



**Quality Handbook**  
and  
**Board of Governance Framework**

May 2025  
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# Section A EQ-Arts Quality Handbook

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This framework sets out the governing principles that guide and regulate all activities undertaken by EQ-Arts. For agencies or institutions wishing to work with EQ-Arts the Framework sets out what they can expect from us and what EQ-Arts expects from them.

EQ-Arts is a sector-specific, not-for-profit, international Foundation that represents a wide range of disciplines within the broad remit of the creative and performing arts and design (CPAD) sector. We are a Quality Enhancement agency providing enhancement-led quality assurance review services to higher arts education institutions across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and beyond. In addition, EQ-Arts uses its agency – as a widely respected and experienced international partner – to represent the interests of the CPAD Sector through our involvement in a range of funded international Higher Education and cultural sector projects. EQ-Arts has increasingly been engaged in the development of the third cycle, doctoral level in the CPAD sector and the recognition of practice-led artistic research. These three main aspects of our work inform each other and, thereby, increases the agency's contribution to the sector.

- 1.2. EQ-Arts can also be co-opted to participate in formal external quality assurance accreditation processes on behalf of, or in partnership with, other (EQAR Registered) QA agencies and national education ministries. To date, EQ-Arts has successfully participated in several accreditation reviews in partnership with other EQAR Registered agencies.
- 1.3. Building on the experience gained from [29 years of quality assurance and enhancement](#)<sup>1</sup> (originally founded within the administration of the European League of the Institutes of Arts [ELIA] in 1996) EQ-Arts was subsequently established as an independent Foundation under Dutch law on 20th July 2015. It is registered at the Chamber of Commerce in Amsterdam (reg. no. 63775751) where its offices are based.
- 1.4. This framework will be revisited, and developed as necessary, at regular intervals (of no more than three years) to ensure its currency and that it remains responsive to the changing demands of the CPAD higher education sector, the world of work and the impact of international/global developments.
- 1.5. Normally, all of the work undertaken by EQ-Arts (along with its associated correspondence and documentation) will be conducted in the English language.

## 2. Authority

- 2.1. Accredited academic awards have standing in law—they are normally licensed by a national education agency, government ministry or by a self-accrediting higher education institution. They are subject to a cyclical national accreditation/re-accreditation process (usually every 5 to 6 years) which is directed at the subject and/or institutional level. Quality Assurance agencies that undertake such accreditation processes must either be authorised by the

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<sup>1</sup> See EQ-Arts website [www.eq-arts.org](http://www.eq-arts.org) – Complete List of Activities

national government to do so or be listed on the EQAR Register. Since 1996, EQ-Arts has participated in 10 formal QA accreditations (several of these being undertaken in partnership with other QA agencies) and 33 enhancement-led QA reviews.

- 2.2. Quality enhancement exercises – such as enhancement-led QA reviews – are normally a matter of institutional choice rather than of legislative requirement. They may be a precursor to accreditation/re-accreditation and are focussed on the enhancement of academic programmes or systems that already are in validation/accreditation, or form part of an institution’s continuous process of self-learning and development. Where no formal accreditation or revalidation outcomes are part of such work then EQ-Arts will normally be commissioned directly by a higher education institution to undertake an independent external review on its behalf.
- 2.3. EQ-Arts works within the QA framework that is set out in the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) 2015. Quality assurance and enhancement services provided by EQ-Arts also take account of the national legislative framework of the country in which the institution is located, and/or to the governance framework of a self-accrediting higher education institution.
- 2.4. The authority and effectiveness of all governance processes underpinning EQ-Arts activities are enhanced through the inclusion of representatives drawn from the following key stakeholder groups:
  - National accreditation and assurance agencies
  - Higher education institutions (both public and private sector)
  - Managers, staff (both academic and administration), researchers and students in CPAD higher education
  - Representatives of the world of work and professional practice in the CPAD sector
  - Other HE disciplines aligned to CPAD

### 3. Vision

*EQ-Arts is a leading provider of quality assurance and enhancement services to higher education institutions across the Creative, Performing Arts and Design (CPAD) sector within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). While promoting and defending academic and cultural diversity, we seek to both assure and enhance the quality of academic provision within our subject field through working together with higher education institutions (HEI's), national and discipline-specific quality assurance agencies and government departments with responsibility for higher arts provision. EQ-Arts works to promote public confidence in the quality and value of higher arts education in the many study disciplines comprised within the CPAD sector, including its capacity for high quality third cycle provision and artistic research, thereby enhancing the student experience and benefiting related communities outside the academy.*

- 3.1. EQ-Arts aims to be the leading provider of quality assurance and enhancement services to higher education institutions in the CPAD sector in Europe.
- 3.2. While recognising academic and cultural diversity across the sector it will work to establish benchmark standards that help to assure and enhance the quality of academic provision, and the student learning experience, in an international (EHEA) context.

- 3.3. Through this work EQ-Arts will be known as an independent and trusted contributor to the CPAD sector, working constructively and efficiently with higher education institutions and national agencies. Thereby, it will engender public confidence in the quality and value of higher education in the many art and design disciplines comprised within the CPAD sector.
- 3.4. Alongside this EQ-Arts will also work to advance the sector's capacity for high quality third cycle provision and to stimulate CPAD research that drives the knowledge gained from research back into the teaching curriculum, to enhance the student experience and benefit communities outside the academy.

## 4. Mission

*The mission of EQ-Arts is to promote a strong quality culture and the continual enhancement of the student learning experience across the CPAD sector of the EHEA. It achieves this through building the institutional capacity of HEI's for high quality internal review and enhancement processes. To help instil public trust and confidence in the processes of quality assurance and enhancement within the framework set out by the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG 2015). EQ-Arts will work productively with Institutions, national and discipline-specific QA agencies and other organisations, to promote the interests and profile of the CPAD sector, building its capacity for – and the wider recognition of - high quality artistic research.*

- 4.1. EQ-Arts embraces the underpinning principles of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) 2015 and will work to fully embed the common framework for Quality Assurance. Particularly that Quality Assurance processes should:
  - be the primary responsibility of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in assuring the quality of their own provision
  - be responsive to the diversity of higher education systems, institutions, programmes and students
  - support the development of a quality culture
  - take into account the needs and expectations of students, other stakeholders and society

Within the fields of CPAD across the EHEA the specific mission of EQ-Arts is to:

- promote a strong quality culture for excellence and its continuous enhancement
- help guarantee the equivalence of minimum threshold standards for any academic qualification offered in the EHEA
- continually enhance the student learning experience to achieve the highest standards
- encourage the transfer of knowledge gained through staff research back into teaching
- instil trust and confidence in the processes of quality assurance and enhancement
- help to build institutional capacity for high quality internal review and enhancement
- work productively with Institutions, national and discipline-specific QA agencies and other organisations, to promote the interests and profile of the CPAD sector

## 5. Integrity

- 5.1. The activities undertaken by EQ-Arts, as set out in this Framework, are based on the governing

principle that all institutions will be treated fairly and equally in having open access to the professional knowledge and experience of EQ-Arts. Therefore, the mission of EQ-Arts is to work to assure and enhance quality across the CPAD sector as a whole – in ways that are even-handed and impartial.

