

RETHINKe PROJECT QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDELINES

November 2014

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INDEX

	Page
1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES	9
2. INTERNAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE ...	10
3. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE RETHINKe DOUBLE DEGREES	12

ANNEXES

ANNEX I. ENQA Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area	15
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ANNEX II. Model surveys to check the adequacy of the existing Quality Assurance Systems in the Partner Countries	57
---	-----------

FOREWORD	59
-----------------------	-----------

MODEL SURVEYS

Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 4	61
• Model Survey 1: Process to define quality policy and goals	
• Model Survey 2: Process to guarantee the quality of the programmes	
Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.3	63
• Model Survey 1: Process to define students' profiles and admission	
Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.4.....	65
• Model Survey 1: Process to manage the performance of the academic activities and the use of the evaluation methods	
• Model Survey 2: Process to manage students' internships	
• Model Survey 3: Process to manage students' mobility	

Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.5.....	69
• Model Survey 1: Student orientation and programme delivery process	
• Model Survey 2: Process to manage careers guidance	
Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.6	71
• Model Survey 1: Process for the recruitment and selection of academic staff	
• Model Survey 2: Process for academic staff training	
• Model Survey 3: Process for the evaluation, promotion and recognition of academic staff	
Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.7	75
• Model Survey 1: Process to define administrative staff policy	
• Model Survey 2: Process for the recruitment and selection of administrative staff	
• Model Survey 3: Process for administrative staff training	
• Model Survey 4: Process for the evaluation, promotion and recognition of administrative staff	
• Model Survey 5: Process to manage and improve equipment and materials	
• Model Survey 6: Process to manage services	
Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.8	81
• Model Survey 1: Process to manage incidents, complaints and suggestions	
• Model Survey 2: Process to analyze the outcomes	
Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.9	83
• Model Survey 1: Process to publicize information on degrees	
ANNEX III. Study Guide Template	85
FOREWORD	87
Study Guide	89
ANNEX IV. Quality Assessment Surveys	
FOREWORD	95
Students' satisfaction	97
• Model survey 1: Student's satisfaction on planning and development	
• Model survey 2: Student's satisfaction on support services to students	
• Model survey 3: Student's satisfaction on teaching support resources	
• Model survey 4: Student's satisfaction on academic staff teaching activities	
• Model survey 5: Graduated students' satisfaction model survey	

Academic staff satisfaction	103
• Model survey 1: Academic staff satisfaction on planning and development	
• Model survey 2: Academic staff satisfaction on support services to students	
• Model survey 3: Academic staff satisfaction on teaching support resources	
• Model survey 4: Academic staff satisfaction on students' group	
Administrative staff satisfaction.....	107
• Model survey 1: Academic staff satisfaction	
Stakeholders' satisfaction	109
• Model survey 1: Stakeholders' satisfaction	
ANNEX V. Template for a Double Degree Agreement under the RETHINKe project	111
ANNEX VI. Inter-institutional Erasmus + agreement between institutions from programme and partner countries	121

RETHINKe PROJECT QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDELINES

RETHINKe PROJECT QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDELINES

ARTICLE I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. These guidelines have been set up as specific developments and precisions on the ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*. Therefore, all the guidelines must be interpreted according to those broader standards and guidelines of the ENQA document (Annex I).

2. The RETHINKe partnership assumes, as its own, the declaration of basic principles on which quality assurance is based, as it is included in the aforementioned ENQA's *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*. These basic principles are:

1. Providers of higher education have the primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance.
2. The interests of society in the quality and standards of higher education need to be safeguarded.
3. The quality of academic programmes needs to be developed and improved for students and other beneficiaries of higher education.
4. There need to be efficient and effective organizational structures within which those academic programmes can be provided and supported.
5. Transparency and the use of external expertise in quality assurance processes are important.
6. There should be encouragement of a culture of quality within higher education institutions.
7. Processes should be developed through which higher education institutions can demonstrate their accountability, including accountability for the investment of public and private money.
8. Quality assurance for accountability purposes is fully compatible with quality assurance for enhancement purposes.
9. Institutions should be able to demonstrate their quality at home and internationally;
10. Processes used should not stifle diversity and innovation.

3. The guidelines included in this document are related to the internal side of QA. They are also intended to be used to ensure directly the quality of those double degree programmes that will be the main deliveries of the RETHINKe project. Nevertheless, some of these guidelines could require changes within the partner HEI's general regulations, and all of them are expected to have influence in spreading good practices in QA according to the EU and EHEA standards.

ANNEX TO ARTICLE 1

ANNEX I. ENQA Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

ARTICLE II. INTERNAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

4. All partner HEIs must show its commitment to QA by having an internal formal policy for the assurance of the quality of their programmes and awards. This policy must comprise at least the following specific assumptions:

1. The HEI aspires to check and enhance constantly the quality of its programmes and awards.
2. Quality can only be ensured by establishing specific internal procedures in order to assess periodically and objectively the HEI's programmes and awards.
3. There has to be specific staff and authorities at different levels (central, faculties and schools, departments) responsible for quality assessment within the HEI's organization. These staff and authorities must be in charge of the QA procedures implementation.
4. Students and external stakeholders (enterprises, professional organizations, public administration) must be involved in the QA procedures and have the opportunity to give their opinion about the HEI's programmes and awards quality.
5. QAS system is not complete unless there is an external quality assurance system for assessing the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance procedures.

5. QAS organization and associated procedures according to these guidelines and the ENQA standards must be completely established in all the HEI's involved in the RETHINKe project before the joint or double programmes begin

to be offered to students. This organization must be active and empowered at least regarding the RETHINKe project double programmes.

6. Should a QAS have already implemented in the participating HEI's, each one of the partners will have to make sure that it is consistent with the ENQA standards and guidelines. Particularly it must include proceedings to establish, publish, publicize, and critically review:

1. The degree's objectives in terms of learning outcomes, i.e. the competences, skills and knowledge that students are intended to acquire in each degree.
2. A study plan coherent with the objectives of the degree, including complete study guides for each course and academic activity with clear indications about evaluation methods.
3. An admission policy in accordance to the degree's objectives.
4. A system to assess the implementation of the study plan, checking the real performance of the academic activities and the use of the evaluation methods stated in the study guides.
5. Formal actions and measures to give orientation and advice to students: about first steps at the university, different curriculum development opportunities offered by each programme, international mobility, internships as well as career opportunities by the end of the degree.
6. Adequacy of the available academic staff to achieve the degree's objectives as well as formal actions and measures to promote continuous learning of academic staff.
7. Adequacy of the HEI's facilities, administrative services, technology, equipment and materials to achieve the degree's objectives.
8. Formal actions and measures to verify the level of achievement of the degree's objectives, by means of statistics, objective indicators and by checking the opinion of students and external stakeholders.
9. Formal actions and measures to disseminate information about the programmes and its goals and results among students, stakeholders and across society

ANNEXES TO ARTICLE 2

ANNEX II. Model surveys to check the adequacy of the existing Quality Assurance Guidelines in the Partner Countries

ANNEX III. Study Guide Template

ANNEX IV. Quality Assessment Surveys

ARTICLE III. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE RETHINKe DOUBLE DEGREES

7. Any double or joint degree set up under the RETHINKe project must be conceived and designed as a tool to achieve the project's objectives as they are defined in its founding documents.

8. Only official master's and Ph.D. degrees, accredited by the state's competent authorities, and relevant for the RETHINKe topics, can be used to form a double degree.

9. Should a joint master degree be set up under the RETHINKe project regarding a relevant project topic, the new degree has to be accredited by the competent authorities of all the states involved in it.

10. After one RETHINKe partner university have decided to start negotiations with other institutions in order to set up a double or joint degree, an internal committee will be appointed to impulse and manage the procedure to approve the project internally as well as to conduct negotiations with the other party/ies. This committee will make sure that:

1. The project has been approved and supported sufficiently by the HEI's bodies and organizations in charge of the academic topics involved in the project (School's or Faculties academic commissions, Dean, etc.).
2. Necessary changes within the internal administrative and academic procedures have been made in order to issue the official diplomas for the foreign students taking part in the double programme.
3. The provisions of the previous article about internal QAS are ready to be fully implemented regarding the HEI's official degree involved in the double programme.

11. Any double degree must be set up by means of an official international academic cooperation agreement (Annex V). This agreement must include binding terms, establishing clear and simple rules, regulating the following matters:

1. Degrees affected by the agreement
2. Definition of the study programme that students must follow to be awarded with both degrees. The study programme must include at least information about:
 - Structure of both degrees.
 - A list of the courses that students have to take at home and abroad.
 - Rules applicable to final thesis/dissertations.
 - All the academic requirements that students have to fulfill to get the award: internships, on-line additional courses, etc.

- Grading systems of both institutions and grading conversion system that will be applied to students participating in the double programme.
- 3. The partner universities' commitment to organize new editions of the double degree programme as long as the official degrees involved are part of the partner universities' academic offer.
- 4. The partner universities' commitment to fully and automatically recognize the credits and grades awarded at the other institutions.
- 5. Enrolment conditions and maximum/minimum number of students in each edition.
- 6. Rules governing the student's mandatory mobility within the double degree programme.
- 7. Organisation and functions of the Joint Commission that will manage and take care of the programme's quality.
- 8. A fair and equal procedure for dispute resolution.
- 12. A Joint Commission will be organized in accordance to the terms of the double degree agreement. This international administrative body will, at least:
 - 1. Ensure that the Agreement terms are fully performed in accordance to all the agreement's requirements and conditions.
 - 2. Monitor and control the fulfillment of the specific RETHINKe project's objectives pursued by the double degree agreement.
 - 3. Interpret the agreement in order to resolve disputes and controversies regarding the agreement or the double programme implementation.
 - 4. Supervise that the QAS designed in the previous article is being fully applied to the official degrees involved in the double programme.

ANNEXES TO ARTICLE 3

ANNEX V: Template for a Double Degree Agreement under the RETHINKe project

ANNEX VI: Inter-institutional Erasmus + agreement between institutions from programme and partner countries

ANNEX I
ENQA STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

ANNEX I: ENQA STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

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Table of contents

Foreword

Executive summary

1. Context, aims and principles

2. European standards and guidelines

Background of the standards and guidelines

Introduction to Parts 1 and 2: European standards and guidelines for internal and external quality assurance of higher education

Part 1: European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions

1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance

1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards

1.3 Assessment of students

1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff

1.5 Learning resources and student support

1.6 Information systems

1.7 Public information

Part 2: European standards and guidelines for the external quality assurance of higher education

2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures

2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes

2.3 Criteria for decisions

2.4 Processes fit for purpose

2.5 Reporting

2.6 Follow-up procedures

2.7 Periodic reviews

2.8 System-wide analyses

Introduction to Part 3: European standards and guidelines for external quality assurance agencies

Part 3: European standards and guidelines for external quality assurance agencies

3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education

3.2 Official status

3.3 Activities

3.4 Resources

3.5 Mission statement

3.6 Independence

3.7 External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies

3.8 Accountability procedures

3. Peer review system for quality assurance agencies

International context

Cyclical reviews of agencies

Register of external quality assurance agencies operating in Europe European Consultative Forum for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

4. Future perspectives and challenges

Annex: Cyclical review of quality assurance agencies – a theoretical model

Foreword

In the Berlin communiqué of 19 September 2003 the Ministers of the Bologna Process signatory states invited the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) 'through its members, in cooperation with the EUA, EURASHE, and ESIB', to develop 'an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance' and to 'explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies, and to report back through the Bologna Follow-Up Group to Ministers in 2005'. The Ministers also asked ENQA to take due account 'of the expertise of other quality assurance associations and networks'.

This report forms the response to this mandate and comes with the endorsement of all the organisations named in that section of the communiqué. The achievement of such a joint understanding is a tribute to the spirit of co-operation and mutual respect that has characterised the discussions between all the players involved. I would therefore like to extend my thanks to the EUA, EURASHE and ESIB together with the ENQA member agencies for their constructive and most valuable input to the process.

This report is directed at the European Ministers of Education. However, we expect the report to achieve a wider circulation among those with an interest in quality assurance in higher education. These readers will hopefully find the report useful and inspirational.

It must be emphasised that the report is no more than a first step in what is likely to be a long and possibly arduous route to the establishment of a widely shared set of underpinning values, expectations and good practice in relation to quality and its assurance, by institutions and agencies across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). What has been set in motion by the Berlin mandate will need to be developed further if it is to provide the fully functioning European dimension of quality assurance for the EHEA. If this can be accomplished, then many of the ambitions of the Bologna Process will also be achieved. All the participants in the work to date look forward to contributing to the success of that endeavour.

Christian Thune
President of ENQA
February 2005

Executive summary

This report has been drafted by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)¹, through its members, in consultation and co-operation with the EUA, ESIB and EURASHE and in discussion with various relevant networks.

It forms the response to the twin mandates given to ENQA in the Berlin communiqué of September 2003 to develop 'an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance' and 'to explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies'.

The report consists of four chapters. After the introductory chapter on context, aims and principles, there follow chapters on standards and guidelines for quality assurance²; a peer review system for quality assurance agencies; and future perspectives and challenges.

The main results and recommendations of the report are:

- There will be European standards for internal and external quality assurance, and for external quality assurance agencies.
- European quality assurance agencies will be expected to submit themselves to a cyclical review within five years.
- There will be an emphasis on subsidiarity, with reviews being undertaken nationally where possible.
- A European register of quality assurance agencies will be produced.
- A European Register Committee will act as a gatekeeper for the inclusion of agencies in the register.
- A European Consultative Forum for Quality Assurance in Higher Education will be established.
- When the recommendations are implemented:
- The consistency of quality assurance across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) will be improved by the use of agreed standards and guidelines.
- Higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies across the EHEA will be able to use common reference points for quality assurance.
- The register will make it easier to identify professional and credible agencies.
- Procedures for the recognition of qualifications will be strengthened.
- The credibility of the work of quality assurance agencies will be enhanced.
- The exchange of viewpoints and experiences amongst agencies and other key stakeholders (including higher education institutions, students and labour

¹ ENQA's General Assembly confirmed on 4 November 2004 the change of the former European Network into the European Association

² The term "quality assurance" in this report includes processes such as evaluation, accreditation and audit.

market representatives) will be enhanced through the work of the European Consultative

- Forum for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.
- The mutual trust among institutions and agencies will grow.
- The move toward mutual recognition will be assisted.

