

**ENQA**, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, is among the first of the regional networks. All of the networks reflect the cultural, legal and education environment in which they exist and ENQA is no different in this regard to other networks. The Association is closely associated with the reform of European Higher Education and the creation of the European Higher Education Area which has grown from the Bologna Declaration of European Education Ministers in 1999. As a consultative member of the Bologna Process and responding to mandates from the European Education Ministers ENQA is probably more within the loop – or within the tent – than some of the other networks.

The European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education was established in 2000 to promote European co-operation in the field of quality assurance. In November 2004 the General Assembly transformed the Network into **the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)**. The idea for the association originates from the European Pilot Project for Evaluating Quality in Higher Education (1994-95) which demonstrated the value of sharing and developing experience in the area of quality assurance. Subsequently, the idea was given momentum by the Recommendation of the Council (98/561/EC of 24 September 1998) on European co-operation in quality assurance in higher education and by the Bologna Declaration of 1999.

The organisation of ENQA consists of three entities: General Assembly, Board and Secretariat.

The **General Assembly**, composed of the representatives of the ENQA member agencies, with representatives of respective European Ministries and stakeholders attending as observers, is the main decision-making body of the association. As the executive body of ENQA, the Board ensures an effective management of the current issues. The Secretariat takes care of the day-to-day conduct of policy, administration, record-keeping and account management.

The responsibilities and tasks of each organ are defined in the Section 3 of the **Regulations**.

The main policy and decision-making body of ENQA is the General Assembly, which is composed of the member organisations of the Association and has European ministerial representatives and stakeholders as observers. The General Assembly convenes once a year.

The main responsibilities of the General Assembly are to:

- elect and discharge the members of the Board;
- elect the President and Vice-Presidents of ENQA from amongst the members of the Board;
- amend ENQA's regulations;
- approve ENQA's annual work plan;
- receive, consider and approve the reports of the President and the Secretary General;
- receive, consider and approve ENQA's annual financial statements, including the annual external audit report;
- discharge the Board and the other accountable parties from liability for the accounts after approving the annual external audit report;
- identify and approve the external auditor and the number of chartered accountants who are to be involved in the annual external audit of ENQA's accounts;
- consider and determine the annual budget;
- establish the level of the annual membership fee to be paid by Full and Candidate members;
- following a decision of the Board, ratify the admission of new members or the exclusion of members who are in breach of the ENQA Regulations;
- decide, if necessary, upon the relocation of the Secretariat from one country to another, giving one-year's notice if relocation to another country is to take place;
- take any decisions or make any recommendations to the Board that are necessary for the satisfactory functioning of ENQA within the framework of the ENQA Regulations.

The next ENQA General Assembly will be held on 20-21 September 2007 in Oslo, Norway.

## **ASSOCIATES AND AFFILIATES**

Bodies that do not wish to, or for whatever reason are unable to, apply to become members of ENQA may request associate or affiliate status within ENQA. An Associate body is a bona fide organisation or agency with a demonstrable interest in the quality assurance of higher education. An Affiliate body is a network of bona fide quality assurance agencies or other bona fide umbrella organisation concerned with the quality assurance of higher education.

Associates and Affiliates are entitled to receive ENQA publications and attend seminars and workshops, and be given access to the password protected parts of the ENQA website. They may not call themselves 'members' of ENQA and will not have voting rights.

### **Affiliates**

CEE Network - Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education, Budapest;  
ECA - European Consortium for Accreditation, CD The Hague.

### **Associates**

AEACE - Agency for Quality Evaluation and Assurance in Education, Bucharest;  
AIEQA - Autonomic Institute for Educational Quality Assurance, Arad;  
Association of MBAs, London;  
HRK - Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, Bonn;  
IGAENR - General Inspectorate of Education and Research, Paris.

### **Cooperation with stakeholders**

ENQA is firmly committed to a continuing cooperation with its key European partner organisations. This is in accordance with ENQA's role as a European forum for developing and proposing standards and guidelines on quality assurance and finding common points of convergence between the European QA systems.

### **ENQA's main partners are:**

- European University Association (**EUA**)
- European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (**EURASHE**)
- National Unions of Students in Europe (**ESIB**)

ENQA forms together with its three main partners, with the European Commission as an observer member, the so-called E4 Group. The four organisations jointly organise a Quality Assurance Forum on a yearly basis.

