



Albanian **BFUG** Secretariat
2021-2024

TPG C on QA meeting

5 DECEMBER 2023

TPG C MEETING

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Programme (1/2)

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 09.30h | Welcome by co-chairs of the TPG C on QA
Approval of the agenda
Approval of the minutes of the third meeting
Introduction to the meeting and its objectives |
| 09.45h | Tour de table |
| 10.00h | General state of play and work plan of TPG C |
| 10.15h | Experience from the staff mobility |
| 10.45h | Health break |
| 11.00h | The European Approach for the Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes PLA |

Programme (2/2)

11.15h	QA of Micro-credentials
11.45h	QA of European Universities
12.00h	Digitalisation of QA processes – preliminary results of the survey
12.30h	The Draft Bologna Process Implementation Report – QA chapter
13.00h	Report of TPG C and contribution to Tirana Communiqué
13.15h	Next steps
13.30h	End of the meeting

General state of play and work plan of TPG C

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General state of play and work plan of TPG C

Project overview

- WP 1 Project Management
- WP 2 TPG C meetings
- WP 3 Staff Mobility
- WP 4 PLAs
- WP 5 Micro-credentials
- WP 6 European Universities
- WP 7 Digitalisation

Composition of TPG C on QA

2021-2024

- Chaired by 3 co-chairs: Belgium/Flemish Community, Romania and Kazakhstan
- **50 members:** 43 countries + EC + 6 consultative members
- **Umbrella project: IMINQA** – Implementation and Innovation in Quality Assurance through Peer Learning

Coordinator: Ministry of Education and Training (BE/FL)

Partners: ARACIS (RO), ENQA, EQAR

Experts: Third co-chair (KZ) involved as expert. Three other experts from Belgium/FR, Romania and EUA.

Action plan of Thematic Peer Group C on QA

Thematic orientations

- Legislative framework in line with the ESG
- Internal quality assurance
- Enhancement-oriented use of the ESG
- The European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes
- Cross-border Quality Assurance
- *Quality assurance of micro-credentials*
- *Quality assurance of European Universities*
- *Digitalisation of quality assurance processes*

Work plan: <http://ehea.info/page-peer-group-C-QA>

- 36 countries OK, 2 countries partly filled, 5 countries not filled (Belgium French-Community, Estonia, North-Macedonia, Spain, Ukraine)

TPG C meetings

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Meetings

1. 30 June 2021, Kick-off Meeting of the TPG C on QA, online
2. 17-18 May 2022, First Meeting of the TPG C on QA, Belgium
3. 30 November 2022, Second Meeting of the TPG C on QA, online
4. 1-2 June 2023, Third Meeting of the TPG C on QA, Kazakhstan
5. 5 December 2023, Fourth Meeting of the TPG C on QA, online
6. 13 – 14 June 2024, Fifth Meeting of the TPG C on QA, Constanta, Romania
7. November 2024, Sixth Meeting of the TPG C on QA, Belgium

Staff mobility

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Staff mobility call 2

Call 2

- Call for proposals: February – March 2023
- Evaluation of proposals by matchmaking committee: April 2023
- Matchmaking committee meeting to select proposals: 30 May 2023 (Kazakhstan)
- Announcement of selection results: May/June 2023
- **Staff mobility: June 2023 – February 2024**
- Matchmaking committee meeting to review the observation reports: June 2024

Staff mobility call 2

- Received details of 14 participants so far (incl. 1 delayed mobility out of call 1)
- 7 reportings received
 - Host countries/organisations:
 - Sweden – UKA (staff mobility week)
 - Estonia – HAKA
 - Slovenia – NAKVIS
 - Finland – FINEEC
 - Spain – AQU Spain
- 21 more mobilities are planned

Quality assurance and dissemination of results

Done	Ongoing	Planned
✓ Setup of MMC	• Forms and procedures	➤ Evaluation outcomes report call 2 (June 2024)
✓ Call for proposals (call 1 & call 2)	• Dissemination and communications	➤ Deliverable: Final reporting of staff mobility schema (by 30 November 2024)
✓ Meeting of MMC (MMC 1 & MMC2)	• Staff mobilities part 2 (June 2023 – February 2024)	
✓ Matching proposals call 1		
✓ Evaluations outcomes report (call 1)		
✓ Matching proposals call 2		



Staff Mobility Experiences

OXANA TREBENKO – NAQA UKRAINE

STEFANO SANTOLI – ANVUR ITALY



Time for
a break

Peer Learning Activities (PLAs)

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Outcomes of PLA 3 – European Approach for the QA of Joint Programmes

Summary 1:

One day event hosted by Belgium/Flemish Community, taking place at the Department of Education and Training

- Followed three parallel sessions with specific discussion topics
- Attendance: 34 participants from 18 countries, majority representatives of national QA agencies and stakeholder organisations and few ministry representatives,.
- Preparatory analysis before the PLA3 -> Thematic analysis including input from PLA prepared by EQAR (published on project website)