Summary list of European standards for quality assurance

This summary list of European standards for quality assurance in higher education is drawn from Chapter 2 of the report and is placed here for ease of reference. It omits the accompanying guidelines. The standards are in three parts covering internal quality assurance of higher education institutions, external quality assurance of higher education, and quality assurance of external quality assurance agencies.

Part 1: European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions

1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance:

Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programmes and awards. They should also commit themselves explicitly to the development of a culture which recognizes the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in their work. To achieve this, institutions should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available.

They should also include a role for students and other stakeholders.

1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards:

Institutions should have formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes and awards.

1.3 Assessment of students:

Students should be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently.

1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff:

Institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students are qualified and competent to do so. They should be available to those undertaking external reviews, and commented upon in reports.

1.5 Learning resources and student support:

Institutions should ensure that the resources available for the support of student learning are adequate and appropriate for each programme offered.

1.6 Information systems:

Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes of study and other activities.

1.7 Public information:

Institutions should regularly publish up to date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programmes and awards they are offering.

Part 2: European standards for the external quality assurance of higher education

2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures:

External quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes:

The aims and objectives of quality assurance processes should be determined before the processes themselves are developed, by all those responsible (including higher education institutions) and should be published with a description of the procedures to be used.

2.3 Criteria for decisions:

Any formal decisions made as a result of an external quality assurance activity should be based on explicit published criteria that are applied consistently.

2.4 Processes fit for purpose:

All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

2.5 Reporting:

Reports should be published and should be written in a style, which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

2.6 Follow-up procedures:

Quality assurance processes which contain recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, should have a predetermined follow-up procedure which is implemented consistently.

2.7 Periodic reviews:

External quality assurance of institutions and/or programmes should be undertaken on a cyclical basis. The length of the cycle and the review procedures to be used should be clearly defined and published in advance.

2.8 System-wide analyses:

Quality assurance agencies should produce from time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of their reviews, evaluations, assessments etc.

Part 3: European standards for external quality assurance agencies

3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education:

The external quality assurance of agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance processes described in Part 2 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

3.2 Official status:

Agencies should be formally recognised by competent public authorities in the European Higher Education Area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdictions within which they operate.

3.3 Activities:

Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institutional or programme level) on a regular basis.

3.4 Resources:

Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources, both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective and efficient manner, with appropriate provision for the development of their processes and procedures.

3.5 Mission statement:

Agencies should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, contained in a publicly available statement.

3.6 Independence:

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.

3.7 External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies:

The processes, criteria and procedures used by agencies should be pre-defined and publicly available. These processes will normally be expected to include:

- a self-assessment or equivalent procedure by the subject of the quality assurance process;
- an external assessment by a group of experts, including, as appropriate, (a) student member(s), and site visits as decided by the agency;
- publication of a report, including any decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes;
- a follow-up procedure to review actions taken by the subject of the quality assurance process in the light of any recommendations contained in the report.

3.8 Accountability procedures:

Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.

1. Context, aims and principles

In the Berlin communiqué of 19 September 2003 the Ministers of the Bologna Process signatory states invited ENQA 'through its members, in cooperation with the EUA, EURASHE, and ESIB', to develop 'an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance' and to 'explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies, and to report back through the Bologna Follow-Up Group to Ministers in 2005'. The Ministers also asked ENQA to take due account 'of the expertise of other quality assurance associations and networks'.

ENQA welcomed this opportunity to make a major contribution to the development of the European dimension in quality assurance and, thereby, to further the aims of the Bologna Process.

The work has involved many different organisations and interest groups. First, ENQA members have been extensively involved in the process. Members have participated in working groups, and draft reports have been important elements in the agenda of the ENQA General Assemblies in June and November 2004. Secondly, the European University Association (EUA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), the National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB) and the European Commission have participated through regular meetings in the 'E4 Group'. Thirdly, the contacts with and contributions from other networks, such as the European

Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) and the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (CEE Network), have been particularly valuable in the drafting process. Finally, ENQA and its partners have made good use of their individual international contacts and experiences and in this way ensured that relevant international perspectives were brought into the process.

Quality assurance in higher education is by no means only a European concern. All over the world there is an increasing interest in quality and standards, reflecting both the rapid growth of higher education and its cost to the public and the private purse. Accordingly, if Europe is to achieve its aspiration to be the most dynamic and knowledge-based economy in the world (Lisbon Strategy), then European higher education will need to demonstrate that it takes the quality of its programmes and awards seriously and is willing to put into place the means of assuring and demonstrating that quality. The initiatives and demands, which are springing up both inside and outside Europe in the face of this internationalisation of higher education, demand a response. The commitment of all those involved in the production of these proposals augurs well for the fulfilment of a truly European dimension to quality assurance with which to reinforce the attractiveness of the EHEA's higher education offering.

The proposals contained in this report are underpinned by a number of principles which are described in more detail in the two chapters which cover the two parts of the Berlin mandate. However, some fundamental principles should permeate the whole work:

- the interests of students as well as employers and the society more generally in good quality higher education;
- the central importance of institutional autonomy, tempered by a recognition that this brings with it heavy responsibilities;
- the need for external quality assurance to be fit for its purpose and to place only an appropriate and necessary burden on institutions for the achievement of its objectives.

The EHEA with its 40 states is characterised by its diversity of political systems, higher education systems, socio-cultural and educational traditions, languages, aspirations and expectations. This makes a single monolithic approach to quality, standards and quality assurance in higher education inappropriate. In the light of this diversity and variety, generally acknowledged as being one of the glories of Europe, the report sets its face against a narrow, prescriptive and highly formulated approach to standards. In both the standards and the guidelines, the report prefers the generic principle to the specific requirement. It does this because it believes that this approach is more likely to lead to broad acceptance in the first instance and because it will provide a more robust basis for the coming together of the different higher education communities across the EHEA. The generic standards ought to find a general resonance at the national³ level of most signatory states. However, one consequence of the generic principle is that the standards and guidelines focus more on what should be done than how they should be

³ Throughout the report, the term "national" also includes the regional context with regard to quality assurance agencies, national contexts and authorities etc.

achieved. Thus, the report does include procedural matters, but it has given a priority to standards and guidelines, especially in Chapter 2.

Finally, it must be emphasised that reaching agreement for this report is not the same thing as fulfilling the Bologna goal of a quality assurance dimension for the EHEA. Ahead lies more work to implement the recommendations of the report and secure the implied quality culture among both the higher education institutions and the external quality assurance agencies.

2. European standards and guidelines

The Ministers' mandate to develop 'an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance' raised a number of important questions. 'Quality assurance' is a generic term in higher education which lends itself to many interpretations: It is not possible to use one definition to cover all circumstances.

Similarly, the word 'standards' is employed in a variety of ways across Europe, ranging from statements of narrowly defined regulatory requirements to more generalized descriptions of good practice. The words also have very different meanings in the local contexts of national higher education systems.

Moreover, the drafting process itself has made evident that, within the quality assurance community itself, there are some quite fundamental differences of view of the appropriate relationship that should be established between higher education institutions and their external evaluators. Some, mainly from agencies which accredit programmes or institutions, take the view that external quality assurance is essentially a matter of 'consumer protection', requiring a clear distance to be established between the quality assurance agency and the higher education institutions whose work they assess, while other agencies see the principal purpose of external quality assurance to be the provision of advice and guidance in pursuit of improvements in the standards and quality of programmes of study and associated qualifications. In the latter case a close relationship between the evaluators and the evaluated is a requirement. Yet others wish to adopt a position somewhere between the two, seeking to balance accountability and improvement.

Nor is it just the quality assurance agencies that have different views on these matters. The interests of the higher education institutions and student representative bodies are not always the same, the former seeking a high level of autonomy with a minimum of external regulation or evaluation (and that at the level of the whole institution), the latter wanting institutions to be publicly accountable through frequent inspection at the level of the programme or qualification.

Finally, the standards and guidelines relate only to the three cycles of higher education described in the Bologna Declaration and are not intended to cover the area of research or general institutional management.

Background of the standards and guidelines

This section of the report contains a set of proposed standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the EHEA. 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. As mentioned earlier, it has not been considered appropriate to include detailed 'procedures' in the recommendations of this chapter of the report, since institutional and agency procedures are an important part of their autonomy. It will be for the institutions and agencies themselves, co-operating within their individual contexts, to decide the procedural consequences of adopting the standards contained in this report.

As their starting point, the standards and guidelines endorse the spirit of the 'July 2003 Graz Declaration' of the European University Association (EUA) which states that 'the purpose of a European dimension to quality assurance is to promote mutual trust and improve transparency while respecting the diversity of national contexts and subject areas'. Consonant with the Graz declaration, the standards and guidelines contained in this report recognise the primacy of national systems of higher education, the importance of institutional and agency autonomy within those national systems, and the particular requirements of different academic subjects. In addition, the standards and guidelines owe much to the experience gained during the ENQA-coordinated pilot project 'Transnational European Evaluation Project' (TEEP), which investigated, in three disciplines, the operational implications of a European transnational quality evaluation process.

The standards and guidelines also take into account the quality convergence study published by ENQA in March 2005, which examined the reasons for differences between different national approaches to external quality assurance and constraints on their convergence. Further, they reflect the statement of Ministers in the Berlin communiqué that 'consistent with the principle of institutional autonomy, the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself and this provides the basis for real accountability of the academic system within the national quality framework'. In these standards and guidelines, therefore, an appropriate balance has been sought between the creation and development of internal quality cultures, and the role which external quality assurance procedures may play.

In addition, the standards and guidelines have also benefited particularly from the 'Code of Good Practice' published in December 2004 by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) and other perspectives included in ESIB's 'Statement on agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines at a European level' (April 2004) and 'Statement on peer review of quality assurance and accreditation agencies' (April 2004), EUA's 'QA policy position in the context of the Berlin Communiqué' (April 2004) and the EURASHE 'Policy Statement on the Bologna Process' (June 2004). Finally, an international perspective has been included by comparing the standards on external quality assurance with the "Guidelines for good practice" being implemented by the international network INQAAHE.

Introduction to Parts 1 and 2: European standards and guidelines for internal and external quality assurance of higher education

The standards and guidelines for internal and external quality assurance, which follow, have been developed for the use of higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies working in the EHEA, covering key areas relating to quality and standards.

The purpose of these standards and guidelines is to provide a source of assistance and guidance to both higher education institutions in developing their own quality assurance systems and agencies undertaking external quality assurance, as well as to contribute to a common frame of reference, which can be used by institutions and agencies alike. It is not the intention that these standards and guidelines should dictate practice or be interpreted as prescriptive or unchangeable.

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.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

The standards and guidelines are based on a number of basic principles about quality assurance, both internal in and external to higher education in the EHEA. These include:

- providers of higher education have the primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance;
- the interests of society in the quality and standards of higher education need to be safeguarded;
- the quality of academic programmes need to be developed and improved for students and other beneficiaries of higher education across the EHEA;
- there need to be efficient and effective organisational structures within which those academic programmes can be provided and supported;
- transparency and the use of external expertise in quality assurance processes are important;
- there should be encouragement of a culture of quality within higher education institutions;
- processes should be developed through which higher education institutions can demonstrate their accountability, including accountability for the investment of public and private money;
- quality assurance for accountability purposes is fully compatible with quality assurance for enhancement purposes;
- institutions should be able to demonstrate their quality at home and internationally;
- processes used should not stifle diversity and innovation.

PURPOSES OF THE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The purposes of the standards and guidelines are:

- to improve the education available to students in higher education institutions in the EHEA;
- to assist higher education institutions in managing and enhancing their quality and, thereby, to help to justify their institutional autonomy;
- to form a background for quality assurance agencies in their work;
- to make external quality assurance more transparent and simpler to understand for everybody involved.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The objectives of the standards and guidelines are:

- to encourage the development of higher education institutions which foster vibrant intellectual and educational achievement;
- to provide a source of assistance and guidance to higher education institutions and other relevant agencies in developing their own culture of quality assurance;
- to inform and raise the expectations of higher education institutions, students, employers and other stakeholders about the processes and outcomes of higher education;
- to contribute to a common frame of reference for the provision of higher education and the assurance of quality within the EHEA.

EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

The standards and guidelines proposed in this report envisage an important role for external quality assurance. The form of this varies from system to system and can include institutional evaluations of different types; subject or programme evaluations; accreditation at subject, programme and institutional levels; and combinations of these.

Such external evaluations largely depend for their full effectiveness on there being an explicit internal quality assurance strategy, with specific objectives, and on the use, within institutions, of mechanisms and methods aimed at achieving those objectives.

Quality assurance can be undertaken by external agencies for a number of purposes, including:

- safeguarding of national academic standards for higher education;
- accreditation of programmes and/or institutions;
- user protection;
- public provision of independently-verified information (quantitative and qualitative) about programmes or institutions;
- improvement and enhancement of quality.

The activities of European quality assurance agencies will reflect the legal, social and cultural requirements of the jurisdictions and environments in which they operate.

European standards relating to the quality assurance of quality assurance agencies themselves are contained in Part 3 of this chapter.

The processes carried out by quality assurance agencies will properly depend upon their purposes and the outcomes they are intended to achieve. The procedures adopted by those agencies that are concerned to emphasise principally the enhancement of quality may be quite different from those whose function is first to provide strong 'consumer protection'. The standards that follow reflect basic good practice across Europe in external quality assurance, but do not attempt to provide detailed guidance about what should be examined or how quality assurance activities should be conducted. Those are matters of national autonomy, although the exchange of information amongst agencies and authorities is already leading to the emergence of convergent elements.

There are, however, already some general principles of good practice in external quality assurance processes:

- institutional autonomy should be respected;
- the interests of students and other stakeholders such as labour market representatives should be at the forefront of external quality assurance processes;
- use should be made, wherever possible, of the results of institutions' own internal quality assurance activities.

The 'guidelines' provide additional information about good practice and in some cases explain in more detail the meaning and importance of the standards. Although the guidelines are not part of the standards themselves, the standards should be considered in conjunction with them.

Part 1: European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions

1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance

STANDARD:

Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programmes and awards. They should also commit themselves explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in their work. To achieve this, institutions should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality.

The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available. They should also include a role for students and other stakeholders.

GUIDELINES:

Formal policies and procedures provide a framework within which higher education institutions can develop and monitor the effectiveness of their quality assurance systems. They also help to provide public confidence in institutional autonomy.

