

Process for application for ENQA membership and EQAR listing

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*Meeting with Higher Education Quality Assurance Council,
Riga, Latvia, 1 December 2015*

What is ENQA?

- ENQA is the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
- ENQA is a **membership organisation** of external Quality Assurance Agencies
- The criteria for membership is that an agency undergoes a successful **external review** against the 2015 **European Standards and Guidelines** (ESG) every five years

ENQA Strategic Plan 2016-20

Goal 1

- **REPRESENTATION**

- ENQA is representative of the diversity of quality assurance agencies throughout Europe
- ENQA supports the continuous development of independent and trustworthy quality assurance agencies operating in line with agreed standards throughout Europe
- ENQA provides advice and represents the interests of its members in the policy-making process

ENQA Strategic Plan 2016-20

Goal 2

- **SERVICES**

- ENQA is a fruitful network for agencies throughout Europe
- ENQA is the preferred partner for reviews against agreed European standards
- ENQA is a key source of reliable information, expertise and know-how on quality assurance
- ENQA is a reference point for European quality assurance in the international context

ENQA Strategic Plan 2016-20

Goal 3

- **QUALITY ENHANCEMENT**

- ENQA contributes to the enhancement and innovation of quality assurance

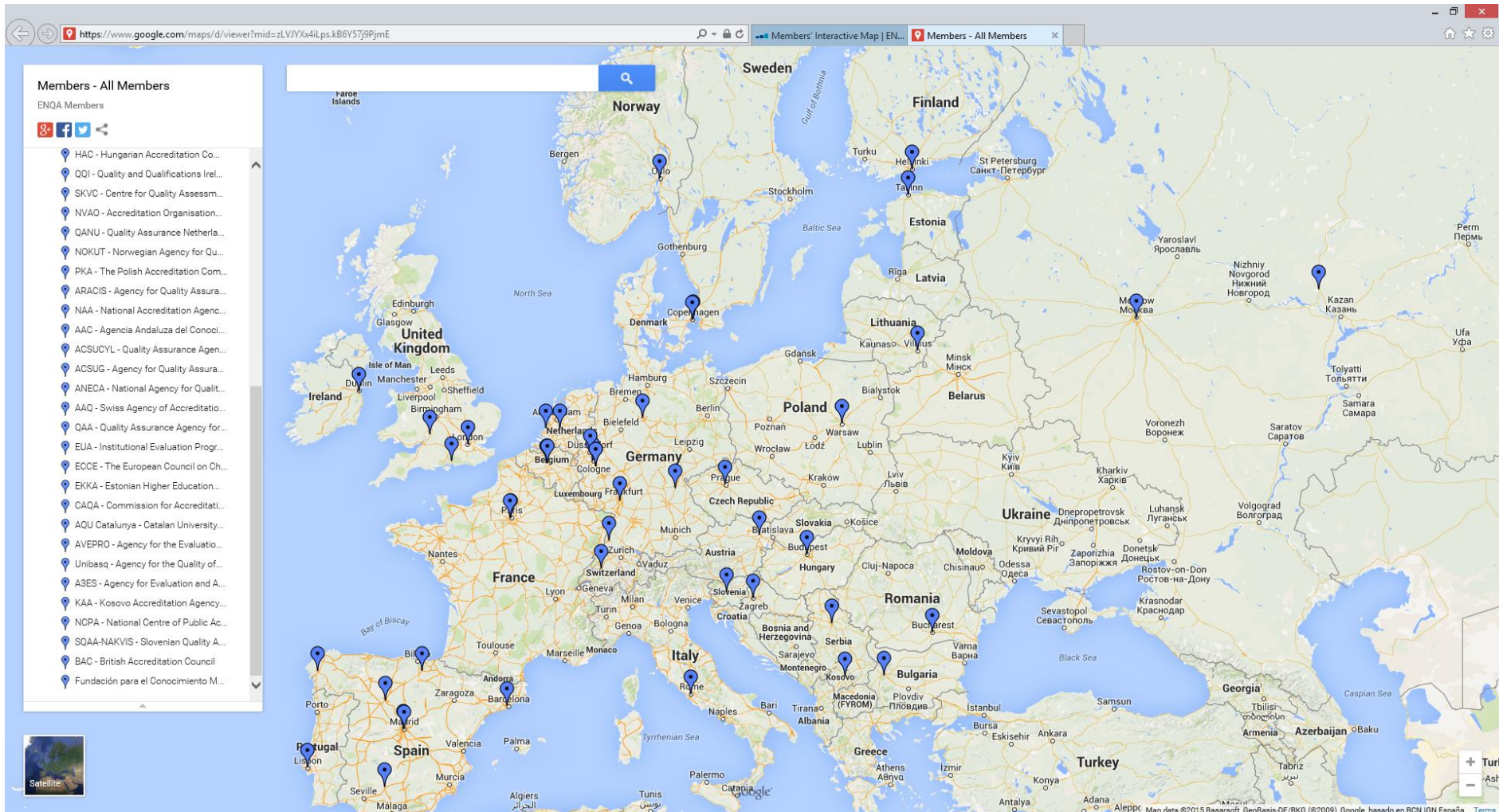
ENQA at a glance

- Established as a network in 2000
- Based in Brussels
- Permanent Secretariat of 5
- Elected Board of 9 members
 - President
 - 2 Vice-Presidents
 - Treasurer
 - 5 ordinary members
- Term of office of Board members is 3 years (renewable once)

