

**Approval of the Application**  
**by Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency (SQAA)**  
**for Renewal of Inclusion on the Register**

**Register Committee**  
 12-13 October 2023

Ref. RC40/A131  
 Ver. 1.0  
 Date 2023-10-13  
 Page 1 / 3

<b>Application of:</b>	2022-05-06		
<b>Agency registered since:</b>	2013-06-01		
<b>Type of review:</b>	Targeted	<b>Site visit:</b>	2023-03-22
<b>External review report of:</b>	2023-06-28	<b>Submitted:</b>	2023-08-21
<b>Review coordinated by:</b>	European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (ENQA)		
<b>Review panel members:</b>	Alastair Delaney, Damir Solak, Janja Komljenovič, Tatjana Volkova		
<b>Decision of:</b>	2023-10-13		
<b>Registration until:</b>	2028-06-30		
<b>Absented themselves from decision-making:</b>	Jernej Širok		
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#"><u>Eligibility minuted clarification, 2023-10-23</u></a></li> <li>2. External Review Report, 2023-06-28 (external document)</li> </ol>		

1. The application of 2022-05-06 adhered to the requirements of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.
2. The Register Committee confirmed eligibility of the application on 2022-06-03.
3. The Register Committee considered the targeted external review report of 2023-06-28 on the compliance of SQAA with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015 version).

**Analysis:**

4. In considering SQAA's compliance with the ESG, the Register Committee took into account:
  - *Accreditation of international joint programmes*
  - *Accreditation of new study programmes*
  - *Assessing the requirements for entry of transnational higher education (THE) to the SQAA register*
  - *External evaluation of vocational colleges*

- *Extraordinary evaluation of higher education institutions*
- *Extraordinary evaluation of study programmes*
- *External (sample) evaluation of a study programme (new)*
- *Initial accreditation of higher education institutions*
- *Re-accreditation of higher education institutions*
- *Transformation of a higher education institution*
- *Notifications of international joint programmes and programmes of the international associations of universities accredited abroad.*

**Register Committee**

12-13 October 2023

**Ref.** RC40/A131

**Ver.** 1.0

**Date** 2023-10-13

**Page** 2 / 3

5. The Register Committee noted that QAA has initiated one new activity i.e. the External (sample) evaluation of a study programme.

6. The Register Committee found that the report provides sufficient evidence and analysis on SQAA'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. In its past decision, the Register Committee was unable to verify whether reports on initial accreditation procedures with a negative outcome were published by SQAA.

9. Having considered the panel's evidence and analysis in its current review report, the Register Committee noted that the agency now publishes all reports, including those of ex-ante accreditation leading to a negative decision.

10. The Register Committee concurs with the panel's conclusion of compliance.

### **ESG 3.4 – Thematic analysis**

11. The review report shows that after the last review, the agency developed a methodology for analyses. These meta-analyses happen every few years after a full cycle of reviews, the last was published in 2018 for 2014 – 2017, the following one covers 2018 – 2023, which was produced at the time of the site-visit. The reports are supposed to cover five years.

12. Issues in understanding and implementing specific criteria are analysed as part of the "Guide to external assessments", annual reports and other analyses are deemed valuable by the sector.

13. The Register Committee concurs with the panel's conclusion of compliance.

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

**Conclusion:**

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

**Register Committee**  
12-13 October 2023

Standard	Previous decision (2019-04-03)	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	Partial compliance	Compliance	Compliance
2.7	Compliance	Compliance	Compliance
3.1	Compliance	Substantial compliance	Compliance
3.2	Compliance	Full compliance	Compliance
3.3	Compliance	Substantial compliance	Compliance
3.4	Partial compliance	Compliance	Compliance
3.5	Compliance	Substantial compliance	Compliance
3.6	Partial compliance	Compliance	Compliance
3.7	Compliance	(not expected)	Compliance (by virtue of applying)

Ref. RC40/A131  
Ver. 1.0  
Date 2023-10-13  
Page 3 / 3

16. SQAA therefore continues to comply substantially with the ESG as a whole.

17. The Register Committee therefore approved the application for renewal of SQAA’s inclusion on the Register. SQAA’s renewed inclusion shall be valid until 2028-06-30<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> 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 Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (SQAA) for Renewal of Registration

## Minutes of Conversation

Register Committee

Ref. A131  
Date 2022-05-25  
Page 1 / 3

<b>Date of the conversation:</b>	17 May 2022, Leuven
<b>Representative of SQAA:</b>	Nataša Kramar & Maja Milas
<b>Representative of EQAR:</b>	Colin Tück

1. SQAA has submitted on 2022-05-06 an application for renewal of registration on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).
2. In order to prepare the deliberations of the Register Committee on the eligibility of the application and SQAA's activities within the scope of the ESG, EQAR contacted SQAA to clarify the portfolio of activities. SQAA agreed to clarify the matters by means of a personal conversation.

