



EQ-Arts

*Quality Framework: history, mission, standards,
procedures & regulations*

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Introduction

EQ-Arts was formally founded as an independent organisation (a *Stichting* under Netherlands law) in July 2015. Prior to this, the members of the EQ-Arts Executive Group (the founding members) have worked jointly in the area of international Quality Assurance and Enhancement in the arts since 2003, in the framework of ELIA, before EQ-ARTS was established. The experience and expertise of EQ-Arts comes directly from the involvement of ELIA in the field of quality reviews and enhancement activities, specifically through the Thematic Networks.

EQ-Arts has become a leading voice in discussions about Quality Assurance & Enhancement (QA&E) in higher arts education across Europe and its mission is to become acknowledged as the leading European Quality Agency for Higher Arts Education.

The national and international quality assurance related projects and activities that EQ-Arts has been involved in over the last 15 years, together with the collective experience of the Executive Group members, has provided the organisation with a unique insight into arts education across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). This experience has led EQ-Arts to recognise that the sector has developed approaches to curriculum design and pedagogical delivery that offer examples of excellent practice in relation to the Standards embodied in the ESG. For example, the fully committed student-centred approach to learning, teaching and assessment (as reflected in ESG Standard 1.3), is a long-established and well-developed feature of pedagogical practice in the arts. In this, as well as in other areas of higher education practice, the arts sector has much to offer to the wider field of higher education.

EQ-Arts is committed to an enhancement-led approach to Quality Assurance in the delivery of Higher Arts Education across the higher education arts field. In undertaking its work, EQ-Arts is mindful of both the clear framework for Higher Education provided by the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) and the key contribution that the creative industries and cultural capital makes to European society and in helping to lay foundations for its future. Therefore, EQ-Arts recognises that the graduates of the diverse range of European Higher Arts Education (EHAE) institutions make significant contributions to the cultural and creative sectors in ways that promote and have significant impact on both social and economic development.

Quality Aims and Values

Mission

EQ-Arts supports higher arts education institutions through its provision of both formal institutional and programme assessment and consultancy on their internal process of self-evaluation and enhancement of their quality systems with the aim of promoting a strong quality culture across the European higher arts education sector.

Vision

EQ-Arts is an independent sector-specific (Arts) not for profit organisation with two closely related yet distinct activities with a focus on enhancement-led quality assurance for higher arts education across the Europe Higher Education Area (EHEA) and beyond.

EQ-Arts fully embraces the four principles that underpin the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) across the EHEA:

- Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance;
- Quality Assurance should be responsive to the diversity of higher education systems, institutions, programmes and students;
- Quality Assurance processes should support the development of a quality culture;
- Quality Assurance processes should take into account the needs and expectations of students, other stakeholders and society more widely.

EQ-Arts applies these principles in ways that respect the unique characteristics of higher arts education and honours the diversity of institutions in which the study of arts practice (in all its variants) is offered.

EQ-Arts recognises and upholds the following values:

1. EQ-Arts believes all activities involving institutions, programmes and stakeholders of the European Higher Arts Education sector must start from a position of trust and EQ-Arts aims to strengthen this and ensure a co-ordinated, bottom-up approach to them.
2. EQ-Arts is well connected to and known by the European Higher Arts Sector for its commitment to and respect for the sector's autonomy.
3. EQ-Arts fully recognises the needs of society and the world of work for the development of creativity and generative critical thinking, which are key attributes of higher arts education.
4. EQ-Arts stresses its commitment to value and promote cultural, artistic, and pedagogical diversity.

EQ-Arts firmly safeguards its independence as an organisation and of its activities, since it believes this is necessary to be best able to guarantee and enhance the quality of Higher Arts Education.

Operational Management

EQ-Arts is an autonomous, independent, not-for-profit external quality assurance agency for higher arts education. EQ-Arts is legally established as a Foundation (Stichting), following a process formally concluded in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on 20th July 2015. EQ-Arts, its purpose and statutes are registered in Amsterdam at the Chamber of Commerce¹. Its current seat of operation is in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

To carry out its activities, EQ-Arts has a clearly defined operational management structure that makes a clear division/distinction between its two distinct areas of activity, which are managed and run independently from each other:

- Formal Institutional and Programme Assessment leading to Accreditation
- Enhancement

To carry out its activities and achieve its quality goals it has a clearly defined operational management structure.

