



New tools for new realities

Intro to the revised European Standards and Guidelines (ESGs) for Quality Assurance

EQUIP Workshop
Amsterdam, 14 March 2016

1. But...

why?

2. Yerevan, a game changer?

3. ESG 2015, what is it all about?



The European Students' Union



- **The European Students' Union (ESU)** is an umbrella organisation of **45 National Unions of Students** from **38 different countries** & 13 European student associations. Through its members, ESU represents over 15 million students in Europe.
- The aim of ESU is to represent and promote the educational, social, economic and cultural interests of students at the European level towards all relevant bodies and in particular the European Union, Bologna Follow Up Group, Council of Europe and UNESCO.
- **Vision:** Equal educational and social opportunities in an open and democratic Europe where students shape a sustainable future.

ESU is diverse, democratic and open-minded.

The beginning....

West European Student Information Bureau

West European
Student
Information Bureau
WESIB

Minutes of the Board Meeting held in Stockholm, 18th October, 1982

Present:	<u>Members</u>	SFS	-	(Sweden)
		NJS UK	-	(United Kingdom)
		NSU	-	(Norway)
		UNEF ID	-	(France)
		SHI	-	(Iceland)
<u>Observers</u>	VVS/UNES	-	(Switzerland)	
	SYL	-	(Finland)	
	OH	-	(Austria)	

The European Students' Union



- 1989: Wall falls and WESIB becomes 
- 1999: The Bologna Process starts and ESIB creates content committees - Information exchange to more advocacy
- 2001: ESU as stakeholder organization in the Bologna Process
- 2007: ESIB is renamed into ESU 
- 2012: 30th anniversary of WESIB/ESIB/ESU

The European Students' Union



- ESU works to bring together, **resource, train and inform** national student representatives on policy developments in higher education at the European level.
- ESU's work centers around conducting **European-wide research, partnership projects and campaigns**, providing **information services** and producing a variety of **publications**. for both students, policy-makers and higher education professionals.

**Since decisions concerning higher education are increasingly taken at the European level, ESU's role as the only European-wide student platform is similarly growing.*

ESU's core policy areas



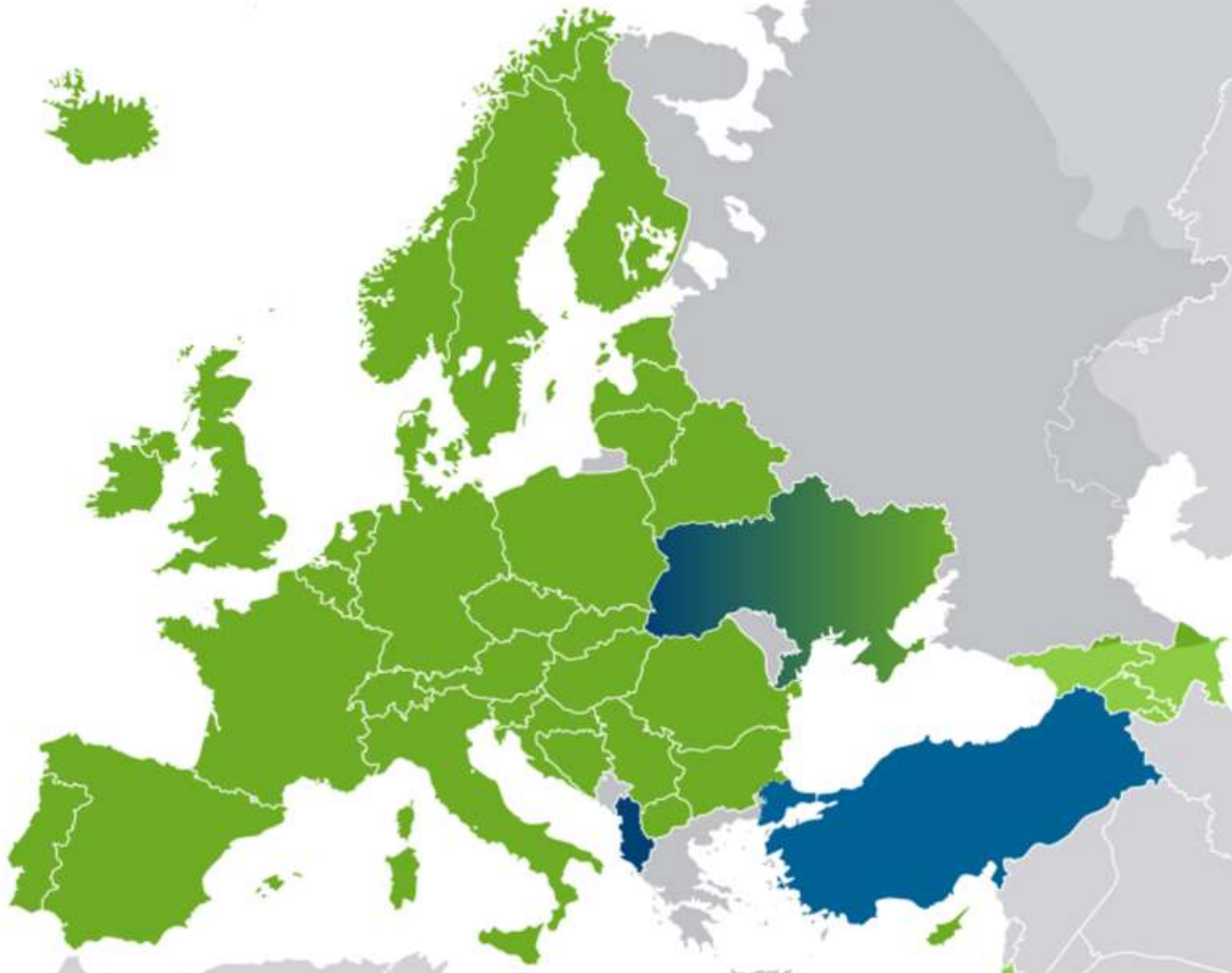
1. Overarching chapter (purposes of HE & int. policy initiatives)

