**Report on the External Evaluation
of the Institutional Evaluation Programme
of the European University Association**

14 January 2014

CONTENTS

1.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report addresses the extent to which the Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) of the European University Association (EUA) complies with the membership criteria of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and, therefore, with the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance* (ESG) in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). It is based on a review process initiated by ENQA at the request of the IEP. The review process includes self-evaluation by IEP and a site visit taking place in Brussels on 17-19 November 2013.

The IEP is an independent membership service of the EUA. It was launched in 1994 as a strategic tool for change in higher education institutions (HEIs), managed by an independent Steering Committee (SC) that takes full responsibility for the development and operation of the IEP. IEP's mission is to support higher education institutions and systems in developing their capacity for change consistent with institutional autonomy, through the process of institutional evaluation. The IEP evaluation methodology is based on a peer-review approach and is improvement-orientated resulting in an evaluation report identifying good practice and providing recommendations for improvement. IEP evaluations examine institutional structures and decision-making processes and the effectiveness of strategic management. The evaluations focus on the relevance of internal quality processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision-making and strategic management, as well as identifying any gaps in these internal mechanisms. IEP's evaluations do not lead to any judgement or accreditation. Since 1994 IEP has carried out 336 evaluations (290 full and 46 follow-up evaluations) across 46 countries in Europe and worldwide.

The IEP is committed to the continuous improvement of its own processes and operates in a manner consistent with good international and European practice, including the ESG.

IEP has been a Full member of ENQA since 2000. Full membership was re-confirmed following an external review in 2009 and in 2011 it was listed in EQAR. The current review for renewal of membership is based on the ENQA Criteria and the ESG. It also takes into account the response of IEP to the recommendations contained in the ENQA Panel Report of 2009.

The Review Panel carefully considered a range of documents and oral evidence which led to judgements of "full compliance" with ENQA membership criteria 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, "substantial compliance" with criteria 1, 6, and "partial compliance" with criterion 4.

The Panel was appreciative of the courtesy and efficiency of the members of the IEP Secretariat who supported the review and the visit.
All documentation requested was provided either in advance of the meeting or while at EUA. While the video links worked to a reasonable degree, the Panel appreciated the face-to-face meetings with Jean-Pierre Finance and Adrian Curaj.

2. GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

CRE   Conférence des Recteurs européens

ECA   European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education

EHEA   European Higher Education Area

ENQA   European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

EQAR   European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies

ESG   European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance

ESU   European Students' Union

EUA   European University Association

HEI   Higher Education Institution

IEP   Institutional Evaluation Programme (of the European University Association)

INQAAHE   International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

MoU   Memorandum of Understanding

SC   Steering Committee of the Institutional Evaluation Programme (of the European University Association)

SEG   Self-evaluation group of the Institutional Evaluation Programme (of the European University Association)

SER   Self-Evaluation Report

3. INTRODUCTION

This is the report of the review of the Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) of the European University Association (EUA) undertaken in November 2013 for the purpose of determining whether the agency meets the criteria for Full membership within the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

3.1. Background and outline of the review process

ENQA's regulations require all full member agencies to undergo an external cyclical review, at least once every five years, in order to verify that they fulfil membership provisions.

In November 2004, the General Assembly of ENQA agreed that the third part of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) should be incorporated within the membership provisions of its regulations. The third part of the ESG covers the cyclical external review of quality assurance and accreditation agencies.

The external review of IEP was conducted in line with the process described in the *Guidelines for external reviews of quality assurance agencies* in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and in accordance with the timeline set out in the Terms of Reference.

The evaluation process started in February 2013 when the IEP asked for a new external review. The procedure was to use international evaluation standards in order to assess the IEP's compliance with the *European Standards and Guidelines*, as a core requirement for ENQA membership.

In October 2012 the Steering Committee of the IEP (SC) set up the self-evaluation group (SEG) for the preparation of the IEP's Self-evaluation report (SER). The SEG included representatives of all relevant stakeholders.
The SEG held several meetings that led to the final approval of the SER, its adoption by the SC (September 2013) and its subsequent communication to ENQA (October 2013).

In parallel, pursuant to its mandate, ENQA worked on a proposal for the composition of the external Review Panel and in agreement with the IEP five persons were appointed:

- Barry O'Connor, Registrar and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Cork Institute of Technology, Ireland – Chair

- Karmela Barišić, Full professor of Biochemistry, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy and Biochemistry of the University of Zagreb, President of the Accreditation Council of the Agency for Science and Higher Education, Croatia – Secretary

- Nieves Pascual, Associate Professor of English at the University of Jaén, Member of the Board of Directors of AAC-DEVA – Andalusian Agency of Knowledge, Department of Evaluation and Accreditation, Spain

- Guy Aelterman, Chief of cabinet, Flemish Minister of Education, Youth, Equal Opportunities and Brussels, Belgium – EURASHE nomination

- Allan Päll, Acting Secretary General at Magna Charta Observatory, General Manager at Eesti Üliõpilaskondade Liit, Estonia – ESU nomination

The IEP's SER was communicated to the members of the Panel in a timely manner in October 2013, in the form of an electronic document.

The SER provides an overview of the structure, organisation of the IEP and its relation to the EUA. It also provides clear and comprehensive information about the intended and actual role of the IEP and a discussion of the extent to which, in IEP's own assessment, the IEP adhered to each ESG standard.

The Panel's site visit took place in Brussels 17-19 November 2013 and led to observations and conclusions that are broadly in line with those presented in the IEP's very helpful SER. On the site visit, the Panel met with IEP and EUA staff. It was able to conduct video conference interviews with the chair and members of the SC, former member of the SC, members of the SEG, members and coordinators of the pool of experts and representatives from evaluated institutions. In the course of its work during the visit, the Panel carefully considered the level of compliance in view of each of the individual ESG criteria.

Finally, the Review Panel produced the present final report on the basis of the self-evaluation report, the site visit and its findings. In doing so, it provided an opportunity for the IEP to comment on the factual accuracy of the draft report.

The Review Panel confirms that it was given access to all documents and people it wished to consult throughout the review.

3.2. Background to the IEP

3.2.1. History and key characteristics

In 1994, the Association of European Universities (Conférence des Recteurs européens, CRE) launched the IEP as an activity for its member institutions in order to demonstrate that universities could regulate themselves and that the model for self-regulation was peer-review. The IEP also aimed at preparing CRE members for national evaluation procedures. The CRE was succeeded by a new organisation (2001) – the EUA – which has continued the IEP's work as a part of its activities related to quality assurance and to the development of institutional capacity.

The IEP is a peer-review service of the EUA. The focus of the IEP review was concerned with strategic planning and the management of change, and the expert peers themselves were heads of institutions, rectors or vice-rectors. This model has developed over time, but the methodology has remained the same since 1994. IEP evaluations are improvement-orientated, resulting in evaluation reports identifying good practice and providing recommendations for improvement. Its evaluation does not lead to any summative judgement or accreditation and is not related to national accountability or produced for funding purposes.

The IEP has an impressive international activity in the evaluation of HEI; 336 evaluations (290 full and 46 follow-up evaluations) across 46 countries in Europe and worldwide have been carried out.

3.2.2. Governance and management

The IEP is an independent EUA membership Service.

The SC is responsible for the management and running of IEP activities. SC meets twice annually. The role and mandate of the SC is defined by the EUA Board. The SC is composed of *8* people: a chair, and seven members. SC's members are carefully selected to achieve geographical and gender balance, as well as on the basis of their experience in the IEP and elsewhere. They are formally appointed by the EUA Board, following a proposal from the Chair of the SC upon consultation within the SC. Each SC member holds a mandate of 4 years which can be renewed once for a further two years. This also applies to the Chairmanship of the IEP SC. In addition, the EUA Board nominates *one Ex-officio EUA Board member* to ensure communication with the EUA Board in relation to strategic discussions. However, this person abstains from discussions related to any operational aspect of the IEP or any specific evaluation.

The IEP Secretariat is responsible for the daily operations of the IEP and the implementation of the SC's decisions. The management of the IEP Secretariat, including operational, human resources and financial management, is under the responsibility of the Head of the IEP Secretariat, who is appointed by the EUA.

