

ENQA Agency Review of UKÄ

- Overview
- Questions to other agencies
- *Commendations and recommendations from ENQA and EQAR 2020/21*
- *UKÄ actions*

ENQA 2020

ESG	Standard
3.1	ACTIVITIES, POLICY, AND PROCESSES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
3.2	OFFICIAL STATUS
3.3	INDEPENDENCE
3.4	THEMATIC ANALYSIS
3.5	RESOURCES
3.6	INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
3.7	CYCLICAL EXTERNAL REVIEW OF AGENCIES

ESG	Standard
2.1	CONSIDERATION OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
2.2	DESIGNING METHODOLOGIES FIT FOR PURPOSE
2.3	IMPLEMENTING PROCESSES
2.4	PEER-REVIEW EXPERTS
2.5	CRITERIA FOR OUTCOMES
2.6	REPORTING
2.7	COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Fully compliant

Substantially compliant

Partially compliant

ENQA/EQAR – questions for other agencies

- **The self-assessment process and report:** During your last agency review, did you try any new and innovative ways to conduct the process (or write the report) that you would like to share? Pros and cons?
- **ESG interpretation:** During your last agency review, did you experience any challenges with the interpretation of the ESG from the review panel and in particular from EQAR? Any standard(s) in particular?

ENQA vs EQAR 2020/21

Standard	Review panel conclusion	Register Committee conclusion
2.1	Full compliance	Compliance
2.2	Substantial compliance	Compliance
2.3	Substantial compliance	Partial compliance
2.4	Full compliance	Compliance
2.5	Full compliance	Compliance
2.6	Full compliance	Compliance
2.7	Partial compliance	Partial compliance
3.1	Full compliance	Compliance
3.2	Full compliance	Compliance
3.3	Substantial compliance	Partial compliance
3.4	Full compliance	Compliance
3.5	Full compliance	Compliance
3.6	Full compliance	Compliance
3.7	(not expected)	Compliance (by virtue of applying)

ESG	Judgement 2020	ENQA	EQAR
<p>ESG 3.3 INDEPENDENCE Agencies should be independent and act autonomously. They should have full responsibility for their operations and the outcomes of those operations without third party influence.</p>	<p>ENQA: Substantially compliant</p> <p>EQAR: Partially compliant</p>	<p>Recommendation: The panel recommends that UKÄ should take measures to <u>further safeguard its capacity to independently design its methodologies</u> in external quality assurance.</p>	<p>Concerns about the <u>Government's control of all major appointments</u>. In particular, the way in which the <u>Director General</u> is selected is not fully transparent. Unclear whether involvement of stakeholders in appointing the <u>Advisory Board</u> is secured in official documents. The <u>potential conflict of interest of the Director General</u> does not seem to be fully addressed through formal means by the agency. <u>Additional tasks</u> from the Government might endanger the independence of the <u>planning process</u>, and might also impact <u>work overload</u> of staff.</p>
<p>ESG 2.2 DESIGNING METHODOLOGIES FIT FOR PURPOSE External quality assurance should be defined and designed specifically to ensure its fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for it, while taking into account relevant regulations. Stakeholders should be involved in its design and continuous improvement.</p>	<p>ENQA: Substantially compliant</p> <p>EQAR: Compliant</p>	<p>Recommendation: The panel recommends UKÄ to go further in <u>reducing the HEIs' workload</u> in its quality assurance activities. In doing so, UKÄ should consider to which extent the different activities can be <u>integrated</u> or <u>complement</u> each other better.</p>	<p>(No recommendation)</p>

ESG	Judgement 2020	ENQA	EQAR
<p>ESG 2.3 IMPLEMENTING PROCESSES</p> <p>External quality assurance processes should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a self-assessment or equivalent - an external assessment normally including a site visit - a report resulting from the external assessment - a consistent follow-up 	<p>ENQA: Substantially compliant</p> <p>EQAR: Partially compliant</p>	<p>Recommendation 1: The panel recommends UKÄ to establish a pre-defined <u>follow-up</u> mechanism for programmes with a positive assessment in the appraisals of <i>degree awarding powers</i> aiming at supporting these programmes in maintaining high quality.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: The <u>panel also recommends</u> UKÄ to more clearly define the <u>follow-up</u> procedures for those institutions and programmes that have received a <u>positive assessment</u> in the <i>institutional reviews</i> and in the programme evaluations.</p>	<p>The absence of any standard framework or guidance as to the use of <u>site visits</u> or <u>interviews</u> in thematic evaluations, makes it unclear whether the agency has sufficient approaches to validate the evidences provided by HEIs in this activity.</p> <p>The suitability of <u>online interviews</u> instead of regular site visits in the activities <u>program evaluation and appraisal of applications for degree-awarding powers</u>.</p>
<p>ESG 2.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS</p> <p>Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.</p>	<p>ENQA: Partially compliant</p> <p>EQAR: Partially compliant</p>	<p>Recommendation 1: The panel recommends the agency to establish a <u>complaints procedure</u>. The procedure should be made known to all concerned parties.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: The panel recommends <u>extending the powers of the appeals committee to make recommendations to UKÄ</u> on how to correct errors in quality assurance procedures that potentially can have affected the assessment outcome.</p>	<p>UKÄ has no formal <u>complaints procedure</u> in place.</p> <p>The fact that the <u>appeals committee cannot make recommendations</u> how to correct potential errors, could undermine the authority of the appeals committee.</p>