- 5.2. In this latter respect, EQ-Arts does not accept, or enter into, exclusive contracts with individual institutions for paid ‘consultancy’ where the purpose is to prepare for a forthcoming formal assessment which directly involves EQ-Arts or to improve the academic provision to create a competitive advantage that would compromise the ability of EQ-Arts to form independent judgments on the quality of that provision.
- 5.3. All of the quality assurance and enhancement activities undertaken by EQ-Arts will be operated on an independent and impartial basis that is free from conflicts of interest. The measures set out above are to ensure that the integrity of EQ-Arts, as an organisation, is never compromised and remains beyond reasonable doubt.

## 6. Ethics

- 6.1. EQ-Arts has regard to general ethical principles that it applies across all its higher arts education activities. The EQ-Arts framework is based on the following Four Principles of ethical behaviour:

- To respect the decision-making capacities of autonomous persons (autonomy)
- To act in ways that benefit participants (beneficence)
- To avoid doing harm (non-maleficence)
- To distribute benefits and costs fairly, treating all participants equally (justice)

- 6.2. EQ-Arts applies these ethical principles in all the activities it participates in and how it engages with individuals and organisations. The Board is responsible to ensure that all people operating under the auspices of EQ-Arts comply with this framework along with the following working principles:

*Independence* EQ-Arts is an independent organisation that, in turn, recognises the independence of institutions as self-governing entities having their own quality processes and policies.

*Excellence* Quality assessments and reviews will be conducted against the highest professional standards. All institutions and/or programmes will be expected to have met a consistent minimum quality threshold while aiming for the highest standards of pedagogical excellence beyond this threshold.

*Impartiality* Expert peer reviewers will be selected against clear criteria and be required to undertake their work strictly without bias or conflict of interest.

*Equality* All individuals, agencies, programmes and/or institutions will be treated with equal dignity and value. EQ-Arts will embrace the diversity of processes and frameworks employed by different agencies in their home nations and respect local legislative requirements and practices.

*Transparency* All quality assessments, undertaken in partnership with other QA agencies or national education ministries, and enhancement reviews will be conducted against clear criteria and requirements that are set out in advance and made

publicly available on the EQ-Arts website. All stakeholders will receive concise feedback on their self-evaluations and other documentation to which they may respond. All reports produced by EQ-Arts will be made available in the public domain. All processes adopted by EQ-Arts will be open to external scrutiny.

- Objectivity* All judgments made by peer reviewers will be solely based on tangible evidence put before them to consider. Reviewers' judgments will not be formed on the basis of subjective opinion but on evidence — nor can self-evaluation documents substitute assertion for evidence.
- Consistency* The quality standards and quality criteria set out by EQ-Arts will be applied consistently and fairly to all assessments and reviews that it undertakes.
- Efficiency* The quality assurance and enhancement process of EQ-Arts is continuously evolving (e.g. online) to continue to develop robust and rigorous reviews within the shortest practicable timescales in order to be efficient with both material and human resources, while sustaining rigorous review processes of the highest standard.
- Confidentiality* Data and intellectual property will be treated confidentially by all persons or agencies involved in the processes of peer review undertaken on behalf of EQ-Arts.

- 6.3. EQ-Arts will ensure that, when undertaking research and data collection in preparation for published reports, that the above ethical principles will be applied and will be outlined in consent forms that provide participants with sufficient information about the research, including the way in which their contribution will be used, and their rights concerning their participation.

## 7. Quality Assurance Activities

- 7.1. The enhancement-led quality assurance review activities undertaken by EQ-Arts can be applied at the following levels:

- Institutional* This will focus on the effectiveness of the institution's own quality assurance and enhancement systems to achieve the stated aims and objectives.
- Academic Unit* This will focus on the degree to which a Faculty, Department or School is delivering a range of academic provision that meets the academic objectives set out for it.
- Programme* This will focus on the degree to which the following programme levels have been able to sustain and enhance their academic provision:
- Pre-degree Certificate/Diploma
  - BA, MA
  - Doctorate level
- Joint Provision* This may focus on a collaboration between two or more institutions seeking to offer, for example, a joint programme leading to a single

academic award or, a compact arrangement between a pre-degree certificate/diploma and an undergraduate BA programme.

## 8. External Review Methods

- 8.1. EQ-Arts has considerable experience of undertaking external quality assurance reviews in institutions across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and beyond. This experience includes the undertaking of enhancement-led Quality Assurance reviews and (in partnership with other national and international QA agencies) formal accreditation reviews. EQ-Arts approaches to each of these procedures is outlined below.

## 9. Enhancement-led Quality Assurance

- 9.1 The approach adopted by EQ-Arts for its enhancement-led quality assurance activities is both rigorous and impartial. This is based on the following processes—both of which are essential precursors to the formation of robust and reliable quality findings:

*Quality Assessment* EQ-Arts will use a systematic and prescribed evaluation process to gather and analyse both quantitative and qualitative information about the provision (an institution, an academic unit, an individual programme or research activity). The aim being to enable a panel of peers to form a clear understanding of the degree to which the provision meets its own stated objectives, and meets the standards required of it by the institution, the national academic framework and the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG 2015).

*Quality Enhancement* To properly evaluate the performance of an institution, academic unit or programme, EQ- Arts will undertake a systematic, and objective, critical analysis that is based on the evidence resulting from both internal and external quality assurance processes (including a self-evaluation of the provision). The outcomes of this evaluation process will be a report that is comprised of set of quality findings that underpin a range of commendations and recommendations that relate to the provision for the purpose of its enhancement.

## 10. Quality Enhancement Activities

- 10.1. Quality enhancement activities are not usually the requirement of any legislative framework but are determined through institutional choice and so are normally commissioned by an institution. Quality Enhancement processes currently offered by EQ-Arts include:

*Quality Review* Review processes are normally conducted on a periodic basis with their primary focus being on quality outcomes. The aim of such reviews is to evaluate the degree to which an institution or programme has been able to quality enhance outcomes from the academic provision that is under review. Quality reviews can be undertaken either as an internal audit by the institution itself with the assistance of EQ-Arts or as an external audit

conducted by EQ-Arts.

*Quality Audit* Quality Audit processes are normally conducted on a periodic basis with their primary focus being on quality systems. Quality audits aim to determine the degree to which the overall system for quality assurance (not the quality of the outcomes from that system) are meeting, or could meet, stated aims and objectives. At programme level this can be undertaken either as an internal audit by the institution itself or as an external audit conducted by EQ-Arts. Institutional audits will determine the degree to which the Institution's own procedures and mechanisms ensure quality assurance and quality enhancement. At this level, Institutional audit is normally undertaken by an external agency such as EQ-Arts.

*QA Benchmarking* Quality benchmarks are external reference points that help institutions to identify their own strengths, weaknesses, and best practice. Benchmarks also help to establish meaningful and relevant comparisons between a range of different institutional cultures and academic programmes so facilitating international co-operation between higher education institutions across the CPAD sector. Where an institution is subject to a national qualifications framework this will constitute the benchmarks to be used for comparison.

*QA Diagnostics* EQ-Arts can carry out Quality 'health checks', which involves the sampling of internal QA processes as they are applied to programmes, subjects, departments or faculties identified by an institution, enabling EQ-Arts to undertake a 'diagnostic' test of the institution's quality processes and environment. The outcome will be a report identifying strengths, best practices and recommendations relating to areas for improvement.

*QA Workshops* EQ-Arts offers a range of workshops which aim to support of the CPAD sector as a whole. These provide guidance on the establishment of quality cultures within institutional contexts. In this instance topics will include:

- The Requirements of National Quality Assurance Agencies
- Ensuring the quality of the students' learning experience
- Developing and embedding Quality Assurance and Enhancement to meet European measures
- Developing a Self-Evaluation Report for external QA purposes (SER)
- Guidance on the development of staff research and the institution's research environment

Workshops will deal with the general principles of best practice in quality assurance and enhancement as applicable to a wide range of institutions. Registration for attendance at workshops will normally be publicly advertised and open to delegates from any institution to attend.