1. Access and support (**Social Dimension**)

2. Public responsibility for education (**Governance & funding**)

3. **Quality and transparency** (Structural reforms, academic affairs, Student Centred-Learning)

4. **Mobility and internationalisation**



www.esu-online.org

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But... why?

Who is who?



QA in the Bologna Process



Bologna Declaration (1999)

“Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies.”

Berlin Communiqué (2003)

Call upon ENQA through its members, **in cooperation with the EUA, EURASHE, and ESIB**, to develop **an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance** and to ‘explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies, and to **report back** through the Bologna Follow-Up Group to Ministers **in 2005**

European Standards & Guidelines



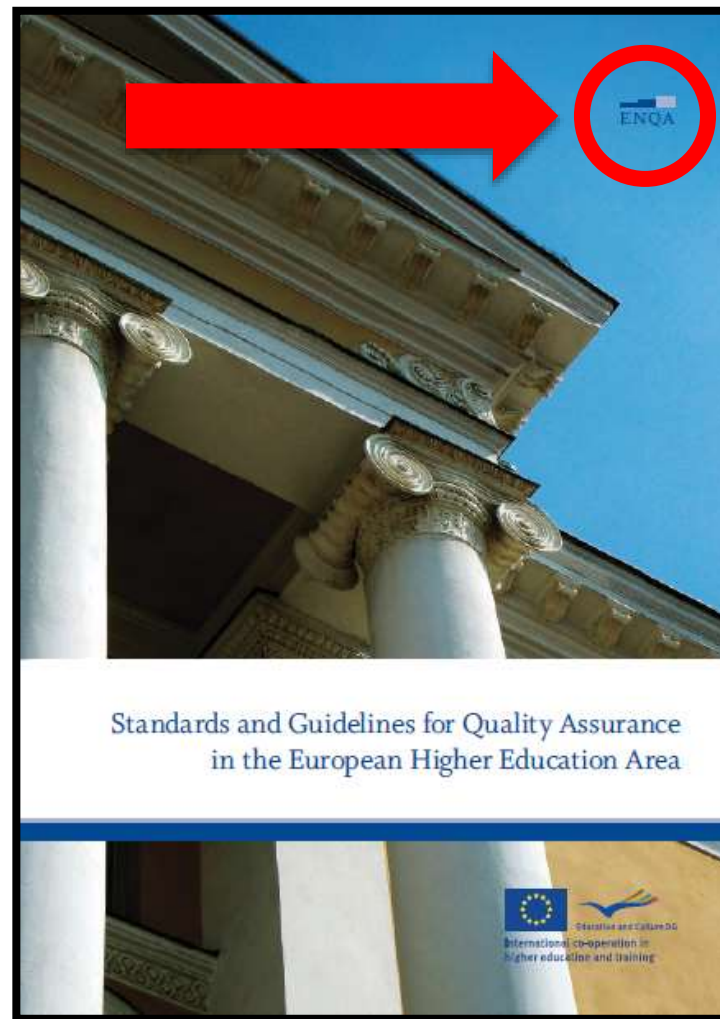
Bergen Ministerial Conference (2005)



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN HIGHER EDUCATION



and a “REGISTER”?



Adoption of the ESG



Bergen Communiqué (2005)

“We adopt the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area as proposed by ENQA. We commit ourselves to introducing the proposed model for peer review of quality assurance agencies on a national basis, while respecting the commonly accepted guidelines and criteria. **We welcome the principle of a European register of quality assurance agencies based on national review.** We ask that the practicalities of implementation be further developed by ENQA in cooperation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB with a report back to us through the Follow-up Group”.

Main issues for the ESG 2005



Focus on the educational process
(or at least its main surrounding areas)

Minimum common denominator (of 40 countries)

Not strong/relevant principles

Unclear relationship between Standards and Guidelines

Weak language

Very different context (no ECTS, EHEA QF, LO, DS, EQAR, ...)

MAP-ESG project



Mapping the **implementation** and **application** of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

- To gather information on how the ESG have been implemented and applied in the 47 Bologna signatory countries.
- By analysing gathered data, the project will evaluate whether the ESG are appropriate and up-to-date to fulfill their main task in contributing to the development of the EHEA.



MAP-ESG recommendation



ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE recommend that ministers of the EHEA countries **mandate the E4 organisations** to carry out, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, notably Education International, Business Europe, the Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) and EQAR, a careful **revision of the ESG in order to improve their clarity, applicability and usefulness**. This work would be carried out in the understanding that the current principles would be maintained. The report, with the revised document, would be referred to the BFUG.

What did the ministers say?



Bucharest Communiqué (2005)

“We acknowledge the ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE (the E4 group) report on the implementation and application of the ‘European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance’ (ESG). **We will revise the ESG to improve their clarity, applicability and usefulness including their scope.** The revision will be based upon an initial proposal to be prepared by the E4, in cooperation with Education International, BUSINESSEUROPE and the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), which will be submitted to the Bologna Follow-Up Group.”