EQ-Arts management structure comprises of:

1. [The Board](#)
2. [The Executive Group](#)
3. [The Executive Office](#)

Supported by:

4. [Expert Peer-Review Register](#)
5. [Appeals Committee](#)

1. The Board

The EQ-Arts Board is the governing body of the Foundation and ultimately accountable for all organisational aspects, the formal assessment/accreditation decision-making and for the commissioning of actions in relation to the operation of EQ-Arts.

The EQ-Arts Board acts with complete independence from any other external influence, including governments (given its non-governmental status) and other stakeholders. The Board approves the annual report and the annual accounts, the financial plan, the organisational strategic five-year plan, the operational plan, as well a plan of activities pertaining to its core processes. The Board also annually appoints auditors. The Board is comprised of at least five members, including a student member who has the same status as the other members with full voting rights. Members must have the required skills to support the mission of the Foundation, be able to assist it to achieve its quality goals and steer it towards excellence in the field. They must have a deep knowledge of, and longstanding experience, in the field of international Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Higher Education.

The Board acts as the **Accreditation Council**, with sole responsibility for the final decision making in formal assessment and accreditation processes.

¹ Kamer van Koophandel 63775751

According to the statutes the Board has the right to invite up to a maximum of representatives from other arts discipline networks and QA agencies to be Board members with non-voting rights (e.g. MusiQuE, Cumulus, Cilect etc.).

The Board's decisions, and the basis for these decisions, are accessible to the public, with both the accreditation decisions and the reports published on the EQ-Arts website.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and General Manager (GM) are ex-officio members of the Board with no voting rights.

2. The Executive Group

The Executive Group (EG) currently comprises of the six original EQ-Arts (ELIA) founding members. The members are all senior academics and managers with a long history of engagement in higher arts education and cultural arts organisations across Europe and globally. They have a wide range of expertise from a broad spectrum of the arts disciplines. The Group make recommendations to the Board on the development of EQ-Arts, its principles, guidelines and practices, including critical self-evaluation processes of its own practices. The EG works closely with the Executive Office and reports to the Board.

The Executive Group is responsible for planning, developing and delivering all enhancement activities.

Based on recommendations made by the EG, both new and additional members of the EG are approved by the Board. All new members must have longstanding experience in international QA&E in Higher Art Education.

3. The Executive Office

The Executive Office comprises of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and General Manager, who are both appointed by the Board and who are responsible for the management and day-to-day organisation of the agency, as determined by the Board.

The Executive Office co-ordinates, guides, supports and documents all external activities of EQ-Arts relating to its core processes as well as internal processes such as committee or working group meetings.

4. Expert Peer-Review Register

The Executive Office maintains an annually updated Peer-Review Register of trained experts. The register is comprised of a pool of selected international peer-experts who collectively represent a broad spectrum of study fields within the arts and who represent a range of academic and management experience. The Executive Group selects experts to join the Register once they have successfully completed the EQ-Arts training programme. From this register, the Accreditation Council endorses a team of experts², recommended by the Executive Office, with the appropriate discipline knowledge and skills appropriate to the specific needs of the institution/programme(s) undergoing the formal assessment review.

The Board reviews the register every two years. Peer-experts are asked if they wish to remain on the register and, if so, to inform the Board about their activities in QA&E processes during

² see section ESG 2.4

the previous two years. Based on this information the Board will decide upon their continued inclusion on the register, including recommending additional training.

5. Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee is an independent group of three experts (with substitutes if necessary) drawn from the Peer-Review Register by the Board to address any complaints or appeals by an institution/programme regarding the accreditation process.

No member of the Committee can have participated in the assessment or any enhancement process undertaken with the complainant institution. The definition of *Complaints* and *Appeals* and the procedure are outlined in the *Appeals and Complaints Criteria and Procedure*³.

Personnel Management

New staff joining the Executive Office and/or the Executive Group are selected according to the range of competencies and experience necessary to fulfil the goals of the organisation. EQ-Arts staff members are motivated and encouraged to engage in professional development. Personnel appointments are made by the CEO in accordance with the Strategic Plan and budget approved by the Board.

The Executive Group makes proposals for new members to the CEO. Staff have the opportunity to take part in training and development activities in order to enhance their knowledge in international external QA. There are annual staff appraisals with the CEO, which are recorded.

