

EUROPEAN
Higher Education Area

Focus groups on QA of European Universities - report

TPG C MEETING

29/11/2024

I'MINQA

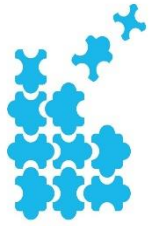
State of play of activities

WG on QA of European Universities

- First meeting: 17 June 2022, Online
- Second meeting: 17 January 2023, Belgium, Brussels
- Third meeting: workshop 8 November 2024, Belgium, Brussels

Different tasks:

- Carry out an analysis of legal and regulatory obstacles for quality assurance procedures of the European Universities Alliances -> **publication on EHEA website**
- Feasibility study in 5 EHEA countries -> **changed to the workshop**



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Context

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European Universities

Overall state of play to date

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES

A key pillar of the European Education Area

- 64 alliances
- 35 countries, including all 27 Member States

More than 560 higher education institutions

Up to EUR 14.4 Million from Erasmus+ per alliance for 4 years

Teaming up with around 2200 associated partners, including higher education institutions from Bologna Process countries

Welcome to 14 new alliances!

European degree: Policy objectives

01

Increased employability
&
skills relevance

02

Cutting red tape for
increased adaptability
&
visibility of higher
education systems

03

A driver of
strategic cooperation &
global competitiveness

The road towards a possible European degree: illustration of possible next steps

Blueprint for a European degree March 2024

Q3-Q4 2024

- Erasmus+ pilot projects final report published
- Discussion in EP CULT Committee
- **Discussions at national level**

By 1st semester of 2025

- Council discussions in EDUC Committee
- Adoption of the **European degree criteria**
- Setting up the **European degree policy lab**

2025-2027

- Member States can implement the European label
- And review their national systems

End of 2025 and
end of 2026
1st and 2nd
**European
Degree Forum**

Mid-2025

Launch of Erasmus+ call to support
European degree pathway projects and
European degree exploratory action

2027

Commission tables a proposal for a
**Council Recommendation on a
European degree**

2028 - 2030

Mainstreaming of the
European degree across all
Member States

**European degree
mainstreamed all
over Europe**



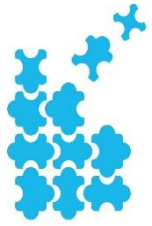
Criteria and reference points



4 reference points for each criterion,
e.g. for Strategy and Policies:

The European University's strategy and policies enable the realisation of an inter-university 'campus' which assures, in close collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, the quality of a joint provision that responds to societal challenges.

1. Vision on quality of education etc.
2. Involvement of all stakeholders
3. Challenge-based approach
4. QA policies for joint provision aligned with ESG



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What did we do?

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Agenda and practical information

09:00 Welcome and registration (**room 1B15 – 1C15**)

09:30 – 10:00 Plenary (**room 1B15 – 1C15**)

10:10 – 11:10 Session 1: State of play and current practices in three stakeholder groups

- Alliances (1B15 – 1C15)- Elena Cîrlan- Kevin Guillaume
- QA agencies (1B06)- Patrick Van den Bosch- Anna Gover
- Ministries (1B13)- Liesbeth Hens

11:10 – 11:30 Coffee break (**room 1B15 – 1C15**)

11:30 – 12:30 Session 2: State of play and current practices

- Alliances (1B15 – 1C15)
- QA agencies (1B06)
- Ministries (1B13)

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch (**room 1B15 – 1C15**)

13:00 – 14:30 Session 3: Scenarios for the future

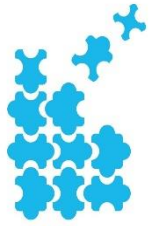
14:30 – 14:50 Coffee break

14:50 – 15:50 Session 4: Aspirations and wishes for the future

13.30 – 14.30 – Scenarios for the future – Internal QA

Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
The Alliance's internal QA system is a joint system covering the joint education provision and the learning environment, research activities, support services, management of the Alliance.	The internal QA system of the Alliance is guided by the needs of each activity, with each sub-consortium being responsible for their joint education provision and the learning environment, research activities, support services, management that are directly related to it.	The internal QA system of each HEI within the Alliance covers its own education provision, research activities, support services, management, and the learning environment that it offers as part of the Alliance.

Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
<p>There is no requirement for external QA of Alliances at Alliance level. HEIs are evaluated individually according to their national/system requirements and the European Approach is used for QA of joint programmes if necessary.</p> <p>There are no implications for the national/system-level external QA requirements.</p>	<p>Alliances must have external QA at Alliance level, and the European Approach is used for QA of joint programmes if necessary. Individual HEIs must also undergo external QA at institutional level according to the national/system-level external QA requirements.</p> <p>The external evaluation at Alliance level is ideally conducted by one agency and recognised in all participating countries. However, it could be conducted jointly by two or more agencies if necessary in order to ensure recognition in all participating countries.</p> <p>There is no discount or lighter touch approach following a successful evaluation at alliance level.</p>	<p>Alliances must have external QA at Alliance level, and the European Approach is used for QA of joint programmes if necessary.</p> <p>The external evaluation at Alliance level is ideally conducted by one agency and recognised in all participating countries. However, it could be conducted jointly by two or more agencies if necessary in order to ensure recognition in all participating countries.</p> <p>For national/system-level external QA of individual HEIs there is a discount/lighter touch approach for institutions following a successful evaluation at alliance level.</p>



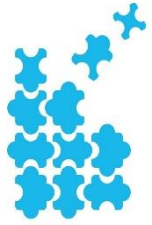
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What are de outcomes?

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preliminary

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audit in once the whole common activity.
→ Saving time and energy!

If it offers more flexibility.

encourage focus and progress (& ambition)

- ① Benchmarking against international expectations
- ② Objective input.
- ③ National obligations (jurisdictional)

increase efforts within the alliance

F
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D
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Way to increase commitment to QA by partners

LET THE SOCIETY KNOW THAT WE ARE DOING A GOOD JOB AS A ALLIANCE

Support further integration
Align strategies and approaches

INPUT
CAN GENERATE
ENHANCEMENT
IN THE ALLIANCE

Objective and constructive critics to improve processes

QA enhancement

If we were to offer Joint Programmes or similar activities. (But then the European Approach would probably be more relevant.)

- Transparency
TO GAIN
REPUTATION

Different QMS developments in each institution
- be sure to respect the ESG
- be avoid contradiction

THEN THE ALL
WOULD DECIDE
ITS OWN
APPROACH

To track whether we are on the right path.

If it were to take place: compliance with possible future recommendations from the EU level.