Main players



Steering Group



Drafting Group



ENQA

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN HIGHER EDUCATION



EUA

European University Association

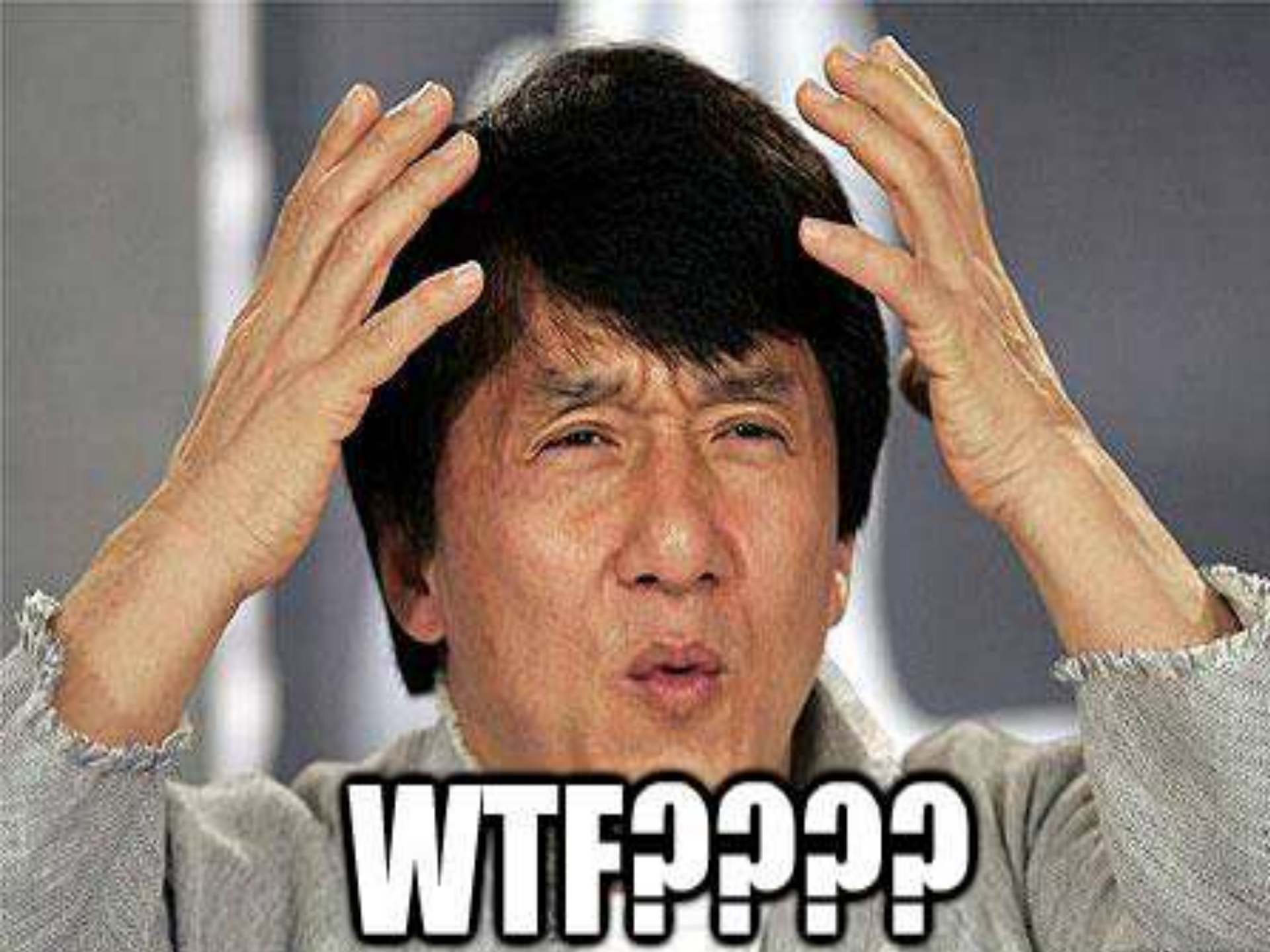


EURASHE

European Association of Institutions in Higher Education







WTF?????

Uhhhhhhh

EASY...

Isn't it?

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Yerevan, a game changer?

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Revision' guiding principles