Outcomes of PLA 3 – European Approach for the QA of Joint Programmes

Summary 2:

Presentations:

- Changes in legal frameworks to accommodate for the European Approach (Belgium/Flemish Community and Poland)
- Lessons learned: institutional perspectives in the implementation of the European Approach (KU Leuven, Belgium and University of Groningen, the Netherlands)
- Lessons learned: agency perspectives in the implementation of the European Approach (AQAS, Germany and Unibasq, Spain)

PLA 3 – European Approach for the QA of Joint Programmes

Overarching topic:

- A) Mapping the current state of play of countries' openness to the European Approach and the legal framework allowing the EA with a suitable EQAR-registered QA agency
- B) Reflection on the changes made in legal framework, Institutional and Agency perspectives on the implementation of the European Approach. Data from DEQAR presented on the usage of the EA.

Reflections from the PLA 3:

A) Limitations and challenges:

Equal limitation between the legal constraints and the lack of experience/knowledge in the EA of JP.

- Even in systems that are open to EA, 'surrounding aspects/challenges' ((e.g., study length, language, form of the degree) in the creation of JP can affect the programme as well as the
- Lack of accessible information regarding the different systems and requirements, EQAR knowledge base only available tool in most of the cases
- All these obstacles show the limited use of the procedure
- Costly procedures (additional expenses for HEI if they opt for the EA)

PLA 3 – European Approach for the QA of Joint Programmes

Reflections from the PLA 3:

B) Recommendations:

- Removing additional obstacles for the creation and implementation of JP
- Openness for the EA of JP as – creates the increase of experience/knowledge in the use of the EA of JP
- Communication between the key actors crucial for the whole process
- EA gives added value for the JP
- Use of already existing tools, e.g., ImpEA toolkit
- Ensure incentives such as covering of the expenses of such a procedure through national or other type of external funding (project funding)

The Thematic Analysis from PLA 3 will be finalised in the coming weeks (published and shared)

Working group on QA of micro-credentials

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Status of activities

- **Report 'Approaches to Quality Assurance of Micro-credentials'** published in August 2023.
- **'Reflective questions for internal and external QA of micro-credentials'** will be finalised and published by the end of the year.
- **Inclusion of micro-credentials and alternative providers in DEQAR** is being tested and will be publicly launched in early 2024.
- **Data standard for information on micro-credentials** is defined.
- A first discussion about the **feasibility study for a quality label for micro-credentials** was held in September and will be taken forward in 2024.

Next meeting: 17 January 2024 (online)

Reflective questions for internal and external QA of micro-credentials

Overview

- Content informed by the desk research
- Originally conceived as three separate documents – decision of writing group to combine
- Originally conceived as guidance or guidelines – decision of writing group to reformulate as reflective questions
- Sections for HEIs, agencies, and alternative providers
- Each question is followed by explanation of key issues to consider
- Key principles: reflective rather than prescriptive; focus on fitness-for-purpose; short and sweet

→ Working group is currently providing final comments.

→ Publication by the end of the year.

Reflective questions for HEIs

What are the reasons for offering micro-credentials?

How can the special characteristics of micro-credentials be captured in the internal quality assurance approach?

What are the specific considerations for quality assuring micro-credentials that are originally conceived as part of an existing programme?

What are the specific considerations for micro-credentials not part of an existing degree programme?

What are the specific considerations for micro-credentials developed and/or offered in partnership with other organisations and providers?

What other factors might be considered at institutional level?

Reflective questions for QA agencies

What is the role of quality assurance agencies in supporting micro-credentials?

To what extent might existing external quality assurance procedures need to be adjusted to address institutional approaches to quality assurance of micro-credentials?

How can quality assurance agencies support alternative providers that offer micro-credentials?

Reflective questions for alternative providers

What are the reasons for offering micro-credentials?

What connection does the alternative provider have with the higher education sector?

What tools can alternative providers use to quality assure the education or training offer?

What would be the benefits for an alternative provider to engage with higher education external quality assurance processes?

What other factors might be considered by the provider?

Inclusion of MC and AP in DEQAR

Definition of micro credential

- a) Study provision related to **EQF/ISCED level (5), 6, 7 or 8 OR QF EHEA level short, first, second, third cycle**
- b) That **does not** lead to a **full (recognised) degree**
- c) Consisted by a **workload expressed in ECTS** in the range of **1 and 59 ECTS credits**

Information on QA of MC collected in DEQAR

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a) Name | g) Assessment and certification |
| b) Programme qualification | h) Learning outcomes |
| c) Programme NQF | i) Description of LO |
| d) Programme QF EHEA level | k) Field |
| e) Degree outcome | |
| f) Workload expressed in ECTS Credits | |

Inclusion of MC and AP in DEQAR

Definition of an alternative provider

An entity that has provides learning opportunities at HE level, but **does not have full degree awarding powers**.