To help build capacity in quality assurance and quality enhancement EQ-Arts can also offer specifically tailored These will normally be tailor-made for the specific circumstances of a country, region, institution or group of institutions, often in collaboration with a Ministry of Education or a National QA Agency. Workshops will provide clear step-by-step introductions to (for example):

- European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG)
- How Quality Assurance Relates to Institutional Mission and Vision
- Internal Quality Assurance Processes
- External Quality Assurance Processes

## 11. Accreditation

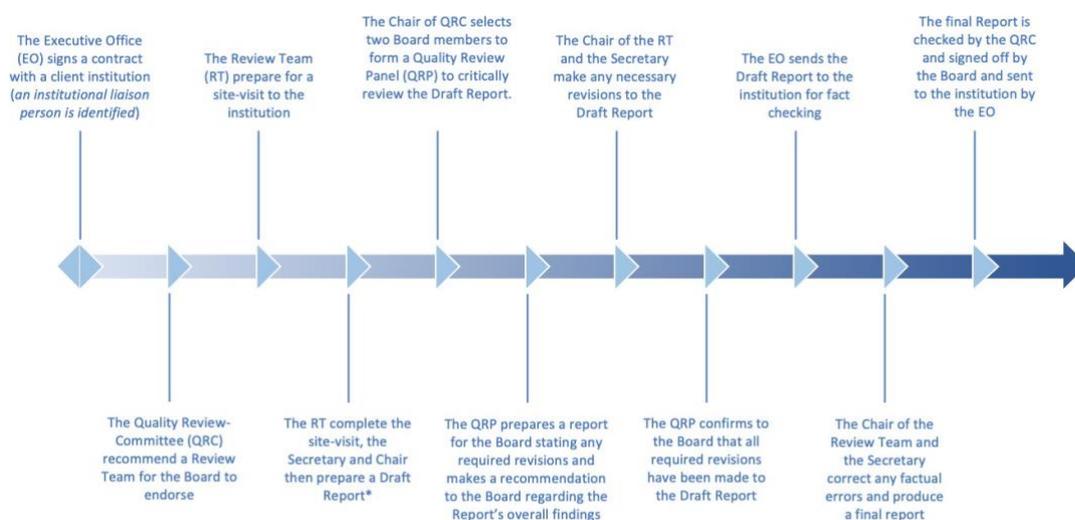
11.1 External quality assessment processes will determine the formal and/or legal standing of an academic award or institutional provision. These activities are commissioned by a higher education institution and sometimes by a national accreditation agency inviting us to collaborate on an accreditation review:

*Accreditation* Accreditation is the evaluation of an institution or a specific educational programme in order to determine the degree to which it will, if approved, meet the minimum threshold standards required to receive a licence to award academic qualifications. Accreditation is normally time-limited with periodic renewal.

*Re-accreditation* Re-accreditation is the process of periodic review through which an already accredited programme is judged to continue to be meeting, and to what degree, the threshold standards required for the accredited award.

11.2 Re-accreditation, as a process of quality assurance, is also linked to evidence for the actions an institution has taken to deliver quality enhancement of the provision throughout the period since the previous validation, the degree to which this enhancement has been achieved and the strategies in place to further that enhancement.

## 12. Process for the Confirmation of Review Report Findings



\* In some cases, EQ-Arts agrees to undertake two site-visits for EQA Enhancement reviews. This is agreed with the institution when the contract is negotiated. If agreed, this will lead to a preliminary site-visit taking place 6-8 weeks before a main site-visit. In such cases, a Draft Report is completed following on from the main site-visit.

[Diagram A: EQ-Arts process for Confirming Review Report Findings]

- 12.1 Once a review has been concluded the commissioning Institution will have 10 days to register any complaint concerning EQ-Arts service delivery<sup>2</sup>. Irrespective of any Complaint being received, the preparation of the final report for both accreditation and enhancement reviews will proceed through the following stages:
- 12.2 The Review Team Chair will deliver a draft Report, co-written with the Review Secretary and agreed with the Review Team, to the Executive Office. The Executive Office asks the Chair of the Quality Review Committee (QRC) to appoint two Critical Readers (drawn from among the Executive group membership), to form a Quality Review Panel (QRP) to undertake a judicious review of the Report. The responsibility of the QRP is to ensure that the set of judgements on levels of compliance reached by the Review Team are securely underpinned by the evidence presented in respect of each of the EQ-Arts standards. In the case of accreditation reports, the QRP also ensures that the overall proposed decision is consistent with EQ-Arts process for Review outcomes as described in Diagram A (see above).
- 12.3 The QRP then prepares and submits a report of its findings to the Board<sup>3</sup>, that specifies any necessary revisions that the Review Team are required to make to the Report prior to the draft Report being sent to the institution for fact checking. In the case of Accreditation Reports, the QRP also make (in its report) a recommendation to the Board with regard to the overall decision on the accreditation of the provision and on the timeframe in which the institution must satisfactorily meet any specified conditions.
- 12.4 Once the Report has been revised in accordance with any guidance set out by the QRP, it is sent by the Executive Office to the institution for a check on its factual accuracy. Once any matters of factual accuracy identified in the Report have been addressed by the Review Team, a final draft of the Report is submitted by the QRP to the EQ-Arts Board for its endorsement, and (in the case of accreditation reports) confirmation of the accreditation decision.
- 12.5 Once a final draft report has been endorsed by EQ-Arts Board, the commissioning Institution will receive a final draft of the Report from the Executive Office, and in the case of an accreditation report, a final decision. It is at this point, that the commissioning Institution may choose to invoke the EQ-Arts Appeals Procedure. If an appeal is received, then the process will be halted until the Appeal is resolved. Once a Report has been endorsed by the Board it is placed on the EQ-Arts website or, if it has been the subject of an appeal, at the conclusion of the appeal process.

## 13. Outcomes of the External Review Process

- 13.1 The outcomes of all EQ-Arts quality assurance and enhancement reviews will be a report<sup>4</sup> written by the Chair of the Review Team and the review team secretary supported by international subject specialists in the CPAD sector. All such reports will be permanently lodged in the public domain via the EQ- Arts website.
- 13.2 All reports will identify commendations (areas of good practice) and recommendations (areas

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<sup>2</sup> A copy of the EQ-Arts Complaints Procedure will have been sent to the institution at the outset of the contract

<sup>3</sup> If any member of the Board has been directly involved in an EQ-Arts review process, they will be required by the Chair of the EQ-Arts Board to 'step out' of Board meetings for the duration of any agenda item concerned with that review process or its outcome.

<sup>4</sup> See Section 9 (pp.8&9) Assessment

with the potential for further development/improvement). When EQ-Arts undertakes, or participates in, formal accreditation reviews in co-operation with an accredited QA agency, reports will also identify any conditions agreed by the Review Team.

## 14. External Quality Review Teams

14.1 Review Teams will be comprised of reviewers who, together, invest the delivery of the EQ-Arts mission with authority and integrity so to engender high levels of confidence and trust in the processes of quality assurance and enhancement. The EQ-Arts Board is responsible for approving the appointment of Chairs, Secretaries and Team Members. Members of the Executive group will not normally take any direct part in quality reviews.<sup>5</sup>

14.2 The size of teams will vary depending on the type of the exercise being undertaken and its scale and/or complexity. Normally the composition and size of a review team will be discussed with an institution prior to arrangements being made. The minimum number of members for any team will be three reviewers (including the Chair and a student representative) and one review secretary.