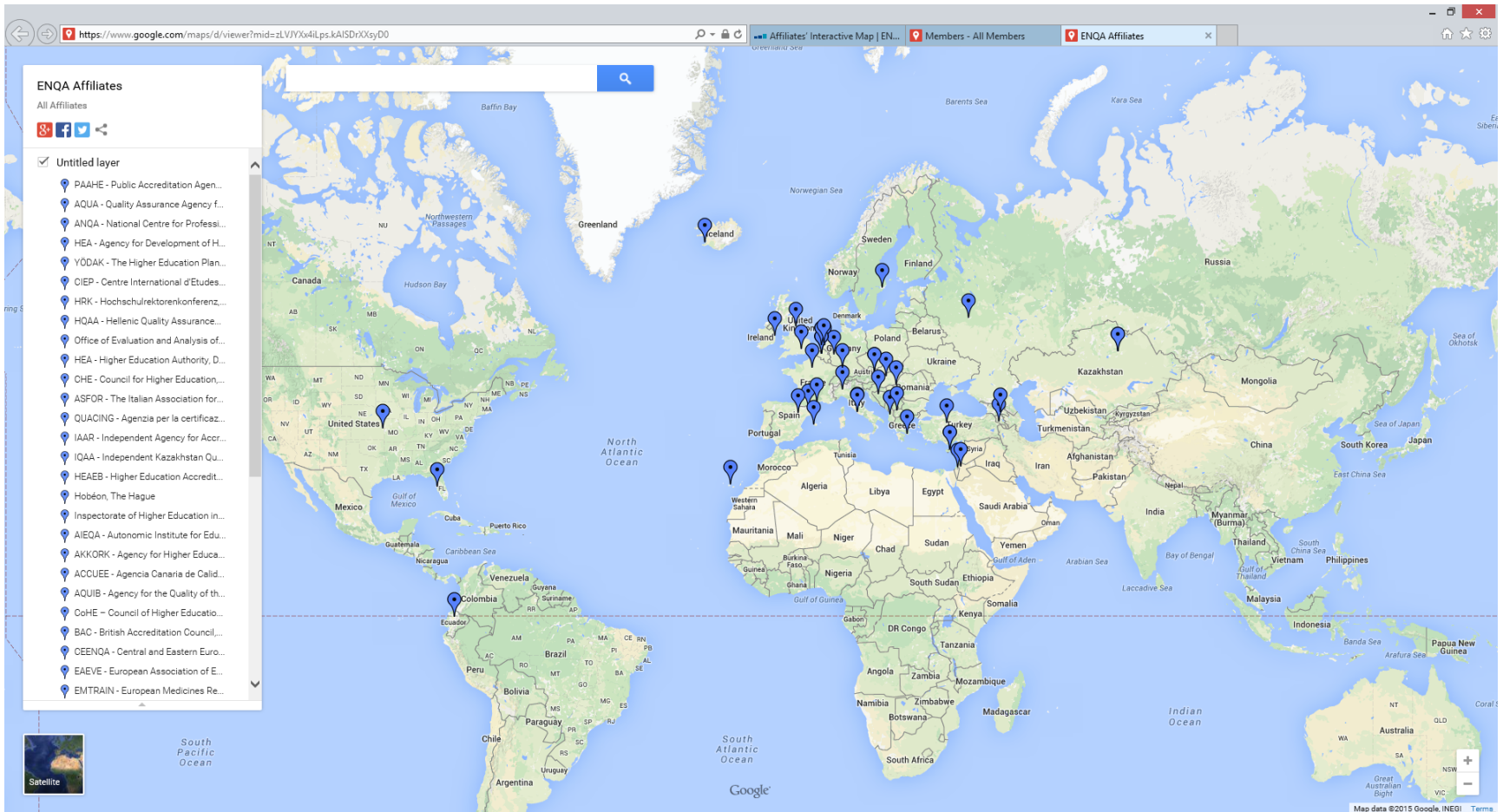
ENQA at a glance

- 48 full members from 26 EHEA countries
- 46 affiliates (including AIC, Latvia) from a further 15 countries
- ENQA is representative of 41 of the 48 members of the EHEA
- Affiliates in the USA, Ecuador, Hong Kong, Israel and Jordan

ENQA – member agencies



ENQA - affiliates



Meeting with the Higher Education Quality Assurance Council, Riga, 1 December 2015

ENQA activities

ENQA

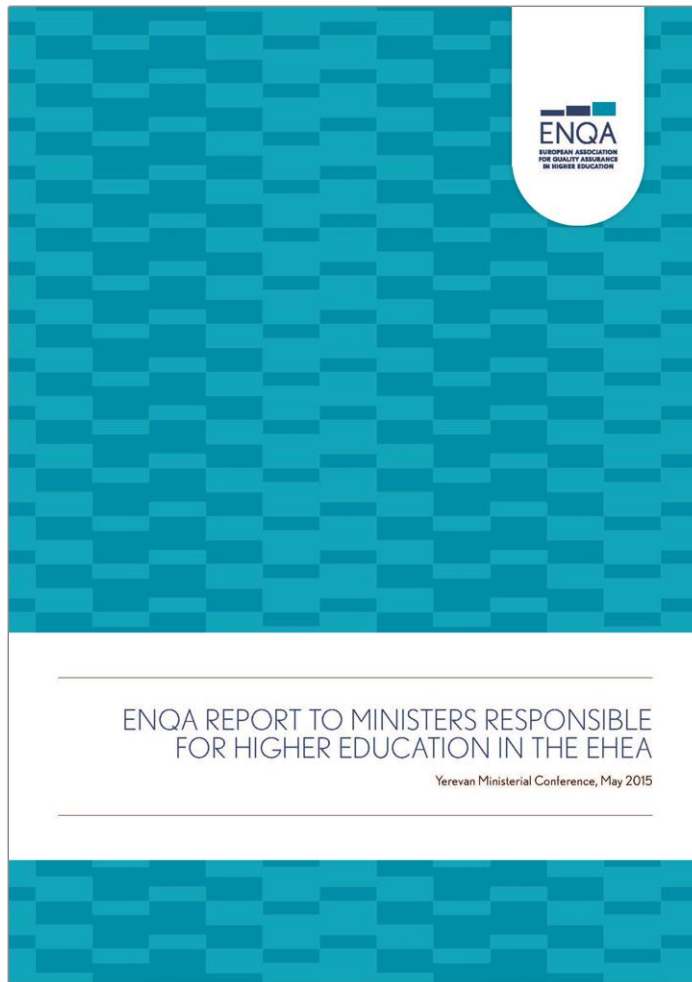
- organises a Members Forum in April and a General Assembly in October each year
- participates as the lead or as a partner in projects funded by the European Commission (ERASMUS+, for instance)
- organises self-funded projects for members (QPP series)
- Participates as a consultative member in the Bologna Follow-up Group
- organises workshops, seminars, conferences and networking events for members
- organises reviews of member or applicant agencies against the 2015 European Standards and Guidelines