3.2.3. IEP evaluation method

The IEP's main activity is to offer institutional evaluations to HEIs. The IEP's evaluations are improvement-orientated peer-reviews, resulting in evaluation reports identifying good practice and providing recommendations for improvement. The IEP also conducts "coordinated evaluations" in which all universities or a sample of institutions in a country are evaluated, and individual evaluations and reports are coordinated by IEP experts, sometimes with the production of a summative overview report.
The IEP's evaluations do not lead to any summative judgement or accreditation. The IEP is not related to national accountability purposes; the starting point of any evaluation is that institutions register for an evaluation on a voluntary basis. The IEP applies a peer-review approach in its evaluations. The IEP's SER describes that the focus of the evaluations is the institution as a whole and its strategic management and thus one key target audience of the evaluations is the institutional leadership. The IEP uses the institution's vision, mission and quality standards as a starting point. Evaluations are based on four key questions, which are in the form of a "Plan-Do-Check-Act" cycle. The evaluation process consists of a self-evaluation process by the institution, two site visits (a two-day and a three-day visit) by the IEP team, an oral and a final written evaluation report prepared by the IEP team.

The Review Panel was considerably occupied by the question of whether the IEP evaluation embraces the assessment of the ESG. The SER and the discussions confirmed that the ESG were incorporated within IEP evaluations. In this context it was also mentioned that the IEP assumes that every HEI evaluated by an IEP team, met basic quality assurance criteria and two documents were said to be relevant for this issue (*Guidelines for the IEP Secretariat* and *Extended SC Meeting Minutes* from June 2009). The HEI registering for an evaluation is checked by the IEP Secretariat. The first step of this check consists in checking whether the HEI is a full member of EUA - as all EUA full members went through a thorough application process. Then, if the HEI is not a full member of EUA, the IEP Secretariat applies the guidelines as stated in the above mentioned documents. However, the Review Panel found that these guidelines contain only instruction for the Secretariat to check more carefully the backgrounds of the institutions registering for the evaluation if they are not full members of the EUA, but without any explanation or

criteria how to appraise whether an institution is legitimate or if it does fulfil the basic quality requirements.

3.2.4. The pool of experts

The IEP carries out evaluations by drawing upon its pool of experts. The SC is responsible for all decisions regarding IEP pool recruitment. *Guidelines for Managing the IEP Pool*, adopted by the SC in 2011, contain the criteria and the procedure used for recruiting pool members and managing the pool. The IEP pool includes three categories of experts: team chairs, regular team members (including students) and team coordinators; IEP teams are composed of one team chair, three regular team members (including students), and one team coordinator. The main body of the IEP pool consists of current or former rectors or vice-rectors. In 2009 the ENQA Review Panel suggested broadening of the recruitment base of the IEP pool of experts. Although IEP accepts these remarks and intensively discussed criteria for selecting new pool members as well as for enhancing transparency of the criteria and procedure, the IEP continues to limit the recruitment of regular non-student team members to current or former rectors and vice-rectors. Both in the SER and during the interviews it was emphasised that skills, experience and attitude, and actual involvement in an HEI are the most important feature for a pool member.

The IEP continues to cooperate with the European Students' Union (ESU) in organising student participation in the IEP. This cooperation was formalised in 2009 by the signing of the *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU) between the two organisations. Following the signing of the MoU, the SC's mandate was updated and it was agreed that a student representative would also serve as a member of the SC. Currently the ESU proposes students who will to take part in IEP evaluations for the SC from ESU's QA pool each year. These students are selected for contributing to the IEP's evaluation work with student perspective, and do not represent the ESU's point of view within evaluation teams or the SC.

Team coordinators (called secretaries until 2009) are selected mostly on the basis of their experience in and knowledge of higher education. They play a crucial role in the IEP's work as they are responsible for managing the whole evaluation process, including liaison with institutions and the production of reports.

The pool of experts is supported by the written guidance that provides specific details about the roles of each team member (SER - Annex H) and the pool is gathered every year for a two-day annual seminar in order to provide training for conducting evaluations (SER – Annex N).

The IEP has paid special attention to pool stability and renewal. In spring 2012 the IEP went through an intensive recruitment period, with the pool growing from about 70 members to about 100 members (not counting student members). Therefore, much of the effort of the IEP was put into an induction programme for new pool members, training and community-building for integrating the newcomers.

IEP teams are international, composed so as to ensure that they offer a mix of experience and profiles, geographically, gender- and discipline-balanced, and care is taken to avoid any conflict of interest.

At this point it should be noted that the Review Panel pays particular attention to the following aspects of the pool: age-profile, current to retired ratio of pool members, broadening the pool of regular experts to include colleagues other than those at the level of rector and vice-rector, and annual training of the pool. Interviewees were very consistent in the expression of their satisfaction with the current composition of the pool, as well as how pool experts were trained. The importance of the role of the rector or vice-rector as the team chairs is emphasised because of their skills, experience and involvement in HEI. However, the Review Panel was not convinced of the importance that "rector speaks with rector", as mentioned by several interviewees, especially regarding the voluntary basis of the IEP evaluations.

3.3. Context of the review

The review is concerned with the renewal of IEP membership of ENQA, dating initially from 2000, most recently renewed in 2009.

3.4. Report structure

The report contains six sections.

The first section is the executive summary.

List of acronyms is given in the second section.

This third section embraces a description of the review process and includes a brief description of the IEP and its evaluation methodology.

The fourth section presents the assessment of the Panel regarding the compliance of the IEP with the ESG related to external quality assurance.

The Panel's conclusion and additional reflections are given in the fifth and sixth sections.

The report includes three annexes: term of references, site visit programme, and the List of documents used in the review of the IEP.

4.   FINDINGS

In terms of the ENQA Guidelines, the IEP's compliance with the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* will be considered as in Part 3 of the *European Standards and Guidelines: European standards and guidelines for external quality assurance agencies.* Each consists of a quote of the corresponding ESG standard, the evidence and opinions used and their appraisal, and a concluding assessment by the Review Panel concerning the level of compliance (fully compliant, substantially compliant, partly compliant or not compliant).

4.1. ENQA criterion 1 – Activities (ESG 3.1, 3.3)

Standard:
Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institution or programme level) on a regular basis. The external quality assurance of agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance processes described in Part 2 of the ESG. The external quality assurance activities may involve evaluation, review, audit, assessment, accreditation, or other similar activities and should be part of the core functions of the member.

Guidelines:
The standards for external quality assurance contained in Part 2 provide a valuable basis for the external quality assessment process. The standards reflect best practices and experiences gained through the development of external quality assurance in Europe since the early 1990s. It is therefore important that these standards are integrated into the processes applied by external quality assurance agencies towards the higher education institutions. The standards for external quality assurance should together with the standards for external quality assurance agencies constitute the basis for professional and credible external quality assurance of higher education institutions.

Assessment against ENQA Membership Criterion 1:

The Review Panel concluded that the IEP is in substantial compliance with ENQA membership criterion 1. See details below.

a) ENQA Criterion 1/ESG 3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education

Standard:

The external quality assurance of agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance processes described in Part 2 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

ESG Part 2: Standards and guidelines for external quality assurance of higher education

ESG 2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures

Standard:

The external quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

The SER and discussions also highlighted that the internal quality assurance processes for teaching and learning are examined as part of IEP's holistic approach to quality management using a "Plan-Do-Check-Act" cycle (PDCA cycle) which covers all aspects of institution governance, research, teaching and learning, its service to society and its internationalisation activities.

Due to the observation of the last Review Panel in 2009 more attention has been paid to quality assurance and, consequently, the quality assurance issue has become more visible and prominent in evaluation processes as well as in evaluation reports.

Moreover, the SER provides information about concrete steps taken by the IEP in order to increase the consistency in covering the ESG Part I throughout all evaluations, as well as to raise awareness of the ESG among the pool.

Concrete steps are:

1. Specifying in the introductory text of the *Guidelines for Institutions* that IEP evaluations address questions brought up by the ESG, as part of the larger framework of quality management.

2. Encouraging institutions taking part in IEP evaluations to consider the ESG Part I in their self-evaluation process, by including the full text as an Annex to the *Guidelines for Institutions* (SER - Annex F).

3. In the IEP annual seminars (i.e. expert training), sessions were organised to draw the pool's attention to a more explicit focus on the ESG.

4. The inclusion of a separate section on quality culture in the report structure adopted by the IEP SC in March 2013. All reports from the Romanian coordinated evaluations also include such a section, as of 2012.

Overall appraisal:

The IEP has made significant and effective progress in implementing this standard since 2009. This was evidenced in the specific guidelines published and issued by the IEP to Institutions undergoing evaluations and to evaluation teams. The effective implementation of the guidelines was supported by interviews with Panel members and representatives of institutions who had already undergone IEP evaluation.

Assessment against ESG Standard 2.1: The review Panel finds that the IEP fully complies with this standard.