14.3 Team membership will be comprised of individuals who represent stakeholder groups and are listed in the EQ-Arts Peer Review Register as follows:

- Chair x1
- Reviewers x1 or more (depending on size or complexity of the provision)
- Student representative x1
- Secretary x1

14.4 In addition to fulfilling the criteria for inclusion in the EQ-Arts Register of Reviewers, Chairs of review panels will meet the following additional criteria:

They will:

- be free of any major conflicts of interest concerning a specific review exercise
- have previous experience of chairing quality exercises, or have participated in sufficient EQ-Arts quality teams
- have the ability to manage the process and deal with sensitive situations effectively and efficiently
- have the ability to structure the workflow for a quality exercise and allocate tasks to appropriately to team members
- be able to facilitate and stimulate the participation of all team members in a quality exercise
- have the capacity to communicate complex issues in a straightforward language
- be able to build trust and confidence between institutional representatives and EQ-Arts team members
- be able to speak with confidence in formal public settings
- have experience in the drafting of quality assurance outcomes and review reports
- ensure that all team members abide by the principles and processes set out in this Governance Framework

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<sup>5</sup> An exception to this may be when EQ-Arts is undertaking an accreditation review in partnership with another QA agency.

- 14.5 Review Team members will be selected from individuals listed in the EQ-Arts Register of Peer Reviewers. The constitution of Review Teams will aim for a balanced membership that is fully aligned with the EQ-Arts Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement, and with due regard for including geographical spread, specific knowledge of applicable arts discipline, general experience of QA&E, academic experience in Higher Arts Education and experience of the professional world. This spread of expertise will normally include institutional management and governance, artistic and academic management and artistic and professional experience. Knowledge of the country-specific system of higher arts education and of the legislation applicable will be addressed where possible and as appropriate.
- 14.6 In convening teams of experts EQ-Arts is also conscious of its responsibility to promote inclusivity and diversity and nourish and support the next generation of academics. In this respect care will be taken to include early career academics so they can learn from, and benefit through, the experience of high-quality peer review processes.

## 15. Reviewers

- 15.1 Independent peer reviewers who underpin the work of EQ-Arts will be identified for their international experience and professional high standing. To support all of its activities EQ-Arts will retain a Register of appropriately experienced peer Reviewers drawn from its range of stakeholders.
- 15.2 Inclusion in the EQ-Arts Register of reviewers will be made through a process of public advertisement, open application, successful completion of the training, and endorsement of the Board. The EQ-Arts website displays an open invitation for teachers, managers and professionals from the higher arts education and professional sectors to participate in the annual External QA&E expert training programme. Their application is accompanied by a curriculum vitae (CV), demonstrating experience and engagement in QA practice. After the training programme, the Board considers recommendations from the trainers, set against the selection criteria below, and endorses the successful candidates to be added to the register. Students are also invited through open calls addressed to national and European Students Unions or associations and national QA agencies.

*Academics*      To be included in the EQ-Arts Register applicants should demonstrate a mixture of the following attributes as appropriate to the work involved:

- must have gained an appropriate academic award in at least one of the disciplinary areas covered by the creative and performing arts and design (CPAD) and/or have gained equivalent professional experience before entering teaching
- have an understanding of, and experience in, learning and teaching methodologies and curriculum design within CPAD
- have experience in the internal evaluation of quality assurance and enhancement processes for disciplines within CPAD
- have experience in the external evaluation of quality assurance and enhancement processes with some experience of benchmarking international standards
- have experience in the consideration of qualitative evidence and quantitative data in order to form objective, balanced, judgments
- have proficiency in the use of academic English, spoken and written, that is sufficient for the purposes of quality assurance and enhancement
- have successfully completed an EQ-Arts training course or briefing for peer reviewers for

those possess commensurate professional expertise and experience

**Managers** To be included in the EQ-Arts Register applicants should demonstrate a mixture of the following attributes:

- be currently, or recently, employed by a higher education institution within the CPAD sector or a national accreditation agency
- hold, or have held, specific senior responsibility for the management of quality assurance and enhancement processes
- have experience in the external evaluation of quality assurance and enhancement processes with a strong knowledge of benchmarking international standards
- have proficiency in the use of academic English, spoken and written, that is sufficient for the purposes of quality assurance and enhancement
- have successfully completed an EQ-Arts training course or briefing for peer reviewers for those possess commensurate professional expertise and experience

**Students** To be included in the EQ-Arts Register applicants should demonstrate a mixture of the following attributes:

- be currently enrolled in a higher education institution studying one of the disciplines within the CPAD sector for either a BA/MA or MPhil/DPhil/PhD/Doctorate
- have sufficient course experience to demonstrate some degree of involvement in quality feedback processes through, for example, annual course monitoring or the representation of student views on course committees or student associations/unions
- have been engaged in an international project, course or scheme (e.g. Erasmus) that provided a comparative international experience of academic programmes
- be able to take an objective and independent view of evidence provided for quality assurance and be sensitive and open-minded to different academic approaches
- have a proficiency in English that is equivalent to level C1<sup>6</sup> in the [Common European Framework of References for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment](#);
- have successfully completed an EQ-Arts training programme or equivalent (e.g., ESU training), or briefing for peer reviewers for those possess commensurate professional expertise and experience.

**Professionals** To be included in the EQ-Arts Register applicants should demonstrate a mixture of the following attributes

- be currently employed in the cultural creative industries, arts public and private organisations and/or arts professional bodies that delivers services or products having some relationship to CPAD education
- have either gained an appropriate academic award in at least one of the disciplinary areas covered by the CPAD and/or have developed student schemes in partnership with a CPAD higher education
- have a familiarity with learning and teaching methods and curriculum design in the CPAD sector
- have participated to some extent with an institution's internal quality assurance and enhancement processes
- be experienced in the consideration of qualitative evidence and quantitative data in order

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<sup>6</sup> *Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself/them self fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices."*

- to form objective, balanced, judgments
  - have proficiency in the use of academic English that is sufficient for the purposes of quality assurance and enhancement
  - have undertaken an EQ-Arts briefing session
- 15.3 If accepted onto the EQ-Arts Register of Peer Reviewers the individual registration period for academic teachers/managers/professionals will be four years. All registrations will be open for renewal when a term ends. Registration for students will terminate two years after the point of final graduation.
- 15.4 The EQ-Arts Board will continuously consider all of the nominations received and formally approve those nominations to be included in the Register of Peer Reviewers.

## 16. External Quality Assurance Reviewer Training

- 16.1 Assuring the quality and relevant experience of peer-reviewers commissioned by EQ-Arts is a major priority for the Agency. Therefore, EQ-Arts offers training courses that are specifically designed to enable participants to adapt a range of skills to form a competence to work as an international peer-review expert in the field of external QA (in line with the ESG 2015 guidelines) and to be familiar with current policy developments in higher education quality assurance. Training can be delivered either in the form of in-person workshops or via a video-conferencing platform.
- 16.2 The training also aims to ensure an adequate level of consistent knowledge across the EQ-Arts community of peer reviewers in terms of EQ-Arts own processes and its standards for quality assurance and enhancement. The peer review training will also help to build the collective expertise and coherence of the CPAD international community of practice. Specifically, the training is designed to:
- familiarise participants with the ESG 2015 for Quality Assurance in the EHEA
  - engage participants in processes of evidence analysis and in the development of strategic approaches to the evaluation of internal quality assurance processes
  - involve participants in a close simulation of an external international peer-review quality assurance process
  - adapt the communication and teamwork skills of participants to the specific context of international external quality assurance review processes
  - involve participants in simulated processes of the formulation and framing of conditions, recommendations and commendations
  - familiarise participants with the procedures and processes adopted by EQ-Arts
- 16.3 All peer reviewers who successfully complete an EQ-Arts training course will receive a certificate of attendance confirming that they have met all the requirements of the programme.