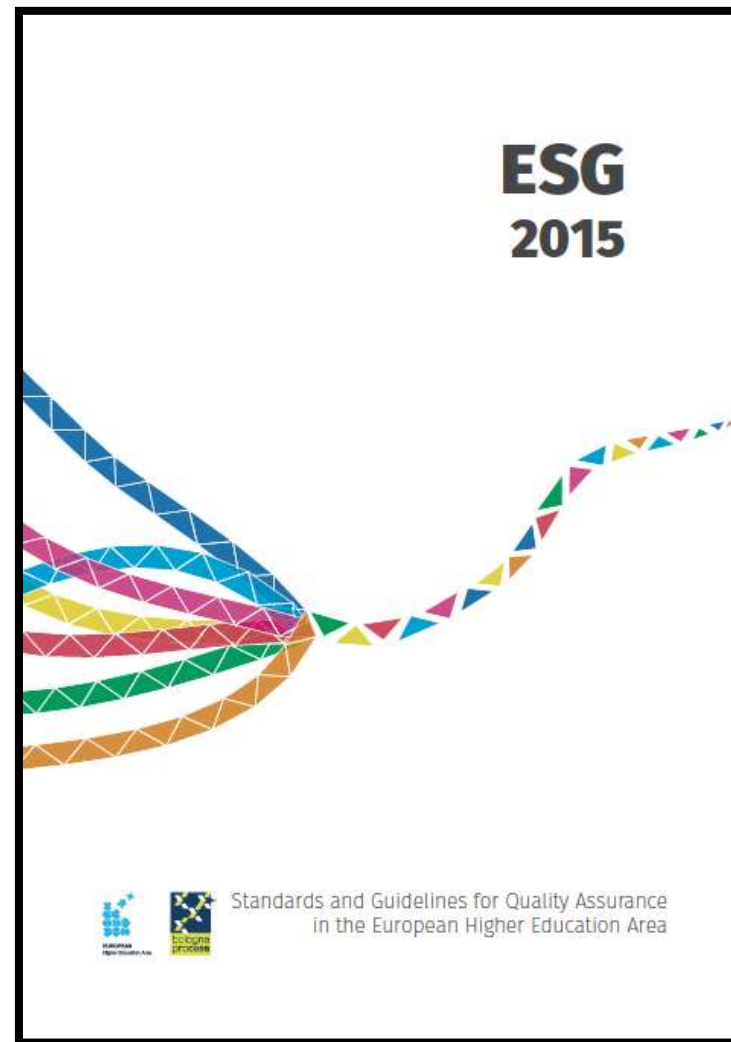
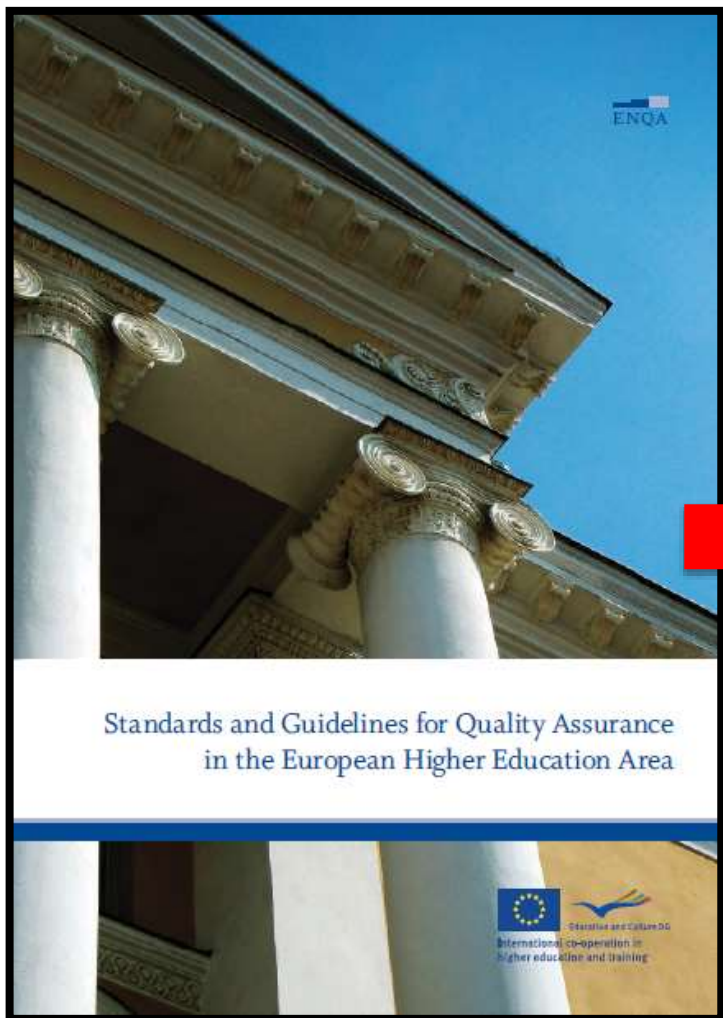
- **Keep the strengths:** integrated concept and under-standing of QA, broad applicability, broad ownership
- **Overcome the weaknesses:** vagueness, redundancies, inconsistencies
- **Update:** ESG as part of the 'Bologna-Infrastructure', taking into account recent developments in QA and HE
- Guarantee future developments

adapt



Changing as much as possible and as little as possible

European Standards & Guidelines



Scope (I)



“The ESG are a set of standards and guidelines for internal and external quality assurance in higher education. **The ESG are not standards for quality**, nor do they prescribe how the quality assurance processes are implemented, but they **provide guidance**, covering the areas which are vital **for successful quality provision and learning environments in higher education**.

The ESG **should be considered in a broader context** that also includes qualifications frameworks, ECTS and diploma supplement that also contribute to **promoting the transparency and mutual trust in higher education in the EHEA.**”

Scope (II)



“The **focus** of the ESG is on quality assurance related to **learning and teaching in higher education**, including the **learning environment and relevant links to research and innovation**. In addition institutions have policies and processes to ensure and improve the quality of their other activities, such as research and governance.

The ESG apply to all higher education offered in the EHEA regardless of the mode of study or place of delivery. Thus, the ESG are also applicable to all higher education including transnational and cross-border provision. **In this document the term “programme” refers to higher education in its broadest sense, including that which is not part of a programme leading to a formal degree.**”

Concepts (I)



“At the heart of all quality assurance activities are the twin purposes of **accountability** and **enhancement**. Taken together, these create trust in the higher education institution’s performance. A successfully implemented quality assurance system will provide information to assure the higher education institution and the public of the quality of the higher education institution’s activities (accountability) as well as provide advice and recommendations on how it might improve what it is doing (enhancement). Quality assurance and quality enhancement are thus inter-related. They can support the **development of a quality culture that is embraced by all**: from the students and academic staff to the institutional leadership and management.”