ESG 2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes

***Standard*:**
The aims and objectives of quality assurance processes should be determined before the processes themselves are developed, by all those responsible (including higher education institutions) and should be published with a description of the procedures to be used.

The IEP's approach and methodology, originally developed by institutional leaders, has remained fundamentally the same since 1994. *Guidelines for Institutions* (SER - Annex F), publicly available on the IEP website, define the aim and the evaluation process. The *Guidelines* are revised annually in the light of discussions in the SC and during the annual seminar. In the process of the *Guidelines'* revision the composition of the IEP pool (institutional leaders, higher education specialists and students) ensures that a variety of perspectives are taken into account.

According to the IEP's SER, when conducting coordinated evaluations, the IEP negotiates terms of reference with the commissioning party and representatives of the institutions, and in line with the IEP's key values and methodology.

When there is a specific focus for the evaluations, a specific set of guidelines are prepared for the institutions and the teams.

Overall appraisal:
The development of these standards continues to evolve through formal feedback and consultation processes, while remaining firmly based in the original published principles and approach as established in 1994.

Assessment against ESG Standard 2.2: The Panel affirms that the IEP is fully compliant under this standard.

ESG 2.3 Criteria for decisions

Standard:
Any formal decisions made as a result of an external quality assurance activity should be based on explicit published criteria that are applied consistently.

With regard to this standard, the IEP SER states: "Evaluations are mission-driven; therefore, the standards and criteria for assessing quality levels are determined in the context of each institution's mission and objectives. Thus, the IEP does not apply externally defined standards and criteria but imposes a range of reference points and questions."

The Review Panel observed that the *Guidelines for Institutions (*SER - Annex F) do contain criteria and the Panel experienced that these criteria are predefined, clearly communicated and that they meet the objective of identifying institutional ability to administer itself in a way which assures quality of its outcomes in teaching and learning, research, and outreach to society from team members as well as from the evaluated institutions.
The IEP implements these criteria by using the "PDCA" cycle, formulated as four key questions:
-What is the institution trying to do?
-How is the institution trying to do it?
-How does the institution know it works?
-How does the institution change in order to improve?

Results of surveys (SER - Annex E) conducted by the IEP with the evaluated institutions and with the pool were considered in the SER but also by the Review Panel during a site visit within the framework of interviews with team members and representatives of the evaluated institutions. It is obvious that the IEP's approach has been well understood and is appropriate for the IEP's improvement-orientated institutional evaluation approach. For this approach, consistency in how IEP teams carry out their work is very important and therefore a stable pool that

undergoes training every year and changing team composition for each evaluation seems to be good practice of the IEP.

Overall appraisal:
Conclusions reached by the IEP in respect of an institution are based on published and consistently implemented criteria. While decisions arrived at are not judgements as such, being more advisory in nature, the criteria are applied consistently.

Assessment against ESG Standard 2.3: The Review Panel finds that the IEP fully complies with this standard.

ESG 2.4 Processes fit for purpose

***Standard*:**
All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

The IEP improvement-orientated evaluation process includes a self-evaluation report, two site visits, an oral and a written report. The institution is also strongly encouraged to submit a progress report within the year following completion of the evaluation process. Further, the institution can register for a follow-up evaluation between one and three years after the initial evaluation has taken place.
The IEP reports are evidence-based: the team's findings and subsequent conclusions are supported by what they learn from the self-evaluation reports, additional background information and the interviews during the site visits. The written report is published by the IEP and the institution is also encouraged to disseminate it.

In SER the IEP explained that the SC makes all decisions regarding IEP pool recruitment. The criteria and the processes used for recruiting pool members and managing the pool are defined in the *Guidelines for Managing the IEP Pool*, adopted by the SC in 2011.
The IEP pool includes three categories of experts: team chairs, regular team members (including students), and team coordinators. IEP teams are composed of one team chair, three regular team members (including a student), and one team coordinator. The main body of the IEP pool consists of current or former rectors or vice-rectors, with demonstrated leadership and interest in quality development and in bringing about change in their own institutions.

The suggestion by the ENQA Review Panel in 2009 to expand the recruitment base of the IEP led to intensive discussions. However, the IEP continues to limit the recruitment of regular non-student team members

to current or former rectors and vice-rectors. The SER and discussions also highlighted that one particular strength of the IEP, which makes it different from other evaluation exercises, is the fact that most of the team is composed of institutional leaders. In the SER, the IEP expresses the view that the combination of institutional leaders, a higher education professional and a student makes the teams balanced in terms of profiles and experience. Regular team members who are rectors or former rectors can be appointed as team chairs after a few years of experience in the IEP. The role of team chairs is essential for the success of the evaluations. They are responsible for the evaluation as a whole and for the quality of the evaluation reports.

After a pilot period of two years, it was decided in spring 2008 that all IEP evaluations would include a student as a regular team member. The IEP continues to cooperate with the ESU in organising student participation in the IEP.

Team coordinators are selected mostly on the basis of their experience in and knowledge of higher education. They are responsible for liaising with the institution on behalf of the team. As part of their responsibilities, they discuss the site visit programme with the institution, take notes during the visits, compile an interim report for the team's internal use after the first visit, and draft the final evaluation report. They are also responsible for liaising with the IEP Secretariat regarding the evaluation process. Specific details about the roles of each team member are provided in the *Guidelines for the Evaluation Teams* (SER - Annex H). The pool is gathered every year for a two-day annual seminar in order to provide training for conducting evaluations (SER - Annex N-a sample programme). Attendance is mandatory, and the seminar is of particular importance for first-time pool members.

In 2012 the pool rose by 30 new members due to an increased number of evaluations (result of the coordinated evaluations in Romania). The IEP put significant effort into the training of new pool members in order to maintain the quality level of evaluations.

Overall appraisal:
The formal and constructive inclusion of a student on each IEP team is a very positive feature of the evaluation teams. It was clear from interviews that student input is valued as much as that from other team members, a certain consequence of the good training provided. The 2009 Panel Report queried the necessity of including a Rector or Vice Rector, current or retired, on each team. This is a strong historical tradition dating back to the origins of the IEP as a rector to rector service of the original CRE. The current Panel recommends that a careful balance be maintained between current and retired rectors. This would ensure currency of knowledge and best practice while simultaneously availing of the breadth of experience of

the rector as a Panel member and as a member of the wider pool of Panel members. The Review Panel further recommends that all IEP Panel members should be appropriately experienced and/or trained particularly in matters of Academic Quality Assurance.

Assessment against ESG Standard 2.4: The Review Panel finds that the IEP is fully compliant with this standard.

ESG 2.5 Reporting

Standard:
Reports should be published and should be written in a style which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

IEP reports have been published on the IEP website since the evaluation round in 2008/2009. Following the 2009 ENQA Review Panel's observations regarding the lack of consistency throughout reports and internal reflection (SER - Annex P), the IEP, as mentioned in the SER, has introduced new practices including:

a) The SC has mandated the Secretariat to make minor changes to the report itself when needed. Currently, the IEP Secretariat reads all reports in order to ensure that they are clear to a readership not involved in the evaluation process and follow IEP's standard evaluation practice in terms of providing evidence-based conclusions.
b) The IEP report templates (for both oral and written reports) were introduced at the beginning of 2010.
c) The SC decided that, as of the 2012/2013 round, teams will be required to conclude the evaluation report with a list of recommendations for easy reading and facilitating a future follow-up evaluation.

Overall appraisal:
Good progress has been made since the 2009 Panel report in this matter, specifically in the area of publication of IEP team reports which are now made publically available on the IEP website. The use of a common template is a further positive step forward, and was so commented on by IEP team members interviewed as well as representatives of evaluated institutions.

Assessment against ESG Standard 2.5: The Panel affirms that the IEP is fully compliant under this standard.

ESG 2.6 Follow-up procedures

***Standard*:**

Quality assurance processes which contain recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, should have a predetermined follow‑up procedure which is implemented consistently.

The issue of follow-up is a very complex issue for the IEP and has been discussed intensively at several SC meetings and annual seminars in recent years. The Review Panel is aware of the voluntary nature of the IEP evaluations; the IEP cannot force institutions to commit themselves to a follow-up, on the one hand, and to the importance of institutional follow-up, on the other.

Based on the SER as well as the discussion, it is obvious that the IEP pays attention to the follow-up (for example, as of 2012/2013, a new section on follow-up has been included in the *Guidelines for Institutions,* SER – Annex F). The new section in the *Guidelines* underlines the importance of institutional follow-up, but also introduces the concept of a Progress Report, which the institutions are recommended to send to the IEP Secretariat. The progress report replaces the previous request to institutions to submit an action plan. The request to institutions to submit an action plan was included in the cover letter of the final evaluation report. But very few action plans reached the IEP Secretariat.