Policies contain the statements of intentions and the principal means by which these will be achieved. Procedural guidance can give more detailed information about the ways in which the policy is implemented and provides a useful reference point for those who need to know about the practical aspects of carrying out the procedures.

The policy statement is expected to include:

- the relationship between teaching and research in the institution;
- the institution's strategy for quality and standards;
- the organisation of the quality assurance system;
- the responsibilities of departments, schools, faculties and other organizational units and individuals for the assurance of quality;
- the involvement of students in quality assurance;
- the ways in which the policy is implemented, monitored and revised.

The realisation of the EHEA depends crucially on a commitment at all levels of an institution to ensuring that its programmes have clear and explicit intended outcomes; that its staff are ready, willing and able to provide teaching and learner support that will help its students achieve those outcomes; and that there is full, timely and tangible recognition of the contribution to its work by those of its staff who demonstrate particular excellence, expertise and dedication. All higher education institutions should aspire to improve and enhance the education they offer their students.

1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards

STANDARD:

Institutions should have formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes and awards.

GUIDELINES:

The confidence of students and other stakeholders in higher education is more likely to be established and maintained through effective quality assurance activities which ensure that programmes are well-designed, regularly monitored and periodically reviewed, thereby securing their continuing relevance and currency.

The quality assurance of programmes and awards are expected to include:

- development and publication of explicit intended learning outcomes;
- careful attention to curriculum and programme design and content;
- specific needs of different modes of delivery (e.g. full time, part-time, distance-learning, e-learning) and types of higher education (e.g. academic, vocational, professional);
- availability of appropriate learning resources;
- formal programme approval procedures by a body other than that teaching the programme;
- monitoring of the progress and achievements of students;
- regular periodic reviews of programmes (including external panel members);
- regular feedback from employers, labour market representatives and other relevant organisations;
- participation of students in quality assurance activities.

1.3 Assessment of students

STANDARD:

Students should be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently.

GUIDELINES:

The assessment of students is one of the most important elements of higher education.

The outcomes of assessment have a profound effect on students' future careers. It is therefore important that assessment is carried out professionally at all times and that it takes into account the extensive knowledge which exists about testing and examination processes. Assessment also provides valuable information for institutions about the effectiveness of teaching and learners' support.

Student assessment procedures are expected to:

- be designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and other programme objectives;
- be appropriate for their purpose, whether diagnostic, formative or summative;
- have clear and published criteria for marking;
- be undertaken by people who understand the role of assessment in the progression of students towards the achievement of the knowledge and skills associated with their intended qualification;
- where possible, not rely on the judgements of single examiners;
- take account of all the possible consequences of examination regulations;
- have clear regulations covering student absence, illness and other mitigating circumstances;
- ensure that assessments are conducted securely in accordance with the institution's stated procedures;
- be subject to administrative verification checks to ensure the accuracy of the procedures.

In addition, students should be clearly informed about the assessment strategy being used for their programme, what examinations or other assessment methods they will be subject to, what will be expected of them, and the criteria that will be applied to the assessment of their performance.

1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff

STANDARD:

Institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students are qualified and competent to do so. They should be available to those undertaking external reviews, and commented upon in reports.

GUIDELINES:

Teachers are the single most important learning resource available to most students. It is important that those who teach have a full knowledge and understanding of the subject they are teaching, have the necessary skills and experience to transmit their knowledge and understanding effectively to students in a range of teaching contexts, and can access feedback on their own performance. Institutions should ensure that their staff recruitment and appointment procedures include a means of making certain that all new staff have at least the minimum necessary level of competence. Teaching staff should be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching capacity and should be encouraged to value their skills. Institutions should provide poor teachers with opportunities to improve their skills to an acceptable level and should have the means to remove them from their teaching duties if they continue to be demonstrably ineffective.

1.5 Learning resources and student support

STANDARD:

Institutions should ensure that the resources available for the support of student learning are adequate and appropriate for each programme offered.

GUIDELINES:

In addition to their teachers, students rely on a range of resources to assist their learning. These vary from physical resources such as libraries or computing facilities to human support in the form of tutors, counsellors, and other advisers. Learning resources and other support mechanisms should be readily accessible to students, designed with their needs in mind and responsive to feedback from those who use the services provided. Institutions should routinely monitor, review and improve the effectiveness of the support services available to their students.

1.6 Information systems

STANDARD:

Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes of study and other activities.

GUIDELINES:

Institutional self-knowledge is the starting point for effective quality assurance. It is important that institutions have the means of collecting and analysing information about their own activities. Without this they will not know what is working well and what needs attention, or the results of innovative practices.

The quality-related information systems required by individual institutions will depend to some extent on local circumstances, but it is at least expected to cover:

- student progression and success rates;
- employability of graduates;
- students' satisfaction with their programmes;
- effectiveness of teachers;
- profile of the student population;
- learning resources available and their costs;
- the institution's own key performance indicators.

There is also value in institutions comparing themselves with other similar organisations within the EHEA and beyond. This allows them to extend the range of their self-knowledge and to access possible ways of improving their own performance.

1.7 Public information

STANDARD:

Institutions should regularly publish up to date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programmes and awards they are offering.

GUIDELINES:

In fulfilment of their public role, higher education institutions have a responsibility to provide information about the programmes they are offering, the intended learning outcomes of these, the qualifications they award, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Published information might also include the views and employment destinations of past students and the profile of the current student population. This information should be accurate, impartial, objective and readily accessible and should not be used simply as a marketing opportunity. The institution should verify that it meets its own expectations in respect of impartiality and objectivity.

Part 2: European standards and guidelines for the external quality assurance of higher education

2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures

STANDARD:

External quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

GUIDELINES:

The standards for internal quality assurance contained in Part 1 provide a valuable basis for the external quality assessment process. It is important that the institutions' own internal policies and procedures are carefully evaluated in the course of external procedures, to determine the extent to which the standards are being met.

If higher education institutions are to be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their own internal quality assurance processes, and if those processes properly assure quality and standards, then external processes might be less intensive than otherwise.

2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes

STANDARD:

The aims and objectives of quality assurance processes should be determined before the processes themselves are developed, by all those responsible (including higher education institutions) and should be published with a description of the procedures to be used.

GUIDELINES:

In order to ensure clarity of purpose and transparency of procedures, external quality assurance methods should be designed and developed through a process involving key stakeholders, including higher education institutions. The procedures that are finally agreed should be published and should contain explicit statements of the aims and objectives of the processes as well as a description of the procedures to be used.

As external quality assurance makes demands on the institutions involved, a preliminary impact assessment should be undertaken to ensure that the procedures to be adopted are appropriate and do not interfere more than necessary with the normal work of higher education institutions.

2.3 Criteria for decisions

STANDARD:

Any formal decisions made as a result of an external quality assurance activity should be based on explicit published criteria that are applied consistently.

GUIDELINES:

Formal decisions made by quality assurance agencies have a significant impact on the institutions and programmes that are judged. In the interests of equity and reliability, decisions should be based on published criteria and interpreted in a consistent manner. Conclusions should be based on recorded evidence and agencies should have in place ways of moderating conclusions, if necessary.

2.4 Processes fit for purpose

STANDARD:

All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

GUIDELINES:

Quality assurance agencies within the EHEA undertake different external processes for different purposes and in different ways. It is of the first importance that agencies should operate procedures which are fit for their own defined and published purposes. Experience has shown, however, that there are some widely-used elements of external review processes which not only help to ensure their validity, reliability and usefulness, but also provide a basis for the European dimension to quality assurance.

Amongst these elements the following are particularly noteworthy:

- insistence that the experts undertaking the external quality assurance activity have appropriate skills and are competent to perform their task;
- the exercise of care in the selection of experts;
- the provision of appropriate briefing or training for experts;
- the use of international experts;
- participation of students;
- ensuring that the review procedures used are sufficient to provide adequate evidence to support the findings and conclusions reached;
- the use of the self-evaluation/site visit/draft report/published report/follow-up model of review;
- recognition of the importance of institutional improvement and enhancement policies as a fundamental element in the assurance of quality.

2.5 Reporting

STANDARD:

Reports should be published and should be written in a style which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

GUIDELINES:

In order to ensure maximum benefit from external quality assurance processes, it is important that reports should meet the identified needs of the intended readership.

Reports are sometimes intended for different readership groups and this will require careful attention to structure, content, style and tone.

In general, reports should be structured to cover description, analysis (including relevant evidence), conclusions, commendations, and recommendations. There should be sufficient preliminary explanation to enable a lay reader to understand the purposes of the review, its form, and the criteria used in making decisions. Key findings, conclusions and recommendations should be easily locatable by readers.

Reports should be published in a readily accessible form and there should be opportunities for readers and users of the reports (both within the relevant institution and outside it) to comment on their usefulness.

2.6 Follow-up procedures

STANDARD:

Quality assurance processes which contain recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, should have a predetermined follow-up procedure which is implemented consistently.

GUIDELINES:

Quality assurance is not principally about individual external scrutiny events: It should be about continuously trying to do a better job. External quality assurance does not end with the publication of the report and should include a structured follow-up procedure to ensure that recommendations are dealt with appropriately and any required action plans drawn up and implemented. This may involve further meetings with institutional or programme representatives. The objective is to ensure that areas identified for improvement are dealt with speedily and that further enhancement is encouraged.

2.7 Periodic reviews

STANDARD:

External quality assurance of institutions and/or programmes should be undertaken on a cyclical basis. The length of the cycle and the review procedures to be used should be clearly defined and published in advance.

GUIDELINES:

Quality assurance is not a static but a dynamic process. It should be continuous and not “once in a lifetime”. It does not end with the first review or with the completion of the formal follow-up procedure. It has to be periodically renewed. Subsequent external reviews should take into account progress that has been made since the previous event.

The process to be used in all external reviews should be clearly defined by the external quality assurance agency and its demands on institutions should not be greater than are necessary for the achievement of its objectives.

2.8 System-wide analyses

STANDARD:

Quality assurance agencies should produce from time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of their reviews, evaluations, assessments etc.

GUIDELINES:

All external quality assurance agencies collect a wealth of information about individual programmes and/or institutions and this provides material for structured analyses across whole higher education systems. Such analyses can provide very useful information about developments, trends, emerging good practice and areas of persistent difficulty or weakness and can become useful tools for policy development and quality enhancement. Agencies should consider including a research and development function within their activities, to help them extract maximum benefit from their work.

Introduction to Part 3: European standards and guidelines for external quality assurance agencies

The growth of European external quality assurance agencies has been expansive since the early 1990s. At the same time cooperation and sharing of best practices among agencies have been an integrated element in this development. Already in 1994/95 the so-called European Pilot Projects initiated by the European Commission resulted in the mutual recognition by agencies of the basic methodology of quality

assurance: independent agencies, self-evaluations, external site visits and public reporting, laid down in the 1998 EU Council Recommendation on quality assurance in higher education. The creation of ENQA in 2000 was therefore a natural formalisation of this development in cooperation, and ENQA has been able to build on the state-of-the-art consensus arrived at during the 1990s.

The European standards for external quality assurance agencies, which follow, have been developed on the premises of this development in the young history of European external quality assurance. Moreover it is the conscious ambition that 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.

It should be added that in this way the standards do also contribute naturally to the work being done towards mutual recognition of agencies and the results of agency evaluations or accreditations. This work has been explored in the Nordic Quality Assurance Network in Higher Education (NOQA) and is part of the 'Code of Good Practise' by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

Several 'guidelines' have been added to provide additional information about good practice and in some cases explain in more detail the meaning and importance of the standards. Although the guidelines are not part of the standards themselves, the standards should be considered in conjunction with them.

Part 3: European standards and guidelines for external quality assurance agencies

3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education

STANDARD:

The external quality assurance of agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance processes described in Part 2 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

GUIDELINES:

The standards for external quality assurance contained in Part 2 provide a valuable basis for the external quality assessment process. The standards reflect best practices and experiences gained through the development of external quality assurance in Europe since the early 1990s. It is therefore important that these standards are integrated into the processes applied by external quality assurance agencies towards the higher education institutions.

The standards for external quality assurance should together with the standards for external quality assurance agencies constitute the basis for professional and credible external quality assurance of higher education institutions.

3.2 Official status

STANDARD:

Agencies should be formally recognised by competent public authorities in the European Higher Education Area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdictions within which they operate.

3.3 Activities

STANDARD:

Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institutional or programme level) on a regular basis.

GUIDELINES:

These may involve evaluation, review, audit, assessment, accreditation or other similar activities and should be part of the core functions of the agency.

3.4 Resources

STANDARD:

Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources, both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective and efficient manner, with appropriate provision for the development of their processes and procedures.

3.5 Mission statement

STANDARD:

Agencies should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, contained in a publicly available statement.

GUIDELINES:

These statements should describe the goals and objectives of agencies' quality assurance processes, the division of labour with relevant stakeholders in higher education, especially the higher education institutions, and the cultural and historical context of their work. The statements should make clear that the external quality assurance process is a major activity of the agency and that there exists a systematic

approach to achieving its goals and objectives. There should also be documentation to demonstrate how the statements are translated into a clear policy and management plan.

3.6 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.

GUIDELINES:

An agency will need to demonstrate its independence through 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.

3.7 External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies

STANDARD:

The processes, criteria and procedures used by agencies should be pre-defined and publicly available. These processes will normally be expected to include:

- a self-assessment or equivalent procedure by the subject of the quality assurance process;
- an external assessment by a group of experts, including, as appropriate, (a) student member(s), and site visits as decided by the agency;
- publication of a report, including any decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes;
- a follow-up procedure to review actions taken by the subject of the quality assurance process in the light of any recommendations contained in the report.

GUIDELINES:

Agencies may develop and use other processes and procedures for particular purposes.

Agencies should pay careful attention to their declared principles at all times, and ensure both that their requirements and processes are managed professionally and that their conclusions and decisions are reached in a consistent manner, even though the decisions are formed by groups of different people.

Agencies that make formal quality assurance decisions, or conclusions which have formal consequences should have an appeals procedure. The nature and form of the appeals procedure should be determined in the light of the constitution of each agency.

3.8 Accountability procedures

STANDARD:

Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.

