

**Approval of the Application
by Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg (evalag)
for Renewal of Inclusion on the Register**

Register Committee
1-2 July 2024

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Ver. 1.0
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Application of:	2023-04-18		
Agency registered since:	2009-09-01		
Type of review:	Targeted	Site visit:	2023-11-21
External review report of:	2024-05-31	Submitted:	2024-06-06
Review coordinated by:	European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (ENQA)		
Review panel members:	Eva Fernández de Labastida, Giuliana Sabbatini, Jakub Bakonyi, Oliver Vettori		
Decision of:	2024-07-02		
Registration until:	2029-05-31		
Absented themselves from decision-making:	n/a		
Attachments:	1. External Review Report, 2024-05-31 2. Clarification by the Review Panel (minuted), 2024-06-25		

1. The application of 2023-04-18 adhered to the requirements of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.
2. The Register Committee confirmed eligibility of the application on 2023-07-14.
3. The Register Committee considered the targeted external review report of 2024-05-31 on the compliance of evalag with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015 version).
4. The Register Committee sought and received clarification from the review panel on 2024-06-25.

Analysis:

5. In considering evalag's compliance with the ESG, the Register Committee took into account the following activities:

- *Programme assessment procedures¹*

¹Programme Accreditation in Germany (as listed in EQAR/DEQAR)

- *Institutional assessment procedures²*
- *International Programme Accreditation*
- *International Institutional Accreditation*
- *Audits of quality management in Austria*
- *Accreditation of study programmes pursuant to HEEdA and Swiss Health Professions Act (GesBG/LPSan)*
- *Certification for Institutions of HEIs offering Continual Professional Development (CPD)*
- *Certification of Continual Professional Development (CPD) offers of HEIs*
- *Certification for Institutions of HEIs offering Continual Professional Development within the framework of Hochschulweiterbildung@BW (only for HEIs in Baden-Württemberg) – normal procedure*
- *Certification for Institutions of HEIs offering Continual Professional Development within the framework of Hochschulweiterbildung@BW (only for HEIs in Baden-Württemberg) – shorten procedure*
- *Certification for CPD offers of HEIs within the framework of Hochschulweiterbildung@BW (only for HEIs in Baden-Württemberg) – normal procedure*
- *Certification for CPD offers of HEIs within the framework of Hochschulweiterbildung@BW (only for HEIs in Baden-Württemberg) – shorten procedure*

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6. The following activities are not within the scope of the ESG and, thus, not pertinent to the application inclusion on the Register:

- *Consultancy*
- *Peer-review based assessment of grant proposals*
- *Projects for the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts (MWK)*
- *Evaluations (outside the ESG)*
- *Cooperation and Research (ERASMUS+ projects)*

7. As per the Policy on Targeted Reviews, the panel, during the targeted review process, is asked to consider other matters outside the focus areas specified in the terms of reference that may affect the compliance with the ESG, if brought to their attention.

8. The Register Committee learned the panel addressed ESG 3.4 which were not within the tripartite terms of reference (annexed in the External Review Report) but which arose during the review. The Register Committee took the analysis for this standard in consideration when making the judgement on evalag's compliance.

²System accreditation in Germany

9. The Register Committee found that the report provides sufficient evidence and analysis on evalag's level of compliance with the ESG.

10. With regard to the specific European Standards, the Register Committee considered the following:

ESG 2.3 – Implementing processes

11. The Register Committee, noted in the analysis by the panel that evalag's review procedures include a self-assessment report and an external assessment followed by expert's report, but no follow-up activities, unless related to conditions/requirements established by evalag when taking the corresponding decision.

12. Given the concerns on the lack of consistent follow-up in all of evalag's procedures the Register Committee concurred with the panel that evalag complies only partially with the standard.

ESG 2.4 – Peer-review experts

13. The Register Committee understood that the panels involve students and other stakeholders on equal bases. Furthermore, the Committee learned that despite the regular (online) trainings offered by the agency, very few people have enrolled for this online trainings.

14. The Register Committee therefore followed the panel's conclusion that the agency continues to comply with the standard. The Committee, however, shared the panel's view that the agency should find ways into making training opportunities more attractive for the reviewers to attend.

ESG 2.7 – Complaints and appeals

15. The Register Committee noted that the Complaints and Appeals Policy is detailed, covering the potential causes for a complaint or an appeal and it is easily accessible on the agency's website. However, the Committee noted the panel's concerns on the need to clarify the terms '*complaints*' and '*appeals*'.

16. The Committee, therefore, followed the panel's conclusion that the agency continues to comply with the standard. The Committee, however, shared the panel's view that the agency should clarify what is meant by the terms '*complaints*' and '*appeals*' in all its documents, including the name of the 'Complaints Commission'.

ESG 3.1 – Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

17. In its last decision for renewal of registration on EQAR (of 2019-11-05), evalag was found to be partially compliant with the standard as it had no clear overarching strategy, bringing together planning, budgeting and risk assessment. Furthermore, the main decision-making body, the Foundation Board, did not included a student member.