Internal and External Communication

EQ-Arts keeps digital records as well as paper copies of minutes, reports and key documentation of its core processes. For internal communication it employs e-mail, file sharing platforms (such as Dropbox) as well as video conferencing tools (such as Skype). All meetings are prepared with agendas, relevant documentation and minutes are kept.

EQ-Arts communicates with the public via its homepage (www.eq-arts.org), which includes published documentation of its work (reports of assessment and accreditation reviews), a public schedule of its activities and news items.

Staff, members of the Board and EG regularly participate as panel members and speakers at international conferences, workshops and seminars pertaining to issues of QA&E.

IT/Infrastructure

EQ-Arts uses an up-to-date IT infrastructure for digital work and data storage. It offers an efficient working environment as well as tele-working opportunities for its staff and members.

³ Available on www.eq-arts.org

Core Processes

Formal Institutional & Programme Assessment leading to Accreditation

Aims and Quality Goals

EQ-Arts upholds its values guided by the following **beliefs** in carrying out its activities through:

- placing particular emphasis on the enhancement of a student learning experience that supports students to become creative mediators in today’s rapidly changing societies and art communities;
- promoting student-centred approaches to learning, teaching and assessment;
- encouraging the constructive alignment of teaching and learning activities, and assessment tasks;
- encouraging institutions to develop and enhance a quality culture which guides their mission and vision;
- adopting a review methodology based on peer review, in which the participation of students, relevant professional bodies and/or employers as stakeholders is embedded;
- ensuring that explicit criteria and transparent processes underpin all its activities;
- ensuring that its processes are open to external scrutiny;
- recognising a range of external and international reference points and/or criteria (primarily guided by the ESG 2015);
- ensuring that the outcomes of its processes have formal status, are decided independently and are publicly available.

In order to deliver a high-quality process that adheres to EQ-Arts core values and beliefs the following QA&E measures are carried out in Formal Assessment Reviews.

The EQ-Arts Framework for External Quality Assurance (EQA)

In EQ-Arts Framework for EQA following ESG standards are addressed along the table beneath.

ESG Standards part 1	EQ-Arts Self-evaluation report institutional Review	EQ-Arts Self-evaluation report Programme Review
1.1 Policy for QA	<p>Standard 1: the institutional mission and vision are clearly stated</p> <p>Standard 6.2: the institution has an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes</p> <p>Standard 7.1: the institution has a strong internal quality culture, supported by clear and effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures</p>	<p>Standard 1: the programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission and aims</p> <p>Standard 6.2: the programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and decision-making processes</p> <p>Standard 7.1: the programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement processes</p>

	<p>Standard 8.1: the institution engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts</p> <p>Standard 8.2: the institution actively promotes links with various sectors of the creative industries and other artistic professions</p>	<p>Standard 8.1: the programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts</p> <p>Standard 8.2: the programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the creative industries</p>
1.2 Design and approval of programmes	<p>Standard 2.1: the goals of the institution are achieved through the content and structure of the study programmes and their methods of delivery</p> <p>Standard 2.3: assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes</p> <p>Standard 5.2: the institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes</p> <p>Standard 6.2: the institution has an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes</p>	<p>Standard 2.1: the aims of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its teaching & learning methodologies</p> <p>Standard 2.3: assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes</p> <p>Standard 5.2: the institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the programme</p> <p>Standard 6.2: the programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and decision-making processes</p>
1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment	<p>Standard 2.1: the goals of the institution are achieved through the content and structure of the study programmes and their methods of delivery</p> <p>Standard 2.3: assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes</p> <p>Standard 6.1: effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the institution</p>	<p>Standard 2.1: the aims of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its teaching & learning methodologies</p> <p>Standard 2.3: assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes</p> <p>Standard 6.1: effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme</p>
1.4 Student admission,	Standard 3.1: clear admission criteria exist, which establish	Standard 3.1: there are clear criteria for student admission,