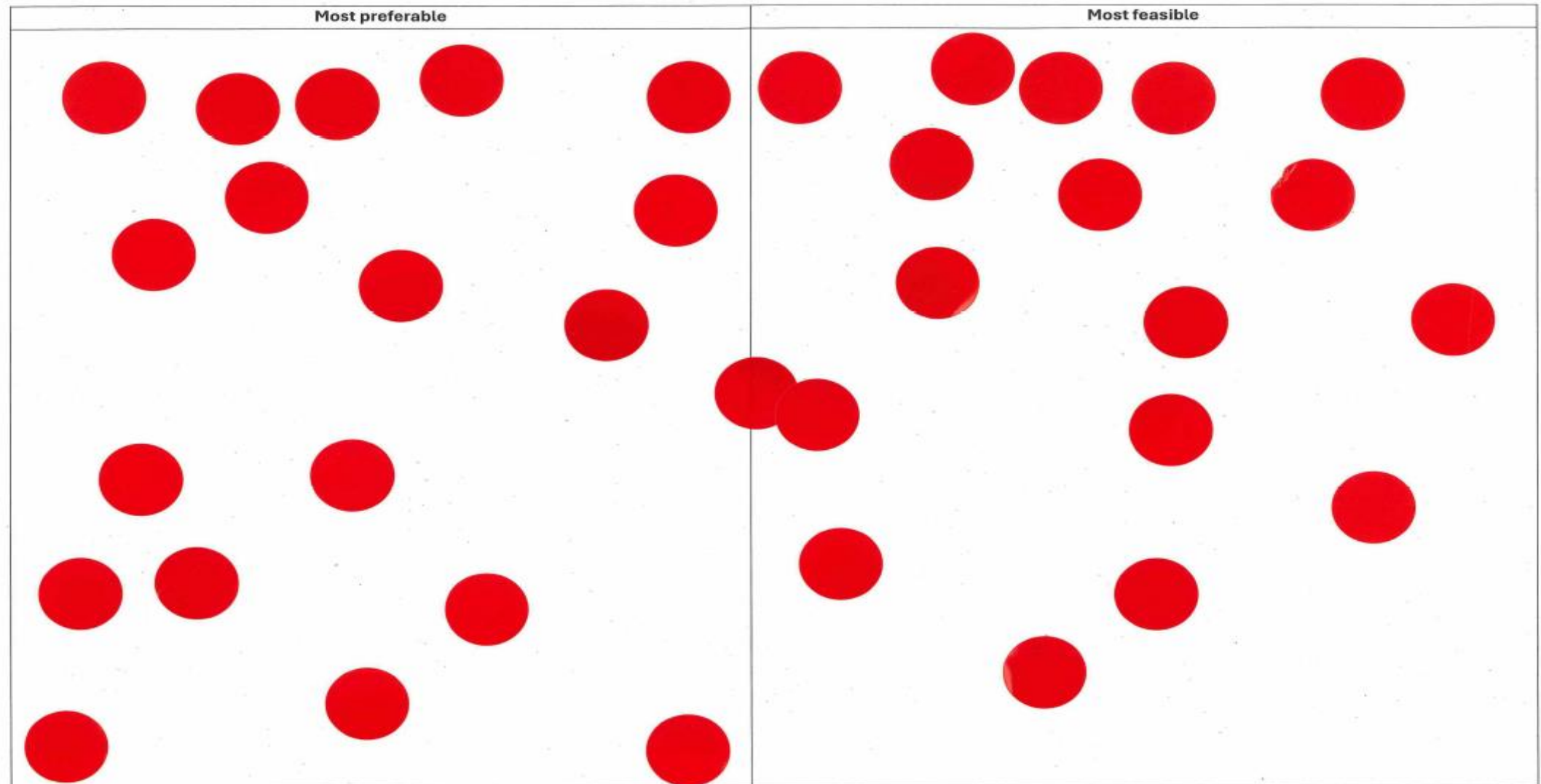
Transform the alliance in a sort of system-accreditation agency ensuring internal QA for joint provision

2

- 2. What are or would be the main reasons for your Alliance to undergo an external quality assurance evaluation at Alliance level?

Scenario 1: There is no requirement for external QA of Alliances at Alliance level. HEIs are evaluated individually according to their national/system requirements and the European Approach is used for QA of joint programmes if necessary.