GUIDELINES:

These procedures are expected to include the following:

1. A published policy for the assurance of the quality of the agency itself, made available on its website;
2. Documentation which demonstrates that:
 - the agency's processes and results reflect its mission and goals of quality assurance;
 - the agency has in place, and enforces, a no-conflict-of-interest mechanism in the work of its external experts;
 - the agency has reliable mechanisms that ensure the quality of any activities and material produced by subcontractors, if some or all of the elements in its quality assurance procedure are subcontracted to other parties;
 - the agency has in place internal quality assurance procedures which include an internal feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from its own staff and council/board); an internal reflection mechanism (i.e. means to react to internal and external recommendations for improvement); and an external feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from experts and reviewed institutions for future development) in order to inform and underpin its own development and improvement.
3. A mandatory cyclical external review of the agency's activities at least once every five years.

3. Peer Review system for quality assurance agencies

In Berlin the Ministers called 'upon ENQA, through its members, in cooperation with the EUA, EURASHE, and ESIB, to [...] explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies'.

ENQA and its partners have met this call by building on the interpretation of the mandate that a system of peer review of agencies must include not only the peer review process itself, but also a careful consideration of the quality standards on which a review could be build. Further, there has been agreement in the process that peer review of agencies should be interpreted as basically the means to achieve the goal of transparency, visibility and comparability of quality of agencies.

Therefore, this report has as a major proposal the creation of a register of recognized external quality assurance agencies operating in higher education within Europe.

This proposal is in essence a response to expectations that there is likely soon to be an increase of quality assurance bodies keen to make a profit from the value of a recognition or accreditation label. Experience elsewhere has shown that it is difficult to control such enterprises, but Europe has a possibly unique opportunity to exercise practical management of this new market, not in order to protect the interests of already established agencies, but to make sure that the benefits of quality assurance are not diminished by the activities of disreputable practitioners.

The work on these proposals has principally taken into consideration the European context and demands. At the same time there has been awareness in the process that similar experiences and processes are developing internationally. This chapter therefore opens with a brief analysis of the international experiences and initiatives relevant for the drafting of this part of the report. It then outlines the proposed peer review system based on the subsidiarity principle and the European standards for external quality assurance agencies. This outline leads to a presentation of the recommended register of external quality assurance agencies operating in Europe. The peer reviews and the agencies' compliance with the European standards play a crucial role in the composition of the register. Finally, a European Consultative Forum for Quality Assurance in Higher Education is proposed.

International context

Europe is not the only area where dynamic developments in the field of higher education quality assurance are currently taking place. This section describes some of the experiences and initiatives of organisations such as the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), the International Association of University Presidents (IAUP), the Council for Higher Education Accreditation in the United States (CHEA), OECD and UNESCO. The work of these organisations in relation to quality assurance have been found useful during the drafting of this report. Even though these international experiences have not been directly included in the specific recommendations, some key international elements are presented below in a manner that relates to the recommendations in this chapter.

The identification of good quality and good practices of external quality assurance agencies has also been on the international agenda for several years. INQAAHE discussed in 1999 and onwards a quality label for external quality assurance agencies, an idea originally initiated by the IAUP, in order to meet the need for higher education institutions to identify which agencies are qualified to fulfil the external quality assurance role. The quality label met widespread opposition and instead INQAAHE has focused on formulating good practice criteria for agencies. The result is a set of principles that presents common denominators of good practice while at the same time recognising the international diversity of agencies in terms of purposes and historical cultural contexts.

In terms of the recommendations on peer review of agencies, the work done by CHEA is relevant. CHEA is a non-governmental organisation functioning as an umbrella body for the US regional, specialised, national and professional accreditation agencies. Accrediting organisations that seek recognition by CHEA must demonstrate that they meet CHEA recognition standards. Accrediting organisations will be expected to advance academic quality, demonstrate accountability, encourage improvement, employ appropriate procedures, continually reassess accreditation practices and possess sufficient resources. CHEA will demand that members undergo so-called recognition reviews every six years. There are basic similarities and compatibility between the CHEA approach and the proposals of this report, for instance in terms of cyclical reviews. However, this report has given a priority to a distinct focus on the quality assurance of agencies.

A separate initiative has been taken jointly by OECD and UNESCO to elaborate guidelines for quality provision in cross-border higher education. The OECD-UNESCO guidelines will be finalised in 2005, but the drafting process has identified the contrast between the need to regulate the internationalisation of higher education and the fact that existing national quality assurance capacity often focuses exclusively on domestic delivery by domestic institutions. Therefore, it is posed as a challenge for the current quality assurance systems to develop appropriate methodologies and mechanisms to cover foreign providers and programmes in addition to national providers and programmes in order to maximise the benefits and limit the potential disadvantages of the internationalisation of higher education.

The proposed OECD-UNESCO guidelines recommend that external quality assurance agencies ensure that their quality assurance arrangements include foreign and for-profit institutions/providers as well as distance education delivery and other non-traditional modes of educational delivery. However, the drafting process of the guidelines also recognises that the inclusion of foreign providers in the remit of national agencies will in most cases require changes in national legislation and administrative procedures.

This report recognises the importance and implications of internationalisation for the quality assurance of higher education institutions. Although it has been considered too early to include a reference to this in the proposed European standards for external quality assurance, the proposal for a European register does explicitly include agencies

from outside Europe operating here as well as European agencies with cross-border operations.

It should also be recognised that the continuing European process fully meets the OECD-UNESCO recommendation that agencies should sustain and strengthen the existing regional and international networks.

Cyclical reviews of agencies

The field of external quality assurance of higher education in Europe is relatively young. However, it may be considered an element of growing maturity among agencies that recent years have evidenced an interest in enhancing credibility of agency work by focusing on internal and external quality assurance of agencies themselves. An ENQA workshop in February 2003 in Sitges, Spain, had quality assurance of agencies as its theme. The participants discussed existing experiences of external evaluation of agencies and one conclusion of the workshop was a recommendation that ENQA should work towards making cyclical external reviews of member agencies.

Accordingly, ENQA received the Berlin mandate at a time when discussion of external reviews of agencies had already begun in ENQA and been an element in E4 meetings.

This report recommends that any European agency should at no more than five-year intervals conduct or be submitted to a cyclical external review of its processes and activities. The results should be documented in a report which states the extent to which the agency is in compliance with the European standards for external quality assurance agencies (see Chapter 2, Part 3).

In the EHEA the map of providers and operators in external quality assurance of higher education will no doubt be more complicated in the future. Therefore, it is important that non-ENQA members are included in considerations on quality assurance of agencies. And it is even more important that agencies from outside Europe have an open opportunity, if they want it, to measure themselves against the recommended European standards. Therefore, the report does not wish to confine the focus of this recommendation to nationally recognised European agencies and thus by implication only actual or potential ENQA members. On the contrary, agencies from outside Europe, but operating in Europe, or European agencies that are not nationally recognised, must also be allowed to opt for a review that assesses its compliance with the European standards.

The general principles for cyclical reviews are proposed to be as follows:

- External quality assurance agencies established and officially recognised as national agencies by a Bologna signatory state should normally be reviewed on a national basis, thus respecting the subsidiarity principle – even if they also operate beyond national borders. These European national agencies may on the other hand also opt for reviews organised by ENQA rather than internal nationally based reviews. The reviews of agencies should include an

assessment of whether the agencies are in compliance with the European standards for external quality assurance agencies.

- Agencies not established and officially recognised in a Bologna signatory state may on their own initiative opt to be reviewed against the European standards for external quality assurance agencies.
- The reviews should follow the process comprising a self-evaluation, an independent panel of experts and a published report.

An external review will typically be initiated at the national or agency level. It is therefore expected that reviews of agencies will usually follow from national regulations or from the internal quality assurance processes in place in the agency.

This report wishes strongly to emphasise the importance of respecting the subsidiarity principle, and it is therefore proposed that ENQA, in respect of its own members, takes the initiative toward an agency only in the case where after five years no initiative has been taken nationally or by the agency itself. In case the agency is a non-ENQA member and after five years no initiative has been taken nationally or by the agency itself, the European Register Committee is responsible for initiating the review. When national authorities initiate reviews, the purpose could obviously be quite broad and include the agency's fulfilment of the national mandate, e.g. However, it is a core element in this proposal that reviews – regardless of whether they are initiated at a national, agency or ENQA level – must always explicitly consider the extent to which the agency conforms with the European standards for external quality assurance agencies. The ENQA General Assembly decided at its meeting in November 2004 that the membership criteria of ENQA should conform with the proposed European standards for external quality assurance agencies. Accordingly, the review of an agency will not only make evident the level of conformity with the European standards, but also at the same time indicate the level of compliance with ENQA membership criteria.

Finally, the report stresses that the involvement of international experts with appropriate expertise and experience will provide substantial benefit to the review process.

The follow-up of a cyclical review will first and foremost be the responsibility of the national authorities or owners of the agency and, of course, of the agency itself. ENQA will have a role in the follow-up only in the case of member agencies where ENQA must certify the degree to which the member agency meets the European standards for external quality assurance agencies according to the review. ENQA regulations will specify the consequences if this is not the case.

An illustrative outline of an exemplary process of an external review of an agency is shown in the annex to this report.

PROPOSED REGISTER STRUCTURE		REVIEWED		NOT REVIEWED
		Compliance with European standards	Non- compliance with European standards	
European national agencies	National operators			
	Cross-border operators			
European non-national agencies				
Extra-European agencies operating in Europe				

Register of external quality assurance agencies operating in Europe

ENQA committed itself before the Berlin Ministerial meeting of 2003 to develop in cooperation with the relevant stakeholders a European register of quality assurance agencies, covering public, private, and thematic agencies, operating or planning to operate in Europe.

The register would meet the interest of higher education institutions and governments in being able to identify professional and credible quality assurance agencies operating in Europe. This interest has firstly its basis in the complicated area of recognition of non-national degrees. Recognition procedures would be strengthened if it were transparent to what extent providers were themselves quality assured by recognised agencies. Secondly, it is increasingly possible for higher education institutions to seek quality assurance from agencies across national borders. Higher education institutions would of course be helped in this process by being able to identify professional agencies from a reliable register.

The most valuable asset of the register would thus be its informative value to institutions and other stakeholders, and the register could in itself become a very useful instrument for achieving transparency and comparability of external quality assurance of higher education institutions.

The register must make evident the level of compliance of entrants with the European standards for external quality assurance agencies. However, it is important to stress that this report does not aim at proposing the register as a ranking instrument.

The register should be open for applications from all agencies providing services within Europe, including those operating from countries outside Europe or those with a transnational or international basis. The agencies will be placed into different sections of the register depending on whether they are peer reviewed or not, whether they comply with the European standards for external quality assurance agencies or not, and whether they operate strictly nationally or across borders.

A possible structure for the register is therefore:

Section 1. Peer reviewed agencies, divided into the following categories:

- European national agencies that have been reviewed and fulfil all the European standards for external quality assurance agencies.
- European national agencies that have been reviewed, but do not fulfil all the European standards for external quality assurance agencies.
- Non-national and extra-European agencies that operate in Europe, have been reviewed and fulfil all the European standards for external quality assurance agencies.
- Non-national and extra-European agencies that operate in Europe and have been reviewed, but do not fulfil all the European standards for external quality assurance agencies.

Section 2. Non-reviewed agencies

- European national agencies, non-national agencies and extra-European agencies that have not been reviewed and are therefore listed according to information gained from their application for inclusion in the register.

Presented in a grid, the structure of the register is this:

A European Register Committee will decide on admissions to the European register.

The committee will use agency compliance with the European standards for external quality assurance agencies as identified in the cyclical review as one criterion for placement in the register. Other criteria should be developed which will take account of the diversity of the higher education systems.

The committee will be a light, non-bureaucratic construction with nine members nominated by EURASHE, ESIB, EUA, ENQA and organisations representing European employers, unions and professional organisations plus government representatives. These members will act in an individual capacity and not as mandated representatives of the nominating organisations. ENQA will perform the secretarial duties for the committee which will meet at least on a semi-annual basis.

The European Register Committee will as one of its first implementation tasks formalise the ownership of the register.

Another immediate task for the European Register Committee must be to establish an independent and credible appeals system to secure the rights of those that have been refused or that cannot accept their placement in the register. This appeals system should be an element in the protocol to be drafted by the committee soon after it has become operational.

European Consultative Forum for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Since the Prague meeting in 2001 the E4 group, consisting of ENQA, EUA, ESIB and EURASHE, has met on a regular basis to discuss respective views on the Bologna

Process and European quality in higher education. Since the Berlin meeting in 2003 the E4 meetings have had as their major focus the implementation of the mandate of the Ministers on quality assurance in higher education.

This cooperation at the European level has proved constructive. The four organisations have therefore agreed that a European Consultative Forum for Quality Assurance in Higher Education will continue to exist building from the E4 group. The foundation of such a forum would in practical terms establish the current cooperation between ENQA, EUA, EURASHE and ESIB on a more permanent basis. The forum would function primarily as a consultative and advisory forum for the major European stakeholders and it would resemble the current arrangements where the four respective organisations finance their own expenses and participation without the creation of a new administrative structure. In the longer term the forum should also include labour market representatives.

4. Future perspectives and challenges

This report contains proposals and recommendations that have been developed and endorsed by the key European players in the world of quality assurance in higher education. The very existence of the report is a testimony to the achievement of a joint understanding in a field where such an understanding might be thought inherently unlikely, given the different interests in play. The proposals offer increased transparency, security and information about higher education for students and society more generally. They equally offer higher education institutions recognition and credibility and opportunities to demonstrate their dedication to high quality in an increasingly competitive and sceptical environment. For the quality assurance agencies the proposals enhance their own quality and credibility and connect them more productively to their wider European professional fraternity.

The proposals will remain no more than proposals, however, if they are not accompanied by an effective implementation strategy. If approved by the Ministers in Bergen, immediate steps will be taken to begin to introduce some of the key elements of this report. The register of quality assurance agencies should be envisaged as being started during the latter half of 2005 and to be ready to go on-line in 2006. The ENQA secretariat has made provision for the extra resources that will be necessary for this purpose. Following the Ministerial meeting, ENQA will take the necessary concrete initiatives towards establishing the European Register Committee. The committee will begin its work with formalising the ownership of the register and drafting a protocol based on the preliminary work done by ENQA in the spring of 2005. The first of the cyclical reviews should be expected to take place during 2005.

The European Consultative Forum for Quality Assurance in Higher Education will also be an early initiative. Thus, the outcomes of the Bergen Ministerial meeting, and the establishment of the forum will be the main theme of the next meeting between ENQA and its E4 partners in June 2005. In addition, the future cooperation with other key stakeholders such as labour market representatives will be subject to discussions.