The **programme** covers (inter alia):

- Understanding quality assurance in the context of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the importance of the ESG
- An appreciation of how the ESG is interpreted in the EQA standards applied by external quality assurance agencies

- The timeline of a typical external review process and the responsibilities of review team members
- How to formulate questions, critically assess and triangulate evidence in the process of reaching shared judgments
- Drafting recommendations and conditions, preparing oral feedback, and contributing to accreditation/enhancement review reports

Aims:

- The key aims of the training provided by EQ-Arts are designed to enable participants to adapt a range of their pre-existing skills to work as an international peer-review expert in the field of external QA (in line with the ESG 2015 guidelines).
- The training provides insight into the operation of The European Standards & Guidelines (ESG) and current developments in the area of external quality assurance and enhancement processes, as well as hands-on, practical guidance on how to participate successfully in international external QA processes.
- The format of the training is designed to replicate as far as reasonably possible the preparation, teamwork, report generation, intensity of workload and complexity of tasks associated with participation in international quality assurance processes. Throughout the training, participants will be actively engaged in a series of simulation exercises that mirror how they will be expected to perform in an external international quality assurance visit.

## 17. Impartiality

All activities undertaken by EQ-Arts will be independent, impartial and free from potential conflicts of interest or perceptions of such a conflict.

- 17.1 All reviewers commissioned by EQ-Arts share the responsibility for guarding against the influence of their personal interests or potential biases, including conscious or unconscious biases based on protected characteristics.
- 17.2 All Board members, and those accepted onto the Register of Peer Reviewers, will be required to declare, and keep up to date, a list of instances where they may have major or minor conflict of interest through completion of the EQ-Arts Conflict of Interest Form.
- 17.3 No person will be allowed to participate in a review approved by the EQ-Arts Board where they have a major conflict of interest with the institution concerned.
- 17.4 Examples of major conflicts of interest include the following:
  - Having been a full time, part time or casual employee of the institution or been paid for professional services within five years preceding the review date
  - Having a close personal relationship (e.g. partner, spouse, immediate family member) or enmity with staff in the institution
  - a. The EQ-Arts CEO will make the final decision regarding the extent to which the existence of a minor conflict of interest may have on a potential reviewer's participation in a review exercise, this decision will take into full account any advice on the matter provided by the QRP in their recommendation of the membership of a Review Team. Depending on the nature of a minor potential conflict of interest the CEO may decide

that:

- The minor interest should be noted by the panel but should not affect the potential reviewer’s participation in a review
  - The minor interest, or group of minor interests, shall be treated as a major interest that precludes the potential reviewer from their participation in an exercise
- b. All review teams will be approved by the CEO via Chair’s action on behalf of the EQ-Arts Board.
- c. The instances described above, and the examples given, are not exhaustive as it is not possible to cover every instance where a conflict of interest may arise. In circumstances that are not covered by the above potential reviewers should seek advice from the CEO of EQ-Arts.
- d. Prior to a quality assessment or enhancement exercise the commissioning institution will be provided with a list of panel members to confirm there are no conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of which EQ-Arts may not have been made aware when convening a panel.

## 18. Feedback

- 18.1 At the conclusion of each review exercise the commissioning institution/agency will be invited to complete a Review Feedback Survey Questionnaire through which they will be able to provide comments on their experience of the review and the quality of service provided by EQ- Arts. This will include areas of good practice, examples of processes that may benefit from further review or the conduct of the business by the EQ-Arts Review Team.
- 18.2 This information will be used as part of the EQ-Arts IQA process in order to identify areas of good practice and others for further improvement as an important part of EQ-Arts’ continuous IQA for self-enhancement of its own activities and services.

## 19. Complaints

- 19.1 Purpose: The complaints procedure will enable an institution to seek remedy for a deviation from, or a failure in, some element of EQ-Arts service delivery as it is set out in this Governance Framework.
- 19.2 Grounds: These will be considered valid where an Institution considers that EQ-Arts has failed to implement, or deviated from, any of the processes or procedures set out in this Governance Framework for its service delivery. Complaints cannot be used to modify the judgments or outcomes of a quality assurance exercise, which would be a matter for appeal (see next section).
- 19.3 Procedure: An institution may lodge a complaint within 10 working days of the receipt of the draft evaluation report. Complaints must be in writing to the EQ-Arts Executive Office and include all of the following:
- Identification of the object of the complaint, pointing to the specific provision in this

- Governance Framework from which there has been some deviation or omission
  - An explanation of the manner and extent of the deviation with supporting evidence
  - An indication of any measure(s) that could help to remedy such a failing or deviation
- 19.4 Receipt of a complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days by the Chair of the EQ-Arts Board who reserves the right to reject complaints that do not contain all of the information listed above. The only exception to this will be a complaint against the Board itself, or its members, in which case the Complaint will go to an independent Complaints Committee<sup>3</sup> (see section 18.5). On accepting a Complaint, the Chair will then decide on one of the following courses of action:
- investigate the matter with the institution and the Chair of the Review Team and decide to either remedy or reject the complaint as a whole
  - establish a Complaints Committee to investigate the matter further
- 19.5 Complaints Committee: A Complaints Committee will be comprised of three members drawn from the EQ-Arts Register of Peer Reviewers and be chaired by the EQ-Arts CEO. In composing the Committee, geographical and disciplinary balance will be considered, as well as required expertise and background of the Committee members. All members will be free of major or minor conflicts of interest. The institution will be made aware of the membership of the Complaints Committee and given 5 working days to raise any concerns about conflicts of interest over which EQ-Arts may not have been made aware. On commencing its work, a Complaints Committee will:
- review the case for the complaint as set out in the institution’s documentation
  - conclude whether the complainant’s case should be upheld, partially upheld or rejected
  - offer any recommendations in support of the committee’s conclusions
  - provide the Chair of EQ-Arts Board with a report setting out a reasoned explanation for the committee’s conclusions and recommendations
- 19.6 In all cases, the EQ-Arts CEO will make a decision on the Complaint and communicate the outcome of the process to the head of the institution, normally within 30 working days of receipt of the complaint. This decision will be final.

