

# **First draft of the revised Standards and Guidelines for the Quality Assurance in the EHEA**



**Prof. A.Rauhvargers**

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- ... The initial proposal to be prepared by the E4: ENQA, EUA, EURASHE and ESU

in cooperation with:

- Education International,
- BUSINESSEUROPE
- EQAR - European Quality Assurance Register for HE



## Next steps and timeline

- 8 Nov: Discussion of initial draft proposal at BFUG Policy Seminar
- Jan/Feb: Steering Group meetings
- Beginning of March: Submission of draft proposal to BFUG

Current ESG – Part 1		Draft initial proposal – Part 1
1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance		1.1 Policy and processes for quality assurance
1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards		1.2 Design and approval of programmes
1.3 Assessment of students		1.3 Student-centred learning
1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff		1.4 Student admission, progression and completion
1.5 Learning resources and student support		1.5 Development of teaching staff
1.6 Information systems		1.6 Learning resources and student support
1.7 Public information		1.7 Information management
		1.8 Public information
		1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes
		1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

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The diagram illustrates the mapping between the 'Current ESG – Part 1' and the 'Draft initial proposal – Part 1'. Blue arrows indicate the following correspondences:

- 1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards → 1.2 Design and approval of programmes
- 1.3 Assessment of students → 1.3 Student-centred learning
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# Main Changes in Part 1

1.2: Old 1.2 separated in new 1.2 and 1.9.

- Design of programme is mentioned more explicitly,
- Reference to: LO, ECTS, NQFs and QF-EHEA.
- 1.3: *New*. Emphasis on student centred learning. Teaching and learning more in the focus.

1.4: (first half)

- Admission, progression and completion mentioned more explicitly, reference to
- Assessment of achieving the intended learning outcomes.

## **1.4 (second half) *NEW***

**Fair recognition of qualifications, study periods and RPL, are essential parts of HEIs work**

### **Institutions will:**

- Ensure that institutional practice for recognition is in line with the Lisbon Convention;
- Cooperate with ENIC/NARIC centre and other HEIs to ensure coherent recognition countrywide.

### **Institutions will provide graduates with:**

- documentation explaining the qualification gained,
- including achieved learning outcomes and
- the context, level and status of the studies completed

# Main Changes in Part 1 (contd)

- 1.6: Diversity of student population emphasized.
- 1.10: *New*. Moved here from 2.7.



Current ESG – Part 2		Draft initial proposal - Part 2
2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures		2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance
2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes		2.2 Designing processes fit for purpose
2.3 Criteria for decisions		2.3 Processes
2.4 Processes fit for purpose		2.4 Criteria for formal outcomes
2.5 Reporting		2.5 Reporting
2.6 Follow-up procedures		2.6 Complaints and appeals
2.7 Periodic reviews		<i><b>moved to part 1 and to part 3</b></i>
2.8 System-wide analyses		<i><b>moved to part 3.</b></i>

# Main Changes in Part 2

Text regarding

- development of procedures,
- standards for procedures and criteria were slightly rearranged and underlined

2.3: Student participation emphasized,

- Publication of full reports. (*Moved from 3.7*)

2.5: Publication of full reports.

2.6: Relevance of appeals procedure emphasized (*Moved here from 3.7*)

*2.7 moved to Part 1 and Part 3;*

*2.8 was moved to Part 3.*

Current ESG – Part 3		Draft initial proposal – Part 3
3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education		3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance
3.2 Official status		3.2 Official status
3.3 Activities		3.3 Independence
3.4 Resources		3.4 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct of the agencies
3.5 Mission statement		3.5 Thematic reflection and analysis
3.6 Independence		3.6 Resources
3.7 External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies		
3.8 Accountability procedures		

The diagram illustrates the mapping between the current ESG Part 3 and the draft initial proposal Part 3. Arrows indicate the following relationships:

- Current 3.1 maps to Draft 3.1.
- Current 3.2 maps to Draft 3.2.
- Current 3.3 maps to Draft 3.3.
- Current 3.4 maps to Draft 3.4.
- Current 3.5 maps to Draft 3.5.
- Current 3.6 maps to Draft 3.6.
- Current 3.7 maps to Draft 3.5.
- Current 3.8 maps to Draft 3.4.

# Main Changes in Part 3

The content of the standards is slightly rearranged.

3.2: Recognizing public authority does not have to be from an EHEA country.