The new emphasis on the follow-up phase will be implemented for the first time at the end of the 2012/2013 round and its outcomes will be closely monitored by the SC.
In the case of coordinated evaluations, IEP processes regularly include elements that aim at encouraging the institutions to address the recommendations of IEP teams or follow-up with lessons learnt from the evaluation process in general.

Overall appraisal:
The lack of a formal or compulsory follow-up procedure means that follow-up is not implemented consistently. Figures show that use of a follow-up procedure by an institution is the exception rather than the rule. This weakness in the IEP approach has its origins in the voluntary nature of the IEP. The financial cost of a follow-up review is also seen as a prohibiting factor. While certain efforts are being made by the IEP to encourage implementation of IEP recommendations, using Progress Reports, for example, there is no evidence to date by which to gauge the effectiveness of the recent efforts for improving follow-up. One suggestion which was proposed was to include the cost, and condition, of a follow-up procedure in the basic IEP contract with an institution inviting an IEP evaluation. A

follow-up visit or review would not necessarily be as extensive as a full review, but merely focused on progress made towards implementing recommendations.

Assessment against ESG Standard 2.6: The Review Panel finds that the IEP partially complies with this standard.

ESG 2.7 Periodic reviews

Standard:
External quality assurance of institutions and/or programmes should be undertaken on a cyclical basis. The length of the cycle and the review procedures to be used should be clearly defined and published in advance.

Due to its voluntary nature, the IEP does not have the authority to impose periodic reviews on any institution, since it is unenforceable in many contexts, and, from a legal point of view, only national legislation can impose evaluations on a particular institution and ensure that there is a periodicity. Therefore, the periodicity of reviews is seen as the responsibility of institutions (and higher education authorities in the case of coordinated evaluations).

Overall appraisal:
Arising from the voluntary nature of the IEP, there is no intrinsic periodic or cyclical review aspect to the IEP.

Assessment against ESG Standard 2.7: The Review Panel concludes that the IEP is not compliant under this standard.

ESG 2.8 System-wide analyses

Standard:
Quality assurance agencies should produce from time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of their reviews, evaluations, assessments etc

The SER provides extensive evidence on the IEP activities in respect of this standard.

Some of the system-wide analyses are:
-In 2005, the IEP published a report entitled *Lessons Learned from the Institutional Evaluation Programme*, authored by Stefanie Hofmann. This report analyses the main issues and recommendations contained in the first 60 IEP reports.

- In 2008, Alberto Amaral, Airi-Rovio-Johansson, Maria João Rosa and Don Westereijden edited a book entitled *Essays on Supportive Peer Review*, which offers different perspectives on the IEP, how it had been operating since its creation, and an analysis through both theoretical concepts and study cases. Three contributions are based on the crosscutting analysis of the IEP reports.

- The IEP provided access to its material to the Portuguese Centre for Research in Higher Education Policies (CIPES), and CIPES published several articles on the IEP methodology and outcomes. Two articles recently published in international reference journals on quality assurance are based on an analysis of IEP reports.

Overall appraisal:
A number of authors have now published articles/reports permitting a system-wide analysis of aspects of IEP activity. These were reviewed as part of this ENQA Review and are of good value to the study of the Higher Education review. Pool members and university-level institutions will also generally derive benefit from these published studies. The introduction by the IEP of a common reporting template will also facilitate future analysis and publication. The volume and contemporaneous nature of the coordinated review in Romania, and that planned for Montenegro, will contribute to this body of knowledge on IEP activities.

Assessment against ESG Standard 2.8: The Panel affirms that the IEP is fully compliant under this standard.

Assessment against ENQA Membership Criterion 1/ESG Part 2: The Review Panel affirm that the IEP is substantially compliant under this criterion.

b) ENQA Membership Criterion 1/ESG 3.3 Activities

Standard:
Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institutional or programme level) on a regular basis.

Guidelines:
These may involve evaluation, review, audit, assessment, accreditation or other similar activities and should be part of the core functions of the agency.

The IEP carries out two types of evaluations: institutional evaluations at the request of individual institutions and coordinated evaluations. The

number of evaluations varies from year to year and there is no opportunity to plan them in advance. Between 1994 and 2013, the IEP carried out 336 evaluations (290 full and 46 follow-up evaluations) across 46 countries worldwide (SER - Annex K).

Coordinated evaluations are conducted at a national or regional level in which all institutions of higher education or a sample of these institutions are evaluated. Coordinated IEP evaluations have a bottom-up approach to the extent that they build on the basic IEP methodology and philosophy, which examines each institution in the light of its own mission and strategic goals, and in its own contextual environment, with the objective of encouraging and supporting the institution to improve.

Assessment against ENQA Membership Criterion 1 (ESG 3.3): The Review Panel concluded that the IEP is fully compliant with this standard.

4.2. ENQA criterion 2 – Official status (ESG 3.2)

Standard:
Agencies should be formally recognised by competent public authorities in the European higher education area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdictions within which they operate.

The EUA is a legal entity, registered in Switzerland. The IEP is an independent member service of the EUA without any legal status in its own right. The IEP is overseen by the SC, the body responsible for all the operations of the IEP, and has an administrative office staff responsible for the support of its work. The SER refers to the IEPs "formal recognition by competent public authorities in several European countries through contracts signed with national or regional authorities responsible for higher education to fund the evaluation of some or all of their universities and other types of institutions. These have included Ireland, Catalonia, Slovakia, Portugal, Romania and Montenegro". The Panel found no reason, either in the SER or the interviews, to challenge this view.

Overall appraisal:
In terms of Official Status, the IEP's legal status is established under the law of Switzerland, where the EUA is registered. The EUA is the contracting body for the IEP. The IEP has achieved national recognition in

many countries through formal and contractual interaction with national and trans-national academic quality assurance agencies.

Assessment against ENQA Membership Criterion 2: The IEP is fully compliant under this criterion.

4.3. ENQA criterion 3 – Resources (ESG 3.4)

Standard:
Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources, both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective and efficient manner, with appropriate provision for the development of their processes, procedures and staff.

The IEP operates on a non-profit basis. It is funded through income generated by fees from participating institutions or authorities commissioning coordinated evaluations. Many international organisations, such as the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the World Bank, and the Open Society Foundation in Macedonia, provide funding for supporting coordinated evaluations conducted by the IEP (SER – Annex L). This income covers administrative expenses, evaluation expenses, expenses of SC meetings and annual seminars.
The IEP budget and accounts are managed as separate items in the EUA budget and appear as such in the financial accounts of the association.
The IEP Secretariat has increased its staff to six members because of the increased number of evaluations. In the SER, the IEP expresses the view that IEP staff is sufficient for the tasks of developing and coordinating the activities, and that, through the increase of staff, the Programme has managed to handle the workload increase following the increase of evaluations. It was emphasised that team coordinators, responsible for the organisation of site visits, preparation of an interim report and the final evaluation report, are considered as an extension of the Secretariat staff. The team coordinators receive an honorarium for this extensive work.
Within the EUA, the IEP staff is clearly identified and there is a staff member in the finance unit in charge of dealing with IEP-related payments. The IEP office is a part of the EUA office and the IEP draws upon the financial management, human resources and resources for marketing and communications support of the EUA.

Overall appraisal:
Based on a discussion with EUA management, the IEP Secretariat, Team Coordinators and having reviewed the activities and reports of the IEP Steering Committee, the ENQA Review Panel concluded that the IEP is managed well. The resources are planned and put in place in advance to

ensure efficient handling the perceived future workload. The unprecedented workload of the Romanian Coordinated Review placed particular strain on the IEP Secretariat, and there was a need for additional resources. They have responded well to this challenge. Evidence from the IEP process is that the significantly increased workload has not affected the operation of individual teams either in coordinated reviews or in so-called 'regular' reviews.

Assessment against ENQA Membership Criterion 3: The IEP is fully compliant under this criterion.

4.4. ENQA criterion 4 - Mission statement (ESG 3.5)

Standard:
Agencies should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, contained in a publicly available statement.

Guidelines:
These statements should describe the goals and objectives of agencies' quality assurance processes, the division of labour with relevant stakeholders in higher education, especially the higher education institutions, and the cultural and historical context of their work. The statements should make clear that the external quality assurance process is a major activity of the agency and that there exists a systematic approach to achieving its goals and objectives. There should also be documentation to demonstrate how the statements are translated into a clear policy and management plan.