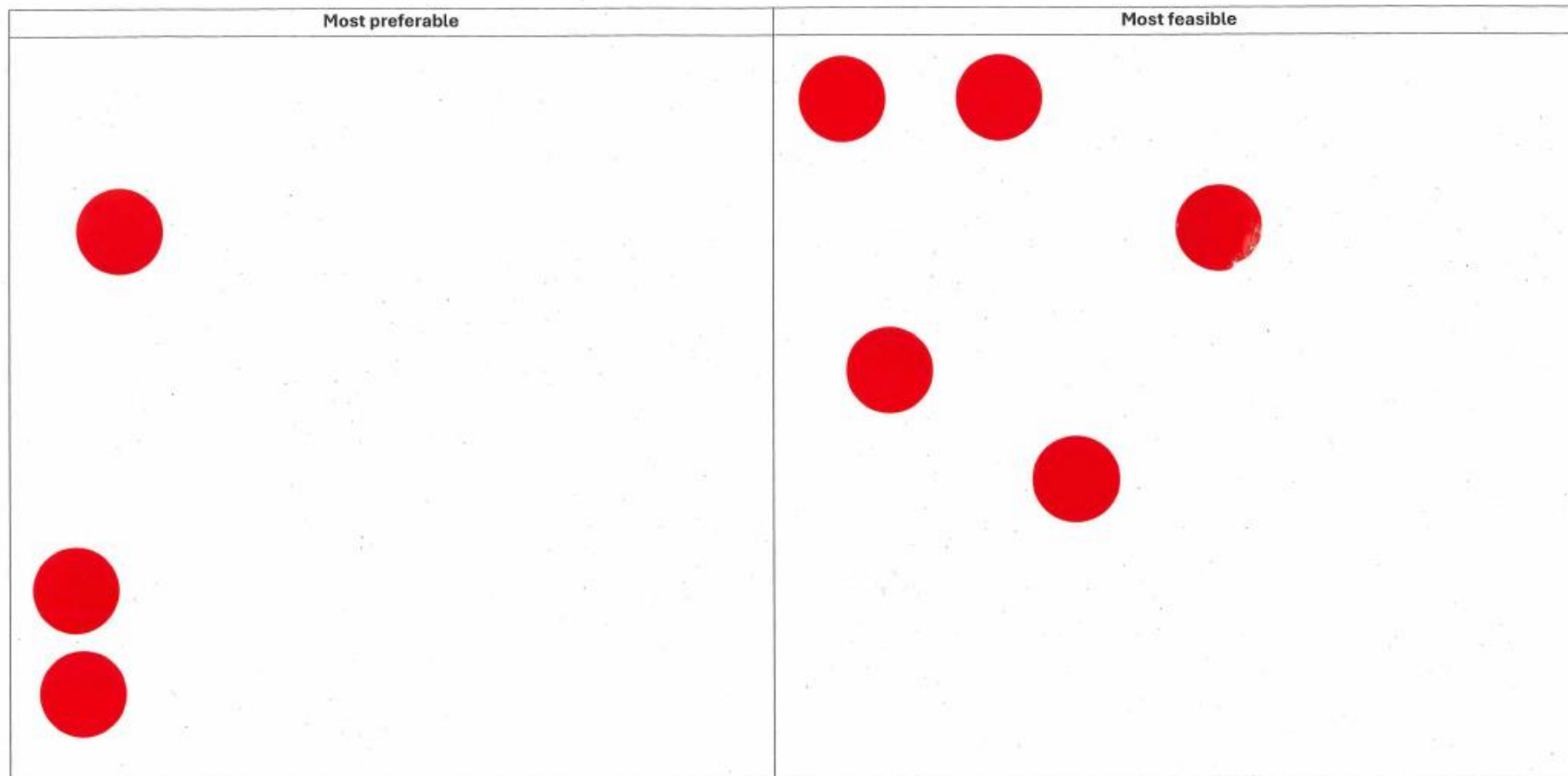
There are no implications for the national/system-level external QA requirements.



Scenario 2: Alliances must have external QA at Alliance level, and the European Approach is used for QA of joint programmes if necessary. Individual HEIs must also undergo external QA at institutional level according to the national/system-level external QA requirements.

The external evaluation at Alliance level is ideally conducted by one agency and recognised in all participating countries. However, it could be conducted jointly by two or more agencies if necessary in order to ensure recognition in all participating countries.

There is no discount or lighter touch approach following a successful evaluation at alliance level.



First conclusions

Nobody wants duplication

Alliances \neq education

Avoid bureaucracy

It will be challenging to make a single model that fits all alliances

What is the added value of EQA?

What is the accountability we have as alliances?

We want to know what we are doing is valid

Sometimes it is only a governmental change away

First conclusions

It depends