



# European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes

## *Standards & Guidelines* *Self-Evaluation Report*

Vienna, 19.05.2025

# Reminder: Objectives of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes

*A framework to streamline external QA of Joint Programmes across the European Higher Education Area*

- ❑ Facilitate quality assurance across *borders*.
- ❑ Make sure that there are no duplicate evaluation processes or accreditation decisions.
- ❑ Ensure consistent use and interpretation of standards, and promote transparency.
- ❑ Support the joint recognition of outcomes and decisions taken.

# Self-Evaluation Report: *The process of expressing jointness*



**"Self-evaluation report** serves as a **primary information source** for the panel in preparing for the on-site visit, during its interviews with the stakeholders and when assessing the programme. This means that the report will be your presentation card. It will provide the panel the first impression of your programme. However, the **process** leading to this outcome is more complex than just writing the report, and might cause some difficulties. [...]." (See [IMPEA Project website: Guide to self-evaluation](#))  
Use the template developed with in the IMPEA Project: [Self Evaluation Report Template](#)

# Self-Evaluation Report: *The process of expressing jointness*



AQ Austria: [https://www.aq.ac.at/de/ueber-uns/dokumente-ueber-uns/AQ-Austria\\_European-Approach\\_06112016.pdf?m=1545321807&](https://www.aq.ac.at/de/ueber-uns/dokumente-ueber-uns/AQ-Austria_European-Approach_06112016.pdf?m=1545321807&)

ImpEA Project – Understanding EA: <https://impea.eu/understanding-ea/>

EQAR – European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes: <https://www.eqar.eu/kb/joint-programmes/>

ENQA – European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes (PDF): <https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/European-Approach-for-Quality-Assurance-of-Joint-Programmes.pdf>

# Self-Evaluation Report: *The process of expressing jointness*



## Parts of the SER

- Key information on the joint programme and the cooperating higher education institutions (+ *national context*)
- Self-evaluation of the joint programme
  - Self-evaluation that gives evidence of its compliance with the standards
  - Chapters of the self-documentation should follow the structure of the standards
- Enclosures / Annexes
  - Relevant for the assessment of the standards

# Standards for accreditation according to the European Approach for Assurance of Joint Programmes



Standard 1	Eligibility (1.1 – 1.3)
Standard 2	Learning Outcomes (2.1 – 2.4)
Standard 3	Study Programmes (3.1 – 3.3)
Standard 4	Admission and Recognition (4.1 – 4.2)
Standard 5	Learning, Teaching and Assessment 5.1 – 5.2)
Standard 6	Student Support
Standard 7	Resources (7.1 – 7.2)
Standard 8	Transparency and Documentation
Standard 9	Quality Assurance

# Standard 1 Eligibility



## Standard 1.1 Status

The institutions that offer a joint programme should be **recognised** as higher education institutions by the **relevant authorities** of their countries. Their respective **national legal frameworks** should enable them to **participate in the joint programme** and, if applicable, to award a **joint degree**. The institutions awarding the degree(s) should ensure that the degree(s) belong to the **higher education degree systems of the countries** in which they are based.

### ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ What kind of documents are submitted to proof the legal status ?
- ✓ Are all participating institutions recognised as higher education institution according to their national legal framework?
- ✓ Does the respective legal framework enable all partners to participate in the JP?
- ✓ Does the respective legal framework enable all partners to award a **joint degree**?
- ✓ Is it ensured that the degree belongs to the higher education degree systems of the countries.

...

# Standard 1 Eligibility



## Standard 1.2 Joint design and delivery

The joint programme should be offered **jointly**, involving all cooperating institutions in the **design and delivery** of the programme.

... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ What indicates the joint design of the joint programme?
- ✓ In what way does the consortium demonstrate joint efforts?
- ✓ How is the "**jointness**" of the development/design/implementation detectable?
- ✓ Might there be any obstacles in the joint delivery of the joint programme?
- ✓ What are the risks ...and how are they taken care of?

# Standard 1 Eligibility



## Standard 1.3 Cooperation Agreement

The terms and conditions of the joint programme should be laid down in a cooperation agreement.

- ❑ Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme
- ❑ Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation (including funding, sharing of costs and income etc.)
- ❑ Admission and selection procedures for students
- ❑ Mobility of students and teachers
- ❑ Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures in the consortium.

### **... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?**

- ✓ Does the CoopA cover all required issues?
- ✓ What does the national framework require in order to award a joint degree?
  - ✓ What are the denomination of the awarded degree(s)?
  - ✓ Is the awarding process clearly outlined? (Remind: Joint degree / or double/multiple degrees)
- ✓ Is there sufficient transparent information about the funding of the joint programme?
  - ✓ Is the financial management clearly outlined?
- ✓ Are the coordinating, management and academic processes clearly defined?

# Standard 2 Learning Outcomes



## Standard 2.1 Level

The intended learning outcomes should align with the corresponding level in the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA), as well as the applicable national qualifications framework(s).

