

Complaints Policy

Register Committee

13/14 May 2011

The European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) maintains a Register of quality assurance agencies that comply substantially with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG).

Agencies evidence compliance with the ESG through an independent external review process. Inclusion on the Register is voluntary for quality assurance agencies.

Individuals or organisations that have substantiated doubts whether a registered agency does comply substantially with the ESG may address these to EQAR in line with this Complaints Policy.

In case of concerns about the professional conduct of EQAR and its representatives please refer to the Code of Conduct.

If you are an applicant and have a concern regarding the decision on your application please refer to the Appeals Procedure.

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Principles

A complaint will only be considered if the concerns are related to:

- a registered agency's substantial compliance with the ESG; or
- the integrity of the external review process on the basis of which EQAR admitted an agency to the Register. The report of the external review is included in an agency's Register entry.

EQAR does not have a mandate to:

- review individual processes or decisions of registered agencies concerning a particular higher education institution or programme;
- construe national legislation, European Union law, or any other applicable rules. Concerns as regards compliance with such rules should be addressed to the competent courts or authorities.

Complaints need to be made by an identifiable individual or organisation. At the complainant's request EQAR shall not disclose their identity to the agency concerned or any other third party.

Complaints have to be substantiated and need to be supported by appropriate evidence, references, examples etc.

Process

Complaints have to be submitted in writing by email, fax or regular mail. If possible, complaints should be submitted by email to info@eqar.eu; documents should be in plain text or PDF format.

EQAR will acknowledge receipt of complaints. EQAR reserves the right to ignore submissions that are apparently bogus or unsubstantiated.

The complaint will be considered by the EQAR Register Committee. The Committee will decide if and what action to take, as appropriate and in line with the EQAR Procedures for Applications.

EQAR will inform the complainant after the complaint has been considered.

Format

Complaints have to be clearly addressed to EQAR, bulk messages will be ignored.

While there are no forms or templates, complaints have to include at least:

- The complainant's identity and contact information.
- The name of the agency concerned.
- The complainant's concerns with regard to the agency's compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) or the integrity of the external review process.

Whenever possible, complainants should refer to specific standards or guidelines of the ESG, or to specific articles of EQAR's Procedures for Application.

- Evidence supporting the concerns.
- Whether the issue has been taken up with the agency concerned; if so, with what result; if not, for what reason.
- Any current or past relationship the complainant has/had with the agency concerned.
- A statement whether the complainant's identity may be disclosed.

Disclaimer and Further Information

This Complaints Policy is solely designed to provide guidelines within EQAR for purposes of reviewing complaints. It may not be relied upon in any manner by any other person or for any other purpose.

The European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) can be found at:

<http://www.eqar.eu/application/requirements/esg.html>

The EQAR Procedures for Applications can be found at:

<http://www.eqar.eu/application/requirements/procedures.pdf>

If you have any questions with regard to the Complaints Policy please do not hesitate to contact the EQAR Secretariat.

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