ENQA has also arranged a meeting with the other European quality assurance networks prior to the next ENQA General Assembly in September 2005.

The possibility of rapid implementation of certain of the proposals of this report should not be taken to mean that the task of embedding the rest of them will be easy.

It will take longer for the internal and external quality assurance standards to be widely adopted by institutions and agencies, because their acceptance will depend on a willingness to change and develop on the part of signatory states with long established and powerful higher education systems. What is proposed in the internal quality assurance standards will be challenging for some higher education institutions, especially where there is a new and developing tradition of quality assurance or where the focus on students' needs and their preparation to enter the employment market is not embedded in the institutional culture. Similarly, the standards for external quality assurance and for quality assurance agencies themselves will require all participants, and especially the agencies, to look very carefully at themselves and to measure their practices against the European expectation. The new cyclical review procedure will provide a timely focus for this purpose. It will only be when the benefits of adoption of the standards are seen that there is likely to be general acceptance of them.

The EHEA operates on the basis of individual national responsibility for higher education and this implies autonomy in matters of external quality assurance. Because of this the report is not and cannot be regulatory but makes its recommendations and proposals in a spirit of mutual respect among professionals; experts drawn from higher education institutions including students; ministries; and quality assurance agencies. Some signatory states may want to enshrine the standards and review process in their legislative or administrative frameworks. Others may wish to take a longer view of the appropriateness of doing so, weighing the advantages of change against the strengths of the status quo. The proposed European Consultative Forum for Quality Assurance in Higher Education should prove a useful place in which to discuss, debate and learn about new thinking, the experiences of other systems and the similarities and dissimilarities of national experiences.

All in all, there will be a considerable and challenging workload for ENQA, its E4 partners and other key stakeholders to get to grips with in the coming years. The report therefore makes it clear that completion of this report is not the same thing as fulfilling the Bologna goal of a quality assurance dimension for the EHEA. Ahead lies more work to implement the recommendations of the report and secure the implied quality culture among both the higher education institutions and the external quality assurance agencies. What has been set in motion by the Berlin mandate will need continuing maintenance and coaxing if it is to provide the fully functioning European dimension of quality assurance for the EHEA.

A European higher education area with strong, autonomous and effective higher education institutions, a keen sense of the importance of quality and standards, good peer reviews, credible quality assurance agencies, an effective register and increased co-operation with other stakeholders, such as employers, is now possible and the

proposals contained in this report will go a long way towards making that vision a reality.

Annex: Cyclical review of quality assurance agencies⁴ – a theoretical model

The model presented below is a proposed indicative outline for a process of external review of an external quality assurance agency. It is presented as an example of a credible process suited to identify compliance with the European standards for external quality assurance agencies. However, note must be taken that the purpose is instructive and illustrative. Therefore, the level of detail is high and most likely higher than what will be perceived as needed in individual peer reviews of agencies. It follows from this that in no way must the process presented here be considered as a standard in itself. Further, it should be noted that in the presented example the term “evaluation” is applied to cover objectives and processes. Terms, such as “accreditation” or “audit”, might as well be applied.

The process covers the following elements:

- formulating terms of reference and protocol for the review;
- nomination and appointment of panel of experts;
- self-evaluation by the agency;
- site visit;
- reporting.

1. Terms of reference

The terms of reference must identify the goals of the review in terms of the perspectives and interests of authorities, stakeholders and the agency itself. All the main tasks and operations of the agency must be covered and in such a manner that it is evident that no hidden agendas are present.

2. Self-evaluation

2.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION REQUIRED FROM AGENCY AS BASIS OF REVIEW

Relevant background information is necessary to understand the context in which the agency is working. The section is expected to include:

2.1.1 A brief outline of the national higher education system, including:

- degree structure;
- institutional structure;

⁴ The structure of the annex approximates the one documented recently in a manual of a project on mutual recognition of quality assurance agencies in the Nordic countries.

- procedures and involved parties in establishing new subjects, programmes and institutions;
- other quality assurance procedures;
- status of higher education institutions in relation to the government.

2.1.2 A brief account of the history of the particular agency and of the evaluation of higher education in general:

- mission statement;
- establishment of the agency (government, higher education institutions, others);
- description of the legal framework and other formal regulations concerning the agency (e.g. parliamentary laws, ministerial orders or decrees);
- the financing of the agency;
- placement of the right to initiate evaluations;
- internal organisation of the agency; including procedures for appointment and composition of board/council;
- other responsibilities of the agency than the evaluation of higher education;
- international activities of the agency, including formal agreements as well as other activities, e.g. participation in conferences, working groups and staff exchange;
- role of the agency in follow-up on evaluations: consequences and sanctions.

2.2 EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE UNDERTAKEN BY THE AGENCY

Evidence should be produced indicating that the agency undertakes on a regular basis external quality assurance of higher education institutions or programmes. This quality assurance should involve either evaluation, accreditation, review, audit or assessment, and these are part of the core functions of the agency.

By 'regular' it is understood that evaluations are planned on the basis of a systematic procedure and that several quality assessments have been conducted over the last two years. This evidence should include:

- a description of the methodological scope of the agency;
- an account of the number of quality assessments conducted and the number of units evaluated.

2.3 EVALUATION METHOD APPLIED BY THE AGENCY

2.3.1 Background information

An account of the overall planning of an evaluation and other fundamental issues is needed to be able to determine if the agency is working on the basis of transparent methodological procedures.

This account should include:

- the procedures for briefing of and communication with the evaluated institutions;
- the agency strategy for student participation;

- the procedures related to establishing the terms of reference/project plan of the individual assessment;
- the reference(s) for evaluation (predefined criteria, legal documents, subject benchmarks, professional standards, the stated goals of the evaluated institution);
- the extent to which the methodological elements are modified to specific reviews.

2.3.2 Elements of methodology

An account giving evidence that the methodology the agency is working on is predefined and public and that review results are public.

The methodology includes:

- self-evaluation or equivalent procedure of the given object of evaluation;
- external evaluation by a group of experts and site visits as decided by the agency;
- publication of a report with public results.

The agency can also work out and apply other methodologies fit for special purposes.

The agency's decisions and reports are consistent in terms of principles and requirements, even if different groups form the judgements.

If the agency makes evaluation decisions, there is an appeals system. This methodology is applied to the needs of the agencies.

If the agency is to make recommendations and/or conditional resolutions, it has a follow-up procedure to check on the results.

2.3.3 An account of the role of the external expert group

The account on the role of the external expert group should include:

- procedures for nomination and appointment of experts, including criteria for the use of international experts, and representatives of stakeholders such as employers and students;
- methods of briefing and training of experts;
- meetings between experts: number, scope and time schedule in relation to the overall evaluation process;
- division of labour between agency and experts;
- role of the agency's staff in the evaluations;
- identification and appointment of the member(s) of staff at the agency to be responsible for the evaluation.

2.3.4 Documentation

Several accounts of the agency's procedures for collecting documentation are needed to determine the procedures related to the self-evaluation of the agency and site visits:

2.3.4.1 An account of the procedures related to self-evaluation

This account should include:

- specification of content in the guidelines provided by the agency;
- procedural advice provided by the agency;
- requirements for composition of self-evaluation teams, including the role of students;
- training/information of self-evaluation teams;
- time available for conducting the self-evaluation.

2.3.4.2 An account of the procedures related to the site visit

This account should include:

- questionnaires/interviewing protocols;
- principles for selection of participants/informants (categories and specific participants);
- principles for the length of the visit;
- number of meetings and average length;
- documentation of the meetings (internal/external, minutes, transcriptions etc.);
- working methods of the external expert group.

2.3.4.3 The reports

The documentation should include the following information on the reports:

- purpose of the report;
- drafting of the report (agency staff or experts);
- format of report (design and length);
- content of report (documentation or only analysis/recommendations);
- principles for feedback from the evaluated parties on the draft report;
- publication procedures and policy (e.g. handling of the media);
- immediate follow-up (e.g. seminars and conferences);
- long-term follow-up activities (e.g. follow-up evaluation or visit).

2.3.5 System of appeal

The agency documents a method for appeals against its decisions and how this methodology is applied to the needs of the agency. It must be evident from the documentation to what extent the appeals system is based on a hearing process through which the agency can provide those under evaluation a means to comment on and question the outcomes of the evaluation.

Basically, the agency must provide evidence that the appeals system provides for those under evaluation an opportunity to express opinions about evaluation outcomes.

2.4 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

This additional documentation should provide an account of the use of surveys, statistical material or other kinds of documentation not mentioned elsewhere. This material should be public.

2.5 PROCEDURES FOR A QUALITY SYSTEM FOR AGENCIES

The agency must document that it has in place internal quality assurance mechanisms that conform to those stipulated in the European standards for external quality assurance agencies.

2.6 FINAL REFLECTIONS

An analysis of the agency's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats is needed in order to give an account of the capacity of the agency to adapt to new demands and trends and to permanently improve its actions while maintaining a solid and credible methodological framework and governance model.

3. Guidelines for the external review panel

These guidelines describe the expectations to the external review panel. They comprise guidance on:

- appointment and general organisation;
- site visit;
- drafting of the report.

As described above, the agency under review should provide a self-evaluation report according to the provided guidelines. The self-study should be sent to the external review panel no later than a month before the visit.

3.1 APPOINTMENT OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW PANEL

This section concerns the appointment of the experts that should conduct the review.

The external expert group should consist of the following experts:

- one or two quality assurance experts (international);
- representative of higher education institutions (national);
- student member (national);
- stakeholder member (for instance an employer, national).

One of these experts should be elected Chair of the external review panel.

It is also recommended that the panel should be supplemented with a person who, in an independent capacity from the agency, would act as a secretary.

Nominations of the experts may come from the agencies, stakeholders or local authorities but in order to ensure that the review is credible and trustworthy, it is essential that the task of appointing the experts be given to a third party outside the agency involved. This third party could for instance be ENQA or an agency not involved in the process. The basis for the recognition of the experts should be declarations of their independence. However, the agency under review should have the possibility to comment on the final composition of the panel.

3.2 SITE VISIT

A protocol must be available for the site visit along lines such as the following:

The visit is recommended to have a duration of two-three days, including preparation and follow-up, depending on the external review panel's prior knowledge of the agency under review and its context. The day before the visit the panel will meet and agree on relevant themes for the visit. The purpose of the site visit is to validate the self-study.

Interview guides should be drafted with this perspective in mind.

The visit could include separate meetings with members from the agency board, management, staff, experts, owners/key stakeholders and representatives from evaluated institutions at management level as well as members from the internal self-evaluation committees.

3.3 PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

Apart from fulfilling the general terms of reference the report must focus in a precise manner on compliance with the European standards for external quality assurance agencies as specified in the self-study protocol, as well as with possibilities for and recommendations on future improvements.

After the visit the external review panel assisted by the secretary will draft a report.

The final version should be sent to the agency under review for comments on factual errors.

This is the third edition of the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area", drafted by ENQA in cooperation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB and endorsed by the ministers of education of the Bologna signatory states at the Bergen meeting of May 2005. The original report has been adjusted to the current ENQA layout.

ANNEX II

MODEL SURVEYS TO CHECK THE ADEQUACY OF THE EXISTING QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS IN THE PARTNER COUNTRIES

ANNEX II. MODEL SURVEYS TO CHECK THE ADEQUACY OF THE EXISTING QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS IN THE PARTNER COUNTRIES

FOREWORD

The questionnaires provided below are a tool for institutions to carry out the diagnosis of their baseline situation for designing an internal quality assurance system, following the recommendations given in the guidelines

The team carrying out the diagnosis should combine answers to the questions obtained from their own observations as well as the testimonies of people who they talk to. Verbal answers should ideally be supported by documented evidence.

Each questionnaire is expressly related to one of the points included in the RETHINKe Quality Assurance Guidelines (Article 2)

INTERPRETING THE CHOICE OF ANSWER

To unify the criteria used by both the reviewers carrying out the diagnosis and the persons filling out the questionnaires, a definition is given below of each choice of answer given in the list of questions:

- **No/rarely:** There is no evidence, or it is anecdotal, of any actions having been carried out in connection with the matter raised in the question.
- **Can be improved:** Evidence provided of the existence of isolated actions carried out in relation to the question although they are neither standardized nor practiced in a systematic way.
- **Pass:** There is evidence of activities having been carried out in relation to the question and these are carried out recurrently and in an orderly way, although the way of doing is not necessarily documented.
- **Satisfactory:** There is evidence and/or testimonies that bear/s witness to the fact that actions have undoubtedly been systematically carried out in relation to the question, and that they are also developed in accordance with a regulation or standard, which the users know and is available in written form.



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Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 4: General Assumptions

Model Survey 1: Process to define quality policy and goals

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Is there a body, unit or person in charge of setting the quality goals and policy?				
2. Does the institution have a formally approved quality policy?				
3. Is the policy disseminated and known by Faculty, administrative staff, students and other stakeholders?				
4. Is there a periodic monitoring of quality goals achievement?				
5. Is there a periodic review of the validity of the quality policy?				

Model Survey 2: Process to guarantee the quality of the programmes

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Is there a body, unit or person responsible for defining the programmes?				
2. Have objective criteria been defined to approve the academic offer and the programmes themselves?				
3. Are activities to disseminate the programmes to all the stakeholders carried out?				
4. Is there a full and systematic analysis about the outcomes in the quality parameters of the programmes?				
5. Are the results of this analysis made known to the stakeholders?				

Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.3: An admission policy in accordance to the degree's objectives

Model Survey: Process to define students' profiles and admission

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Are objective parameters applied to define students' admission profile?				
2. Are suitable and adequate channels used to disseminate admission requirements?				
3. Are objective criteria used to prepare students' admission and registration procedures?				
4. Are suitable and adequate channels used to disseminate students' admission and registration procedures?				

Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.4: A system to assess the implementation of the study plan, checking the real performance of the academic activities and the use of the evaluation methods stated in the study guides.

Model Survey 1: Process to manage the performance of the academic activities and the use of the evaluation methods

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Is there any authority in charge of monitoring the performance of the academic activities and the use of the evaluation methods disclosed in the study guides?				
2. Do they control that the performance of the academic activities and the use of the evaluation methods are consistent to the study guides?				
3. Are the performance of the academic activities and the use of the evaluation methods to be developed planned beforehand and in detail?				
4. Is students' satisfaction regarding the performance of the academic activities and the use of the evaluation methods regularly assessed and in accordance with an established methodology?				
5. Is there a procedure to define teaching methodologies?				
6. Is students' satisfaction as regards teaching methods regularly assessed and in accordance with an established methodology?				