Concepts (II)



The ESG make a difference between **internal stakeholders** to cover all actors within an institution, including students and staff, and **external stakeholders** such as external partners of an institution or employers.

The word **institution** is used in the standards and guidelines to refer to higher education institutions. Depending on the institution's approach to quality assurance *it can, however, refer to the institution as whole or to any actors within the institution.*

Four purposes



- They set a **common framework** for quality assurance systems for learning and teaching at European, national and institutional level;
- They **enable the assurance and improvement** of quality of higher education in the European higher education area;
- They **support mutual trust**, thus facilitating recognition and mobility within and across national borders;
- They **provide information** on quality assurance in the EHEA.

Four principles



- Higher education institutions **have primary responsibility for the quality of their provision** and its assurance;
- Quality assurance **responds to the diversity** of higher education systems, institutions, programmes and students;
- Quality assurance **supports the development of a quality culture**;
- Quality assurance **takes into account the needs and expectations of students, all other stakeholders and society.**

Structure (I)



The overall structure of the ESG with **three parts remains the same**, to some extent:

1. Internal quality assurance
2. External quality assurance
3. Quality assurance agencies

In order to avoid existing overlaps between the parts 2 and 3 some standards were moved from the one to the other part.

The three parts are intrinsically interlinked and together form the basis for a European quality assurance framework. As a consequence, the three parts should be read as a whole.

Structure (II)

A clearer distinction between standards and guidelines is made:

- The **standards** set out **agreed and accepted practice for quality assurance** in higher education in the EHEA and should, therefore, be taken account of and adhered to by those concerned, in all types of higher education provision. – **WHAT**
- **Guidelines** explain why the standard is important and **describe how standards might be implemented**. They set out good practice in the relevant area for consideration by the actors involved in quality assurance. Implementation will vary depending on different contexts . - **HOW**

* The **Standards** make use of the common English usage of “should” which has the connotation of **prescription and compliance**.

ESG 2005 – Part 1

1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance

1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards

1.3 Assessment of students

1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff

1.5 Learning resources and student support

1.6 Information systems

1.7 Public information

ESG 2015 – Part 1

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

1.2 Design and approval of programmes

1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

1.5 Teaching staff

1.6 Learning resources and student support

1.7 Information management

1.8 Public information

1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

ESG 2005 – Part 2

2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures

2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes

2.3 Criteria for decisions

2.4 Processes fit for purpose

2.5 Reporting

2.6 Follow-up procedures

2.7 Periodic reviews

2.8 System-wide analyses

ESG 2015 – Part 2

2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose

2.3 Implementing processes

2.4 Peer-review experts

2.5 Criteria for formal outcomes

2.6 Reporting

2.7 Complaints and appeals

ESG 2005 – Part 3

3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education

3.2 Official status

3.3 Activities

3.4 Resources

3.5 Mission statement

3.6 Independence

3.7 External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies

3.8 Accountability procedures

ESG 2015 – Part 3

3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

3.2 Official status

3.3 Independence

3.4 Thematic analysis

3.5 Resources

3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct of the agencies

3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies

Bologna tools & instruments

ECTS

Diploma Supplement

Learning Outcomes

EHEA QF

Cycle system



SCL – A new concept?



“Student-Centred learning and the teaching mission of higher education

We reassert the importance of the teaching mission of higher education institutions and the necessity for ongoing curricular reform geared toward the development of learning outcomes. **Student-centred learning requires empowering individual learners, new approaches to teaching and learning, effective support and guidance structures and a curriculum focused more clearly on the learner in all three cycles.** Curricular reform will thus be an ongoing process leading to high quality, **flexible and more individually tailored education paths.** Academics, in close cooperation with student and employer representatives, will continue to develop **learning outcomes** and **international reference points** for a growing number of subject areas. We ask the higher education institutions to pay particular attention to improving the teaching quality of their study programmes at all levels. **This should be a priority in the further implementation of the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance.”**

ESG 2005 vs ESG 2015



Is it really that new? What a surprise!



Evolution, revolution or adaptation?