Follow-up report to ENQA 2022

ESG	Judgement 2020	Recommendation	Action
<p>ESG 3.3 INDEPENDENCE Agencies should be independent and act autonomously. They should have full responsibility for their operations and the outcomes of those operations without third party influence.</p>	<p>Substantially compliant (EQAR: Partially compliant)</p>	<p>Recommendation: The panel recommends that UKÄ should take measures to <u>further safeguard its capacity to independently design its methodologies</u> in external quality assurance.</p>	<p>No action or change in regulation. Explanation of UKÄ's organisational and operational independence, and independence of formal outcomes, as an independent government agency vis-à-vis the government and the sector.</p>
<p>ESG 2.2 DESIGNING METHODOLOGIES FIT FOR PURPOSE External quality assurance should be defined and designed specifically to ensure its fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for it, while taking into account relevant regulations. Stakeholders should be involved in its design and continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Substantially compliant (EQAR: Compliant)</p>	<p>Recommendation: The panel recommends UKÄ to go further in <u>reducing the HEIs' workload</u> in its quality assurance activities. In doing so, UKÄ should consider to which extent the different activities can be <u>integrated</u> or <u>complement</u> each other better.</p>	<p>Comprehensive review of the national quality assurance framework. Principles: more accurate, flexible, knowledge-based, resource-efficient, less burdensome for HEIs, assessors and UKÄ. Fewer assessment criteria. Coordinated review.</p>

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<p>ESG 2.3 IMPLEMENTING PROCESSES</p> <p>External quality assurance processes should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a self-assessment or equivalent - an external assessment normally including a site visit - a report resulting from the external assessment - a consistent follow-up 	<p>Substantially compliant (EQAR: Partially compliant)</p>	<p>Recommendation 1: The panel recommends UKÄ to establish a pre-defined <u>follow-up</u> mechanism for programmes with a positive assessment in the appraisals of <u>degree awarding powers</u> aiming at supporting these programmes in maintaining high quality.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: The <u>panel also recommends</u> UKÄ to more clearly define the <u>follow-up</u> procedures for those institutions and programmes that have received a <u>positive assessment</u> in the institutional reviews and in the programme evaluations.</p>	<p>Recommendation 1 + 2:</p> <p>Follow-up of ETP through UU, LSG or TU must be knowledge-based, development-oriented, predictable and not increase the workload of HEIs. The reviews partly have different purposes and evaluation objects, which speaks against general follow-up of ETP through UU, LSG or TU.</p> <p>In addition, UKÄ’s review/evaluation ‘owing to certain circumstances’ is an opportunity for follow-up.</p> <p>Since 2022, follow-up procedures have been further developed.</p>
<p>ESG 2.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS</p> <p>Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.</p>	<p>Partially compliant (EQAR: Partially compliant)</p>	<p>Recommendation 1: The panel recommends the agency to establish a <u>complaints procedure</u>. The procedure should be made known to all concerned parties.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: The panel recommends <u>extending the powers of the appeals committee to make recommendations to UKÄ</u> on how to correct errors in quality assurance procedures that potentially can have affected the assessment outcome.</p>	<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>No special complaints procedure introduced for quality assurance activities so far (but on its way!). Reference to dialogue, the <i>Ethical Foundations of the State – professional values for good governance</i>, and UKÄ's whistleblower function on uka.se:https://www.uka.se/om-oss/kontakta-oss. The Parliamentary Ombudsmen (JO).</p> <p>Recommendation 2: Done.</p>

ENQA commendations

- ESG 3.1 The panel witnessed a **great involvement of students**. From its meeting with students and all other stakeholders, the panel learned that students participate actively in the Advisory Board, reference groups and play an active role in nominating students for panels.
- ESG 3.6 The panel commends the **richness of observed IQA documents** as well as applauds their thorough preparation for **supporting UKÄ's internal quality assurance and professional conduct**.
- ESG 2.2 The panel commends on the **involvement of stakeholders** in UKÄ's search to ensure fitness for purpose in its quality assurance activities.

Risks?

- ESG 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance:
 - ESG 1.4 Student admission, progression, **recognition** and certification
- ESG 2.3 Implementing processes: (online) site visits, follow-up
- ESG 2.7 **Complaints** and appeals

- ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance: **QA of research** as part of institutional reviews – one or two EQA activities?
- ESG 3.3 Independence