## 20. Templates

Available on <http://www.eq-arts.org>

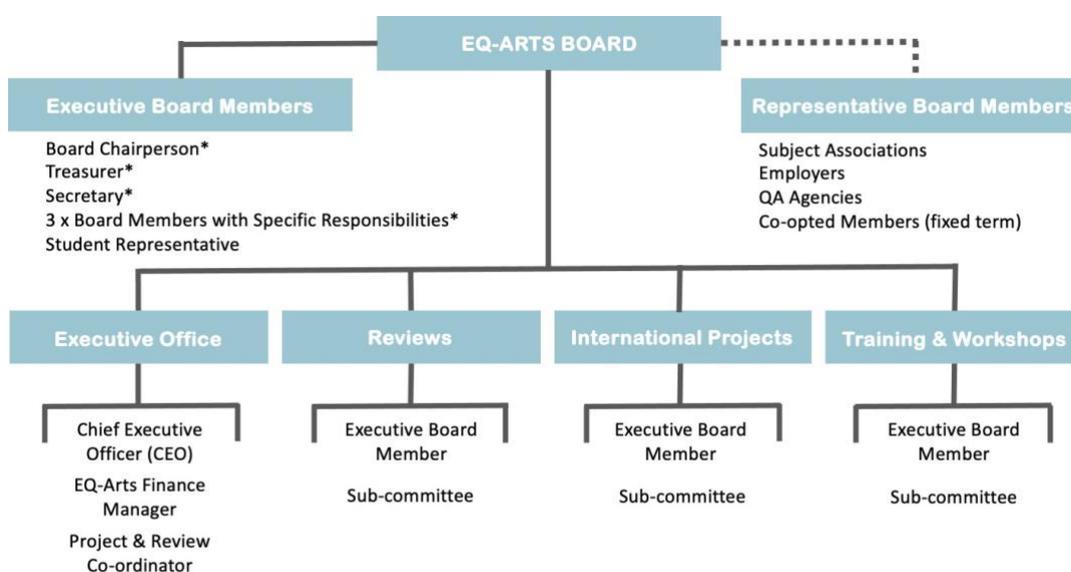
- 20.1 EQ-Arts Standards
- 20.2 EQ-Arts Standards mapped to ESG 2015
- 20.3 Institutional/Programme Review Self-Evaluation Report (SER)
- 20.4 Institutional/Programme Review Report

## Section B EQ-Arts Board of Governance Framework

### 1. EQ-Arts Board

In order to fully meet both the operational and strategic aims of the Foundation (hence forward the 'Agency'), the EQ-Arts Board of Governance is comprised of two types of membership, namely Executive and Representative group members.

#### EQ-Arts Board operational structure



\* Elected from, and by, the Executive Board Members

#### 1.1 Executive Group Members of the Board

As a small independent Agency, EQ-Arts does not currently operate a sufficient level of financial resource to support a staff base that can adequately cover the full range of expertise or specialised skills and knowledge to meet all its operational needs. Therefore, Executive group members of the Board will be actively engaged in a number of the operational tasks required to maintain all of the Agency's functions; from the periodic re-assessment and determination of the organisation's purposes, goals and objectives, to the selection and training of reviewers, and the setting-up and implementation of strategies, plans and budgets, and the reporting of the Agency's activities to other stakeholders. Consequently, the day-to-day responsibility and legal accountability for the organisation's continued existence and function, in part, rests with the Executive members of the Board.

#### 1.2 Representative Group Members of the Board

EQ-Arts is an international Quality Enhancement Agency, that is focussed upon the Creative, Performing Arts and Design (CPAD) sector of Higher Arts Education across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and beyond. Therefore, the Board of Governance also includes Representative group members who, while not directly involved in the day-to-day functioning of the organisation, provide the Board with an important perspective on, and engagement with, the

Agency's fields of operation. Representative group Board members contribute to the successful operation of the Agency through their responsibility to affirm, endorse, and advise the Agency on its activities in the context of an existing organizational vision and mission (determined by the Executive members) and to use their own influence to promote the Agency's work.

### **1.3 Terms of Reference of the EQ-Arts Board**

The EQ-Arts Board is comprised of both Executive and Representative members (combined total of normally a minimum of 11) and (*ex officio*) EQ-Arts staff members<sup>7</sup> (3), the Executive members (minimum 6) of the Board constitute the operational governing body of the Agency. Executive members have delegated responsibilities for specific activities of EQ-Arts and will be selected for their relevant expertise and experience. To discharge its responsibilities the EQ-Arts Board will act independently of all external interests and/or influences, including governments (given its non-governmental status) and other stakeholders. Consequently, Executive members of the Board are appointed in a personal capacity (no Executive group member can represent the interests of any other organisation, agency or institution).

#### **1.3.1 The Executive members of the EQ-Arts Board are responsible for the:**

- effective implementation and continuous review of the Governance Framework set out within this Governance Framework
- planning of external, independent, periodic reviews of the Board's own performance
- approval of annual reports/accounts and the appointment of annual auditors
- preparation and monitoring of a five-year strategic plan
- approval and monitoring of annual business and operational plans
- final decision making in all the Board's formal assessment and accreditation processes
- signing off final reports concerning all the Board's quality assurance activities
- approval of, participation in, and contribution of their expertise to external European projects (for which they are eligible to receive a fee)
- researching and approving periodic trend analyses drawn from the Board's activities
- scrutinising and approval of applications to join the Board's Register of Peer Reviewers
- approval of the appointment of Review Team Chairs and Members
- instigating independent reviews of complaints or appeals concerning the Board's activities
- convening standing or occasional sub-committees and working groups to assist in the Board's work
- identifying and selecting new Executive group members and electing a chair
- nominating and electing new Representative group Board members

#### **1.3.2 The Representative members of the EQ-Arts Board are responsible for:**

- the provision of guidance and recommendations in the review of the Governance Framework and annual reports
- the provision of relevant information regarding the sectors and/or the organisations that they represent
- contributing to the development and preparation of five-year strategic, annual business and operational plans
- nomination of new Representative group Board members.

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<sup>7</sup> These comprise the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Projects & Review Co-ordinator and Finance Manager.

## 1.4 The Membership of the EQ-Arts Board of Governance is constituted as follows:

Normally a minimum of 6 Executive members<sup>8</sup>:

Board Chairperson (elected from, and by, Executive group members)  
Treasurer (elected from, and by, Executive group members)  
Secretary (elected from, and by, Executive group members)  
Board member with responsibility for oversight of international projects  
Board member with responsibility for oversight of reviews  
Board member with responsibility for oversight of training and workshops  
Student Representative<sup>9</sup>

Normally a minimum of 5 Representative members:

Members selected through open call to CPAD subject associations, professional Cultural & Creative Industries (CIC) sectorial associations, stakeholder groups or other quality assurance agencies, or by nomination from the Board.

3 Ex-officio members:

EQ-Arts Chief Executive Officer  
Project & Review Coordinator (who acts as minuting secretary to the Board)  
EQ-Arts Finance Manager

## 1.5 Terms of Office

Excepting of the posts of Chief Executive Officer, Projects & Review Coordinator and Finance Manager, each period of tenure for all Board members will be for three years, renewable for a maximum of three terms. However, the Board has the power to vary the length of individual Board memberships (by up to one year) where it is deemed to be in the best interests of the smooth running and/or security of the organisation.

A skills audit of all current Board members will be maintained to ensure that the Board's collective responsibilities are fully discharged and that the range of stakeholder interests are properly represented.

No Executive members of the Board will normally participate in EQ-Arts led enhancement or accreditation reviews<sup>10</sup>.

## 1.6 Quoracy of the Board

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<sup>8</sup> *Members may hold more than one responsibility*

<sup>9</sup> *Nominated through open call by Higher Education Institutions, Student Union associations or Quality Assurance Agencies.*

<sup>10</sup> *Excepting where, in the view of the Board, the integrity of the EQ-Arts review process is best assured by the participation of an Executive group member in accreditation processes shared with another QA agency.*

The Board of Governance will be quorate when 50% of Executive members of the Board are present at the meeting, plus the Chair of the Board (or Acting Chairperson).<sup>11</sup>.