Information on AP collected in DEQAR

- a) Name
- b) Location/Legal seat
- c) Website
- d) Other identifier
- e) Identifier source
- f) Type of organization (e.g. private company, CSO etc.)
- g) Source of information about the provider (the agency that provided the information)

Information on QA of AP collected in DEQAR

- a) Agency that uploads the reports
- b) Activity
- c) Status of decision (obligatory or voluntary)
- d) Valid from
- e) Valid to
- f) Link to the report on agency's website
- g) PDF file of the report
- h) Report language

Inclusion of MC and AP in DEQAR

www.testzone.eqar.eu/qa-results



Feasibility label on quality label for alternative providers

Produce a feasibility assessment on the establishment of an ESG-based quality label for all providers that operate in alignment with the [European Approach for Micro-credentials](#), in dialogue with alternative providers

1. First consultations with WG on MC in September 2023
2. Areas to explore

Why – Reasons for the Creation of a Label	What – The meaning of the label
<i>Who would benefit and what would be the added value in comparison with the current status quo?</i>	<i>A label is normally used to provide information about a product or service offered by a company/organisation. Since a label is a form of communication with the end “consumer” the label must be meaningful. A meaningful label is transparent, consistent and trusted</i>

3. Main work to be performed in 2024 (if you have concrete example of quality label in HE, please share it with EQAR)

Working group on quality assurance of European Universities

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QA of European Universities

State of play

- Desk research completed
- 2 WG QA EurUnis (online, Brussels)
- Next step: Feasibility study (2 PLA's, study and final WG)
 - > Some delay in implementation

Adjusted proposal: Replace study with questionnaire for ministries, alliances and QA agencies

- Interesting to see how different the 3 actors on the questions react and to bring their views together
- Process will be less intense, wider scope and easier to organise for countries and ministries than the first proposal

QA of European Universities

Way forward

- Flemish Ministry will continue their coordinator role
- Both experts Kevin and Romiță are willing to help with implementation, e.g.
 - Content of the questionnaire
 - Ensure academic standards
- No budget implications, only content wise
- Next steps:
 - Informal update EC
 - Submit amendment

The Draft Bologna Process Implementation Report – QA chapter

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Report of TPG C and contribution to Tira na Communiqué

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Report

Content

- Dates, participants and summary of TPG C, peer learning activities (PLA) and Working Group meetings
- Summary of the assignments of Working Groups
- Main outcomes, conclusions and recommendations

Contribution to Tirana Communiqué Draft 0.1

*We call upon the BFUG to develop a transversal approach to internationalised research and education, that takes into account the transversal character of existing and developing transnational initiatives, such as alliances of universities or joint degrees, bridging all dimensions of higher education, recognition, **quality assurance**, or learning, teaching and research. In this regard, we advocate for the ratification of the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education (Global Convention), and we support and see with interest the developments of the European Universities Initiatives and intend to further facilitate transnational education wherever possible.*

In this respect, the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG 2015) have been one of the most successful initiatives of the Bologna Process, promoting trust and transparency between higher education systems, facilitating not only degree recognition but also serving as a basis for the accountability of higher education towards the public and the enhancement of quality through quality assurance processes across EHEA. In order to keep the document in line with developments, challenges and expectations, we invite the primary authors of the ESG (ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE - the E4 Group), together with Business Europe, EI and EQAR, to **propose a revised version by 2026, together with a revised version of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes**. While keeping already established principles, the revised ESG should promote increased support to international cooperation in higher education, put a stronger emphasis on the links with the social dimension and the fundamental values, and highlight innovative practices and emerging trends such as digitalisation and lifelong learning.

Contribution to Tirana Communiqué Draft 0.1

Contribution to Tirana Communiqué

1. What are the main achievements of your working group/task force in the working period 2020-2024 that you wish to see appearing in the communiqué? If relevant, please group them under the three principles laid out in the Rome Communiqué (“innovative, interconnected EHEA”)
2. If your WG/TF was to continue beyond 2024 what would be the objectives to be achieved for the 2024-2027 working period?
3. If applicable, what commitments would you want Ministers to take especially for the 2024-2027 working period?
4. Do you envisage a priority area or an area "neglected" for the period until 2030 and which?

- Cross border QA
- European Approach Joint Degrees
- Effective transnational QA

Next steps

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Upcoming activities of the TPG (1/2)

- Next TPG meeting
 - 13-14 June 2023, Fifth Meeting of the TPG C on QA, Romania
 - November 2024, Sixth Meeting of the TPG C on QA, Brussels



Upcoming activities of the TPG (1/2)

- Staff mobility programme
 - Staff mobility call 2: June 2023 – February 2024
- WG on QA of micro-credentials
 - Fourth meeting, 17 January 2024, online
 - Fifth meeting, 29-30 April 2024, Brussels

Upcoming activities of the TPG (2/2)

- WG on QA of European Universities
 - ...
- Digitalisation of QA processes
 - Interviews
 - Break –out sessions within V TPG C meeting
 - Workshop back-to-back VI TPG C meeting

Thank you!

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