### **... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?**

- ✓ What are the intended LO of the joint programme?
  - ✓ Do the learning outcomes reflect what graduates are expected to know, understand and be able to do?
  - ✓ Do the learning outcomes match the descriptors of the QF-EHEA (e.g. Bachelor's, Master's or Doctorate level)? *Are the intended LO in line with the corresponding level in the QF-EHEA?*
  - ✓ Do the learning outcomes reflect academic and professional relevance across all participating institutions?
- ✓ If there are national QF: Are the intended LO as well in line with the NQFs?
- ✓ ...

# Standard 2 Learning Outcomes



## Standard 2.2 Disciplinary Field

The intended learning outcomes should comprise knowledge, skills, and competencies in the respective disciplinary field(s).

### ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ Does the joint programme provide information on the respective/proposed subject area/disciplinary field?
- ✓ Are the learning outcomes described in a **comprehensible** way?
  - ✓ What learning outcomes does the joint programme aim to achieve?
- ✓ Are the intended learning outcomes **adequate** (skill, competences and knowledge) for the respective disciplinary field(s)
- ✓ ...

# Standard 2 Learning Outcomes



## Standard 2.3 Achievement

The programme should be able to demonstrate that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

### **... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?**

- ✓ What are the aims and objectives (goals) of the joint program?
- ✓ Are the aims and objectives of the joint programme clearly defined?
- ✓ How does the joint programme ensure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes?
- ✓ Which measures and assessment methods are used to measure the achievement of learning outcomes?
  
- ✓ ....

# Standard 2 Learning Outcomes



## Standard 2.4 Regulated Professions

If relevant for the specific joint programme, the minimum agreed training conditions specified in the European Union Directive 2005/36/EC, or relevant common trainings frameworks established under the Directive, should be taken into account.

### **... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?**

- ✓ What indicates ...?
- ✓ In what way does the consortium show/demonstrate...
- ✓ How is the ....detectable?
- ✓ Are there any obstacles ....
- ✓ What are the risks ...and how are they taken care of?
- ✓ In what way is...
- ✓ Why ...

# Standard 3 Study Programmes



## Standard 3.1 Curriculum

The **structure and content** of the curriculum should be fit to enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

### ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ How is the **structure** of the curriculum defined?
  - ✓ The curriculum should be developed and delivered jointly to ensure coherence and integration across institutions.
- ✓ What are the **key elements** of the curriculum's content?
- ✓ How are the **contents** aligned to the structure?
  - ✓ What is the size of the modules, tracks, paths and assessments?
- ✓ Is it clear how students will be facilitated in achieving the intended learning outcomes?
- ✓ Does the programme's teaching and learning support the achievement of the intended learning outcomes?
- ✓ Do the learning outcomes **adequately** reflect the **context, level, scope and content** of the programme?

# Standard 3 Study Programmes



## Standard 3.2 Credits

The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) should be applied properly and the distribution of credits should be clear.

### ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ How does the **consortium** handle the **ECTS**?
  - ✓ Are there national differences? (1 cp = 25 to 30 hours)
  - ✓ Is the ECTS credit point equal in hours the same in every HEI involved?
- ✓ Is the ECTS properly applied?
- ✓ Is the allocation of ECTS reasonable?
  - ✓ It must specify the total workload, credits (as defined by the ECTS) and learning outcomes.

# Standard 3 Study Programmes



## Standard 3.3 Workload

A joint bachelor programme will typically amount to a total student workload of 180-240 ECTS-credits; a joint master programme will typically amount to 90-120 ECTS-credits and should not be less than 60 ECTS-credits at second cycle level (credit ranges according to the FQ-EHEA); for joint doctorates there is no credit range specified.

The workload and the average time to complete the programme should be monitored.

### ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ What is the estimated **workload** of students to complete all learning activities foreseen in the joint programme?
- ✓ What processes are in place to **monitor** the workload of the students?
- ✓ How does the consortium handle the monitoring of the students workload?
- ✓ What processes are in place to monitor the average time to complete the joint programme?
- ✓ ....

# Standard 4 Admission and Recognition



## Standard 4.1 Admission

The admission requirements and selection procedures should be appropriate in light of the programme's level and discipline.

### ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ How does the consortium **organise the admissions process**?
- ✓ Who is responsible for admitting students to the joint programme?
  - ✓ Are there national requirements to be taken into consideration?
- ✓ What does the selection procedure look like?
- ✓ Are they appropriate for the joint programme?
- ✓ What are the **admission requirements**?
  - ✓ Are they clearly defined and do they meet the statutory requirements?
- ✓ How do the admission requirements contribute to achieving the educational goals/learning outcomes of the joint programme?

• ....

# Standard 4 Admission and Recognition



## Standard 4.2 Recognition

Recognition of **qualifications** and of **periods of studies** (including recognition of **prior learning**) should be **applied in line** with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and subsidiary documents.