progression, recognition and certification	<p>artistic/academic suitability of students</p> <p>Standard 3.2: the institution has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students</p>	<p>based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programme</p> <p>Standard 3.2: the programme has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students</p>
1.5 Teaching staff	<p>Standard 4.1: members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/ pedagogues/researchers</p> <p>Standard 4.2: there are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes</p> <p>Standard 6.1: effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the institution</p>	<p>Standard 4.1: members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/ pedagogues/researchers</p> <p>Standard 4.2: there is sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programme</p> <p>Standard 6.1: effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme</p>
1.6 Learning resources and student support	<p>Standard 5.1: the institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programmes</p> <p>Standard 5.2: the institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes</p> <p>Standard 5.3: the institution has sufficient qualified support staff</p>	<p>Standard 5.1: the institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme</p> <p>Standard 5.2: the institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the programme</p> <p>Standard 5.3: the programme has sufficient qualified support staff</p>
1.7 Information management	<p>Standard 7.1: the institution has a strong internal quality culture, supported by clear and effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures</p>	<p>Standard 7.1: the programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement</p>
1.8 Public information	<p>Standard 8.1: the institution engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts</p> <p>Standard 8.2: the institution actively promotes links with various sectors of the creative</p>	<p>Standard 8.1: the programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts</p> <p>Standard 8.2: the programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the creative</p>

	<p>industries and other artistic professions</p> <p>Standard 8.3: information provided to the public about the institution is clear, consistent and accurate</p>	<p>industries</p> <p>Standard 8.3: information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate</p>
1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes	<p>Standard 7.1: the institution has a strong internal quality culture, supported by clear and effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures</p> <p>Standard 8.1: the institution engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts</p> <p>Standard 8.2: the institution actively promotes links with various sectors of the creative industries and other artistic professions</p>	<p>Standard 7.1: the programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures</p> <p>Standard 8.1: the programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts</p> <p>Standard 8.2: the programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the creative industries</p>
1.10 Cyclical EQA	<p>Standard 7.1: the institution has a strong internal quality culture, supported by clear and effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures</p> <p>Standard 8.1: the institution engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts</p> <p>Standard 8.2: the institution actively promotes links with various sectors of the creative industries and other artistic professions</p>	<p>Standard 7.1: the programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement</p> <p>Standard 8.1: the programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts</p> <p>Standard 8.2: the programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the creative industries</p>
(not specifically addressed in ESG Part 1)	<p>Standard 2.2: the institution offers a range of opportunities for students and staff to gain an international perspective</p>	<p>Standard 2.2: the programme offers a range of opportunities for students and staff to gain an international perspective</p>

Preliminary Information and Contract

Once an institution expresses its interest in having a quality review carried out, the Executive Office will co-ordinate a preliminary information visit to the institution in order to establish clarity with the institution about the goals and scope of the process.

Before starting a review, a contract will be signed confirming the goals and scope of the review, the time frame, the responsibilities of both partners, as well as cost and billing arrangements. The contract is signed by EQ-Arts CEO and an authorised signatory on behalf of the institution.

Selection of the Peer Review Panel

The Board, with guidance from the Executive Office, endorses the Chairperson of the review panel, from the current EQ-Arts Peer-Review Register, who has the necessary experience to fulfil the role of a Chair as specified in the *Code of Conduct* and *Composition of the Evaluation Teams*⁴.

In collaboration with the Executive Office, the Chair will propose the other members of the Review Team, also drawn from the Peer-Review Register, to the Board. The Chair may decide to appoint individual members to specific areas of the review according to their expertise and experience, or in light of the structure or specific circumstances of the subject institution.

The institution may challenge the Board's decision to include specific members of a proposed panel if they believe that there is a conflict of interest (see *Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form*⁵).

Student members are not required to have taken part in the Expert Training provided by EQ-Arts, but will receive support and guidance from the Chair on their role and responsibility.

Training of the Peer Review Panel

In order to ensure the highest degree of professionalism, EQ-Arts demands that all members of a review panel have previously completed the training programme provided by EQ-Arts.

The exclusive employment of EQ-Arts trained experts guarantees that each participant:

- is familiar with the relevant aspects of the ESG for Quality Assurance in the EHEA
- is trained in evidence gathering and analysis, allied to the development of strategic approaches for the evaluation of internal QA&E processes
- is prepared to work in international external peer-review QA&E process (including the elements of preparation, intensity of workload, complexity of task, etc.)
- has the communication and teamwork skills required in the specific context of international external QA review processes
- is able to formulate and frame a set of recommendations and commendations as a precursor to the drafting of a report.

Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

The production of the SER is guided by the EQ –Arts *Guidelines for a Self-Evaluation Report & the Institutional & Programme SER* templates⁶, as EQ-Arts is highly conscious to balance the

⁴ Both documents available on www.eq-arts.org

⁵ Available on www.eq-arts.org

⁶ All documents available on www.eq-arts.org

need for clarity and evidence with the demands associated with the production of additional documentation and associated issues of translation for the institution.

The institution is provided with an EQ-Arts SER template that covers each of the current ESG standards. This is augmented by series of questions in each section of the template, designed to ensure that the review process covers the particular issues and demands of higher art education as set out in the core beliefs of EQ-Arts. The SER template encourages the institution to discuss how it has dealt with past challenges and to demonstrate any recent improvements it has instigated.

The Executive Office will act as liaison and establish clear lines of communication between the institution and the Chair who liaises with the Review Team.

On-Site Visit(s)

The visit(s) to the institution will be carried out in accordance to the EQ-Arts *Codes and Statements* and the EQ-Arts *Review Procedures*⁷ which consist of an extensive range of protocols that guide communication, scheduling, evidence gathering, note-taking and documentation and the collegiate comportment of the team, both within its membership and in respect of the institution.

Each visit concludes with oral feedback, which outlines the major points that have been agreed by the Evaluation Team, which will be discussed in more detail within the subsequent written report.

The Formal Assessment Report

The written report produced by EQ-Arts provides a thorough, evidence-based, external appraisal of the institution, which seeks to balance commendations of institutional achievements and recommendations for further improvements of its Quality Culture. The report also takes full account of the national context of the institution and any other specific circumstances, to ensure that the report does not include external demands that it would be impossible for it to implement (for example actions that are inconsistent with the national laws or statutes that pertain to higher education).

EQ-Arts reports will always consider any steps that have already been taken by an institution in relation to quality assurance and enhancement while also identifying areas of necessary improvement and/or steps towards further enhancements. Reviews and reports will be written in a collegial tone with the intention of supporting and encouraging the further development of an institutions quality culture.

Each finding determined by the review is substantiated within the information provided by the institution (including the SER and its appendices) and/or evidence gathered during the Evaluation Team's discussions with the groups of staff, students, graduates and stakeholders during the on-site visits.

Formal Assessment reports are written by, and agreed upon, by all the members of the Evaluation Team. Decisions regarding any conditions and recommendations that are to be included in the report should be agreed unanimously. If any individual member of the team

⁷ ibid

finds that they cannot support a decision regarding any of the conditions and recommendations they can elect to formulate a substantiated note of dissent to the Board.

Institutions will have opportunity to read a draft copy of the report and comment on any matters of factual error before a final version of the report is approved by the EQ-Arts Accreditation Council.

Institutions have a right to ask for sensitive information to be redacted in the final report before it is published.

Accreditation Decisions

The Accreditation Council will base its decisions concerning recommendations, conditions and accreditation on the basis of the recommendations as set out in the report they receive from the Review Teams.

It is the responsibility of the Accreditation Council to ensure that any conditions and recommendations arrived at by Review Teams are evidence-based and have been arrived at through the written material (SER, Strategic Plan, Institutional Policies, minutes of meetings, etc.) presented prior to, during, or subsequent to the site visit and/or through the series of meetings held with key stakeholders. The Accreditation Council is ultimately responsible for the guardianship of the principles, guidelines and practices employed by EQ-Arts in its formal assessment and accreditation.

After the set period for making formal appeals has lapsed, the outcomes of the accreditation process and the final reports will be published on the EQ-Arts website.

Follow-Up Procedure

The EQ-Arts *Follow-up Procedure*⁸ is an instrument to guarantee that recommendations and conditions which have been set in the formal assessment reviews are met in an appropriate time in order to ensure the validity of the accreditation process. The procedure is designed to support the on-going enhancement of the quality culture of an institution and allows the institution to demonstrate improvement. EQ-Arts has designed a template⁹ for institutions to communicate with EQ-Arts about its progress in order to minimise resources for the institution and ensure a robust, transparent process.

EQ-Arts current practice provides extensive feedback through an oral report at the end of the final visit to the institution and in a very detailed written report¹⁰ sent to the institution within 11 weeks of the final visit.