3

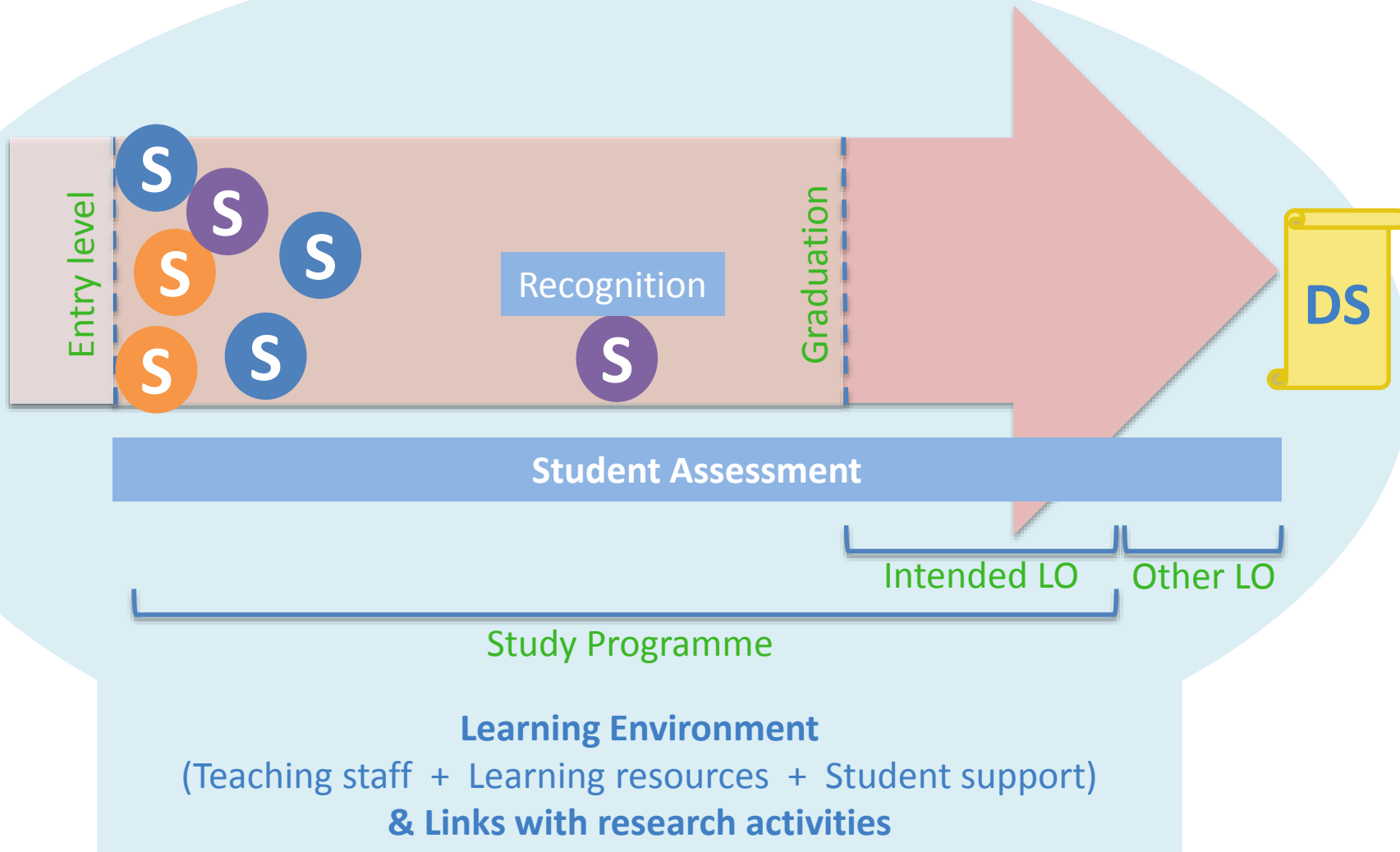
ESG 2015,
what is it all about?

what is it all about?

Ticket to Lean (Europe)



Learning and teaching process



Quality Assurance in EHEA

EHEA (ESG + EQAR)

Quality Assurance Agency (ESG part 3)

External Quality Assurance (ESG part 2)

Internal Quality Assurance (ESG part 1)



Learning & Teaching process

- Study Programme
- Links with research
- Student-Centred Learning
- Assessment & certification
- Recognition
- Teaching staff
- Learning resources
- Student support

It is really great when all the parts work together

Part 1

Standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions

ESG Part 1 - Internal QA

Learning process

1.2 Design and approval of programmes

1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

Learning environment

1.5 Teaching staff

1.6 Learning resources and student support

Info & transparency

1.7 Information management

1.8 Public information

Internal QA system

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

ESG part 1 - 1.1 & 1.2



- **1.1 Policy for quality assurance**

Institutions should have a **policy for quality assurance** that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. **Internal stakeholders** should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.

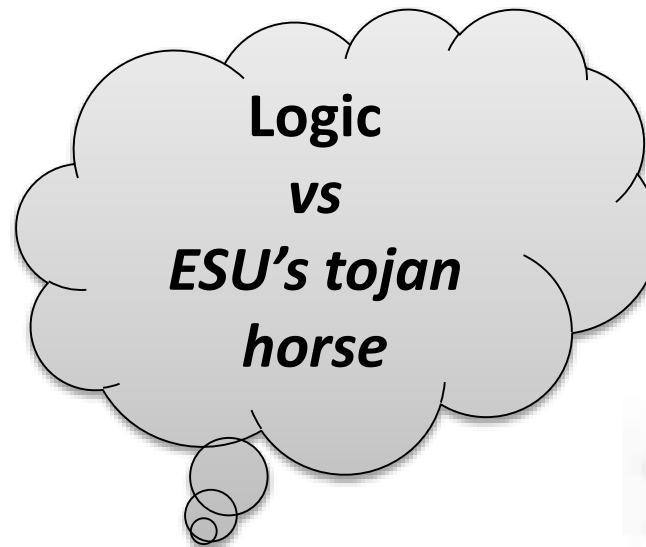
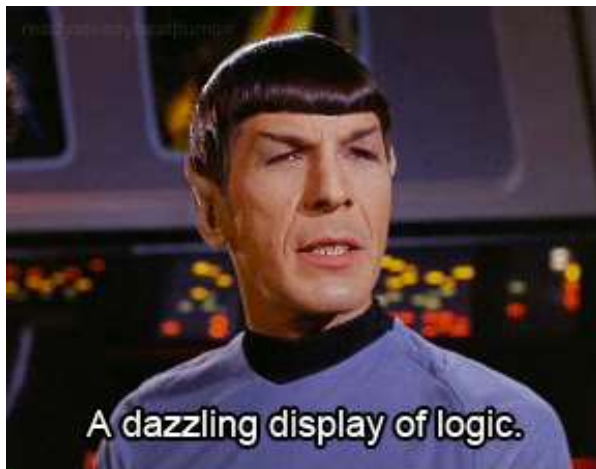
- **1.2 Design and approval of programmes**

Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The **programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them**, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

ESG part 1 - 1.3

- 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that **encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process**, and that the **assessment** of students reflects this approach.