3.3: Notion of independence explained better

3.4: Professional conduct added,  
also if to working in another country;

*3.7 is moved to part 2.*

## Guiding principles for the revision

- Keep the strengths: integrated concept and understanding of QA, broad applicability, broad ownership
- Overcome the weaknesses: vagueness, redundancies, inconsistencies
- Update: ESG as part of the 'Bologna-Infrastructure', taking into account recent developments in QA and HE
- Guarantee adaptability to future developments
- Keep a balance between changing as much as possible and as little as possible

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- Current ESG – Part 1 Draft initial proposal – Part 1
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## Context

- “...stronger link between **research, teaching and learning** at all levels. **Study programmes** must reflect changing **research priorities...**, **research should underpin teaching and learning...**” (Bucharest, 2012)
- “... **promote quality**, transparency, employability and mobility **in the third cycle...**” (Bucharest, 2012);
- “Explore ... quality and quality assurance procedures **in doctoral training**” (ToR, n. 5);
- ... implementation of the
  - Salzburg Recommendations and on the
  - Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training.

## **Principles for quality assurance in the EHEA:**

1. Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality;
2. QA processes respond to the diversity of HE systems, HEIs & programmes;
3. QA supports the development of a quality culture;
4. QA processes involve stakeholders and take into account the expectations of all stakeholders and society.



# 1.1 Policy and processes for QA

## Standard:

- Institutions should have a **public quality assurance policy** that reflects institutional vision and strategy, linking it to strategic management of the HEI.
- The **policy should be put into practice through the quality assurance processes, managed by appropriate structures.**
- **Stakeholders should be involved in the development and implementation of policy and processes.**

## 1.1 Policy and processes for QA - guidelines

Such a policy supports

- The institution's strategy for assuring and enhancing its quality;
- The organisation of the QA system;
- **Departments, faculties etc. as well as institutional leadership, staff members and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance;**
- Processes that ensure academic freedom;
- **Processes to guard against intolerance or discrimination against the students or staff;**
- **Involvement of external stakeholders in QA**

## 1.2 Design and approval of programmes

### Standard:

- Institutions **have processes** for the design and approval of their programmes.
- Programmes should be designed so that they match the objectives set for them.
- The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national QF for higher education and, consequently, to the QF-EHEA

## 1.2 Design and approval of programmes

### GUIDELINES

- Programmes are designed with programme objectives and have explicit intended **learning outcomes**.
- Students are involved in the design of the programme.
- **External expertise** is taken into consideration.
- Programmes **should ensure smooth student** progression
- Different modes of delivery are carefully planned and expected student workload is defined
- The formal approval of the programme is independent of the designing or teaching entity.

## 1.3 Student-centred learning

### Standard:

- Institutions should embed **student-centred learning approaches** in their programmes.
- The way in which the programmes are delivered should encourage students to take an active role in co-creating the learning process.

## 1.3 Student-centred learning. Guidelines:

When implementing student-centred learning, institutions will want to ensure the following aspects:

- Respecting the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;
- The flexible use of a variety of pedagogical methods to support the learning needs
- **Regular feedback** to adjust the pedagogical methods;
- **Encouraging a sense of autonomy in the learner**, while assuring guidance and support;
- Promoting **learner-teacher mutual respect**

## **1.4 Student admission, progression and completion**

### **Standard:**

- HEIs should have pre-defined, published and consistently applied regulations covering all phases of the student “life cycle”, e.g. student admission, assessment, recognition and certification

## 1.4 Student admission, progression and completion

Institutions will want to ensure that:

- **Assessors are familiar with examination methods** and receive support in developing skills in this field;
- The **criteria and method of assessment are published in advance**;
- The achieved **learning outcomes** are compared to the intended LOs. Students receive feedback;
- Where possible, use **more than one examiner**;
- The regulations take into account mitigating **circumstances, e.g. illness**;
- Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students, in accordance with the stated procedures, documented;



## **1.4 (second half)**

**Fair recognition of qualifications, study periods and RPL, are essential parts of HEIs work**

### **Institutions will:**

- Ensure that institutional practice for recognition is in line with the Lisbon Convention;
- Cooperate with ENIC/NARIC centre and other HEIs to ensure coherent recognition countrywide.

