

Approval of the Application
by Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria
(AQ Austria)
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:	2023-03-17		
Agency registered since:	2014-05-01		
Type of review:	Targeted	Site visit:	2024-02-23
External review report of:	2024-05-31	Submitted:	2024-06-07
Review coordinated by:	European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (ENQA)		
Review panel members:	Adrian Korzeniowski, Heli Mattisen, Tim McIntyre-Bhatty, Đurđica Dragojević		
Decision of:	2024-07-02		
Registration until:	2029-05-31		
Absented themselves from decision-making:	Beate Tremel		
Attachments:	1. External Review Report (external file), 2024-05-31		

1. The application of 2023-03-17 adhered to the requirements of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.
2. The Register Committee confirmed eligibility of the application on 2023-05-18.
3. The Register Committee considered the targeted external review report of 2024-05-31 on the compliance of AQ Austria with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015 version).

Analysis:

4. In considering AQ Austria's compliance with the ESG, the Register Committee took into account the following activities:
 - Accreditation of private higher education institutions in Austria
 - Accreditation of programmes at private higher education institutions in Austria
 - Accreditation of universities of applied sciences

- Accreditation of programmes at universities of applied sciences in Austria
- Audit of internal quality management systems at Austrian public universities, universities of applied sciences and university colleges of teacher education
- European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes
- International Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions
- International Programme Accreditation
- Programme accreditation in Germany
- System accreditation in Germany
- Institutional accreditation in Switzerland
- Joint programme accreditation

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5. The activities *notification of foreign degree programmes in Austria, developing and carrying out review procedures for programmes for continuing education, providing information and advice in matters related to the recognition of formal, non-formal and informal competences, NQF Service Point and consultancy and other evaluation activities* are not within the scope of the ESG and, thus, not pertinent to the application inclusion on the Register.

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

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

ESG 2.6 – Reporting

8. From the report, the Register Committee learned that in case of the activities leading to an accreditation of German higher education institutions, there is a (theoretical) possibility that an institution may not forward the report to the German Accreditation Council (GAC); hence the report may not be published.

9. The Register Committee concurred with panel's conclusion and found the agency compliant with the standard. It, however, underlined panel's recommendation that the agency could include a publishing clause in the contract with the higher education institution in case the report to the German Accreditation Council is not forwarded.

ESG 3.1 – Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

10. While the Register Committee was able to follow panel's conclusion that AQ Austria is compliant with the standard, it highlighted the panel's recommendation that the agency should enhance the clarity on its ESG

aligned activities and consultancy services for the public and add explanation on avoiding conflicts of interest on their website.

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

Conclusion:

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

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

13. **AQ Austria therefore continues to comply substantially with the ESG as a whole.**

14. **The Register Committee therefore approved the application for renewed AQ Austria's inclusion on the Register. AQ Austria's renewed inclusion) shall be valid until 2029-05-31¹.**

¹ Inclusion is valid for five years from the date of the external review report, see §3.25 of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.