The IEP's mission statement is available on the IEP website. It describes the aims and principles of the IEP evaluation. The SC is responsible for approving, reviewing and ensuring the realisation of the mission statement.

Overall appraisal:
The IEP Mission Statement as published does outline the goals and objectives of the programme. The voluntary nature of an institution's engagement with the IEP is a key contextual dimension of the IEP goals and objectives but is not explicitly stated or referred to in the IEP Mission Statement.

Assessment against ENQA Membership Criterion 4: The IEP is partially compliant under this criterion.

4.5. ENQA criterion 5 - Independence (ESG 3.6)

Standard:
Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders.

Guidelines:
An agency will need to demonstrate its independence through measures, such as:
• Its operational independence from higher education institutions and governments is guaranteed in official documentation (e.g. instruments of governance or legislative acts).
• The definition and operation of its procedures and methods, the nomination and appointment of external experts and the determination of the outcomes of its quality assurance processes are undertaken autonomously and independently from governments, higher education institutions, and organs of political influence.
• While relevant stakeholders in higher education, particularly students/learners, are consulted in the course of quality assurance processes, the final outcomes of the quality assurance processes remain the responsibility of the agency.

The Review Panel assessed compliance of the IEP with criterion 5 by considering its independence from two points of view: first, the IEP's independence from any external political involvement in its work and second, the IEP's position within the EUA. In the SER the IEP is described as a self-governed, non-governmental evaluation programme that is independent of national higher education authorities, higher education institutions and other stakeholders. The IEP carries out evaluations that result in evaluation reports and conclusions for which evaluation teams are responsible. The IEP Secretariat only monitors the consistency of the reports and ensures that they are evidence-based. The evaluated institutions receive a final draft of the report and have the possibility to comment on factual errors, but without influence on the teams' conclusions.
The Charter of conduct for pool members (Annex 1 to *Guidelines for evaluation teams*) ensures that no conflict of interest at the level of individual pool members takes place.
With regard to the first, based on the SER and findings of the site visit, the Review Panel concluded that the IEP acts with complete independence from any external influences, including government, higher education institutions and other stakeholders.
The SER explained the independence of the IEP operations from the EUA by highlighting the following documents:

- a specific mandate for the SC, first developed in 2005 in order to make boundaries between the IEP and the EUA's governance and decision-making structures explicit;
- the IEP Extended SC discussed and approved a document defining how the IEP is governed and the terms of reference for the IEP SC in September 2013;
- the "Institutional Evaluation Programme" has been registered as a trademark since January 2013. Since the 2011/2012 round, evaluated institutions have received an "evaluated by IEP" icon after the report is published, thus reinforcing the use of the IEP as an independent brand.

These documents aim to ensure the independence of IEP management and evaluations. It is important to take into account that there is no link between EUA membership criteria and IEP evaluations, so IEP evaluations are not limited to EUA members or members-to be, and outcomes from IEP evaluations are not used in the examination of membership candidacies to the EUA.

It was clear to the Review Panel that the IEP is very closely associated with the EUA in a number of ways: IEP staff is employed by the EUA, there are shared offices, the IEP has a budget line in the EUA's accounts and there are resources of the EUA support in budgetary and human resource of the IEP. However, it is important to stress that IEP can use those resources in full independence from the EUA. Moreover, records and working documents of the activities conducted by the IEP Secretariat staff are stored in a restricted area of the EUA computer server, and cannot be accessed by the EUA Secretariat staff who are not involved in the IEP.

The Review Panel discussed the IEP's independence of the EUA during interviews with the EUA Secretary General, the SC ex-officio member and IEP Secretariat members. These discussions and examination of the SC meeting minutes assured the Review Panel that the SC played an important role in the IEP's governance and that it was solely responsible for the IEP's policy. In short, the IEP works in line with EUA objectives and the EUA is mainly responsible for the sustainability of the IEP, while maintaining the autonomous and independent nature of the QA-policy of the IEP. Sustainability must be interpreted as guarantee of the independent work of the IEP and the gatekeeper for possible financial pressure on the IEP.

Overall appraisal:
The principal enablers of the IEP are team members as drawn from the IEP Pool. Respective interviews with Members, Chairs and Coordinators attest to the independence of the IEP evaluation team as it goes about its business in a particular institution under evaluation. At a governance level there are clear and effective lines drawn between the EUA and the IEP Steering Committee. Similarly, the IEP Secretariat exists to enable and

facilitate the workings of the individual Teams. The commitment and professionalism of the Pool members and the peer review nature of the IEP process further assure the independence of the IEP. This independence is also clearly valued and protected by the EUA as the legal entity which is a guarantor for IEP activities.

Assessment against ENQA Membership Criterion 5: The IEP is fully compliant under this criterion.

4.6. ENQA criterion 6 - External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the members (ESG 3.7)

Standard:
The processes, criteria and procedures used by agencies should be pre-defined and publicly available.
These processes will normally be expected to include:
• a self-assessment or equivalent procedure by the subject of the quality assurance process;
• an external assessment by a group of experts, including, as appropriate, (a) student member(s), and site visits as decided by the agency;
• publication of a report, including any decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes;
• a follow-up procedure to review actions taken by the subject of the quality assurance process in the light of any recommendations contained in the report.

Guidelines:
Agencies may develop and use other processes and procedures for particular purposes. Agencies should pay careful attention to their declared principles at all times, and ensure both that their requirements and processes are managed professionally and that their conclusions and decisions are reached in a consistent manner, even though the decisions are formed by groups of different people. Agencies that make formal quality assurance decisions or conclusions which have formal consequences should have an appeals procedure. The nature and form of the appeals procedure should be determined in the light of the constitution of each agency.

According to the SER, the IEP evaluation process consists of a self-evaluation report, two site visits, an oral and a written report. The IEP stresses the self-evaluation process as being the most important phase of the evaluation process. The follow-up is on a voluntary basis, but strongly recommended. The IEP evaluation process and criteria are described in the *Guidelines for institutions* which are available on the IEP website.

The Review Panel discussed the evaluation process during a site visit with the team chair, team coordinators, representatives of the evaluated institutions and student team members.
Review Panel members read certain evaluation reports that are publicly available. On the basis of the collected information and findings, the Review Panel was able to confirm that IEP evaluations operate as described in the SER.

Some aspects of Criterion 6 such as criteria, reporting and the follow-up procedure have already been assessed in this report under Criterion 1.

Overall appraisal:
The IEP fulfils all the requirements under this criterion and ESG 3.7 with the exception of the follow-up procedure which does not normally happen nor can it be enforced arising from the voluntary nature of the IEP. In addition to this, as the IEP does not lead to formal decisions, neither is there an appeals process.

Assessment against ENQA Membership Criterion 6: The IEP is substantially compliant under this criterion.

4.7. ENQA criterion 7 - Accountability procedures (ESG 3.8)

Standard:
Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.

Guidelines:
These procedures are expected to include the following:
1. A published policy for the assurance of the quality of the agency itself, made available on its website;
2. Documentation which demonstrates that:
• the agency's processes and results reflect its mission and goals of quality assurance;
• the agency has in place, and enforces, a no-conflict-of-interest mechanism in the work of its external experts;
• the agency has reliable mechanisms that ensure the quality of any activities and material produced by subcontractors, if some or all of the elements in its quality assurance procedure are subcontracted to other parties;
• the agency has in place internal quality assurance procedures which include an internal feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from its own staff and council/board); an internal reflection mechanism (i.e. means to react to internal and external recommendations for

improvement); and an external feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from experts and reviewed institutions for future development) in order to inform and underpin its own development and improvement.
3. A mandatory cyclical external review of the agency's activities at least once every five years which includes a report on its conformity with the membership criteria of ENQA.

The SER states the following:
- a formal statement on the IEP internal quality policy was first adopted in 2007; since then, it has been revised and is now called Internal Quality Procedures. The Statement is publicly available,
- The IEP constantly reflects on how to improve the collection of feedback. So, the SC revised the surveys that IEP administers routinely in spring 2013. The major change consisted in reducing the number of regularly conducted surveys from three to two by eliminating the short questionnaire for each team after each evaluation. This decision was based on the observation that no concrete improvement could be based on such limited results.
Consequently, the IEP Secretariat administers two annual surveys, one for the pool and another one for institutions.
- the Work Programme for the following year, which is approved by the SC and the Annual Report from the previous year, includes a section on improvements based on feedback received,
- the IEP is also internally evaluated at the annual seminar,
- based on the discussions, the IEP staff annually review guidelines, the annual seminar programme and the workshop that is offered to participating institutions,
- the IEP has been externally reviewed regularly since the beginning of the Programme: CHEPS Monitoring (1995-1998), Review of the pilot phase (1995), Review of the experimental phase (1996), Review of the follow-up evaluations (1998), Review of the evaluation reports by Peter Williams (1999), External review by an international Panel (2003), an analysis of 60 evaluation reports by Stefanie Hofmann (2005), External review conducted by a Panel appointed by ENQA (2009).