## 1.7 Co-option to the Board

The Board has the facility to co-opt additional members for a fixed period of time where a specific need for additional expertise and/or sectorial knowledge is required in support of EQ-Arts international projects/activities. Co-option must be agreed by a majority of the Executive group members. Similarly, individual Representative members of the Board may be co-opted to join international projects and/or specific items being discussed on the Executive Items section of Board meetings though they will not have any voting rights.

## 1.8 Voting

Only Executive members of the Board have voting rights. If a vote is tied the Chairperson will have the casting vote.

## 1.9 Board Meeting Agendas

The Agendas of Board meetings will normally be organised to deal with any Executive business without the Representative members being present (this will be titled 'Executive Items'. Usually, this time will be set aside at the beginning of the meeting with Representative members joining the meeting after this business has been concluded (this section of the agenda will be titled 'Representative Items'). If the wider view of the Board is needed to inform key decisions on Executive Items, the agenda of the meeting can be revised so that Representative members can be engaged.

## 2. Criteria for the appointment of Executive Group Members includes:

- experience of the world of work and professional practice in the CPAD sector
- a deep knowledge and experience of working (teaching, managing, researching, etc.,) in the higher arts education sector
- a deep knowledge of, and longstanding experience in, the field of international Quality Assurance and Enhancement in the Higher Arts Education sector
- specific skills that contribute to the Board's wide-ranging activities
- the ability to summarise and present complex arguments and ideas in public situations
- a firm command of, and proficiency in, the use of academic English both spoken and written

Throughout their period of tenure, Executive group members shall not undertake pro bono or paid work with an institution commissioning the services of EQ-Arts and must declare any such consultancy arrangements prior to their membership of the Board as a potential major conflict of interest.

### 2.1 Frequency of Board Meetings

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<sup>11</sup> An acting Chairperson must be drawn from within the Executive membership of the Board.

There will normally be four full Board meetings each year, one in advance of each calendar quarter. However, when the business of the Agency requires it, additional *ad hoc* Extraordinary Board meetings of the Executive group members of the Board can be scheduled between full meetings of the Board by agreement between the Chairperson and the Chief Executive.

## 2.2 Process for recruitment of Board members

When new Executive group members are required, they will be identified through an open process based upon:

- an analysis of the diversity of the current membership
- an audit of the skills needed to ensure the good governance of the agency.

When new Representative group Board members are required, they will be identified through an open process based upon:

- their ability to represent key stakeholder groups identified by the EQ-Arts Board
- achieving the desired level of diversity of institutional types and regional interests represented by Board membership
- holding relevant experience and knowledge of professional and/or academic CPAD disciplines

## 2.3 Process of Recruitment to the Board

The recruitment process for both Executive and Representative members of the Board will be implemented through:

- focused open calls
- targeted invitations
- nomination by Board members
- invitation to international arts subject associations or professional bodies (aligned to the work of EQ-Arts) to nominate candidates

# 3. Executive Office

Responsibilities include:

- Managing and organising the day-to-day operation of the Agency;

## 3.1 Chief Executive Officer

Duties include:

- day-to-day leadership and management of the Agency;
- the setting and achievement of the Foundation's objectives in line with the Board's strategic plan;
- monitoring and guaranteeing absolute independence in decision making for the Board/Accreditation Council;
- liaising and consulting with external partners and stakeholders;

- organisation and management of the staffing of the Agency;
- the propriety and regulation of the Agency’s finances, and the efficient, effective and economical use of its resources;

### 3.2 Finance Manager

Duties include:

- Establishing administrative procedures for the day-to-day operation
- Payments and invoicing
- Preparing yearly budget
- Preparing Treasurer’s Report
- Preparing Annual Accounts
- Bookkeeping in Exact Online

### 3.3 Projects & Review Coordinator

Duties include working closely with the CEO to:

- Organise and minute Board meetings;
- Provide support to the review team Chair and Secretary in the review process;
- Book accommodation and support in organising travel arrangements for the review team;
- Organise online or live expert training in collaboration with the trainers;
- Provide support for the publication/dissemination of thematic analysis/survey reports etc;
- Updating the EQ-Arts website;
- Provide support for external European project;
- Organising induction sessions for new Board members;

## 4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion statement

EQ-Arts approaches Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in two ways. Firstly, within EQ-Arts own organisational environment and, secondly, within the broader academic community that EQ-Arts engages with in terms of its quality assurance and enhancement activities. In both these respects EQ-Arts is committed to:

- making sure there is no unjustified, unconscious or unlawful discrimination in the organisation’s recruitment, selection, management, promotion and quality assurance/enhancement processes;
- ensuring that all colleagues are treated equally, solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, regardless of sex, colour, ethnic or national origin, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, religion and belief (including lack of belief) or political beliefs, trade union membership or non-membership, marital and civil partnership status, family circumstances, pregnancy or maternity status, gender reassignment, or on the basis of being a part-time or fixed term worker;
- understanding, valuing and working constructively with diversity to enable fair and full participation in our work and activities so that all participants are able to express their views and beliefs without fear of penalty;

- treating individuals with whom we work with fairness, dignity and respect;
- being pro-active in the removal of barriers and the redressing of imbalances caused by inequality and unjustified discrimination.

## 5. Appeals Procedure

- 5.1 *Purpose:* The appeals procedure will enable an institution to seek reconsideration of a quality judgement(s) or outcome(s) before publication of the final report.
- 5.1.1 The various provisions for reviewing the preliminary judgements of Review Teams and correcting factual errors in draft reports should mean that an Appeal is an action
- 5.2 *Scope for an Appeal:* The outcomes of quality assessment exercises (i.e. accreditation and revalidation) are potentially far-reaching for the institution. It is important, therefore, that the institution can have access to an appeals process where genuine concerns over the reliability and robustness of quality judgments and their outcomes can be independently tested.
- 5.2.1 Appeals will only relate to quality assessment exercises (i.e. accreditation and revalidation) where the judgments and their outcomes have a formal or legal standing that require the institution's compliance. There can be no appeal against recommendations included in a quality enhancement exercise (i.e. review, audit or benchmarking) where the take-up of good practice recommendations is a matter of institutional choice and discretion.
- 5.2.2 An institution should only resort to an appeal in cases where the quality assessment outcomes are either "Accredited with conditions" or "Not accredited". In either case, the Review Team will have decided that a significant proportion of the EQ-Arts Standards constituting either of these outcomes have not been met and it is towards these individual judgements of Standards, that the appeal should be directed
- 5.3 *Grounds for an Appeal:* Whereas there is provision in EQ-Arts procedures for institutions to correct factual errors in review reports<sup>4</sup>, prior to the reports being published, issues of factual accuracy will not constitute grounds for an appeal. Nor can there be any appeal against the academic judgments made by peer reviewers. If, however, there were thought to be flaws in the processes leading up to such judgments then these may constitute the grounds for an appeal. In this respect, the following instances alone are grounds for appeal:
- Evidence was supplied by the institution in documentation that was made available prior to a visit but was overlooked or ignored by reviewers when forming quality judgments about the academic provision;
  - For reasons beyond an institution's control it was not possible at the time of a visit for the institution to make some important evidence available to the reviewers;
  - There was some procedural irregularity in the conduct of the business during a site visit that distorted the process of forming judgments.
- 5.4 *Appeals Process:* Institutions should, at the earliest opportunity, alert the EQ-Arts Executive Office of their intention to lodge an appeal and before a final report has been published. All appeals must be made in writing and received by the EQ-Arts Executive Office within 20 working days of the formal

notification of a confirmed outcome being communicated by the EQ-Arts Board and before the final report is published.