ENQA had the important task of preparing, in co-operation and consultation with the other E4 members, a report on **Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area** which was adopted by the European Ministers of Education in the Bergen Summit of May 2005.

### **ENQA services and benefits**

ENQA member agencies have the following benefits:

- information dissemination on recent developments in the evaluation of higher education through ENQA website and publications;
- access to training workshops and advisory support;
- participation in the thematic activities through seminars and special projects;
- contacts to European quality assurance experts;
- quality assurance advisory support.

### **Current Projects**

**ENQA initiates and coordinates transnational quality assurance projects, which aim to disseminate information at the European level and promote the establishment of the quality assurance framework of the European Higher Education Area.**

ENQA-coordinated external review of the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (**ANECA**).

The review will evaluate the way in which and to what extent ANECA fulfils the criteria for the ENQA membership and thus the Standards and Guidelines

for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. The duration of the evaluation is scheduled to take about 9 months, from January 2007 to October 2007.

ENQA-coordinated external review of the Agency for Quality Assurance in the University System of Catalunya **(AQU)**

The review will evaluate the way in which and to what extent AQU fulfils the criteria for the ENQA membership and thus the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. The duration of the evaluation is scheduled to take about 9 months, from January 2007 to October 2007.

ENQA-coordinated external review of the Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance **(AQA)**

The review will evaluate the way in which and to what extent AQA fulfils the criteria for the ENQA membership and thus the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. The duration of the evaluation is scheduled to take about 9 months, from January 2007 to October 2007.

## **ENQA and the Bologna Process**

### **General Overview**

In the Bologna Declaration (1999) the European Ministers of Education committed themselves to establish the European Higher Education Area by 2010. The Bologna Declaration encourages, among other things, the European co-operation in quality assurance of higher education with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies. Other important goals agreed in Bologna are easily comparable degrees, a system based on two main degree cycles (subsequently a third cycle has been included); a common European system of credits and mobility of students and teachers.

In 2001 the European Ministers of Education meeting in Prague invited ENQA to collaborate in establishing a common framework of reference for quality assurance, which would directly work towards the establishment of the European quality assurance framework by 2010. Two years later, in Berlin, the Ministers recommended ENQA to contribute even more directly to the European quality assurance process. In the Berlin Communiqué ENQA received a double mandate from the Ministers to explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance agencies and to develop an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance.

In the Bergen meeting of May 2005 the European Ministers of Education adopted the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" drafted by ENQA. The Ministers committed themselves to introducing the proposed model for peer review of quality assurance agencies on a national basis. They also welcomed the principle of a European register of quality assurance agencies based on national review and asked that the practicalities of its implementation would be further developed by ENQA in co-operation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB, with a report back to the Ministers through the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG).

In Bergen ENQA was accepted as a new consultative member of the BFUG.

## **Issues**

During the past year the main focus in the work of ENQA has been on the implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). As an important part of this implementation process consists of the external reviews of ENQA member agencies. ENQA has also been involved in the E4 Group (ENQA, ESIB, EUA and EURASHE), the main task of which has been to explore the practicalities of implementation of the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies. The E4 Group has begun preparation for the Register following the Ministers meeting in London in May 2007.

The ENQA General Assembly of September 2006 decided that ENQA, in order to enhance its profile as an European organisation and to be located in the same town with its European partners, should move its headquarters from Helsinki (Finland) to Brussels (Belgium) by the year 2009 at the latest. It also agreed to create two forms of formal relationship with ENQA - association and affiliation – for those bona fide quality assurance bodies that do not wish or are, for whatever reason, unable to apply for ENQA membership. Associates and Affiliates will be entitled to receive ENQA publications and attend seminars and workshops, and be given access to the password protected parts of the ENQA website. They will not however, be entitled to call themselves ‘members’ of ENQA and will not have voting rights.

## **Activities**

### **Activities related to Bologna Process**

ENQA has participated actively in the work of the E4 Group. The E4 meetings since May 2006 have been concerned mostly with the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies and with the organisation of the first European Quality Forum (Munich, Germany, November 2006). The second European Quality Forum will be co-organised by the E4 Group in Rome, Italy, in November 2007. ENQA provided on behalf of the E4 Group, the final report on the practicalities of implementation of the European Register of the Quality Assurance Agencies to the London meeting of European Ministers of Education (May 2007) through the Bologna Follow-Up Group.

