



## **ECA Principles for the Selection of Experts**

*Dublin, June 2, 2005*

### **Introduction**

- Convinced of the importance of agreed procedures and principles for the selection of experts and the composition of expert panels;
- As a necessary step towards reaching the aim of mutual recognition of accreditation decisions;
- In line with the Conclusions of the fourth meeting of the Consortium, 2-3 December 2004 in Zürich;
- Based on standard 15 of the ECA Code of Good Practice;

The members of ECA agree on the following principles for the selection of experts:

### **Procedures**

- Any decision regarding the expert panel should be based on the policies, procedures and criteria of the accreditation organisation or on relevant legislation.
- Panel members must be independent and in a position to make unbiased judgments. Any possible conflict of interest must be disclosed.
- The selection criteria for expert panels must be established and published by the accreditation organisation.
- Applicants undergoing accreditation are given the opportunity to comment on the selection of panel members.
- The accreditation decisions should be made by the relevant authority and not by the group of experts themselves.
- Panel members must be committed to treat all material and findings as strictly confidential.
- Panel members are briefed adequately by the accreditation organisation on the context within they are operating (national legislative environment, criteria, procedures and guidelines).

## **Composition**

The number of panel members may vary depending on the range of competence of individual members. Gender balance should be taken into consideration when appointing a panel of experts. The expert panel should have the following mix of expertise appropriate to the objectives of the accreditation procedure.

### Institutional Accreditation Panels

- experience in quality assurance in higher education
- appropriate academic qualifications and recognised expertise in the relevant area(s)
- expertise in institutional governance and management
- leadership experience in research/academic management
- relevant international experience that provides a basis for making international comparisons
- knowledge on teaching and learning methods
- expertise in development, design, provision and evaluation of higher education programmes
- knowledge of the country-specific system of higher education, institutions and applicable legislation

Depending on the national context it is commendable to include in the institutional accreditation panel:

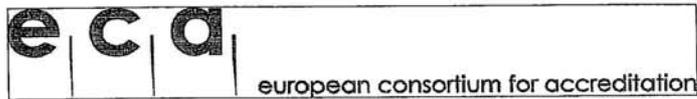
- student representatives
- representatives from the labour market
- a significant proportion of panel members from outside the country

## Programme Accreditation Panels

- experience in quality assurance in higher education
- appropriate academic qualifications and scientific or professional reputation in the relevant area(s)
- relevant international experience that provides a basis for making international comparisons
- knowledge on teaching and learning methods
- expertise in development, design, provision and evaluation of higher education programmes
- knowledge of the country-specific system of higher education, institutions and applicable legislation

Depending on the national context it is commendable to include in the programme accreditation panel:

- student representatives in the respective area(s)
- representatives from the labour market
- a significant proportion of panel members from outside the country



## Signatures

The following ECA member organisations have committed themselves to implement the ECA Principles for the Selection of Experts on 2nd June 2005 in Dublin:

Hannelore Weck-Hannemann  
Österreichischer Akkreditierungsrat, Austria

Udo Dierk  
Foundation for International Business  
Administration Accreditation (FIBAA), Germany

Kurt Sohm  
Fachhochschulrat, Austria

René-Paul Martin  
Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur (CTI), France

Jürgen Kohler  
Akkreditierungsrat, Germany

Rainer Künzel  
Zentrale Evaluations- und Akkreditierungsagentur  
(ZEvA), Germany

Séamus Puirseil  
the Higher Education and Training Awards  
Council (HETAC), Ireland

Karl Dittrich  
Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie  
(NVAO), The Netherlands and Flanders

Thomas Reil  
Akkreditierungs-, Zertifizierungs- und  
Qualitätssicherungs-Institut (ACQUIN), Germany

Georg Reschauer  
Akkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge im  
Bereich Heilpädagogik, Pflege, Gesundheit und  
Soziale Arbeit (AHPGS), Germany

Oddvar Haugland  
Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen  
(NOKUT), Norway

Francisco Marcellán  
Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y  
Acreditación (ANECA), Spain

Edna Habel  
Agentur für Qualitätssicherung durch  
Akkreditierung von Studiengängen (AQAS),  
Germany

Rolf Heusser  
Organ für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung  
der Schweizerischen Hochschulen (OAQ),  
Switzerland