

**Approval of the Application**  
**by National Centre for Professional Education Quality**  
**Assurance (ANQA)**  
**for Renewal of Inclusion on the Register**

**Register Committee**  
25/10/2022

Ref. RC37/A113  
 Ver. 1.0  
 Date 2022-11-02  
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<b>Application of:</b>	2021-07-19
<b>Agency registered since:</b>	2017-02-01
<b>External review report of:</b>	2022-06-10
<b>Review coordinated by:</b>	European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (ENQA)
<b>Review panel members:</b>	Almantas Šerpataukas, Francisco Joaquin Jimenez Gonzalez, Gohar Hovhannisyan, Simona Lache
<b>Decision of:</b>	25/10/2022
<b>Registration until:</b>	2027-06-30
<b>Absented themselves from decision-making:</b>	Patricia Georgieva
<b>Attachments:</b>	1. Confirmation of eligibility, 2021-10-21 2. External Review Report, 2022-06-10 ( <a href="#">an external file</a> )

1. The application of 2021-07-19 adhered to the requirements of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.
2. The Register Committee confirmed eligibility of the application on 2021-10-21.
3. The Register Committee considered the external review report of 2022-06-10 on the compliance of ANQA with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015 version).

**Analysis:**

4. In considering ANQA's compliance with the ESG, the Register Committee took into account the following activities: *Institutional accreditation* and *programme accreditation*.
5. The activity *institutional accreditation of vocational education institution* is not within the scope of the ESG and, thus, not pertinent to ANQA's registration on EQAR.

6. The Register Committee found that the report provides sufficient evidence and analysis on ANQA's level of compliance with the ESG, with the exception of the analysis of the implementation of the programme accreditation. The panel could not check how the agency performs these accreditations in practice as the process is still not operational.

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

### **ESG 2.1 – Consideration of internal quality assurance**

8. In its previous decision, based on the evidence provided in the external review report and the clarification from the panel, the Committee found that the agency sufficiently covers the ESG Part 1 in its ESG aligned activities.

9. **The current report, however, offered a deeper insight into ANQA's criteria and their relation to the Part 1 of the ESG. The report clearly demonstrates that ANQA's evaluation criteria are not fully addressing ESG 1.4, ESG 1.5, ESG 1.9 and ESG 1.10. Based on the new evidence provided by the panel's report, the Committee concurred with the panel's conclusion that the agency in fact is only partially compliant with the standard.**

### **ESG 2.3 – Implementing processes**

10. The Committee learned that the agency is now implementing the follow up procedures. The agency introduced one day visits to the HEIs, aiming to monitor the implementation of the recommendations provided in the final decision. The panel noted the stakeholders' positive views on the newly introduced step; the monitoring process was perceived as "an opportunity for quality enhancement" and the follow-up process as beneficial for their work.

11. **The Register Committee recognised that now the agency has a functional and improved follow-up procedure. The Committee concurred with the panel's conclusion that ANQA now complies with the standard.**

### **ESG 2.4 – Peer-review experts**

12. While the Committee was able to concur with panel's conclusion and found the agency to be compliant with the standard, it highlighted panel's recommendation that agency should consider providing formal training for the international panel members.

### **ESG 2.5 – Criteria for outcomes**

13. ANQA has made public all the criteria and procedures for accreditation. **The Committee found that the agency has successfully addressed the concerns raised in the previous decision on inclusion on the register, and now complies with the standard.**

## ESG 2.6 – Reporting

14. ANQA has made public all the reports and decisions of the institutional accreditation, including the negative ones. **The Committee found that the agency has addressed the concerns raised in the previous decision on inclusion on the register, and now complies with the standard.**

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## ESG 2.7 – Complaints and appeals

15. The agency has introduced a new appeals procedure, which is described in a clear manner in the accreditation procedures publicly available at their web site. The Committee found that the earlier concern related to the appeals procedure has been successfully addressed.

16. From the report, the Committee learned that the complaints on the review process are mainly addressed to the review coordinator and solved on the spot; the panel noted that the agency does not have clear and publicly available complaints procedure in place.

17. **The Committee welcomed the efforts made by the agency in improving the appeals procedure. The Committee, however, considered that the review report identified considerable shortcomings in the complaints procedure and therefore concurred with the panel’s conclusion of partial compliance.**

## ESG 3.1 – Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

18. ANQA involves students in the review panels, but not in the body responsible for making decisions on accreditation (i.e. the Accreditation Council). **The Committee highlighted the panel’s recommendation and found it necessary that the agency improves the involvement of students in the decision-making process. Following this, the Committee was not able to concur with panel’s conclusion, but found the agency to be only partially compliant with the standard.**

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

### Conclusion:

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

Standard	Review panel conclusion	Register Committee conclusion
2.1	Partial compliance	Partial compliance
2.2	Compliance	Compliance
2.3	Compliance	Compliance
2.4	Compliance	Compliance
2.5	Compliance	Compliance

2.6	Compliance	Compliance
2.7	Partial compliance	Partial compliance
3.1	Compliance	Partial compliance
3.2	Compliance	Compliance
3.3	Compliance	Compliance
3.4	Compliance	Compliance
3.5	Compliance	Compliance
3.6	Compliance	Compliance
3.7	(not expected)	Compliance (by virtue of applying)

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21. The Register Committee considered that ANQA only achieved partial compliance with some standards. In its holistic judgement, the Register Committee considered that the agency covers most of the standards from Part 1 from the ESG in its methodologies (ESG 2.1), that significant improvements have been made since the last review (ESG 2.3, ESG 2.5, ESG 2.6) and that the institutions do have opportunities to raise issue with the review process even though the process is not formalised (ESG 2.7),. The Committee also considered that the involvement of students is fully ensured in the panels (ESG 3.1). The Register Committee thus concluded that there are specific and limited issues, but that ANQA continues to comply substantially with the ESG as a whole.

22. The Register Committee therefore approved the application for renewed ANQA's inclusion on the Register. ANQA's renewed inclusion shall be valid until 2027-06-30<sup>1</sup>.

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

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