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18. From the review report and the panel’s analysis the Register Committee noted that the main shortcomings identified in the previous decision were only minimally improved i.e., the statutory changes in order to involve student member in the Foundation Board, limits their involvement only in specific cases (*“If international standards in the field of study and teaching are dealt with, a student member may be called upon as a permanent or temporary, non-voting guest.”*)

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19. Furthermore, the Committee understood that evalag, at the time of the review, worked on a new overarching strategy bringing together planning, budgeting and risk assessment, however this strategy was to be approved only in July 2024.

20. Considering the minimal improvements made since the last decision, the Register Committee could not follow the panel’s judgement of compliance and found that evalag complies only partially with the standard.

ESG 3.4 – Thematic analysis

21. The Register Committee understood by the panel’s analysis that the agency, since the last review, produced two publication named *“Thematic analysis 2018 to mid-2021”* and *“Thematic Analysis mid 2021 to mid 2023”*. However, as noted by the panel *“these significantly digressed from the previous approach and in the eyes of the panel could not be taken as reports that describe and analyse the general findings of evalag’s external quality assurance activities as established by the standard. These reports give merely an overview of the most important projects, publications and events in the period under study, more like an annual report.”*

22. The Register Committee, could concur with the panel analysis and underlined the panel’s recommendation that the agency should resume the work on thematic analysis, which was abandoned after 2018, particularly in light of the severe changes in the ‘German system’.

23. The Register Committee therefore concurred with the panel that evalag complies only partially with the standard.

24. For the remaining standards, the Register Committee was able to concur with the review panel’s analysis and conclusion without further comments.

Conclusion:

25. Based on the external review report and the considerations above, the Register Committee concluded that evalag demonstrated compliance with the ESG (Parts 2 and 3) as follows:

Standard	Previous decision (2019-11-05)	Review panel conclusion	Register Committee conclusion
2.1	Compliance	Compliance	Compliance
2.2	Partial compliance	Compliance	Compliance

2.3	Compliance	Partial compliance	Partial Compliance
2.4	Compliance	Compliance	Compliance
2.5	Compliance	Compliance	Compliance
2.6	Compliance	Compliance	Compliance
2.7	Compliance	Compliance	Compliance
3.1	Partial compliance	Compliance	Partial Compliance
3.2	Compliance	<i>Inherited</i>	Compliance
3.3	Compliance	Compliance	Compliance
3.4	Compliance	Partial compliance	Partial Compliance
3.5	Compliance	<i>Inherited</i>	Compliance
3.6	Compliance	<i>Inherited</i>	Compliance
3.7	Compliance	(not expected)	Compliance (by virtue of applying)

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26. The Register Committee considered that evalag only achieved partial compliance with some standards. In its holistic judgement, the Register Committee concluded that these are specific and limited issues, but that evalag continues to comply substantially with the ESG as a whole.

27. The Register Committee therefore approved the application for renewed evalag's inclusion on the Register. evalag's renewed inclusion shall be valid until 2029-05-31³.

28. The Register Committee further underlined that evalag is expected to address the issues mentioned appropriately and to resolve them at the earliest opportunity.

³ Inclusion is valid for five years from the date of the external review report, see §3.25 of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.

Application by evalag for Renewal of Registration

Clarification provided by the Panel

Register Committee

Date of the conversation: 2024-06-25

Panel members: Oliver Vettori, Eva Fernandez de Labastida

Representative of EQAR: Blazhe Todorovski

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1. evalag has submitted on 2023-04-18 an application for renewal of registration on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). On 2024-06-06, evalag submitted the external review panel's report of 2024-05-31.
2. In order to prepare the deliberations of the Register Committee on evalag' compliance with the ESG, EQAR contacted the Panel to clarify the matter(s) below.

ESG 2.1 – Consideration of internal quality assurance

3. EQAR representative asked the panel to elaborate whether ESG 1.1 addressed under ESG 2.1 in the review report, is consistently covered and expected to be covered through institutional accreditation and therefore the agency does not look into this standard in programme reviews, in the CPD offers and the accreditation of study programmes pursuant to HEdA and Swiss health Professions Act.
4. The panel explained that in the case of accreditation of Study programmes pursuant to HEdA and Swiss health Professions Act, the agency does not look into standard ESG 1.1 as the accreditation of these study programmes can only be carried out on the condition that the HEI has been already institutionally accredited, either by AAQ (Swiss QA agency) or another EQAR-registered agency.
5. In the case of CPD procedures, the panel noted that since these procedures are still in the pilot phase and only two procedures have been conducted so far and it is hard to confirm how this is done in practice. Nevertheless, based on those two procedures and considering that Criteria 6 of the Certification Guidelines, deals with Quality Assurance and checks internal QA of the programmes. Therefore, the panel noted that ESG 1.1 could be considered as covered in these procedures.