### **Institutions will provide graduates with:**

- documentation explaining the qualification gained,
- including achieved learning outcomes and
- the context, level and status of the studies completed



## 1.5 Development of teaching staff

### Standard:

Institutions should have fair and transparent **processes for recruitment and development of staff** that allow them to assure themselves of the competence of their teachers

## 1.5 Development of teaching staff

Since HEIs have primary responsibility for quality of their staff, they will want to ensure that they:

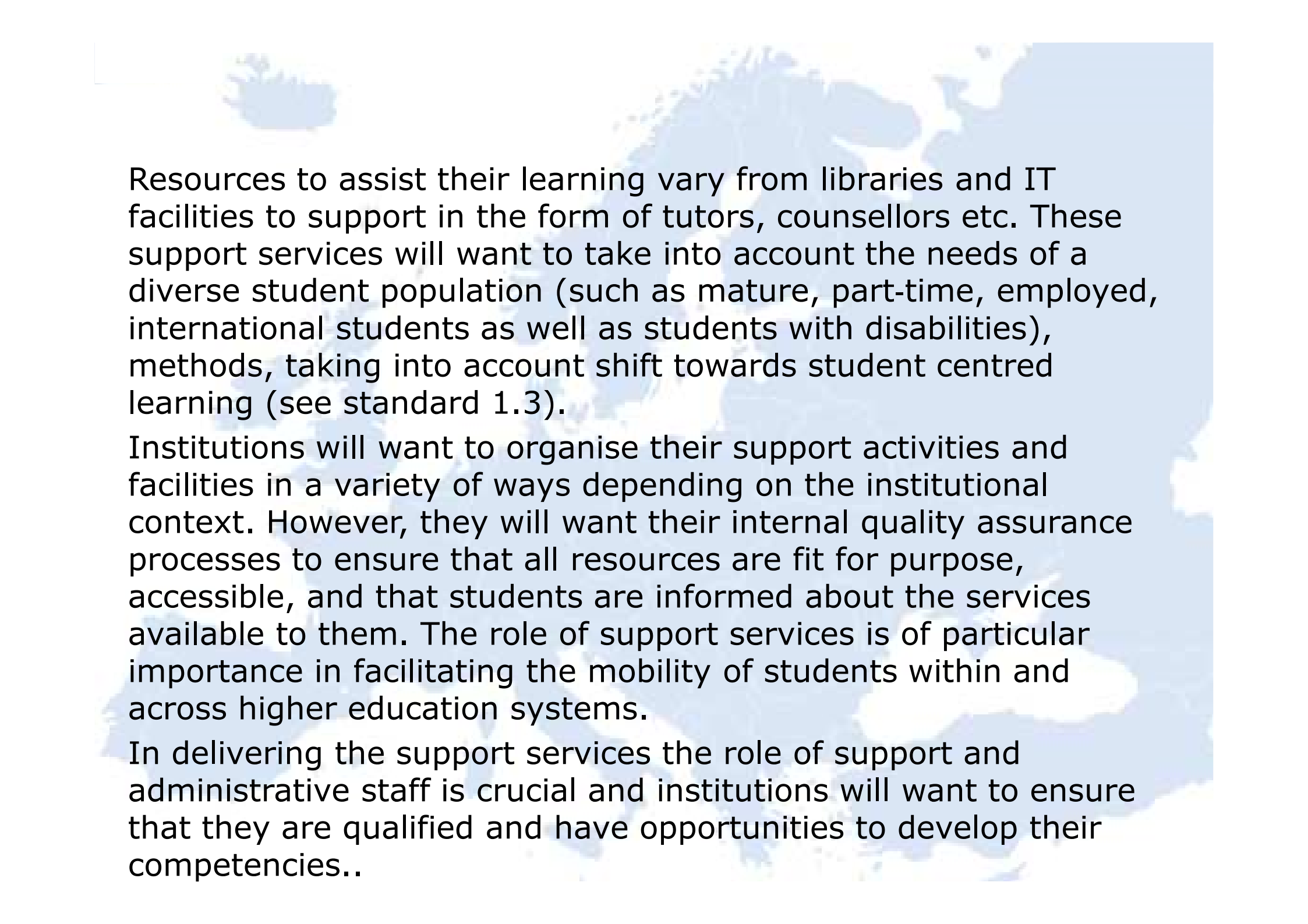
- Set up clear, transparent and fair processes for staff recruitment, promotion and dismissal;
- Offer opportunities for professional development, **following the outcomes of staff evaluation, including peer review and student feedback;**
- **Strengthen the link between education and research;**
- Encourage **innovation in teaching methods;**
- **Recognise excellence** in teaching through promotion and public awards.