ESG part 1 - 1.3



ESG 1.3 - Guideline (I)



Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. This means **careful consideration of the design and delivery of study programmes and the assessment of outcomes.**

The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching

- respects and attends to the **diversity of students and their needs**, enabling **flexible learning paths**;
- considers and uses **different modes of delivery**, where appropriate;
- flexibly uses a **variety of pedagogical methods**;
- **regularly evaluates** and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods;
- encourages a **sense of autonomy in the learner**, while ensuring adequate **guidance and support** from the teacher;
- promotes **mutual respect** within the learner-teacher relationship;
- has appropriate procedures for dealing with **students' complaints**. (...)

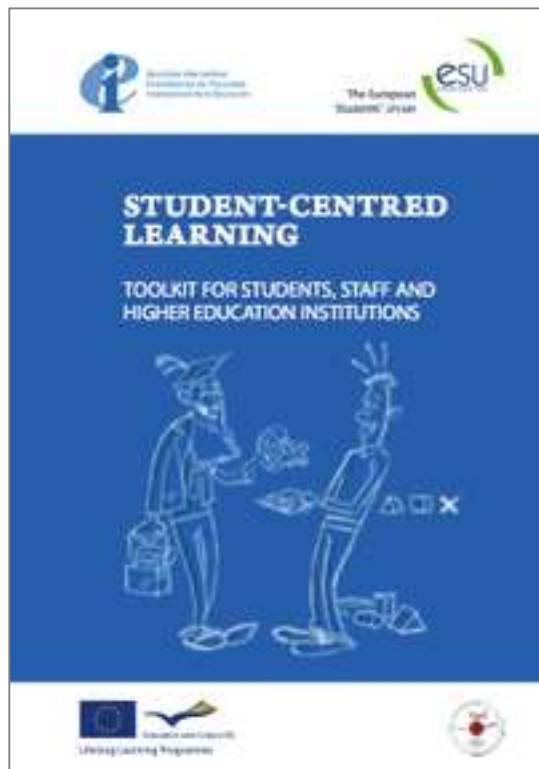
ESG 1.3 - Guideline (II)



(...) Considering the importance of **assessment for the students' progression** and their future careers, quality assurance processes for assessment take into account the following:

- Assessors are familiar with existing **testing and examination methods** and receive support in developing their own skills in this field;
- The criteria for and method of assessment as well as criteria for marking are **published in advance**;
- The assessment **allows students to demonstrate** the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. **Students are given feedback**, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process;
- Where possible, assessment is carried out by **more than one examiner**;
- The regulations for assessment take into account **mitigating circumstances**;
- Assessment is **consistent, fairly applied to all students** and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;
- A formal procedure for student **appeals** is in place.

ESG part 1 - 1.3



HERE-ES



ESG part 1 - 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 & 1.7



- **1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**

Institutions should consistently apply **pre-defined and published regulations** covering all phases of the student “life cycle”, e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

- **1.5 Teaching staff**

Institutions should assure themselves of the **competence of their teachers**. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.

- **1.6 Learning resources and student support**

Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible **learning resources and student support** are provided.

- **1.7 Information management**

Institutions should ensure that they **collect, analyse and use relevant information** for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.

ESG part 1 - 1.8, 1.9 & 1.10



- **1.8 Public information**

Institutions should **publish information about their activities**, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.

- **1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes**

Institutions should **monitor and periodically review their programmes** to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

