

Complaints Policy

(concerning registered quality assurance agencies¹)

Register Committee

22/23 May 2014

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 concerns about a registered agency's compliance with the ESG or the external review process may address these to EQAR in line with this Complaints Policy.

Ref. RC/10.1
(ex RC6/04.1)

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Principles

A complaint will only be considered as an official complaint in the sense of §7.2 of the EQAR Procedures for Applications if it is credible, substantiated and supported by appropriate evidence, references, examples etc.

EQAR will only consider complaints that 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.

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.

Process

Complaints have to be submitted to the EQAR Secretariat in writing by email, fax, regular mail or using the [on-line form](#).

At the complainant's request EQAR shall not disclose their identity to the agency concerned or any other third party. Complaints may also be made anonymously (via the on-line form only).

Any documents should be attached in plain text or PDF format.

EQAR will acknowledge receipt of complaints (except anonymous ones).

¹ In case of concerns about the professional conduct of EQAR and its representatives please refer to the [Code of Conduct](#). If you are a quality assurance agency and have a concern regarding the decision on your application please refer to the [Appeals Procedure](#).

The complaint will be considered by the EQAR Register Committee. EQAR reserves the right to ignore submissions that are bogus or obviously unsubstantiated.

The Register Committee will decide if and what action to take, as appropriate and in line with the EQAR Procedures for Applications, and will (except in the case of anonymous complaints) inform the complainant after the complaint has been considered.

The agency concerned will be informed and invited to make representation in line with the provisions of the Procedures. The agency can opt to have a notary verify the fact that a complaint has in fact been made through an official channel.

Format

Complaints have to be clearly addressed to EQAR, bulk messages will be ignored. Unless made anonymously, the complaint should include the complainant's identity, contact information and a statement whether the complainant's identity may be disclosed to the agency concerned.

Complaints have to include at least:

- 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.
- A statement whether the issue has been taken up with the agency concerned; if so, with what result; if not, for what reason.
- Information on any current or past relationship the complainant has/had with the agency concerned.

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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