## **1.6 Learning resources and student support**

### **Standard:**

- **Institutions should ensure that learning and student support resources are adequate, readily accessible and appropriate.**



Resources to assist their learning vary from libraries and IT facilities to support in the form of tutors, counsellors etc. These support services will want to take into account the needs of a diverse student population (such as mature, part-time, employed, international students as well as students with disabilities), methods, taking into account shift towards student centred learning (see standard 1.3).

Institutions will want to organise their support activities and facilities in a variety of ways depending on the institutional context. However, they will want their internal quality assurance processes to ensure that all resources are fit for purpose, accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them. The role of support services is of particular importance in facilitating the mobility of students within and across higher education systems.

In delivering the support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and institutions will want to ensure that they are qualified and have opportunities to develop their competencies..

## 1.7 Information management

Institutions but institutions will want to pay attention to the following:

- Profile of the student population;
- Student progression, success and drop-out rates;
- Students' satisfaction with their programmes;
- Learning resources and student support available;
- Employability of graduates;
- The **HEI's' own key performance indicators.**
- It is important that **students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.**

## 1.8 Public information

### Standard:

- **Institutions should publish information, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and accessible for graduates, other stakeholders and the public**

### Guidelines:

Institutions will provide information about :

- their activities, including the programmes **and their intended learning outcomes**
- qualifications they award,
- the **teaching, learning and assessment procedures** used, the **pass rates** and
- the learning opportunities available to students.

## 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

Standard:

- Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes **to ensure that they achieve their objectives** and respond to the needs of students and society.
- The outcomes of these processes should be public and should lead to continuous improvement of the programme.



## **1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes**

- The processes for the continuous improvement of study programmes are implemented, carried out and monitored regularly, evaluating:
- Programme in the light of the latest research in the discipline;
- Effectiveness of different modes of delivery;
- Students' workload, progression & completion;
- The student expectations, needs and satisfaction
- Support services and their fitness.
- The information is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up to date.
- **Revised programme specifications are published.**

## 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

### Standard:

- External quality assurance should address the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the ESG.

### Guidelines

- QA in higher education is **based on the institution's responsibility for the quality of their programmes and other provisions;**
- therefore it is important that **external quality assurance processes recognise institutional responsibility for quality assurance.**

## 2.2 Designing processes fit for purpose

### Standard:

- **All external quality assurance processes should be defined and designed to ensure fitness to achieve their aims and objectives,** while taking into account relevant regulations.
- Stakeholders should be involved in the design and continuous improvement of processes.

## 2.3.



## 2.4 Criteria for formal outcomes

### Standard:

- Any formal outcomes or judgements made as the result of external QA should be based on **explicit published criteria that are applied consistently**, irrespective of whether the process leads to a formal decision.

## 2.5 Reporting

- Context description
- Description of the procedure, including experts involved;
- Evidence, analysis and findings;
- Conclusions;
- Features of good practice, demonstrated by the institution;
- Recommendations for follow-up action.

## 2.6 Complaints and appeals

### **Standard:**

- **Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined** as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.

## **3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance**

### **Guidelines:**

- **To ensure the meaningfulness of the external QA, it is important that institutions and the public trust agencies.**
- The agencies will describe and publish the
- goals and objectives of their QA activities,
- nature of interaction with stakeholders in HE, especially the HEIs,
- context of their work.





## **3.2 Official status**

### **Standard:**

- **Agencies should have an established legal basis and**
- **should be formally recognised as quality assurance agencies by public authorities**

## 3.3 Independence

In independence of an agency :

- Organisational independence: official documentation (legislative acts) guarantees the agency's independence from HEIs, governments and other stakeholders;
- Procedures and methods as well as nomination of external experts are undertaken **autonomously and independently from third parties** such as HEIs, governments and other stakeholders;
- While experts from stakeholder backgrounds, e.g. students, take part in QA processes, the **final outcomes of the QA processes remain the responsibility of the agency.**

## 3.4 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct

- When working in different frameworks, agency **will adhere to the core values of EHEA as demonstrated** for instance in the Bologna Communiqués;
- **Communicate with the relevant authorities of those jurisdictions where they operate.**

## **3.5 Thematic reflection and analysis**


### **Standard:**

**Agencies should regularly publish reports that describe and analyse the general findings of their external quality assurance activities.**

## **3.6 Resources**

### **Standard:**

- **Agencies should have adequate and appropriate resources, both human and financial, to carry out their work**



**Thank you for  
attention!**