The Review Panel was able to understand the measurements for internal quality assurance using the above-mentioned evidence provided by the SER as well as by discussing this issue during site visits with IEP staff, SC representatives, representatives from the evaluated institutions and pool members. The Review Panel found that two-day annual seminars are an important source for self-reflection on the IEP and its activities. Seminars provide opportunities for the discussion of changes to the guidelines, for reflection on the roles of pool members, for reviews of certain aspects of the evaluation process and for an overview of current policy developments in European higher education. Another important aspect of self-reflection are SC meetings that consider the effectiveness of evaluations,

consistency of reports, and overview on how IEP is related to changes and development in the European QA.

Overall appraisal:
There are established mechanisms in place within the IEP for self-evaluation, feedback and the resultant process and procedural evolution. There was clear evidence from the interview sessions of dynamic discussion through feedback and from the annual seminar and the meetings of the Extended Steering Committee. Account is also taken of externally moderated reviews including, for example, ENQA and EQAR reports and recommendations. All parties, including pool members, IEP Steering Committee members, the IEP Secretariat and EUA senior management were informed and active contributors on topics raised by the ENQA Panel and issues concerning the current and planned workload of the IEP. The IEP Secretariat was also current on these topics.

Assessment against ENQA Membership Criterion 7: The IEP is fully compliant under this criterion.

4.8. ENQA criterion 8 - Consistency of judgements, appeals system and contribution to ENQA aims

Standard:
i. The agency pays careful attention to its declared principles at all times, and ensures both that its requirements and processes are managed professionally and that its judgments and decisions are reached in a consistent manner, even if the judgments are formed by different groups
ii. If the agency makes formal quality assurance decisions, or conclusions which have formal consequences, it should have an appeals procedure. The nature and form of the appeals procedure should be determined in the light of the constitution of the agency.
iii. The agency is willing to contribute actively to the aims of ENQA.

Consistency of judgements
The IEP has in place various mechanisms to ensure consistency of judgements:
- through maintaining a steady pool of experts, training them regularly and fostering a sense of community and ownership among the pool members;
- through careful staff recruitment and induction procedures as well as pre-defined procedures for coordinating the evaluations and other related activities (regular updates of *Guidelines for Secretariat*, including adaptations based on comments by the SC whenever needed, streamlined

management of pool-related information, including statistics and record of past members, weekly meetings of the Secretariat staff for updates on activities and discussion of current issues, yearly self-evaluation, training for incoming staff).

Appeals procedure
The IEP evaluations do not result in any judgements; they are improvement-orientated evaluations based on peer-reviews, they do not have an appeals procedure. However, in the spring of 2008 the SC adopted a formal complaints procedure (publicly available) which includes both an external part, informing institutions how and on what grounds to submit an appeal, and an internal part which defines how the IEP would deal with an appeal.
Since the adoption of the complaints procedure, it has not been used by any institution.

Willingness to contribute to ENQA's aims
The IEP Secretariat staff regularly participates in ENQA events and discussions. The IEP associates itself with ENQA's aims to promote the European dimension of quality assurance.

Overall appraisal:
In terms of consistency, there was clear evidence from all participants that the IEP is actively working on this. The IEP is particularly alert to the risk to consistency of the large-scale undertaking which is the coordinated review of Romanian institutions and the consequent increase in pool membership from 70 to over 100 members.
There is no formal appeal system as there are effectively no judgements made by the IEP; rather there are a number of recommendations.
The IEP makes a significant contribution to the aims of the ENQA via its inherent QA activity, training activities, analysis and publications on academic QA, particularly within a European context.

Assessment against ENQA Membership Criterion 8: The IEP is fully compliant under this criterion.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the self-evaluation report, the documentation provided and the oral evidence considered in the course of the site visit, the Review Panel concluded that the Institutional Evaluation Programme of the European University Association is fully compliant with the majority of ENQA membership criteria.

The criteria where full compliance has not been achieved are:
- ENQA Membership Criterion 1 and the section 3.1: external quality assurance built on the results of internal quality assurance - substantially compliant,
- ENQA Membership Criterion 4: Mission statement - partially compliant,
- ENQA Membership Criterion 6: External Quality assurance criteria and processes used - substantially compliant.

The Institutional Evaluation Programme is, nonetheless, in the opinion of the Review Panel, sufficiently compliant to have its Full Membership of ENQA confirmed for a further period of five years.

The Review Panel congratulates the Institutional Evaluation Programme's determination to contribute to further development of Higher Education Institutions through the enhancement of the quality of their provisions and recommends that the Institutional Evaluation Programme:
1. Should keep under review the age-profile and current to retired ratio of pool members to ensure dynamism and currency in panel membership. The Review Panel further recommends that
   a) the pool of regular experts should be extended with qualified and experienced colleagues other than those at the level of rector and vice-rector and
   b) that all IEP panel members should be appropriately experienced and/or trained, particularly in matters of Academic Quality Assurance.
2. Should augment further use of the common report template in order to increase consistency of reports.
3. Should augment the follow-up procedure by including the cost and condition of the follow-up procedure in the basic contract with an institution inviting an evaluation. A follow-up visit or review would not be as extensive as a full review, but merely focused on progress made towards implementing recommendations.
4. Should explicitly state or refer to the voluntary nature of an institution's engagement with the IEP in the Mission Statement.
5. Should launch discussions on the IEP's future and strategic planning into concrete initiatives.

6.   REFLECTION ON THE IEP's FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

It is evident, both from the SER and this report, that the IEP is committed to the continuous improvement of its own processes and operates in a manner consistent with good international and European practice, including the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* and has made progress in refining its operations since its most recent membership review in 2009.

It is important to state that the SER demonstrated clear awareness of a number of possible weaknesses in the implementation of the IEP processes as well as awareness of a number of new challenges for the IEP due to changes in the EHEA. The Review Panel noted that there are no current plans to address them.

It was clear to the Review Panel that the IEP has been able to play a significant and positive role in its support within HEIs by enhancing their capacity for self-steering, particularly in the HEIs of less well-developed parts of the EHEA. However, it is evident that high-ranking universities are not interested in the IEP's evaluation procedure. The IEP should offer a different approach to these universities; consultancy rather than evaluation. Therefore, the Review Panel suggests that the IEP should give due consideration to proposing a benchmarking service to institutions. This would not be a ranking mechanism but rather advice on the 'Plan' aspect of the PDCA cycle. This would allow the IEP to act as 'challenging friends' and not just 'critical friends' to institutions inviting evaluation. The IEP expert panel could establish valued targets for the host institution, in advance of the self-evaluation step and site visits. This additional service might be more attractive to established universities or universities that have participated in the IEP in the recent past.
This could then be a third service offered by the IEP, in addition to the IEP's current peer-review improvement-orientated evaluation and the IEP's follow-up evaluation.

Finally, due to the intensive Review Panel's discussion on coordinated evaluation, especially the Romania coordinated evaluation, the Panel wish to bring to the attention of the SC and IEP Secretariat that, although everything appears to be under control, vigilance should be maintained to ensure that large-scale coordinated reviews do not change the character of the IEP, or the IEP resourcing model. In addition, the matter of the 'voluntary by law' aspect of the Romanian review should also be kept under scrutiny.

7.   ANNEXES

7.1. Terms of references

External review of the European University Association's (EUA) Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

Annex I: TERMS OF REFERENCE
August 2013

1. Background and Context

The Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) is an independent membership service of the European University Association (EUA). It was launched in 1994 as a strategic tool for change in higher education institutions. So far, IEP carried out over 300 evaluations in Europe and worldwide. The Programme is overseen by a Steering Committee. IEP's mission is to support higher education institutions and systems in developing their capacity for change consistent with institutional autonomy, through the process of institutional evaluation.

The IEP evaluates higher education institutions in the context of their specific goals and objectives with the aim of quality improvement. The Programme emphasises an inclusive self-evaluation process and institutional self-knowledge for improved internal governance and management as well as for external accountability purposes. The evaluation methodology is based on a peer-review approach.