Model Survey 2: Process to manage students' internships

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have the members and specific functions of the body responsible for managing students' internship been established?				
2. Is there any regulation or procedure for defining the contents and minimum requirements for work placement?				
3. Are internship activities to be developed planned beforehand and in detail?				
4. Is it defined who disseminates the information on work placement programmes and how this is done?				
5. Is students' satisfaction as regards internships regularly assessed and in accordance with an established methodology?				

Model Survey 3: Process to manage students' mobility

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have the members and specific functions of the body responsible for managing students' mobility been established?				
2. Is there a procedure to define and approve the aims and policies for mobility?				
3. Are mobility activities to be developed planned beforehand and in detail?				
4. Is it defined who disseminates the information on mobility programmes and how this is done?				
5. Is students' satisfaction as regards mobility actions regularly assessed and in accordance with an established methodology?				

Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.5: Formal actions and measures to give orientation and advice to students: about first steps at the university, different curriculum development opportunities offered by each programme, international mobility, internships as well as career opportunities by the end of the degree.

Model Survey 1: Student orientation and programme delivery process

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have the members and functions of the body responsible for defining actions involving student orientation been established?				
2. Is there a procedure to design students' reception/support/tutoring actions?				
3. Is the information on these actions disseminated through appropriate channels?				

Model Survey 2: Process to manage careers guidance

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have the members and specific functions of the body responsible for students' careers guidance been established?				
2. Is there a procedure to define and approve the type of measures to be developed in relation to careers guidance?				
3. Are careers guidance activities to be developed planned beforehand and in detail?				
4. Is it defined who disseminates the information on careers guidance programmes and how this is done?				
5. Is students' satisfaction as regards careers guidance actions regularly assessed and in accordance with an established methodology?				

Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.6: Adequacy of the available academic staff to achieve the degree's objectives as well as formal actions and measures to promote continuous learning of academic staff.

Model Survey 1: Process to define academic staff policy

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible for defining academic staff policy been determined?				
2. Are there any goals and objectives for defining specific plans?				
3. Is the outcome of specific plans evaluated systematically?				
4. Are the results of the evaluation to define and plan proposals for improvement used?				

Model Survey 2: Process for the recruitment and selection of academic staff

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible to recruit and select new academic staff been determined?				
2. Are there any goals defining plans to recruit and select new academic staff?				
3. Are there appropriate channels to publicize recruitment and selection process of new academic staff?				
4. Are public and objective criteria used for candidate selection?				
5. Are the results of selection processes made public?				

Model Survey 3: Process for academic staff training

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible to define the training plan of academic staff been determined?				
2. Are there any goals defining plans to draw up the annual training and development plan?				
3. Is the target group appropriately informed of plans?				
4. Is there an assessment of the participants' degree of satisfaction with the training plan?				
5. Is an analysis of the effectiveness of training received carried out?				

Model Survey 4: Process for the evaluation, promotion and recognition of academic staff

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible to define the evaluation, promotion and recognition of academic staff been determined?				
2. Are there any goals for the promotion, incentive and enhancement of academic staff?				
3. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible to carry out the evaluation, promotion and recognition of academic staff been determined?				
4. Are the results of evaluation, promotion and recognition processes made public?				

Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.7: Adequacy of the HEI's facilities, administrative services, technology, equipment and materials to achieve the degree's objectives.

Model Survey 1: Process to define administrative staff policy

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible for defining administrative staff policy been determined?				
2. Are there any goals and objectives for defining specific plans?				
3. Is the outcome of specific plans evaluated systematically?				
4. Are the results of the evaluation to define and plan proposals for improvement used?				

Model Survey 2: Process for the recruitment and selection of administrative staff

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible to recruit and select new administrative staff been determined?				
2. Are there any goals defining plans to recruit and select new administrative staff?				
3. Are there appropriate channels to publicize recruitment and selection process of new administrative staff?				
4. Are public and objective criteria used for candidate selection?				
5. Are the results of selection processes made public?				

Model Survey 3: Process for administrative staff training

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible to define the training plan of administrative staff been determined?				
2. Are there any goals defining plans to draw up the annual training and development plan?				
3. Is the target group appropriately informed of plans?				
4. Is there an assessment of the participants' degree of satisfaction with the training plan?				
5. Is an analysis of the effectiveness of training received carried out?				

Model Survey 4: Process for the evaluation, promotion and recognition of administrative staff

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible to define the evaluation, promotion and recognition of administrative staff been determined?				
2. Are there any goals for the promotion, incentive and enhancement of administrative staff?				
3. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible to carry out the evaluation, promotion and recognition of administrative staff been determined?				
4. Are the results of evaluation, promotion and recognition processes made public?				

Model Survey 5: Process to manage and improve equipment and materials

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible to manage equipment and materials been determined?				
2. Are there any goals to define the plans for the provision and maintenance of equipment and materials?				
3. Is there a periodic analysis about the efficiency of equipment and materials?				
4. Are the results of management and use of equipment and materials made public?				

Model Survey 6: Process to manage services

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible to manage services been determined?				
2. Is there a clear definition of the aims of the services provided by the institution?				
3. Is there any planning of necessary measures so that services could be correctly provided?				
4. Has information on services provided by the institution, and their aims made public?				
5. Is there an analysis of the results of the services provided by the institution (satisfaction level of users, process, etc.)?				

Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.8: Formal actions and measures to verify the level of achievement of the degree's objectives, by means of statistics, objective indicators and by checking the opinion of students and external stakeholders

Model Survey 1: Process to manage incidents, complaints and suggestions

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Is there a defined channel to appropriately deal with complaints, appeals, pleas and suggestions?				
2. Are objective criteria used to determine when a complaint, incident, appeal or suggestion needs to be documented?				
3. Is it established who participates in analyzing the reasons for complaints, appeals and incidents and in defining corrective/preventive actions or improvements?				
4. Are specific plans defined in order to achieve the goals of corrective/preventive actions or improvements?				
5. Is any action taken if a negative assessment is made of the result of corrective/preventive actions or improvements?				

Model Survey 2: Process to analyze the outcomes

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTORY
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible for the survey and analysis of the outcomes been determined?				
2. Is data collected in a systematic and consistent way?				
3. Is the validity (quantitative and qualitative) of the data checked prior being analysed?				
4. Are the outcomes (especially those pointing to negative trends) used to define improvement measures?				
5. Are stakeholders appropriately informed about the results of the outcomes analysis process?				

Checking the level of fulfilment of Guideline 6.9: Formal actions and measures to disseminate information about the programmes and its goals and results among students, stakeholders and across society

Model Survey 1: Process to publicize information on degrees

	NO / RARELY	CAN BE IMPROVED	PASS	SATISFACTOR Y
1. Have members and specific functions of the unit responsible for publicising information about the degrees been determined?				
2. Is the gathering of information on degrees and programmes carried out in a systematic and consistent way				
3. Is the validity (quantitative and qualitative) of the information checked prior to it being publicised?				
4. Are objective criteria applied in determining which information is to be publicised?				
5. Are the stakeholders appropriately informed about the results obtained in the process of collecting information on the degrees?				
6. Is a periodic assessment of the relevance of the publicised information carried out?				

ANNEX III

STUDY GUIDE TEMPLATE

ANNEX III. STUDY GUIDE TEMPLATE

FOREWORD

According to the quality Guidelines (Sections 6.1 and 2), programmes must have precisely defined learning outcomes, so that students and stakeholders could know from the beginning which skills and abilities they are going to acquire or enhance enrolling in them. Double programmes also have to be negotiated to reach objectives in terms of skills, knowledge and abilities. These additional double degree's abilities should reach a point beyond those specified for the single degrees that compound them. In the case of the RETHINKe double degrees, these skills and abilities should be closely related to the project's topics and goals.

The study guide included in this Annex is a template designed to be used as a teaching tool for each one of the courses that conform the single master/Ph.D. programmes linked by a double degree agreement.

In the first place, as traditional syllabuses do, the study guide template is useful to give summarized information to students about the course's subject matter, its contents and topics and the suggested study books and learning materials. In addition, EHEA system's study guide is intended to identify the role of the course in the single and double programme's context. The guide fulfils this objective by:

- a) defining the course's specific learning outcomes,
- b) linking those learning outcomes to the general ones previously decided for the master programme of which the course is part,
- c) linking those learning outcomes to the even more general goals assigned to the double programme.

The proposed model also provides complete information about the teaching methods that will be used by the lecturers, as well as precise information about how students will be assessed and evaluated, including the weighted importance of the different assessment methods in the final grade. Full disclosure about those basic questions is also essential in an EHEA guide.

STUDY GUIDE TEMPLATE

University Logo

Teaching Guide
Master in
2014

IDENTIFYING DATA					2014/15	
Course	xxxx				Code	xxxx
Study programme	Master in xxxx					
Characteristics	Cycle	Period	Year	Type	Credits	
	Official Master's Degree	1st Semester / 2nd semester	First / Second	Mandatory / Optional	xx	
Language/s	English					
Prerequisites	Students are supposed to be skilled in/know....					
Department	xxxx					
Coordinator	Prof.....		E-mail		xxx@xxx	
Lecturers	Prof.....					
Web						
General description	This course is designed to enable you to develop a foundation of knowledge in the area of xxxxxx.					

EXPECTED SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY STUDENTS BY MEANS OF THE MASTER PROGRAMME

Code	Competence
A1	Enhanced communication skills
A2	Enhanced leadership and organisational skills
A3	Improved fluency in world languages
A4	Ability to engage in and provide analyses of issues and trends in the international community
A5	Ability for independently initiate and implement professional and interdisciplinary cooperation and take on professional responsibility
B1	In-depth knowledge of the sources of international commercial law (treaties and customary international law).
B2	Ability for independent and informed thinking about international law issues and problems

EXPECTED SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY STUDENTS BY MEANS OF THE COURSE

Subject competencies (Learning outcomes)	Study programme competences		
Enhance the students' analytical, problem solving, and related skills that they will use as an attorney in litigation settings (disputes arising in contract), in advisory settings (contract formation, corporate practice), or a combination of both.	A4	B1	B2
Develop a working knowledge of various black letter principles of contract law, and related doctrines and legal concepts.	B1		
Enhance the students' oral communication skills and legal analysis skills via class discussion.	A1	B2	

SYLLABUS

Topic	Sub-topic
1. INTRODUCTION	1.1 Origins of contract law 1.2 Importance of contract for commercial transactions 1.3 Structure of a contract
2. CONTRACT FORMATION	
3. OFFER & ACCEPTANCE	

PLANNING			
Methodologies / tests	A Ordinary class hours	B Student's personal work hours	C (A+B) Total hours
Theoretical lectures	10	40	
Study of law cases	10	20	
Law clinic	10	15	
Research paper	5	40	
.....			
Tutorship	4	0	4
.....			

(*)The information in the planning table is for guidance only and does not take into account the heterogeneity of the students.

METHODOLOGIES	
Methodologies	Description
Lecture method	Teaching by giving spoken explanations of the subject that is to be learned. Lecturing is often accompanied by visual aids to help students visualize an object or problem.
Case method	Providing an opportunity for students to apply what they learn in the classroom to real-life experiences has proven to be an effective way of both disseminating and integrating knowledge. The case method is an instructional strategy that engages students in active discussion about issues and problems inherent in practical application. It can highlight fundamental dilemmas or critical issues and provide a format for role playing ambiguous or controversial scenarios. Course content cases can come from a variety of sources. Many faculty have transformed current events or problems reported through print or broadcast media into critical learning experiences that illuminate the complexity of finding solutions to critical social problems. The case study approach works well in cooperative learning or role playing environments to stimulate critical thinking and awareness of multiple perspectives.
Role play method	This is a learning method that depends on roleplaying. Learners take on the role profiles of specific characters or organisations in a contrived setting. Roleplay is designed primarily to build first person experience in a safe and supportive environment. Roleplay is widely acknowledged as a powerful teaching technique in face-to-face teaching and roleplay online is also powerful, with some added benefits.
Problem solving method

PERSONALIZED ATTENTION	
Methodologies	Description

Case method

Problem solving method

Regarding the activities developed for resolving the cases and making the assigned papers, lecturers will have mandatory/voluntary personal tutoring sessions with each student.....

ASSESSMENT		
Methodologies	Description	Qualification
Lecture method	Multiple choice exam	40 %
Case method	Assessment of legal documents made by students	30 %
....

Assessment comments

A seating chart will be circulated during the initial class session.

With respect to in-class decorum:

- 1) Please arrive for class on time (a steady stream of late-arriving students during the first ten minutes of class is extremely distracting);
- 2) please do not use your laptop computer during class for things other than taking notes. This too is extremely distracting.

In all respects, please follow the Student Code of Conduct.

Attendance in class is mandatory.

If you are absent for a class, you must notify me within 24 hours of the missed class for it to be considered an excused absence. If you have more than four (4) unexcused absences your final grade will be dropped down three points.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Basic	Here the teacher must indicate the books, papers, cases and other materials that must be consulted by students during the course.
Complementary	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Subjects that it is recommended to have taken before

Subjects that are recommended to be taken simultaneously

Subjects that continue the syllabus

ANNEX IV

QUALITY ASSESSMENT SURVEYS

ANNEX IV. QUALITY ASSESSMENT SURVEYS

FOREWORD

This Annex contains a list of model surveys that seek to measure and assess students, staff and stakeholders' opinion and satisfaction with the programmes, awards and organisation/management of a HEI. As it was stated in the guidelines, checking periodically, publicizing, and using the information obtained from these groups of interest is a key question in any Quality Assessment System.

The aim of the survey list is only to provide information about the kind of questions and items that are normally necessary to assess the quality of academic programmes and awards in a HEI, but it is just a mere sample. Most of the proposed questions have been borrowed from surveys that have actually been used in Spain to assure internal quality for years.

