

Organizational setup of external QA entities: Some European Examples

**Organisational setup of external QA entities:
Some European examples**

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In this seminar

- I. Relevance of the theme (ESG)
- II. Organisational setup: theoretical possibilities
- III. Examples + discussion
QAA, HAC, Latvia, Slovenia, Serbia, ZEvA, HSV
- IV. Lessons, patterns for Croatia?

Questions, comments at any time!

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I. **ESG: Reference to organisational setup?**

2.2 Introduction to Parts 1 and 2:

In some countries of the EHEA the ministry of education or an equivalent organisation has the responsibility for some of the areas covered by the standards and guidelines. Where this is the case, that ministry or organisation should ensure that appropriate quality assurance mechanisms are in place and subject to independent reviews.

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I. **ESG: Reference to organisational setup₂**

2.5 Introduction to Part 3:

(...) the standards should be neither too detailed nor too prescriptive. They must not reduce the freedom of European quality assurance agencies to reflect in their organisations and processes the experiences and expectations of their nation or region. The standards must, though, ensure that the professionalism, credibility and integrity of the agencies are visible and transparent to their stakeholders and must permit comparability to be observable among the agencies and allow the necessary European dimension.

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I. **ESG: Reference to organisational setup₃**

Annex (review of agencies, themes in SER)

2.1.2

- (...)
- *internal organisation of the agency; including procedures for appointment and composition of board/council.*

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I. **ESG: Reference to organisational setup₄**

2.6.6 INDEPENDENCE

Standard:

Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders.

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I. **ESG: Reference to organisational setup**_{4 cont'd}

2.6.6 INDEPENDENCE [G] (...) measures, such as:

- its operational independence from higher education institutions and governments is guaranteed in official documentation (e.g. instruments of governance or legislative acts);
- the definition and operation of its procedures and methods, the nomination and appointment of external experts and the determination of the outcomes of its quality assurance processes are undertaken autonomously and independently from governments, higher education institutions, and organs of political influence;
- while relevant stakeholders in higher education, particularly students/learners, are consulted in the course of quality assurance processes, the final outcomes of the quality assurance processes remain the responsibility of the agency.

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I. **Interpretation of the term “Agency”**

to ‘explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies’ Berlin Comm. '03


establishment of a widely shared set of underpinning values, expectations and good practice in relation to quality and its assurance, by institutions and agencies ESG Foreword

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I. **Interpretation of the term “Agency”₂**

- “agency” as a general term throughout the ESG
- agency including (...) board/council (see slide 5)
- formal decisions made by QA agencies... 2.4.3 [G]

assumes one organisational model? (“unified” model)



The standards and guidelines are designed to be applicable to all higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies in Europe, irrespective of their structure, function and size, and the national system in which they are located. (ESG 2.1, Background)

A contradiction?

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II. **Organisational setup: major theoretical possibilities**

1. Unified model: Decision Making* + Admin = one organ.
 - a) Admin takes part in decision making
 - b) Admin does not (formally) take part in decision making
2. Split model: DM and Admin two (or more) separate organ.
 - a) two (or more) autonomous organisations
 - b) DM autonomous - Admin at Ministry

DM*: (usually) Council / Board / Committee
Admin: Secretariat / *Geschäftstelle* / Department (e.g. in Ministry)

* Appointment of experts, responsibility for the final outcomes


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II. **Note**

Models discussed here do not cover cases when different external QA responsibilities are allocated to different bodies on the national level.

E.g. accr. of universities – colleges in Austria (Akkreditierungsrat – Fachhochschulrat)

Here: same (shared) responsibilities



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III.1 **Examples: Unified model**

Name of organisation (with examples):

- Agency (QAA, ZEvA)
- Council (Austria)
- Committee (HAC)
- Commission (Slovakia)
- Institute (EVA, ACQUIN)
- Foundation (FIBAA, AR in Germany)

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III.1.a

Unified model (a): QAA

Name: Agency (Board + agency staff)
 Legally: Association of UUK, UScotland, HEW, GuildHE

QAA is an independent body funded by subscriptions from universities and colleges of higher education, and through contracts with the main higher education funding bodies.

governed by a Board, which has overall responsibility for the conduct and strategic direction of our business.

www.qaa.ac.uk

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III.1.a

QAA - Board

QAA Board: 15 members (1 student) + 2 observers see handout

Board responsibilities

- overall operation of QAA
- strategy
- policy development
- monitoring performance against targets
- finances
- recomm. (to Privy Council through respective Ed.Dept) on Degree Awarding Power and university title

4 (+) meetings/year

Board committees (task based, not disciplinary)

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III.1.a


QAA - staff

agency staff - employees!