IEP evaluations examine institutional structures and decision-making processes and the effectiveness of strategic management. The evaluations focus on the relevance of internal quality processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision-making and strategic management as well as identifying any gaps in these internal mechanisms.

The IEP is committed to continuous improvement of its own processes and operates in a manner consistent with good international and European practice, including the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.*

IEP has been Full member of ENQA since 2000. Full membership was confirmed following an external review on 7 September 2009.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

This is a type A review, as defined in the *Guidelines for external reviews of quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Education Area.* It will evaluate the way in which and to what extent IEP fulfils the criteria for the ENQA membership and thus the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*. Consequently, the review will also provide information to the ENQA Board to aid its consideration of whether IEP should be reconfirmed Full Member of ENQA. The review panel is not expected, however, to make any judgements as regards the reconfirmation of Full Membership.

3. The Review Process

The process is designed in the light of the *Guidelines for external reviews of quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Education Area*.

The evaluation procedure consists of the following steps:

- Formulation of the Terms of Reference and protocol for the review;
- Nomination and appointment of the review panel;
- Self-evaluation by IEP including the preparation of a self-evaluation report;
- A site visit by the review panel to IEP;
- Preparation and completion of the final evaluation report by the review panel;
- Scrutiny of the final evaluation report by the Review Committee of the ENQA Board;
- Analysis of the scrutiny by the ENQA Board and their decision regarding ENQA membership;
- Follow-up of the panel's and/or ENQA Board's recommendations by the agency.

3.1 Nomination and appointment of the review team members

The review panel consists of five members: Four external reviewers (one or two quality assurance experts, representative(s) of higher education institutions, student member) and a review secretary. Three of the reviewers (including the review secretary) are nominated by the ENQA Board on the basis of proposals submitted to ENQA by the national agencies, and are drawn from senior serving members of Board/Council or staff of ENQA member agencies. The fourth external reviewer is drawn from a nomination provided by the European association of Higher Education Institutions (EURASHE). The nomination of the student member is asked from the European Students' Union (ESU). One of the panel members serves as the chair of the review.

Current members of the ENQA Board are not eligible to serve as reviewers.

ENQA will provide IEP with the list of suggested experts with their respective curriculum vitae to establish that there are no known conflicts of interest. The experts will have to sign a non-conflict of interest statement as regards the IEP review.

3.2 Self-evaluation by IEP, including the preparation of a self-evaluation report

IEP is responsible for the execution and organisation of its own self-evaluation process and shall take into account the following guidance:

- Self-evaluation is organised as a project with a clearly defined schedule and includes all relevant internal and external stakeholders;
- The self-evaluation report is broken down by the topics of the evaluation: background description of the current situation of the Agency; analysis and appraisal of the current situation; proposals for improvement and measures already planned; a summary of perceived strengths and weaknesses;
- The report is well-structured, concise and comprehensively prepared. It clearly demonstrates the extent to which IEP fulfils its tasks of external quality assurance and meets the criteria for the

ENQA membership and thus the ESG. The report is submitted to the review panel a minimum of four weeks prior to the site visit.

3.3 A Site Visit by the Review Panel

IEP will draw up a draft proposal of schedule of the site visit to be submitted to the review panel at least two months before the planned dates of the visit. The schedule includes an indicative timetable of the meetings and other exercises to be undertaken by the review panel during the site visit, the duration of which is 2 days. The approved schedule shall be given to IEP at least three weeks before the dates of the visit, in order to properly organise the requested interviews.

The review panel will be assisted by IEP in arriving in Brussels, Belgium.

The site visit will close with an oral presentation and discussion of the major issues of the evaluation between the review panel and IEP.

3.4 Preparation and completion of the final evaluation report

On the basis of the review panel's findings, the review secretary will draft the report in consultation with the review panel. The report will take into account the purpose and scope of the evaluation as defined under article 2. It will also provide a clear rationale for its findings with regards to each ENQA membership criteria. A draft will be submitted for comment to IEP by January 8th, 2014, for comment on factual accuracy. If IEP chooses to provide a statement in reference to the draft report it will be submitted to the chair of the review panel at the latest on January 15th, 2014. Should the report be received after January 8th, 2014, the IEP will send its statement within one week after receipt of the report. Thereafter the review panel will take into account the statement by IEP, finalise the document and submit it to IEP and ENQA.

The report is to be finalised by January 22nd, 2014 and will not exceed 40 pages in length.

4. Follow-up Process and Publication of the Report

IEP will consider the expert panel's report and may inform ENQA of its plans to implement any recommendations contained in the report. Subsequent to the discussion of the evaluation results and any planned implementation measures with ENQA, the review report will be published on the IEP website. IEP also commits to preparing a follow-up plan in which it addresses the recommendations of the review panel.

The final review report will be published on the ENQA website, regardless of the review outcome and decision by the Board.

5. Use of the report

ENQA shall retain ownership of the report. The intellectual property of all works created by the expert panel in connection with the review contract, including specifically any written reports, shall be vested in ENQA.

The review report is to be used by the Board of ENQA for the purpose of reaching a conclusion on whether IEP has or has not met the membership criteria/ESG.

The working paper authored by the Panel is to be considered as a report owned by ENQA only after being approved by the ENQA Board.

Once submitted to IEP and ENQA and until the decision by the Board is made, the working paper may not be used or relied upon by IEP, the panel and any third party and may not be disclosed without the prior written consent of ENQA. IEP may use the report at its discretion only after the Board decision has been made.

IEP shall be aware that, should an application to the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) be submitted, the Chair of the panel might be approached by the Register Committee for any request for clarification. The Chair of the panel may give a response but he/she is requested to copy the Director of ENQA on all correspondence.

5. Budget

IEP shall pay the following review related fees:

Fee of the Chair	4,750 EUR
Fee of the Secretary	4,750 EUR
Fee of the 3 other panel members	8,250 EUR (2,750 EUR each)
Administrative overhead for ENQA Secretariat	5,000 EUR
Experts Training fund	1,250 EUR
Travel and subsistence expenses (approximate)	6,000 EUR

This gives a total indicative cost of 30,000 EUR for a review team of 5 members. In the case that the allowance for travel and subsistence expenses is exceeded, IEP will cover any additional costs after the completion of the review. However, the ENQA Secretariat will endeavour to keep the travel and subsistence expenses in the limits of the planned budget, and will refund the difference to IEP if the travel and subsistence expenses go under budget.

In the event of a second site visit required by the Board and aiming at completing the assessment of compliance, and should the agency accept a second visit, an additional fee of 500 EUR per expert, as well as travel and subsistence costs are recoverable from the agency.

6. Indicative Schedule of the Review

The duration of the evaluation is scheduled to take about 19 months, from October 2012 to March 2014:

Self-evaluation starts	October 2012
Agreement on terms of reference and protocol for review	August 2013
Appointment of review panel members	August 2013
Preparation of site visit schedule and indicative timetable	September-October 2013
Self-evaluation completed and submitted	11 October 2013
Briefing of review panel members	October 2013

Review panel site visit	4th week of November 2013 (25-28)
Draft of evaluation report to IEP	January 2014
Statement of IEP to review panel if necessary	January 2014
Submission of final report to ENQA	22 January 2014
Consideration of the report by ENQA and response of IEP	February 2014
Publication of report	March 2014

7.2. Site visit programme

Sunday 17th November		
17.00 – 19.00	*Private meeting of the review panel*	Review panel only
19.30	*Dinner*	Review panel only

Monday 18th November		
9.30 – 10.00 3rd floor meeting room	**Introductions**	**Tia Loukkola**, *Head of the IEP Secretariat* **Thérèse Zhang**, *Programme Manager*
10.00 – 10.30 3rd floor meeting room	**Meeting with the Chair of the IEP Steering Committee and the Head of IEP Secretariat** *Video conference with the Chair of the IEP Steering Committee. The Head of the IEP Secretariat will be present in person*.	**Tia Loukkola**, *Head of the IEP Secretariat* **Lothar Zechlin**, *former Rector, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany, and Chair of the IEP Steering Committee since 2010; IEP team chair and pool member since 2004*
10.40 – 11.30 3rd floor meeting	***Meeting with the members of the IEP Secretariat***	**Alicja Bochajczuk**, *Administrative Officer* **Anna Gover**, *Administrative Officer (replacement Alicja's maternity leave)*

room		**Caroline Marissal,** *Administrative Assistant* **Crina Mosneagu**, *Project Officer* **Thérèse Zhang**, *Programme Manager*
11.40 – 12.30 *3rd floor meeting room*	***Meeting with IEP pool members*** *Video conference*	**Erazem Bohinc**, *student, European Faculty of Law, Slovenia; IEP pool member since 2012* **Carmen Fenoll**, *Professor and former Vice-Rector, University of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain; IEP team member since 2006* **Jacques Lanarès**, *Vice-Rector, University of Lausanne, Switzerland; IEP team member since 2005* **Lucka Lorber**, *Vice-Rector, University of Maribor, Slovenia; IEP team member since 2012* **Winfried Müller**, *former Rector, University of Klagenfurt, Austria; IEP team chair and pool member since 2001* **Öktem Vardar**, *Rector, TED University, Turkey; IEP team chair and member of the IEP pool since 2002*
12.30 – 14.00 *3rd floor meeting room*	*Internal review panel discussion with lunch*	*Review panel only*
14.00 – 14.40	***Meeting with EUA Secretariat members***	**Julien Georis**, *EUA Chief Accountant* ***Lesley Wilson***, *EUA Secretary*