ENQA activities - 2015

- January – ASIA Pacific Regional Forum, Macau
- April – 5th ENQA Members' Forum, Cordoba
- June – 15 years of QA in Europe, ENQA networking event, Brussels
- October – 6th ENQA General Assembly, Dublin
- November – 10th European Quality Assurance Forum, London
- December - ENQA Workshop on Quality Assurance and e-learning, Barcelona

ENQA Report to Ministerial Conference (Yerevan, May 2015)

QA in the EHEA - Priorities for the future



- Internationalisation of Quality Assurance and the Revised ESG
- Benefits and Risks of Cross Border Quality Assurance Services
- Transparency and Availability of Quality Assurance Reports
- Independence of Quality Assurance Agencies

ENQA – Reviews of agencies

- ENQA organises reviews of applicant or member agencies
- ENQA trains panels of reviewers
- ENQA membership criteria is a finding of substantial compliance with ESG 2015 following a review

ENQA – Reviews of agencies

- Panel usually consists of 5 members
 - One or two quality assurance professionals (at least one of whom should be currently employed by a QA agency)
 - An academic currently serving at a higher education institution
 - A student member
 - A member of the ENQA Secretariat (new since 2015)
- When requested by the agency under review, other stakeholders members (e.g. from the labour market) may be included instead of the second quality assurance professional or in addition to the 5 panel members

ENQA – Reviews of agencies

- Panels are appointed from among experts nominated by
 - ENQA
 - EUA or EURASHE
 - ESU
 - BusinessEurope
- All panel members must have undergone training by ENQA
- At least two panel members must come from outside the national system of the agency under review
- At least one member of the panel has good knowledge and understanding of the higher education and quality assurance system in which the agency (predominantly) operates

Stages in ENQA Review (I)

- Application from (current or applicant) member to ENQA to co-ordinate review
- Agreement of Terms of Reference between agency and ENQA
- Agency produces self-assessment report (SAR)
- ENQA Secretariat carries out an administrative scrutiny of the SAR to verify if it meets the requirements
- Appointment of external panel
- Site visit to the agency by panel