ESG Activities Listed in Application	Listed (as current) on Register Entry
Accreditation of international joint programmes	Accreditation of international joint programmes
Accreditation of new study programmes	Accreditation of new study programmes
Assessing the requirements for entry of transnational higher education (THE) to the SQAA register	Assessing the requirements for entry of transnational higher education to the SQAA register
Extraordinary evaluation of higher education institutions	External evaluation and extraordinary evaluation of higher education institutions External evaluation and extraordinary evaluation of international joint study programmes
Extraordinary evaluation of study programmes	External evaluation and extraordinary evaluation of study programmes
External (sample) evaluation of a study programme	
Initial accreditation of higher education institutions	Initial accreditation of higher education institutions Notifications of international joint programmes and programmes of the international associations of universities accredited abroad
Re-accreditation of higher education institutions	Re-accreditation of higher education institutions
Transformation of a higher education	

institution

### Outside the scope of the ESG

External evaluation of vocational colleges

Minimum criteria for election to the titles of higher education teacher, researcher and higher education associate at higher education institutions

Advisory services

Register Committee

Ref. A131

Date 2022-05-25

Page 2 / 3

## 1. External evaluation of vocational colleges

3. Higher vocational colleges (HVC) are a clearly separate category from higher education institutions, but offer short cycle programmes at EQF level 5. In European programmes (e.g. Erasmus+), HVC are generally considered part of higher education.
4. In the previous review, evaluations of HVC were analysed against ESG Part 2, even though they were not listed as a separate activity on the Register entry.
5. SQAA explained that the evaluations of HVC were now presented as a separate activity for better clarity, as they follow their own process and criteria. The classification as non-ESG activity was, however, by mistake; SQAA actually considers evaluations of HVCs as an activity within the scope of the ESG.
6. SQAA underlined that it only carries out an evaluation and produces an evaluation report for HVC, but does not make accreditation decisions; the competent ministry uses SQAA's reports as a basis for its accreditation decisions. This is opposed to higher education, where SQAA itself makes accreditation decisions.

## 2. External evaluation

7. The regular external evaluations of institutions is part of the (re-)accreditation of institutions, hence only the extraordinary evaluation is listed as a separate activity; the current presentation was slightly misleading.
8. The only regular external evaluation of (regular and joint) programmes is the external evaluation of a sample of programmes (see below); otherwise only extraordinary programme evaluations take place.

## 3. External (sample) evaluation of study programmes

9. The evaluation of a sample of programmes was introduced with the current legal framework adopted in 2016. It existed in principle when the 2018 review took place, but the first actual procedures were implemented only in 2019.

## 4. Transformation of a higher education institution

10. The process for applications re. "transformations" already existed in 2018 and has not changed since. In the 2018 external review it was

considered together with re-accreditation and not as a separate activity, since the same criteria are applied.

11. For clarity and as it happens outside the regular cycle (similar to an extraordinary evaluation), SQAA listed it as a separate activity.

## **5. Notifications of international joint programmes and programmes of the international associations of universities accredited abroad**

12. This specific process applies only to programmes implemented by one single federation of higher education institutions, EMUNI, which was granted a special status within Higher Education Act. The EMUNI programmes are regulated by Article 10.a of the Higher Education Act. The notification is based on the programme already being accredited abroad and the degree(s) awarded correspond to the country of accreditation.
13. The notification process does not include an actual evaluation by SQAA, but a formal desk-based process only, without the appointment of a group of experts and without a visit of the higher education institution. The notification procedure results in an Agency Council decision either allowing or declining the notification, depending on whether the formal requirements are met (see chapter 4 of the [Criteria for International Cooperation](#)).
14. Even though it was on the Register entry list, SQAA did not list the activity in the application as no case occurred since 2010 and since it was not considered an actual external QA process.

## **Register Committee**

Ref. A131  
Date 2022-05-25  
Page 3 / 3