### **External reviews of ENQA member agencies**

ENQA's membership criteria require that its members should undergo an external review on a five-yearly basis. These are normally organised through national arrangements but, if this is not possible or the agency so requests, they can also be co-ordinated by ENQA.

The first agencies that had their ENQA membership reconfirmed on the basis of their national reviews were HETAC of Ireland (August 2006), EVA of Denmark (September 2006) and HsV of Sweden (September 2006). In addition, two agencies have been granted a Full membership in ENQA as a result of their external reviews: OAQ of Switzerland (December 2006) and ASIIN of Germany (February 2007). This year several other ENQA member agencies will undergo a national review and, in addition, three reviews will be coordinated by ENQA. The review results are subject to rigorous examination by the ENQA Board before any decisions are taken.

### **The second Transnational European Evaluation Project (TEEP) II**

The TEEP II was a European-wide transnational quality evaluation scheme and a follow-up to the first TEEP project conducted by ENQA in 2002-2003. The project involved many actors from several countries: six quality assurance agencies (which were all ENQA members), three joint master's programmes and experts from across Europe. In addition, it included a project administrator from ENQA and representatives from EUA, the ENIC-NARIC network and the European Commission. The final conference was held in May and the project ended in June 2006.

## **ENQA review of the accreditation and quality assurance practices in the Portuguese higher education (EPHE)**

ENQA review of the present accreditation and quality assurance practices in the Portuguese higher education was concluded in November 2006. The project was part of the overall assessment and quality review of the Portuguese higher education system and was financed by the Portuguese Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education.

## **European Quality Convergence Study (QCS) II**

QCS I (2003-2005) was a survey on the development of common working methods between the European quality assurance agencies. The aim of the QCS II in 2006 was to continue a little further along this path by offering the member agencies of ENQA an opportunity to reflect together on the values that underpin their activities. The QCS will have a follow-up project in 2007, QCS III.

## **SCALE**

The main goal of ENQA is to disseminate information, experiences and good practices in the field of quality assurance (QA) in higher education to European QA agencies, public authorities and higher education institutions. It also represents its member agencies (47 member agencies from 23 countries) at the European level. In order to fulfil these tasks, ENQA organises seminars, workshops and an annual General Assembly to its members. Also, ENQA disseminates information through its publications, website ([www.enqa.eu](http://www.enqa.eu)) and being actively involved in international activities with its key stakeholders in the field of higher education.

## **WORKING PARTIES**

ENQA has collaborated, through common project planning and attendance at events, with several European and international actors including, inter alia, the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEEN), the European University Association, the ENIC/NARIC networks, Council of Europe, INQAAHE and OECD.

In addition, CEEN and the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) have formalised their relationship with ENQA through being granted affiliate status in ENQA.

## **REPORTS**

In June 2006 ENQA published the report “Mapping External Quality Assurance in Central and Eastern Europe”. It was a comparative survey by

CEEN, which charted how far the member agencies matched up to the good practice described in the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

After the final conference in May 2006 of the TEEP II, ENQA published on its website three subject-specific reports (Water Management, Cultural and Communication Studies, Law and Economics) and a methodological report of the project. In addition, the methodological report was published in hardcopy in August 2006.

ENQA has developed and adopted a set of National Review Guidelines, which provide guidance on the characteristics of national reviews that will be necessary for acceptance by ENQA for its membership purposes. The Guidelines were published in a hardcopy in October 2006.

The final report of the ENQA review of the accreditation and quality assurance practices in the Portuguese higher education (EPHE) was published by ENQA in November 2006.

The report “European Standards and Guidelines in a Nordic Perspective” was the outcome of the project conducted by the Nordic Quality Assurance Network in Higher Education (NOQA) in 2005-2006. ENQA published the report in December 2006.

ENQA produced a report on “Student involvement in the processes of quality assurance agencies” on the basis of the workshop held in October 2006. A report on the language of European QA (a follow-up to the ENQA workshop of Warwick in June 2006) and the Quality Convergence Study (QCS) II report on terminology of the European QA were integrated into a single report. Both reports have been recently published in hardcopy.