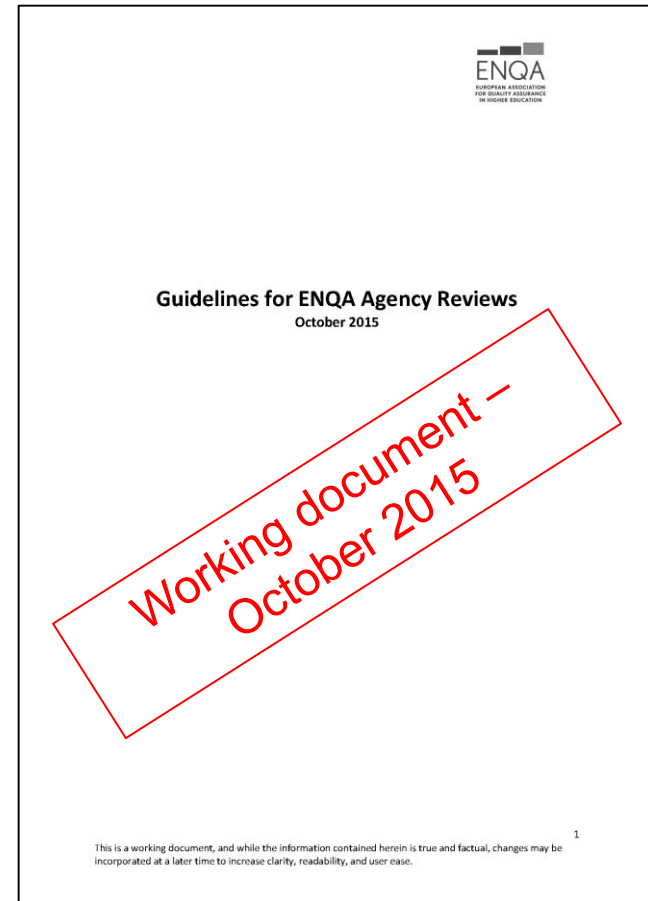
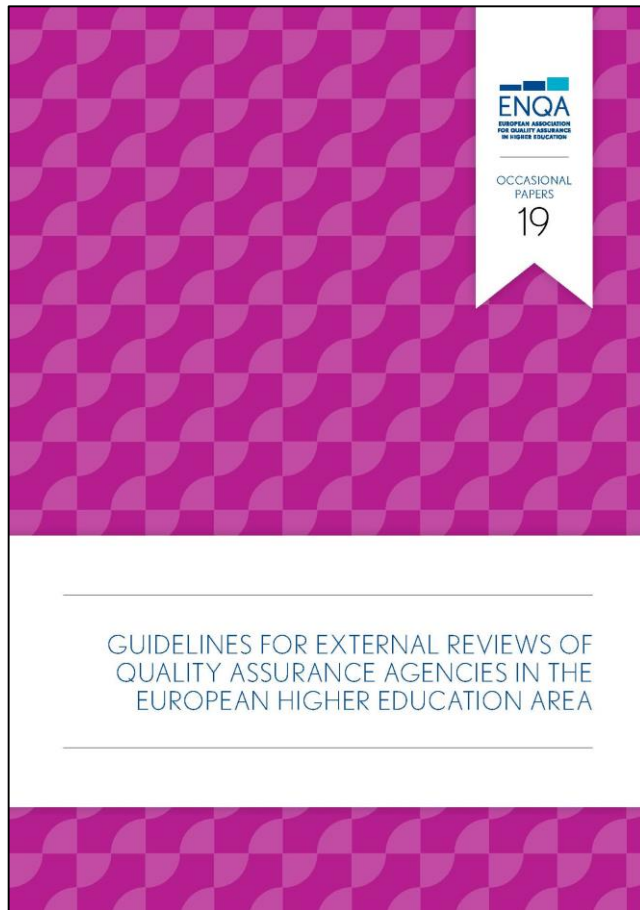
Stages in ENQA Review (II)

- Panel drafts external review report
- Report sent to agency for factual checking
- Panel judgement is provided for each standards with the following grading:
 - Fully compliant
 - Substantially compliant
 - Partially compliant
 - Non-compliant
- Report submitted to ENQA Board

Stages in ENQA Review (III)

- Report is sent to one of the ENQA scrutiny committees
 - 2 Board members and (usually) 1 ex-Board member
- Report is considered by the full ENQA Board
- Board decides if the agency is accepted (or reconfirmed) as a member
- ENQA publishes the external review report (irrespective of whether the decision was negative or positive)
- Membership is valid for five years from the date of the Board meeting
- Applicant can appeal a negative finding to the ENQA Appeals Committee

Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews



Meeting with the Higher Education Quality Assurance Council, Riga, 1 December 2015

Membership of ENQA and listing on EQAR (November 2015)



48 members from **26** EHEA countries



39 agencies listed from **20** EHEA member countries

There are **38** agencies that are members of ENQA and are listed on EQAR

Application for listing on EQAR

DISCLAIMER: the following information is a synopsis of material available on the EQAR website www.eqar.eu

All details should be checked with the EQAR Secretariat.

- The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education is a list of agencies that have undergone a review and have been found to be substantially compliant with the European Standards and Guidelines
- The founding members of EQAR are ENQA, EUA, EURASHE and ESU
- The other members are national governments and consultative members; Education International and Business Europe
- The decisions of listing on EQAR are taken by the Register Committee
- EQAR requires an applicant agency to commission a review against the ESG
- EQAR does NOT organise reviews itself
- The overwhelming majority of EQAR listed agencies chose ENQA as the commissioning body for their review


Application for listing on EQAR

- Agencies applying for inclusion on the Register (or renewal of registration) need to undergo an eligibility check before initiating their external review
- As part of the verification of eligibility the applicant is expected to submit to EQAR a **draft of the terms of reference** for the planned external review to be agreed between the applicant and the review coordinator (e.g. ENQA).

