

Quality Assurance of Higher Education in Slovakia International Context

Path to ESG Compliance

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SAAHE is

- ENQA member
- EQAR registered
- WFME recognized
- ENAI member
- CoARA signaturer
- INQAHE member

In Slovakia

- Accreditation Committee as a state government advisory body operated since 1993
- 2013 - ENQA Agency Review of former Accreditation Committee result: non-compliant, main issue – independence and others

Nature of Changes in Slovak HE

- From accreditation of individual study programmes to institutional responsibility
- From (state) accreditation to independent quality assurance
- From „auditing“ to assurance and enhancement (ESG 2015), balanced involvement of stakeholders
- From formal evaluation to content peer reviews (a pool of reviewers)

Timeline for QA in Slovakia

- **2014-2018:** preparation of a new legal framework
- March 2019: SAAHE executive board
- **2019-2020:** issuance of accreditation standards (criteria)
- **2020-2022:** HEIs complying with standards
- **2020-** study programme accreditation within ESG
- **2022** institutional internal systems of QA
- **2023-2024:** initial institutional accreditation

Timeline for international recognition plan

- The first accreditation within the ESG compliant framework
- Application for ENQA Agency Review
- ENQA Review Panel site visit
- EQAR registration Committee
- ENQA Agency Review Committee and ENQA Board
- Application for WFME review

ENQA SEQA-ESG project (SAAHE)

- Six affiliates willing to comply ESG
(Albania, Czech Republic, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, and Slovakia)
- Initial meeting with ENQA, EQAR, Ministry and SAAHE
(online cca 2021)
- National Action Plan (Ministry and SAAHE)
- Specialized workshops
- Progress visit (2022)

Approaching ENQA and EQAR

- ENQA Affiliate since 2021
- Application Letter to ENQA Feb. 2022 (earliest possible term)
- Preparation of Self-Assessment Report March-September 22
- Terms Of Reference agreement (ENQA, EQAR and SAAHE)
- Site visit of review panel March 2023
- ENQA review panel report published September 2023
- EQAR decision December 2023
- ENQA decision February 2024

Benefits of ENQA membership

- Access to ENQA services and events
 - General Assembly
 - Members Forum
 - QA agencies CEOs meetings
 - Webinars, workshops, and other events organized by ENQA
 - Staff mobilities for knowledge sharing and capacity building
 - ENQA Leadership Development Programme

Bonus „benefits“

- Thanks to our successful road to ENQA membership SAAHE is actively contributing to ENQA
 - experts are being invited to speak at workshops and meetings
 - is requested to share experience with several other agencies seeking guidance for ENQA membership (Ukraine, Kosovo, Bosna and Hercegovina, Azerbaijan)
 - is hosting staff mobilities from other agencies
 - participate on QA-FIT project – preparation for ESG update

WFME Recognition Award

- World Federation of Medical Education (Geneve)
- Request for review 2023
- Application with self-evaluation report
- Panel site visit november 2023
- Decision on awarding the recognition status 2024

Factors of Success

- Legislation compliant with ESG
- International resources
 - Learning from **ENQA/EQAR public documentation**
 - Project **SEQA-ESG, ENQA Leadership Programme**
 - Learning from other agencies (**staff mobilities, observers, best practice**)
- Trainings/briefings
 - All stakeholders (HEIs, students and employers), incl. staff & reviewers
- Agency's strategic planning & rapid improvements
 - (internal PDCA cycles shortened & "asynchronous")

What next?

- Lessons learned:
Importance of trainings, cooperation, discussions
- **Next: optimisation** of processes and criteria
- **Internationalisation** as a tool for criteria simplification
 - European Approach of Quality Assurance of Joint Study Programmes (for University Alliances...)
 - Cross-border Quality Assurance