5.4.1 The appeals documentation should be delivered both electronically (as a single pdf file) and in hard copy form to the EQ-Arts Executive Office in Amsterdam. The date stamp on the electronic version of the appeal will be taken as the definitive date for it being within the 20-day cut-off point. Upon receipt of appeals in the EQ-Arts Executive Office they, and the date of their receipt, will be confirmed by email. Written appeals should include:

- A covering letter from the institutional Head, confirming the appeal and providing a summary of its key points;
- A document that:
  - Identifies the grounds upon which the appeal is to be considered (see above);
  - A reasoned argument that identifies the specific judgments, outcomes and/or conditions that should be reconsidered, the reasons for doing so, along with tangible evidence to support the appeal;
  - Any supporting documentation that may include evidence to support specific parts of the appeal (being clearly referenced to the points above) where this is too lengthy to be included in the above document.

5.4.2 Once an Appeal has been formally received by EQ-Arts the Review process will be suspended until the Appeal has been fully resolved and closed.

5.5 *Appeals Committee*: All Appeals (including Complaints that are against the EQ-Arts Board or any of its members) will be heard by an Appeals Committee that is independent of the Board of Governance. This Committee will have a Chair, to be nominated for a period of three years by an independent Subject Association with whom EQ-Arts is formally associated. The Chair will be nominated for their considerable experience of quality assurance and appeals procedures, and, be free of any major conflicts concerning the appeals to be heard. During their period of tenure, the Chair will not participate in any of EQ-Arts quality assurance and enhancement activities. The Appeals Committee will be comprised of two or three people, including the Chair who will appoint a second or third person(s), meeting the criteria set out above and being selected from the EQ-Arts Register of Peer Reviewers.

5.5.1 The Appeals Committee will consider documentation received from the appellant institution along with any direct responses to specific points in the appeal that EQ-Arts may choose to submit. The final judgement of the Appeals Committee will take one of the following forms:

- The appeal is rejected;
- The appeal is partly upheld (in which case it must be specified whether the case is sufficiently strong to cause the original judgement to be altered) ;
- The appeal is fully upheld (based on the report and written submissions alone);
- The appeal cannot be decided based upon a written submission alone and a further visit is required (in principle, this judgement will only be used as a last resort).

5.5.2 In each case, the Chair of the Appeals Committee will prepare a reasoned explanation for the Committee's verdict. This takes the form of a report submitted to the EQ-Arts Board by the Appeals Committee. Except under the most exceptional circumstances, the EQ-Arts Board will accept the verdict and recommendations of the Appeals Committee. Similarly, if a further visit is called for, the Board will normally endorse this.

- 5.6 *Outcomes of an Appeal*: The result of the appeal will be communicated by the EQ-Arts Board to the institution. The result finally published on the EQ-Arts website will reflect the judgement after the appeal and will not record that this judgement was reached after an appeals process.
- 5.6.1 Where an appeal is Rejected by the Board this decision will be final with no further recourse for a subsequent appeal.
- 5.6.2 Where an appeal is partly upheld, the Appeals Committee may either decide that the strength of the institution's case is sufficient to alter the overall result or that, notwithstanding the valid points made, the overall verdict should stand. This decision will focus on two considerations:
- Does the partial upholding of an appeal mean that a Review Team's decision, that a particular standard has been 'partially fulfilled' or 'not fulfilled', should be revised?
  - If so, should an overall condition arising from the original verdict be mitigated to a recommendation – or be removed?
- 5.6.3 Where an appeal is fully upheld, this is likely to result in a change in both of the areas described above.
- 5.6.4 Because an Institution may appeal against a number of outcomes or conditions in a single report then this, likewise, may result in the Appeals Committee concluding that some elements of an appeal should be rejected, others partially upheld and some to be fully upheld. This, in turn, will determine any changes to the overall profile of conditions (for example, in the exceptional case of an original decision not to grant accreditation, an appeals decision that reduced the overall number, or the severity, of the conditions applied would normally result in accreditation being approved subject to any remaining conditions).
- 5.6.5 Exceptionally, the Appeals Committee may decide that it is unable to reach a definitive verdict based on the submitted documentation alone. Should this occur, the Committee may recommend a fresh review visit to consider the contested elements of the Review Team's decision. In such instances only the substance of the appeal will be reviewed and matters previously dealt with cannot be re-opened. For an appeals visit, the Review Team will consist of three experts, none of whom was involved in the original visit and amongst whom there is an appropriate balance of expertise. The visit should normally take no longer than one day. The costs of the visit will be shared equally between the institution and EQ-Arts. In the light of this, the institution shall have the right to decline a visit, in which case the original decision of the Review Team will stand.

## 6. Privacy statement EQ-Arts

- 6.1 EQ-Arts greatly values the safe collection and protection of personal data.
- 6.1.1 These data are collected and processed according to the [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#), see [article 13](#).
- 6.2 We process data on the legal bases presented in the [Article 6 EU GDPR "Lawfulness of processing"](#), more specifically in the frame of the "Legitimate Interest and Legal Obligation".

6.3 Data subjects hold several rights when it comes to the collection and protection of their data. They can be found [here](#), under Chapter Three.

6.4 **Identity and contact details of the data protection officer:**

Sally Mometti, Finance Manager of EQ-Arts, is the designated protection officer. She can be reached via email: [s.mometti@eq-arts.org](mailto:s.mometti@eq-arts.org)

6.5 **Reasons for processing the data:**

EQ-Arts collects data in order to conduct activities such as reviews, accreditation process, training and workshops as well as for promotion (e.g. Mailchimp, Facebook, LinkedIn and EQ-Arts Website).

6.6 **Location and duration of the data storage:**

These data will be stored in the EQ-Arts online Dropbox, which can be accessed only by Board Members and the Executive Office. These data will be kept until it is necessary for the purpose for which they were originally collected.

6.7 **Disclosure of your data to third parties:**

The data collected and processed will not be sold or transferred to third parties without the explicit consent of the subject unless EQ-Arts is required to do so by law.

6.8 **Destruction of Data:**

The destruction of data will be carried out according to the [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#), see [article 5](#).

## 7. Members of the Board of Governance May 2025

*Chair* Professor Paula Crabtree  
*Emeritus Professor former Vice-Chancellor, Stockholm University of the Arts, Sweden*

*Secretary* Dr. Sarah Bennett  
*Artist and Visiting Fellow, Kingston School of Art, Kingston University, UK*

*Treasurer* Professor Paula Crabtree

*Executive group Members*

Professor Anthony Dean  
Emeritus Professor, University of Winchester, UK

Matthew Kitching  
Student – PhD, Lancaster University

*Representative group Members*

Dr. Orla McDonagh

Dean of Faculty of Arts & Humanities, Technical University of Dublin, representative of the Association of European Conservatoires (AEC)

Professor Dr. Stanislav Semergjiev,  
Rector, National Academy of Film and Theatre Arts, Executive Director & representative of CILECT

Natacha Lallemand  
Head of International Affairs at the École Duperré Paris, France & representative of CUMULUS

Lars Ebert  
Secretary General, Programme Director H401 and independent advisor for arts and education, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, & representative of Culture Action Europe

Johan Haarburg  
Executive Officer & representative of the Society for Artistic Research (SAR)

Ana Telles  
Vice Rector Culture and Community, University of Évora, Portugal, & representative of the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA)

*Ex-officio* Professor John Butler  
EQ-Arts Chief Executive Officer

Sally Mometti  
EQ-Arts Finance Manager

Anna Brown  
Project & Review Assistant