Up to a maximum of 12 months after a review the Chair of that review will coordinate a follow-up survey on the implementation and impact of the recommendations and/or conditions made and complete the *EQ-Arts Review Follow-up Report*.¹¹ These reports are analysed by the Board to see if the institution has addressed the recommendations and/or conditions and help identify any areas and/or trends that could be researched further into.

Appeal

⁸ see *EQ-Arts Review Follow-up Procedure* on the EQ-Arts website www.eq-arts.org

⁹ *ibid*

¹⁰ See *EQ-Arts Institutional and Programme Review Report* templates to be found on the EQ-Arts website www.eq-arts.org

¹¹ See *EQ-Arts Follow-up Report* template to be found on the EQ-Arts website www.eq-arts.org

EQ-Arts has established procedures for the Appeals Committee, which are designed to guarantee that it works as an independent group to address any complaints or appeals by an institution during the accreditation process. The definition of *Complaints* and *Appeals* and the procedure are outlined in the *Appeals and Complaints Criteria and Procedure*.¹²

Feedback

In order to develop and enhance its own processes, EQ-Arts has developed a feedback form to gather input from institutions. The forms are sent out by the Executive Office and shared with the review panel, the Executive Group and the Board.

Collaborating with Agencies and National QA&E Entities

EQ-Arts is open to collaborate and work with EQAR registered agencies and national QA&E entities in order to develop QA&E methodologies and tools within the sector as well as carrying out joint Assessment and Accreditation Reviews.

In such cases a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) will be drawn up signed by both parties. The MoA will provide clarity about the division of work load, cost sharing, requirements for the expertise panel members, the process by which panel members will be selected, the guidelines, templates and processes that will be used, as well which accreditation body will make the final decision regarding accreditation.

Both agencies and national entities will be asked to evaluate the process and give feedback to EQ-Arts in order to develop and enhance its own processes.

In case of agencies and national QA& entities that are not registered by EQAR or have not fully and consistently adopted the ESG, a memorandum of agreement will be signed that ensures that the process delivered by EQ-Arts will adhere to the ESG and in accordance to its internal standards for Quality Assurance.

EQ-Arts is open to recommend experts for review panels out of its Register of Peer-Experts to other EQAR registered agencies as a means of heightening the quality of external QA&E processes in the sector and to maintain collegial relationships with other agencies and entities. Experts will be asked to share examples of best practice with the Executive Office in order to be included in the review and development of its own methodology and processes.

Enhancement Activities

Aims and Quality Goals

EQ-Arts Enhancement activities aim to support individual higher arts education institutions in the self-evaluation and enhancement of their internal quality systems in order to help them foster a strong internal quality culture. EQ-Arts aims to make Quality Assurance and Enhancement matters fully comprehensible for all staff members and the student body. To facilitate this EQ-Arts offers a range of Enhancement activities that can be made available to individual institutions, to the wider international higher arts education sector, and to national Higher Education Agencies and Ministries.

¹² Available on www.eq-arts.org

Support of Enhancement Activity

In order to ensure consistency and the highest standard of delivery the Executive Office coordinates all non- Formal Assessment/accreditation enhancement activities.

- It liaises with clients about the content and issues to be addressed
- it selects trainers and consultants from the Executive Group & Expert Register
- it approves and documents, and all training and consultancy materials which will be used by trainers and consultants
- it liaises with the institution about matters of logistics and billing

Feedback

In order to develop and enhance its process EQ-Arts has developed feedback forms to gather input by the institutions. The forms are sent out by the Executive Office and are shared with the trainer or consultant, the Executive Group and the Board.

Review and Development of Core Processes

In order to enhance its core processes the Executive Group regularly reviews all published guidelines, templates, training and consulting material as well as the internal QA&E measures described in this document.

To this end the EG establishes working groups, on a bi-annual basis, who review EQ-Arts processes in relation to relevant external parameters (such as the ESG, EQF, national QA&E frameworks and guidelines), examples of international best practice in external QA&E and the feedback gathered from institutions and clients. The working groups set up by the EG may include external experts as necessary.

The working groups report to the EG, which formulates recommendations for amendments and changes to processes, documents and materials, which are presented to the EQ-Arts Board for approval.

EQ-Arts internal and external QA&E processes are periodically reviewed externally in accordance to EQAR regulations.