STUDENTS' SATISFACTION

Model survey 1: student's satisfaction on planning and development

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No Answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

STUDY PLAN OBJECTIVES	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. I know the objectives of the study plan								
2. Objectives are cleared detailed								
3. When choosing my studies, I knew the knowledge and abilities to achieve								
4. I am satisfied with the plan of study objectives								
STUDY PLAN DESIGN	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Development of the study plan as regards subjects, structure, human and material resources, is appropriate								
6. There is a standard document including the objectives, characteristics, contents, evaluation criteria and methods, teaching staff, timetables, references, exams calendar of each of the courses								
7. Teaching guides are accessible and available								
8. Teaching guides are consistent with study plan objectives								
9. Teaching guides include detailed contents, methodology, references, evaluation								
10. All teaching guides are available in advance so that students could organize the activities and decide their curricula before registration								
11. Credits assigned to each course are consistent to the tasks to pass the course								
12. Are initial planning and activities respected?								
13. The proportion of theoretical and practical classes is appropriate								
14. Mobility mechanisms are appropriate								
15. Internships planning, if included in the study plan, are appropriate								
16. Faculty coordination is appropriate (no overlapping in contents)								
17. I am satisfied with teaching planning								
TEACHING DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING EVALUATION	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Learning development is consistent to scheduled activities								
19. Contents are different from undergraduate contents								
20. Knowledge and abilities included in teaching guides are appropriately developed								
21. Professor, when developing the contents, takes into account students' interests and previous knowledge								
22. Implemented methodology is consistent to teaching guide contents								
23. Evaluation methodology is consistent to teaching guide contents								
24. Evaluation is consistent to criteria and procedures established in the teaching guide								
25. Tutor sessions are another activity in the teaching guide or are they an orientation activity?								
26. Unexpected problems are efficiently resolved								
27. Study hours is consistent to total hours of the study plan								
28. I am satisfied with study plan development								
29. I am satisfied with evaluation method								

Model survey 2: student's satisfaction on support services to students

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No Answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

STUDENTS' ADMISSION	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Previous information (pre-enrolment, enrolment process) is appropriate								
2. I know criteria and procedures for students' admission								
3. Required knowledge (to face new studies) are available								
4. Required knowledge is clearly specified								
5. I am satisfied with students' admission process								
STUDENTS' GUIDANCE	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Orientation activities for new students are appropriate								
7. Orientation activities about extra-curricular activities (mobility, external internships...) are appropriate								
8. Support programmes (methods and techniques to improve knowledge acquisition and competences) are appropriate								
9. Activities related to attention to the diversity, if necessary for students, are appropriate								
10. Activities aimed at preparing students for work environment or continuity of studies are appropriate								
11. Cultural, sport, cooperation activities (promoting integral formation) are appropriate								
12. I am satisfied with activities guiding student								

Model survey 3: student's satisfaction on teaching support resources

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No Answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

ACADEMIC STAFF	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Academic staff is enough								
2. I am satisfied, in general, with academic staff								
RESOURCES AND SERVICES	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Classrooms (equipment, lighting, furniture, etc) are appropriate								
4. Work spaces are consistent to students' needs								
5. Laboratories and equipment are appropriate								
6. Library facilities (equipment, materials...) are appropriate								
7. Library materials are enough								
8. Access to different information sources, database, books are guaranteed to fulfill learning requirements								
9. Facilities external to the institution to develop internships are appropriate to achieve the established objectives								
10. Space for academic staff to develop their activities (i.e. tutor sessions) are appropriate								
11. Spaces for administrative staff are appropriate								
12. I am satisfied with resources and services devoted to learning activities								

Model survey 4: student's satisfaction on academic staff teaching activities

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No Answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

ITEMS	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Information provided by Professors about teaching activities (objectives, references, evaluation criteria and system) are easy to access and useful								
2. Planned tasks (theoretical, practical, individual tasks, in group, etc) are related to the Professor's learning objectives								
3. Teaching activity does not overlap the contents of other activities (no unnecessary repetitions)								
4. Theoretical and practical tasks are appropriately coordinated								
5. Credits assigned to each teaching activity are consistent to the volume of contents and tasks included in the activity								
6. Time devoted to activities is consistent with the time established in the programme								
7. The professor modified (increases or reduces) the programme depending on students' previous knowledge								
8. The professor prepares, organizes and plans activities or tasks developed in classrooms (or laboratories, seminars, fieldwork, etc)								
9. Professor's explanations are clear and highlights the important contents								
10. The professor gives answers to doubts and guides the students during tasks development								
11. It is easy to have access to the professor during tutor sessions								
12. Help in tutor sessions is useful								
13. The professor uses teaching resources adequately to make learning easier								
14. References recommended by the professor is useful to develop individual or group tasks								
15. The professor encourages students' participation								
16. The professor achieves the student show interest in the different matters developed during the learning/teaching process								
17. Evaluation method (exams, individual or group tasks) are consistent to the kind of evaluated tasks (theoretical, practical, individual or in group)								
18. The professor implements evaluation criteria included in the programme								
19. The professor makes students' learning easier; thanks to professor's help the student could improve knowledge, abilities or ways to face specific questions								
20. I improved my initial level, regarding with competences scheduled in the programme								
21. In general, I am satisfied with teaching method of this professor								

Model survey 5: Graduated students' satisfaction model survey

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No Answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

TEACHING PROCESS EVALUATION	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Do you think you achieved the planned objectives?								
2. Global organization of the degree was appropriate								
3. Infrastructures and available resources were appropriate								
4. Learning-teaching methods were appropriate								
5. Evaluation criteria and procedures were appropriate								
6. If internships available, they were appropriate								
7. If mobility exchange available, it was appropriate								
8. The Degree was interesting and it is updated								
9. In general, the Degree fulfilled my initial expectations								
TEACHING PERFORMANCE	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Student-Professor relationship was right								
11. The professor proved to know the subject								
12. In general, I am satisfied with professors' performance								
PRESENT WORK STATUS	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. My present job is related to my academic training								
14. The Degree contributed to improve my work status								
15. The Degree contributed to improve my training (professional, academic or research)								
16. The Degree is appropriate to develop professional tasks								

ACADEMIC STAFF SATISFACTION

Model survey 1: Academic staff satisfaction on planning and development

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

STUDY PLAN OBJECTIVES	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Support mechanisms to elaborate and design objectives are appropriate								
2. My participation level in elaborating objectives is appropriate								
3. Objectives are consistent to students' profile								
4. Annual review mechanisms are provided and implemented								
5. I am satisfied with objectives included in the study plan								
STUDY PLAN DESIGN	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. My participation level in planning the Degree is appropriate								
7. The planning of Master contents is different from the planning of Bachelor contents								
8. Support mechanisms to elaborate and design teaching guides are appropriate								
9. Annual review mechanisms of the contents are carried out								
10. Teaching guide of each course included in the study plan are approved by the competent University organism								
11. Students' interest and previous knowledge are taken into account when planning the teaching activities								
12. Credits assigned to each course/subject are consistent to the tasks developed by students to pass the course/subject								
13. Initial planning and scheduled activities are respected								
14. Mechanisms to provide professors' mobility are appropriate								
15. Internships planning, if part of the study plan, in external companies/enterprises is appropriate								
16. Professors' coordination for teaching discussions is appropriate								
17. Coordination of departments taking part in the programme is appropriate								
18. Coordination of partner universities taking part in the programme, in case of Double Masters or Joint Degrees, is appropriate								
19. I am satisfied with teaching planning								
DEGREE DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Teaching development is consistent to scheduled activities								
21. Knowledge, activities and abilities included in teaching guides are appropriate								
22. I take into account students' learning hours (tasks during the class and extra work) based on number of ECTS credits								
23. Evaluation procedures are consistent to the level of competences acquired by students								
24. Unexpected problems were resolved efficiently								
25. I am satisfied with the development of teaching activities								

Model survey 2: Academic staff satisfaction on support services to students

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No Answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

STUDENT'S GUIDANCE	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Mechanisms to inform students about orientation activities are appropriate								
2. Activities aimed at guide new students are appropriate								
3. Orientation activities about extra-curricular activities (mobility, external internships...) are appropriate								
4. Activities related to attention to the diversity, if necessary for students, are appropriate								
5. Support programmes help to improve knowledge acquisition and competences included in the teaching guide								
6. Tutor sessions for students are appropriate								
7. Activities related to prepare the student for making-decision after finishing the Degree are appropriate								
8. I am satisfied with activities aimed at guiding the student								

Model survey 3: Academic staff satisfaction on teaching support resources

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No Answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

ACADEMIC STAFF	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Academic staff is enough								
2. As regards professor's selection process, present regulation is applied								
3. Teaching assignment criteria are consistent to academic staff training								
4. If professional disciplines, there is enough experienced academic staff to guarantee planned objectives								
5. As regards professional academic staff's selection process, present regulation is applied								
6. I am satisfied with the number of academic staff								
RESOURCES AND SERVICES	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Classrooms (equipment, lighting, furniture, etc) are appropriate								
8. Work spaces are consistent to students' needs								
9. Laboratories and equipment are appropriate								
10. Library facilities (equipment, materials...) are appropriate								
11. Library materials are enough								
12. Access to different information sources, database, books are guaranteed to fulfill learning requirements								
13. Facilities external to the institution to develop internships are appropriate to achieve the established objectives								
14. Necessary technology to obtain, treat, transfer and present data and information is appropriate								
15. Space for academic staff to develop their activities (i.e. tutor sessions) are appropriate								
16. Spaces for administrative staff are appropriate								
17. I am satisfied with resources and services devoted to teaching activities								

Model survey 4: Academic staff satisfaction on students' group

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No Answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

STUDENTS	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Students attend classes regularly								
2. Students have previous knowledge to follow the contents								
3. Students devote enough time to prepare the course/subject								
4. Students collaborate among them to prepare and pass the course/subject								
5. Students are interested in the different matters dealt with during the classes								
6. Students participate actively in discussions and activities developed in the classrooms								
7. Students solve problems and interpret results								
8. Students use the recommended references								
9. Students carry out complementary activities (reading, works, expositions...)								
10. Students often use tutor sessions								
11. Students are satisfied with teaching-learning methodology								
12. Students are satisfied with evaluation methodology								
13. Students are satisfied with evaluation results								
14. Students talk to the professor about evaluation results								
15. Students increase competences (knowledge and abilities) during the development of the course/subject								
16. I think the course/subject fulfilled students' expectations								
18. In general, I am satisfied with the group of students								

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF SATISFACTION

Model survey 1: Administrative staff satisfaction

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

POSITION	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Work in the service is well organized								
2. Organization chart is clear and well defined								
3. My tasks and responsibilities are clearly defined								
4. In my job I can develop my abilities								
5. Tasks distribution is appropriate								
6. Relationship with other colleagues is good								
7. It is usual to collaborate to develop the tasks								
8. I feel part of a working team								
9. It is easy for me to express my opinions at work								
MANAGEMENT	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Person(s) in charge know tasks developed in the service								
11. Person(s) in charge solution the problems efficiently								
12. Person(s) in charge make decisions taking into account all staff in the service								
13. Person(s) in charge make a good monitoring of my tasks								
COMMUNICATION	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Internal information and communication in the service is appropriate								
15. Necessary information to develop my tasks is appropriate								
16. Knowledge about other services in my institution is enough								
17. Coordination among different services/units in my institution is appropriate								
18. Communication among the staff in my service is appropriate								
PHYSICAL PLACES AND RESOURCES	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Physical places devoted to the development and coordination of administrative staff's tasks are appropriate								
20. Necessary resources devoted to the development of administrative staff's tasks are appropriate								
TRAINING	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Training to develop my tasks is appropriate								
22. Training to implement new applications, procedures, etc. is appropriate								
23. When elaborating training plan, administrative staff's needs were taken into account								

INVOLVEMENT IN IMPROVEMENT	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Quality improvement is a priority objective in my service								
25. Person(s) in charge implement initiatives to improve the quality of the service								
26. I can identify some improvable matters								
SATISFACTION	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. My tasks are adequately recognized								
28. The University provides chances to develop my professional career								
29. In general, work conditions (wages, working hours, holidays...) are appropriate								
30. In general, I am satisfied with my work								

STAKEHOLDERS' SATISFACTION

Model survey 1: Stakeholders' satisfaction

ANSWERS: DK/NA (Don't know / No answer) or from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

PLANNING		DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Stakeholder's opinion is taken into account to develop study plans									
KNOWLEDGE		DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Satisfaction level of knowledge acquired by graduates	Theoretical knowledge								
	Practical knowledge								
	Language knowledge								
	Computer knowledge								
In general, knowledge acquired by graduates is consistent to tasks required in labor market									
COMPETENCES		DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Satisfaction level regarding competences acquired by graduates	Adaptation								
	Self-learning								
	Updated learning								
	Capacity to analyze and synthesize								
	Self-control								
	Ethic engagement								
	Oral and written communication								
	Ability to organize and plan								
	Creativity								
	Ability to apply knowledge to practical questions								
	Technical experience								
	Analysis								
	Leadership								
	Motivation								
	Business ability								
	Solidarity								
	Pressure tolerance								
	Decision-making								
	Work in group and cooperation								
	Individual work								
Ability to assume responsibilities									

	Problems resolution								
In general, competences acquired by graduates are consistent to tasks required in labor market									
SATISFACTION WITH GRADUATES	DK/NA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
In general, graduates meets present needs and demands in labor market									
In general, graduates' profile is adequate									
In general, professional development is satisfactory									
SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS									

ANNEX V

**TEMPLATE FOR A DOUBLE DEGREE
AGREEMENT UNDER THE RETHINKe PROJECT**

ANNEX V: TEMPLATE FOR A DOUBLE DEGREE AGREEMENT UNDER THE RETHINKE PROJECT

Double Degree Agreement

on

[TITLE]

between

HEI's official name

And

HEI's official name

The [name of the HEI], hereinafter referred as [acronym], represented by [name of the representative] and the [name of the HEI], hereinafter referred as [acronym], represented by [name of the representative],

Agree on the following terms regarding a **DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAMME** on [name of the programme]

1. PURPOSE OF THE AGREEMENT AND RELEVANCE FOR THE RETHINKe PROJECT

The aim of this agreement is to establish a double degree programme with regard to these official degrees:

- a. Master/PhD in [name of the first programme], official degree of the current academic offer of [acronym of HEI].
- b. Master/PhD in [name of the first programme], official degree of the current academic offer of [acronym of HEI].

By means of this agreement, students enrolled in one of these programmes could be awarded with both degrees, providing that they fulfil the conditions and requirements established in the following clauses.

The double degree set up by this agreement is intended to be a relevant academic tool to achieve the following basic objectives of the RETHINKe project in the field/s of [environmental sciences / climate engineering / urban planning / architecture]:

- a)
- b)
- c)

2. MUTUAL CREDIT RECOGNITION UNDER THIS AGREEMENT

Students taking part in this double degree programme will have to get a total of [number] ECTS credits to be awarded with both degrees. Part of those total ECTS credits must be earned at the student's home institution and other part at the other university involved in this double programme.