Application for listing on EQAR

- As EQAR does not co-ordinate reviews itself, it is the responsibility of the applicant to identify a suitable review coordinator (such as ENQA) that has the necessary professional capacity and is independent from the applicant
- EQAR's requirements in terms of the external panel composition and the site visit are fully compatible with the ENQA review model
- So as to ensure that the review is conducted on a sufficient and robust basis for the Register Committee to make a decision, EQAR advises that an applicant agency and the review co-ordinator are aware of the EQAR document (2015) *Use and Interpretation of the ESG*

Application for listing on EQAR



Use and Interpretation of the ESG
for the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies

Register Committee
June 2015

Ref. RC/12.1
Ver. 1.0
Date 2015-06-12
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1. Introduction

The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) manages a register of quality assurance agencies that have demonstrated their substantial compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (European Standards and Guidelines, ESG).

The Register Committee² is EQAR's independent decision-making body that decides on inclusion of quality assurance agencies on the Register.

The ESG provide the criteria at European level against which the quality assurance agencies (QAAs) and their activities are assessed. This ensures that QAAs adhere to the same set of principles and the processes and procedures are modelled to fit the purposes and requirements of their context.

2. Aims and Target Groups

The present policy on the Use and interpretation of the ESG aims to:

- increase the transparency of the Register Committee's interpretation of the ESG;
- ensure consistency in the Register Committee's decisions;
- facilitate the understanding of the Register Committee's decisions³;
- inform quality assurance agencies, external review coordinators and external review panels *ex ante* of the Register Committee's interpretation of the ESG.

In the interest of efficient use of resources and avoiding duplication for agencies, EQAR has adopted a system that allows agencies to use one single external review process and report to support their registration on EQAR as well as for other purposes, such as membership in ENQA, fulfilling national requirements or demonstrating adherence to other standards.

Since these reviews are not organised by EQAR itself, EQAR established a set of formal requirements for external reviews and published the present policy on the Use and Interpretation of the ESG. In order to ensure that external reviews of quality assurance agencies are a sufficient and robust basis for the Register Committee's decisions it is vital that coordinators are aware of this document and ensure that the panels undertaking a review take it into account.

While key parts of the introduction to the ESG as well as the standards of Parts 2 and 3 are quoted in this document, it should always be read in conjunction with the [full text of the ESG](#).

Use and Interpretation of the ESG is a document published by the EQAR Register Committee in June 2015 following adoption of ESG 2015 by Ministers in Yerevan in May 2015

Application for listing on EQAR

- The Register Committee convenes twice a year (spring and autumn). Before each meeting there is a deadline (15 March and 15 September) for which complete applications (review documents) must have reached the Secretariat in order to be considered at that meeting.
- In the case of initial applications, the review documents must be submitted before one of the two deadlines (**15 March / 15 September**)
- The EQAR Register Committee will then make a decision on admission of the agency to the Register (or renewal of its registration, respectively)

ENQA and EQAR

– do I have to do the examination twice?

- ENQA is an association of external quality assurance agencies. It represents agencies and organises projects, seminars, conferences and networking events.
- ENQA offers reviews against ESG 2015 as a service to agencies. The ENQA membership criteria is a successful review against ESG 2015.
- ENQA trains reviewers for and organises reviews against ESG 2015
- The ENQA Board takes membership decisions based on a review report

ENQA and EQAR

– do I have to do the examination twice?

- EQAR is a listing of agencies substantially complying with ESG 2015
- EQAR requires an applicant agency to commission a body to co-ordinate a review
- Based on the submission of the report arising from that review, the EQAR Register Committee makes a decision on listing of the applicant agency

ENQA and EQAR

– do I have to do the examination twice?

- If an agency wishes to apply to ENQA for members and also to apply to EQAR for listing, there is no duplication of effort on the agency's behalf other than Indicating to both organisations that they wish to apply for membership and listing
- In the case of an application to ENQA, ENQA organises the review and produces the report and the ENQA Board takes a decision on ENQA membership
- In the case of seeking an EQAR listing, the agency submits its review report and the EQAR Register Committee takes a decision on listing
- The examination is sat once but there are two 'examiners'. Like any good quality assurance system, if the process is consistent, the 'examiners' should (and usually do) come to the same conclusion

Thank you