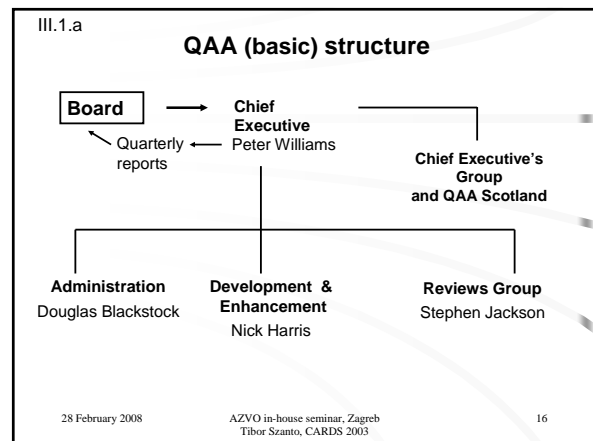
- more than 100 staff in Gloucester
- 16 staff in Glasgow (QAA Scotland)

Executive committee (6 members):
 "authoritative decision-making body within the management structures of QAA"

complete organisational chart of agency (6 slides):
www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/jobs/OrganisationalChart.pdf



basic structure:  next slide

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III.1.a

QAA staff responsibilities

- actual operation of QAA reviews, development, admin. - incl. IT and communic.
-  - selection (?) and training of experts
- audit coordinating (Ass. Directors, not members of panel)
-  - editing audit reports (AD)

It is the responsibility of the AD to test that the team's findings are supported by adequate and identifiable evidence, and that the audit report provides information in a succinct and readily accessible form, supported by reference to more detailed evidence and analysis in the annex to the report.

- reporting and drafting policy documents for the Board
- international activities

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III.1.b

Unified model (b): HAC

Name: Committee (Body + Secretariat)
 Legally: public benefit organisation

The HAC is "an independent national body of experts assessing quality in education, research, and artistic activities in higher education, and examining the operation of the institutional quality development scheme" (HEA)

"... a legal person and shall consist of the body established under subsection (1) and a secretariat"

www.mab.hu/english/index.html

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III.1.b

HAC - Body

HAC Body: 29 (+ 6) members, 2 students invited

Body responsibilities

- ➡ - decision making (accr., eval., selection of experts, reports), resolutions
- strategy, policy
- criteria and procedures
- recomm. (to Education Authority) on establishment of new HEI

10 meetings/year
 Disciplinary (+ other) subcommittees (19+10)

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III.1.b

HAC - staff

Secretariat
 19 staff members – employees! (16,75 FTE)

Responsibilities:

- actual operation, administration
- finances
- committee servicing
- expert panel servicing (ex-post inst. and progr. accr)
- drafting strategy / policy / procedures documents
- contributing to accr. reports, texts of resolutions
- international activities

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III.2.a

Split model (a): Latvia

Organisations involved in external QA

1. Council for Higher Education
2. Accreditation Commission of Study Progs
3. HE Quality Evaluation Center (HEQEC)

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III.2.a

Latvia - CHE

1. Council for Higher Education
 12 members (delegated by various org. incl. student, proposed by minister, appointed by Parliament), 4 ys minister is *ex officio* member!
 chairman: full time! (employed by HEQEC)

Responsibilities:

- HE strategy and development (structure, financing)
- cooperation in relation to HE
- quality of HE (accreditation decision on HEIs)

↓

approval (final decision) by minister
www.aip.lv/eng_info.htm

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III.2.a

Latvia - AC

2. Accreditation Commission of study progs

- set up by the Ministry of Education and Science
- members delegated by HEIs, research institutes, ministries, Academy of Sciences, profess. org.
- accreditation decision on programmes, based on recommendations of the expert panels (“Evaluation Committee”)

↓

approval (final decision) by minister

- expert panels include at least two foreign members
- 6 (+) meetings/year

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III.2.a

Latvia - HEQEC

3. HE Quality Evaluation Center
 Established: 1996
 Legally: Ltd
 Shareholders (?): Ministry + 5 HEIs
 Board: 7 members (2 foreign)
 Employees:

- 3 FT (incl. chairman of CHE and director of HEQEC)
- 2 PT

(old) full member of ENQA!
www.aiknc.lv/en/about.php

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III.2.a

Latvia - HEQEC₂

Responsibilities

- administrative tasks
- organising peer visits, inviting foreign experts
- setting up working groups related to QA
- to sum up and to make public the experience obtained in national QA

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III.2.b

Split model (b): Slovenia

Earlier: National Higher Education Quality Assessment Commission (1996-2007)
Then: HEA modified in June 2006
→ Organisations involved in external QA:

1. Council for Higher Education (20 members) (extended responsibilities)
 - a) Senate for Accreditation (9 memb.)
 - b) Senate for Evaluation (9 memb.)
 - c) Senate for Habilitation (9 memb.)
2. Administrative back-up by unit in ministry

2008: Change of plans?

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III.2.b

Split model (b): Serbia

Organisations involved in external QA:

1. National Council for Higher Education (also other responsibilities) standards and procedures, election of CAQA ("supervision"?), appeals
2. Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA, established by NCHE) proposals for standards and procedures etc., accreditation decisions, issuing certificate on accr.
3. Administrative back-up by unit in ministry

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III.

ASHE staff visits₁ - ZEvA

Summary of organisatinal setup by

Davor

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III.

ASHE staff visits₂ - HSV

Summary of organisatinal setup by

Kristina (F.)

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IV.

Lessons, patterns for Croatia?

Discussion, please!

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