All the ECTS credits and grades awarded by one university to students taking part in this double degree programme will be fully recognized by the other institution, according to the terms and conditions established in the Annex to this agreement.

3. DOUBLE DEGREE STUDY PROGRAMME

Students participating in the double degree programme must follow the study programme set out in this agreement's Annex in order to be awarded with both degrees.

The administrative procedure to obtain each official degree after having completed the study programme is defined and managed by the issuing institution.

A new edition of the double degree programme will take place every academic year, only provided that both titles are officially implemented during that year at the partner institutions.

4. NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Every year a maximum number of [number] students from each party will take part in this double programme. Each partner institution will reserve the necessary places for these students in the programmes affected by this agreement.

This number may be increased by mutual written consent.

5. ENROLMENT CONDITIONS

Both institutions will set up a proper internal procedure to select the students that will take part in the double degree among those enrolled in the degrees affected by this agreement. The conditions of access to the double degree will be stipulated by each institution.

In any case, every student taking part in this programme must, at least, accredit a CEFRL «B1» level in English language.

[Other special conditions required from the students should be established here]

Students' home university will communicate by the [date for giving notice of the participating student to the other party] a list with the name, passport and other relevant data of all the students taking part in this programme. All the students included in this list will be also registered as ordinary degree seeking students at the other institution. Students will pay their regular tuition fees and taxes at the home institution. No further tuition costs will be charged by the host institution, except for the following: [fees that will be charged by the host institution]

For all purposes, students will be considered as students enrolled at the two universities.

6. MANDATORY STUDENT MOBILITY

Mobility in accordance to this agreement's clauses is mandatory for every student taking part in the double degree programme. Teaching staff mobility could be eventually required as well.

Whenever available, student and teaching staff mobility will be carried out under the Erasmus+ programme. The parties agree on establishing a specific Erasmus+ exchange agreement suitable to implement this provision.

Should the Erasmus+ programme be not available to finance the mobility, this double degree agreement, in itself, is considered by both parties a valid agreement for exchanging students and staff. These exchanges will take place according to the following terms:

6.1. Duration of student exchanges

The exchange period shall not exceed the provisions of the learning programme included in the Annex.

6.2. Exchange conditions

- a) Exchanges students will conform to the requirements established in this agreement and will be subject to all the rules and procedures of the home and the host institutions.
- b) Exchange students will be enrolled as regular degree seeking students in the programme of the host institution affected by this agreement. During the exchange period all of them will be registered and attend the courses and activities established in the learning programme included in the Annex.
- c) Exchange students will be provided with the same academic resources and supporting services as normally provided to regular students at the host institution of the same academic level.
- d) Exchange students shall take out appropriate health, life and non-life insurance.
- e) Both institutions undertake to award official transcripts of academic records to the students. These transcripts shall be communicated to the other party in order to get the full academic recognition established in section 2.
- f) The host institution will help exchange students in the search of accommodation by providing all the available information.

6.3 Financial Responsibilities

Exchange students will be responsible for the payment of housing-related costs, transportation, food, life, non-life and medical insurance, medical treatment and all other personal expenses.

7. FACULTY EXCHANGES

Both parties agree on the possibility of exchanging Faculty. This mobility will be governed by specific arrangements between the parties. The details of such arrangements will be negotiated at the appropriate time, according to the academic needs of the double programme and the available funding.

8. ACADEMIC COMMISSION

In order to ensure the good development of the double degree programme, an Academic Commission will be formed including the coordinators of both degrees and one additional representative named by each institution.

This Academic Commission will be responsible to examine the efficiency of the learning programme and the academic results achieved by the students, as well as the resources supplied by both institutions.

The Academic Commission will also be in charge of suggesting modifications suitable to improve the programme quality. The members of this Commission will meet, either personally or on-line, at least once a year.

9. FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

The signature of this agreement does not mean any financial commitment for any of the parties.

10. PROCEDURE FOR DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The parties agree to resolve any dispute arising from the interpretation or performance of the present agreement by common consent. In case that the dispute could not be solved that way, it will be resolved by arbitration of a technical commission formed by three members. Each party will designate a member of the arbitration commission and the third member will be agreed by both parties.

11. ENTRY IN FORCE AND DURATION OF THE AGREEMENT

The present agreement shall entry in force after being signed by both parties. The agreement is valid for a period of 5 years and may be renewed for identical periods with the express written consent of the two parties.

12. CONTACT DATA FOR NOTICES REGARDING THIS AGREEMENT:

[name of the party HEI]

Contact:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

[name of the party HEI]

Contact:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

In witness whereof, the present agreement is signed in duplicate by the official representatives of both institutions.

Name: _____

Function: _____

Institution: _____

Name: _____

Function: _____

Institution: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

ANNEX DOUBLE DEGREE AGREEMENT

STUDY PROGRAMME

The study plan has to include sufficient and clear information about the following matters:

- Structure of both degrees: number of semesters, number of credits required, degree's specialties (if applicable), etc.
- A list of the courses that students have to take at home and abroad for getting both degrees and the moment where they are expected to go abroad. If the study plan allows two or more academic paths to achieve both titles, all of them must be clearly exposed as different options for the students
- Academic conditions for the exposition and public defence of the final dissertation/project.
- Other academic conditions to fulfill by students to get the award(s): internships, on-line additional courses, other academic activities...
- Grading systems of both institutions and grading conversion system that will be applied to students participating in the double programme.

ANNEX VI

**INTER-INSTITUTIONAL ERASMUS +
AGREEMENT BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS FROM
PROGRAMME AND PARTNER COUNTRIES**

ANNEX VI: INTER-INSTITUTIONAL ERASMUS + AGREEMENT BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS FROM PROGRAMME AND PARTNER COUNTRIES

Erasmus+ Programme Key Action 1 – Mobility for learners and staff – Higher Education Student and Staff Mobility

Inter-institutional⁵ agreement 2014-20[21]⁶ between institutions from programme and partner countries

[Minimum requirements]⁷

The institutions named below agree to cooperate for the exchange of students and/or staff in the context of the Erasmus+ programme. They commit to respect the quality requirements of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education in all aspects of the organisation and management of the mobility, in particular the recognition of the credits (or equivalent) awarded to students by the partner institution. The institutions also commit to sound and transparent management of funds allocated to them through Erasmus+.

A. Information about the higher education institutions

Full name of the institution / country	Erasmus code or city ⁸	Name of the contact person	Contact details (email, phone)	Website (eg. of the course catalogue)
[...]				

⁵ Inter-institutional agreements can be signed by two or more higher education institutions (HEIs), at least one of them must be located in a Programme Country of Erasmus+.

⁶ Higher education institutions have to agree on the period of validity of this agreement.

⁷ Clauses may be added to this template agreement to better reflect the nature of the institutional partnership.

⁸ Higher Education Institutions (HEI) from Erasmus+ programme countries should indicate their Erasmus code while Partner Countries HEI should mention the city where they are located.

B. Mobility numbers⁹ per academic year

[Paragraph to be added if the agreement is signed for more than one academic year:]

The partners commit to amend the table below in case of changes in the mobility data by the end of January at the latest in the preceding academic year.]

FROM [Erasmus code or city of the sending institution]	TO ⁷ [Erasmus code or city of the receiving institution]	Subject area code * [ISCED 2013]	Subject area name *	Study cycle [short cycle, 1 st , 2 nd or 3 rd] *	Number of student mobility periods	
					Student Mobility for Studies [total number of months of the study periods or average duration*]	Student Mobility for Traineeships* [Not relevant for 2015]

*[*Optional: subject code & name and study cycle are optional. Inter-institutional agreements are not compulsory for Student Mobility for Traineeships or Staff mobility for Training. Institutions may agree to cooperate on the organisation of traineeship; in this case they should indicate the number of students that they intend to send to the partner country. Total duration in months/days of the student/staff mobility periods or average duration can be indicated if relevant.]*

FROM ⁷ [Erasmus code or city of the sending institution]	TO ⁷ [Erasmus code or city of the receiving institution]	Subject area code * [ISCED 2013]	Subject area name *	Number of staff mobility periods	
				Staff Mobility for Teaching [total number of days of the teaching periods or average duration*]	Staff Mobility for Training *

⁹ Mobility numbers can be given per sending/receiving institutions and per education field (optional*: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/international-standard-classification-of-education.aspx>)

C. Recommended language skills

The sending institution, following agreement with the receiving institution, is responsible for providing support to its nominated candidates so that they can have the recommended language skills at the start of the study or teaching period.

Receiving institution [Erasmus code or city]	Optional: Subject area	Main language of instruction	Additional language of instruction	Recommended language of instruction level ¹⁰	
				Student Mobility for Studies [Minimum recommended level: B1]	Staff Mobility for Teaching [Minimum recommended level: B2]

For more details on the language of instruction recommendations, see the course catalogue of each institution [Links provided on the first page].

D. Respect of fundamental principles and other mobility requirements

The higher education institution(s) located in a **programme country**¹¹ of Erasmus+ must respect the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education of which it must be a holder. The charter can be found here:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/funding/2014/call_the_charter_en.php

The higher education institution(s) located in a **partner country** of Erasmus+ must respect the following set of principles and requirements:

The higher education institution agrees to:

- Respect in full the principles of non-discrimination and to promote and ensure equal access and opportunities to mobile participants from all backgrounds, in particular disadvantaged or vulnerable groups.
- Apply a selection process that is fair, transparent and documented, ensuring equal opportunities to participants eligible for mobility.
- Ensure recognition for satisfactorily completed activities of study mobility and, where possible, traineeships of its mobile students.
- Charge no fees, in the case of credit mobility, to incoming students for tuition, registration, examinations or access to laboratory and library facilities. Nevertheless, they may be charged small fees on the same basis as local students for costs such as insurance, student unions and the use of miscellaneous material.

¹⁰ See Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

¹¹ Erasmus+ programme countries are the 28 EU countries, the EFTA countries and other European countries as defined in the Call for proposals.

The higher education institution located in a **partner country** of Erasmus further undertakes to:

Before mobility

- Provide information on courses (content, level, scope, language) well in advance of the mobility periods, so as to be transparent to all parties and allow mobile students to make well-informed choices about the courses they will follow.
- Ensure that outbound mobile participants are well prepared for the mobility, including having attained the necessary level of linguistic proficiency.
- Ensure that student and staff mobility for education or training purposes is based on a learning agreement for students and a mobility agreement for staff validated in advance between the sending and receiving institutions or enterprises and the mobile participants.
- Provide assistance related to obtaining visas, when required, for incoming and outbound mobile participants. Costs for visas can be covered with the mobility grants. See the information / visa section for contact details.
- Provide assistance related to obtaining insurance, when required, for incoming and outbound mobile participants. The institution from the Partner country should inform mobile participants of cases in which insurance cover is not automatically provided. Costs for insurance can be covered with the organisational support grants. See the information / insurance section for contact details.
- Provide guidance to incoming mobile participants in finding accommodation. See the information / housing section for contact details.

During and after mobility

- Ensure equal academic treatment and services for home students and staff and incoming mobile participants and integrate incoming mobile participants into the institution's everyday life, and have in place appropriate mentoring and support arrangements for mobile participants as well as appropriate linguistic support to incoming mobile participants.
- Accept all activities indicated in the learning agreement as counting towards the degree, provided these have been satisfactorily completed by the mobile student.
- Provide, free-of-charge, incoming mobile students and their sending institutions with transcripts in English or in the language of the sending institution containing a full, accurate and timely record of their achievements at the end of their mobility period.
- Support the reintegration of mobile participants and give them the opportunity, upon return, to build on their experiences for the benefit of the Institution and their peers.
- Ensure that staff are given recognition for their teaching and training activities undertaken during the mobility period, based on a mobility agreement.

E. Any additional requirements

[To be completed if necessary. Other requirements may be agreed on academic or organisational aspects, e.g. the selection criteria for students and staff; measures for preparing, receiving and integrating mobile students and/or staff including cultural preparation before mobility; the recognition tools used]

[Please specify whether the institutions have the infrastructure to welcome students and staff with disabilities.]

F. Calendar

1. Applications/information on nominated students must reach the receiving institution by:

Receiving institution	Autumn term*	Spring term*
[Erasmus code or city]	[month]	[month]

[to be adapted in case of a trimester system or different seasons]*

- The receiving institution will send its decision within [x] weeks.
- A Transcript of Records will be issued by the receiving institution no later than [xx] weeks after the assessment period has finished at the receiving HEI. *[It should normally not exceed five weeks according to the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education guidelines]*
- Termination of the agreement
[It is up to the involved institutions to agree on the procedure for modifying or terminating the inter-institutional agreement. However, in the event of unilateral termination, a notice of at least one academic year should be given. This means that a unilateral decision to discontinue the exchanges notified to the other party by 1 September 20XX will only take effect as of 1 September 20XX+1. The termination clauses must include the following disclaimer: "Neither the European Commission nor the National Agencies can be held responsible in case of a conflict."]

G. Information

1. Grading systems of the institutions

[It is recommended that receiving institutions provide the statistical distribution of grades according to the descriptions in the ECTS users' guide¹². A link to a webpage can be enough. The table will facilitate the interpretation of each grade awarded to students and will facilitate the credit transfer by the sending institution.]

¹² http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/ects_en.htm

2. Visa

The sending and receiving institutions will provide assistance, when required, in securing visas for incoming and outbound mobile participants, according to the requirements of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education.

Information and assistance can be provided by the following contact points and information sources:

Institution [Erasmus code or city]	Contact details (e-mail, phone)	Website for information

3. Insurance

The sending and receiving institutions will provide assistance in obtaining insurance for incoming and outbound mobile participants, according to the requirements of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education.

The receiving institution will inform mobile participants of cases in which insurance cover is not automatically provided. Information and assistance can be provided by the following contact points and information sources:

Institution [Erasmus code or city]	Contact details (e-mail, phone)	Website for information

4. Housing

The receiving institution will guide incoming mobile participants in finding accommodation, according to the requirements of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education.

Information and assistance can be provided by the following persons and information sources:

Institution [Erasmus code or city]	Contact details (e-mail, phone)	Website for information

SIGNATURES OF THE INSTITUTIONS (legal representatives)

Institution [Erasmus code or name and city]	Name, function	Date	Signature