### **... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?**

- ✓ What are the defined **recognition rules** for external achievements?
- ✓ What recognition rules apply to the consortium?
- ✓ Are they pursuant to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and achievements outside of higher education institutions ?
- ✓ Is the issuance of a **diploma supplement** guaranteed?

• ...

# Standard 5 Learning, Teaching and Assessment



## Standard 5.1 Learning and Teaching

The programme should be designed to correspond with the intended learning outcomes, and the **learning and teaching approaches** applied should be **adequate** to achieve those. The **diversity of students** and their needs should be **respected** and **attended to**, especially in view of potential different **cultural backgrounds** of the students.

### ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ What **teaching and learning approaches** are in place?
  - ✓ Which teaching methods are employed to facilitate student-centred learning experiences?
- ✓ How do **teaching and learning processes** ensure the **achievement** of intended learning outcomes?
- ✓ In what ways is the diversity of students reflected in the joint programme?
  - ✓ How does the programme address diversity, particularly with regard to the different cultural backgrounds of students and staff?
- ✓ .....

# Standard 5 Learning, Teaching and Assessment



## Standard 5.2 Assessment of students

The examination regulations and the assessment of the achieved learning outcomes should correspond with the intended learning outcomes. They should be applied consistently among partner institutions.

### ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ What **examination** regulations, processes and procedures are in place?
- ✓ Are they **adequate** for assessing the achievement of the intended learning outcome (LO)?
- ✓ How is it ensured that they are applied consistently?
- ✓ Who is responsible for monitoring the examination procedures and processes in place?
- ✓ .....

# Standard 6 – Student Support



The student support services should contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. They should take into account specific challenges of mobile students.

## **... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?**

- ✓ Are student support services for joint programme students clearly defined and in place?
- ✓ Do the student support services aim to facilitate achievement of the intended learning outcomes (LO)?
- ✓ Do the services adequately address the needs of students who are mobile?
- ✓ Who is responsible for monitoring the student support services in place?
- ✓ ...

# Standard 7 - Resources



## Standard 7.1 Staff

The staff should be **sufficient and adequate** (qualifications, professional and international experience) to implement the study programme.

### ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ How many **scientific teaching and research staff** are available?
  - ✓ Those who are scientifically qualified, have adequate vocational experience, and are qualified in terms of their teaching methods.
- ✓ How is the ration between part-time/full-time staff?
- ✓ Does the faculty composition meet the requirements of a thorough scientific education?
- ✓ Is the available staff sufficient to ensure adequate student support?
  - ✓ How is **administrative staff** supporting the implementation of the programme?
- ✓ What are the human resource development and further education measures for teaching and research staff engaged in the joint programme, and do they have access to them?
- ✓ ...

# Standard 7 - Resources



## Standard 7.2 Facilities

The facilities provided should be sufficient and adequate in view of the intended learning outcomes.

### **... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?**

- ✓ How is it ensured that the facilities provided are sufficient and appropriate for implementing the joint programme?
- ✓ Are there enough adequate rooms and technical facilities required for the joint programme available?
- ✓ Are the facilities provided suitable to support the achievement of the intended learning outcomes?
- ✓ (in case facilities used jointly/ with third parties) Are the required cooperation contracts submitted?
- ✓ .....

# Standard 8 Transparency and Documentation



Relevant information about the programme like admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures etc. should be well documented and published by taking into account specific needs of mobile students.

## ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ How is **information** about the joint programme made available to the **public**?
  - ✓ Is the programme information publicly available?
  - ✓ Is the information clear and up to date, providing descriptions of the structure, objectives and outcomes of the joint programme?
  - ✓ Does the programme issue a Diploma Supplement with joint elements?
  - ✓ Is communication in a common language (usually English) used?

# Standard 9 Quality assurance



The cooperating institutions should apply joint internal quality assurance processes in accordance with part one of the **ESG**.

## ... look at ... do we have sufficient evidence?

- ✓ What **joint** internal **quality assurance** processes does the **consortium** have in place for the joint programme?
  - ✓ In what ways do the respective consortium's quality management systems support the delivery of the joint programme?
  - ✓ Does the QMS facilitate reflection on study conditions and programme organisation?
  - ✓ How are students' reflections on the joint programme organised?
  
- ✓ Are the joint quality assurance processes in place adequately reflect on **ESG 1.1** and part one of the ESG?
  - *Policy (ESG 1.1)*
  - *Design and approval of programmes (ESG 1.2)*
  - *Student-centered Learning, Teaching and Assessment (ESG 1.3)*
  - *Student Admission, Progression Recognition and Certification (ESG 1.4)*
  - *Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)*
  - *Learning resources an student support (ESG1.6)*
  - *Information Management (ESG 1.7)*
  - *Public Information (ESG (1.8)*
  - *On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes (ESG 1.9)*
  - *Cyclical External Quality Assurance (ESG 1.10)*



Questions?



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