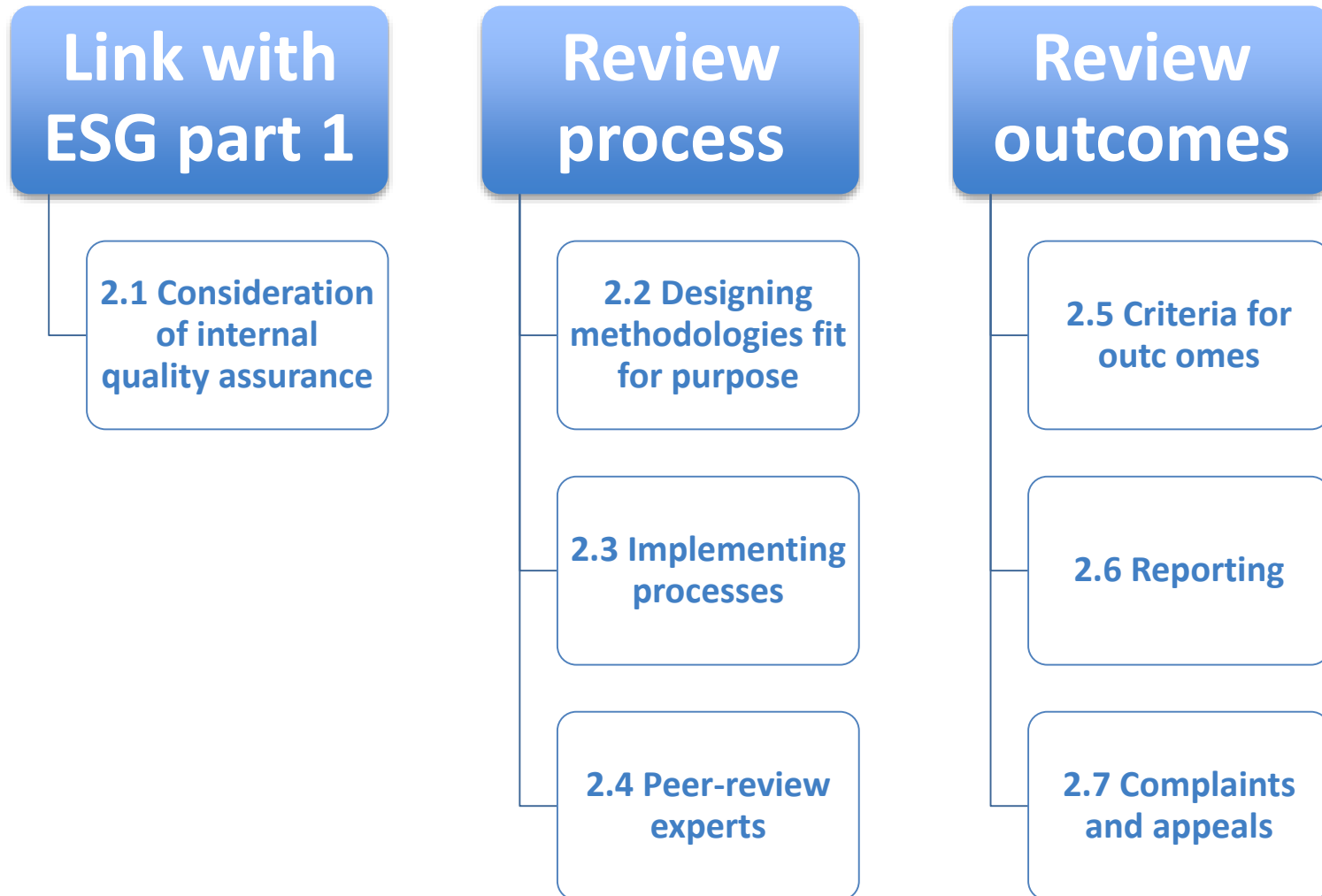
- **1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance**

Institutions should **undergo external quality assurance** in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.

Part 2

Standards and guidelines for external quality assurance of higher education institutions

ESG Part 2 - External QA



ESG part 2 - 2.1, 2.2 & 2.3



- **2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance**

External quality assurance should address the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance described in **Part 1 of the ESG**.

- **2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose**

External quality assurance should be **defined and designed specifically to ensure its fitness to achieve the aims and objectives** set for it, while taking into account relevant regulations. **Stakeholders should be involved** in its design and continuous improvement.

- **2.3 Implementing processes**

External **quality assurance processes** should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. They include

- a self-assessment or equivalent;
- an external assessment normally including a site visit;
- a report resulting from the external assessment;
- a consistent follow-up.

ESG part 2 - 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 & 2.7



- **2.4 Peer-review experts**

External quality assurance should be **carried out by groups of external experts** that include (a) **student member(s)**.

- **2.5 Criteria for outcomes**

Any outcomes or judgements made as the result of external quality assurance should be **based on explicit and published criteria that are applied consistently**, irrespective of whether the process leads to a formal decision.

- **2.6 Reporting**

Full reports by the experts should be published, clear and accessible to the academic community, external partners and other interested individuals. If the agency takes any formal decision based on the reports, the decision should be published together with the report.

- **2.7 Complaints and appeals**

Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.

Part 3

Standards and guidelines for quality assurance agencies

ESG Part 3 – QA Agencies

Link with ESG part 2

3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

Organisational setup

3.2 Official status

3.3 Independence

3.5 Resources

Activities

3.1 (bis) Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

3.4 Thematic analysis

QA of QAAs

3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct

3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies

ESG part 3 – 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3



- **3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance**

Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities as defined in **Part 2 of the ESG on a regular basis**. They should have clear and explicit goals and objectives that are part of their publicly available mission statement. These should translate into the daily work of the agency. **Agencies should ensure the involvement of stakeholders in their governance and work.**

- **3.2 Official status**

Agencies should have an established **legal basis** and should be formally recognised as quality assurance agencies by competent public authorities.

- **3.3 Independence**

Agencies should **be independent and act autonomously**. They should have full responsibility for their operations and the outcomes of those operations without third party influence.

ESG part 3 - 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 & 3.7



- **3.4 Thematic analysis**

Agencies should regularly publish reports that **describe and analyse the general findings** of their external quality assurance activities.

- **3.5 Resources**

Agencies should have **adequate and appropriate resources**, both human and financial, to carry out their work.

- **3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct**

Agencies should have in place processes for internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the **quality and integrity of their activities**.

- **3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies**

Agencies should undergo an **external review** at least once every five years in order to demonstrate their compliance with the ESG.

Now everything
makes sense...



Doesn't it?

The European Students' Union

REPRESENTING STUDENTS SINCE 1982



Thank you!

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