

**Approval of the Application
by AQ Austria
for Inclusion on the Register**

Register Committee

Ref. RC13/2014/12

Ver. 1.0

Date 2014-11-29

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Application of:	07/07/2014
External review report of:	May 2014
Review coordinated by:	ENQA
Review panel members:	Rafael van Grieken (Chair), Karmela Barišić (Secretary), Nicolaas Pronk, Andrejs Rauhvargers, Henni Saarela
Decision of:	29 November 2014
Registration until:	31 May 2019
Absented themselves from decision-making:	Andrea Blättler (member)

1. The application of 07/07/14 adhered to the requirements of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.
2. The Register Committee considered the report on the external review of AQ Austria of May 2014 on the compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). The Register Committee found that the report provides clear evidence and analysis of how AQ Austria complies with the ESG.
3. Given its recent establishment AQ Austria is not able to show evidence of compliance with some of the standards (e.g. the cyclic process of audits, accreditation and re-accreditations, follow-up procedures or effectiveness of internal QA processes). In its assessment of AQ Austria, the Register Committee also took into consideration the foundations of its work, which are a result of the activities carried out by AQ Austria's predecessors.

Analysis:

4. With regard to the specific European Standards and Guidelines, the Register Committee considered the following:

ESG 2.5: At the time of the external review AQ Austria was yet to complete and publish the first reports of its external reviews.

The Register Committee noted that it is AQ Austria's policy to publish the full reports of its external reviews and that a number of reports have been made available (following its external review) on the website-

AQ Austria is expected to provide evidence of full implementation in the next review of the agency.

5. **ESG 2.8:** It is within AQ Austria's legal mandate to carry out system-wide and cross-sector analyses of the Austrian higher education system. The review panel noted that the agency is working on its first report on the development of quality assurance in Austria and that a separate department has been set up within the Agency for these tasks. Since the work is in progress, AQ Austria has not yet produced documentation that can evidence substantial compliance with this standard. This matter requires attention in the future but the Register Committee noted that preparatory work is in train.
6. **ESG 3.6:** The Register Committee noted that formal approval of accreditation decisions by the Minister in charge of higher education does not include the possibility to change or to ask for a revision of AQ Austria's decision. The Minister could, however, deny an accreditation approval, although this has not happened so far.

The Register Committee noted that this could be a constraining factor in the independent activity of the agency and warrants further attention in the next review of the agency.

7. **ESG 3.8:** The Register Committee noted that AQ Austria's internal quality assurance processes have recently been put in place and that they have not yet been tested. The implementation of the internal quality assurance system is expected to be addressed in the next external review of the agency.

Conclusion:

8. **Based on the external review report and the considerations above, the Register Committee concluded that AQ Austria complies substantially with the ESG and, therefore, approved the application for inclusion on the Register.**

AQ Austria's inclusion shall be valid until 31/05/2019¹.

¹Inclusion is valid for five years from the date of the external review report, see §4.1 of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.

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