3rd floor meeting room		*General*
14.50 – 15.40 *3rd floor meeting room*	**Meeting with representatives from evaluated institutions** *Video conference*	**From Babes Bolyai University, Romania** *(evaluated in 2000-2001 and 2012):* **Ladislau Nagy**, *Vice-Rector* **Marcel Pop**, *Vice-Rector* **Monica Zaharie**, *Expert at the Center for University Development and Quality Assurance* **From Atilim University, Turkey** *(evaluated in 2011-2012):* **Hasan U. Akay**, *Provost* **Fatma Ulku Selcuk**, *Assistant Professor of Management* **From Mykolas Romeris University** (evaluated in 2012-2013): **Giedrius Vilunas**, *Chairman of the Working group for IEP* **Nijole Burkšaitiene**, *Secretary of the Working group for IEP* **Nomeda Gudeliene**, *Doctoral student, Member of the Working group*

15.40 – 16.10 *3rd floor meeting room*	*Coffee break with internal review panel discussion*	*Review panel only*
16.10 – 17.00 *3rd floor*	**Meeting with the self-evaluation group** *Video conference, with Tia Loukkola present in person.*	**Tove Bull**, *former Rector, University of Tromso, Norway; IEP team chair and member of the IEP pool since 2004*

meeting room		**Tia Loukkola**, *Head of the IEP Secretariat* **Fernando Miguel Galan Palomares**, *student,* *University of Cantabria, Spain;* *Former IEP* *pool member (2010-2013) and former* *member of the IEP SC (2011-2013)* **Derin Ural**, *Professor and former Vice-* *Rector, Istanbul Technical University,* *Turkey; IEP team member since 2012* **Padraig Walsh**, *Chief Executive, Quality and* *Qualifications Ireland; IEP coordinator since* *2005, and former member of the IEP SC* *(2009-2013)*
17.10 – 18.00 *3rd floor meeting room*	**Meeting with representatives of evaluated institutions** *Video conference*	**From Universidad El Bosque, Colombia** *(evaluated in 2009-2010 and in 2012-2013):* **Luisa Fernanda Amortegui Ruíz**, *student (8th semester), Faculty of Design, Image and Communication* **María Fernanda Cala**, *Teacher representative on the board of the Faculty of Psychology, Director of the Psychometrics Lab, and Professor of communication, persuasion and marketing* **Carlos Felipe Escobar**, *Rector*
18.00 – 18.15 *3rd floor meeting room*	**Meeting with representatives of evaluated institutions**	**Adrian Curaj**, *Executive Agency for Higher Education and Research Funding, Romania*

18.15 – 19.00 *3rd floor meeting room*	*Review panel meeting to summarize outcomes of day one*	*Review panel only*
19.30	*Dinner*	*Review panel only*

Tuesday 19th November		
8.45 – 9.35 *3rd floor meeting room*	***Meeting with members of the IEP Steering*** ***Committee (SC)*** *Video conference*	*Virgilio Meira Soares, former Rector,* *University of Lisbon, Portugal; IEP team* *chair, member of the IEP pool since 1994,* *member of the SC since September 2013* ***Emilia Todorova**, student, University of* *Glasgow, UK; IEP pool member since 2012,* *member of the SC since March 2013* ***Howard Davies**, EUA Senior Adviser and HE* *Consultant, UK; IEP coordinator since 2005,* *member of the SC since 2011*
9.45 – 10.15 *3rd floor meeting*	**Meeting with the outgoing IEP Steering Committee ex-officio member**	***Jean-Pierre Finance**, former President,* *University Henri Poincaré of Nancy (now* *University of Lorraine), France;* *Former EUA* *Board member, and former IEP*

room		*SC ex-officio member (2009-2013)*
10.15 – 11.00 *3rd floor meeting room*	*Coffee break with internal review panel discussion*	*Review panel only*
11.10 – 11.40 *3rd floor meeting room*	**Meeting with students coordinating the ESU QA pool of experts** *Video conference*	**Dan Derricott**, *student, University of York, and Student Engagement Officer, University of Lincoln, UK; IEP pool member since 2011, coordinator of the ESU QA pool of experts* **Asnate Kazoka**, *student, Riga Technical University, Latvia; IEP pool member since 2011, coordinator of the ESU QA pool of experts*
11.50 – 12.50 *3rd floor meeting room*	**Meeting with a group of team coordinators** *Video conference*	**Christina Rozsnyai**, *Programme Officer for International Affairs, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (HAC), Hungary; IEP coordinator since 2000* **Pedro Teixeira**, *Associate Professor and Director of CIPES, University of Porto, Portugal; IEP coordinator since 2006* **Oliver Vettori**, *Director for Programme Management and Quality Management, Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria; IEP coordinator since 2012*
12.50 – 14.45	*Final discussion of review panel to agree outcomes and to*	*Review panel only*

3rd floor meeting room	*discuss main lines of the report with lunch*	
14.45 – 15.15 *3rd floor meeting room*	**Final meeting**	**Alicja Bochaczjuk** **Anna Gover** **Tia Loukkola** **Caroline Marissal** **Crina Mosneagu** **Thérèse Zhang**
15.15	**Departure**	

7.3. List of documents used in the review of IEP

A Documents requested and received by the Panel before the visit

1. Self-evaluation report with annexes:
   A IEP organigramme
   B IEP's mission statement, March 2013
   C Governance of IEP and the terms of reference for the IEP steering committee
   D Steering Committee meeting – Draft agenda, 8 March 2013
   E Internal quality procedure, March 2013
   F Guidelines for institutions, 2013
   G Follow-up evaluation: Guidelines for institutions and evaluation teams, 2013
   H Guidelines for the evaluation teams, 2013
   I   IEP annual report, 2012
   Ib IEP annual report 2012 - feedback collected
   J   Work programme 2013/2014
   K Some figures on evaluations
   L Overview of IEP Coordinated Evaluations
   M Overview of the IEP pool
   N IEP – Annual seminar programme, 4-5 October 2012
   O EUA – Annual report, 2012
   P   Summary of recommendations from the 2009 ENQA review report and EQAR Register Committee and IEP responses

2. A copy of a book chapter on the specific theme of the role of IEP with regard to the "role of market forces in HE": Cardoso, S., Rosa, M.J., Tavares, D.A., Amaral, A. (2011). Increasing Role of Market Forces in HE: Is The EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme Playing a Role? In P. N.

Teixeira and D.D. Dill (eds.), Public Vices, Private Virtues? Assessing the Effects of Marketization in Higher Education (91-110). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers

3. Rosa, M.J., Cardoso, S., Dias, D., and Amaral, A. (2011), "The EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme: an account of institutional best practices" in *Quality in Higher Education*, 17(3), pp. 369-386

4. Tavares, D.A., Rosa, M.J., and Amaral, A. (2010), "Does the EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme Contribute to Quality Improvement?" in *Quality Assurance in Education*, 18 (3), pp. 178-190.

B Documents requested and received by the Panel during the visit

1. Steering Committee Meetings' Minutes, 2010-1013

2. IEP annual seminars – List of participants

3. Lists of regular and coordinated evaluations, 2010-1013

4. Follow-up report – sample – Universidade da Madeira

5. IEP, Extended Steering Committee Meeting, 5-6 June 2009, Minutes

6. IEP Guidelines for the IEP Secretariat, May 2013

C Documents provided by ENQA
1. ENQA Code of conduct for review expert

2. Panel members' CVs

3. Terms of Reference for the review of IEP

4. EUA-IEP review report, 2009

5. Progress report following the 2009 external review of EUA-IEP