



The European Consortium for
Accreditation in Higher Education

ECA NEWSLETTER



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ECA EDITORIAL:

Dear members and observers,

After the first half of the year, we need to wrap up before the well-deserved summer break. During the last months, the Board team has been working on the development of the new strategy building on your contributions. As you know, the new strategy was approved in the General Assembly held in June during a wonderful summer seminar in Malta hosted by MFHEA, Malta Further and Higher Education Authority. The new strategy prioritises capacity building, innovation, cooperation and networking. We would like to highlight some aspects as the ECA trainings, continuing with the regular trainings regarding the assessment of Joint programmes following the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes and assessing the quality of internationalisation following the CeQult framework and offering some new trainings as Cultural competences for Quality Assurance Professionals and the recent one regarding "European Higher Education for Entry-Level Quality Assurance Professionals".

During the last General Assembly, our fellow colleagues, Luut Kroes, Klemen Šubic and Ronny Heintze, were reelected as Board members and Giacomo Annese from MFHEA, was appointed to the Financial Committee.

Finally, we would also want to welcome again our new member evalag.

Thanks again for all your contributions and participation and looking forward to seeing you in Stockholm!

Eva Fernández de Labastida
ECA Chair



Solange Pisarz
ECA Vice-Chair



NEWS FROM ECA

Members Seminar in Malta

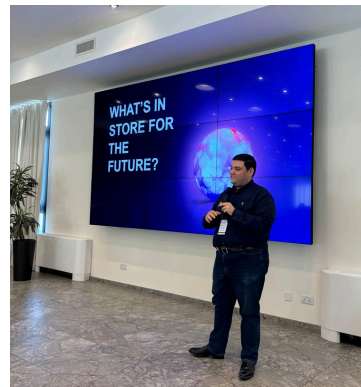
By ECA

The **Members Seminar and in Malta** (3 June 2024) marked a significant milestone in the intersection of artificial intelligence and quality assurance in higher education and featured a series of insightful keynote speeches and discussions, together with the **General Assembly and Working groups meeting**.

Hosted by the **Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA)**, the event brought together our Members from across Europe.

Esteemed keynote speakers shared their knowledge and expertise, shedding light on emerging trends, challenges, and innovative practices:

- **Prof. Alexei Dingli, Faculty of ICT at the University of Malta** spoke about AI's unseen yet profound impact on academic frameworks and explored how AI is not just a tool but a catalyst for redefining educational models, challenging traditional pedagogies, and reshaping the learning and teaching landscape.
- **Núria Mancho-Fora, PhD, Data Analyst at AQU Catalunya** focused on how AQU Catalunya investigated the viability of employing AI algorithms to predict at-risk programs.



ECA Elections: Ronny Heintze, Luut Kroes and Klemen Šubic re-elected as Board members, Giacomo Annese new member of Financial Committee

By ECA

We are pleased to announce the successful conclusion of the ECA Board elections, which took place during the General Meeting held as part of the Members Seminar in Malta.

We are delighted to share that **Klemen Šubic from SQAA**, **Luut Kroes from NVAO**, and **Ronny Heintze from AQAS e.V.** have been re-elected to the ECA Board for another two-year term. Their expertise and commitment to quality assurance in higher education continue to be instrumental in shaping the direction of the ECA.

Last year, members elected **Eva Fernandez de Labastida from Unibasq** as **ECA Chair**, **Solange Pisarz from Cti** as the **Vice-Chair of ECA**, and **Sebastian Steele from UKA** as a board member. With their vast experience and expertise, the board is well-equipped to lead the ECA towards its mission of enhancing quality assurance in higher education and fostering international cooperation.

Warm congratulations also to **Giacomo Annese from MFHEA** for his election as a new Financial Committee Member, and to **Luis Velon (ACSUG)** and **Chris Thompson (THE-ICE)** for their re-election as valuable representatives of the Financial Committee.

At ECA, together with our respected members and observers, we will continue to implement our shared vision and contribute to the development of quality assurance in higher education across Europe.



Newly developed training for Entry-Level QA Professionals

By ECA

In June ECA organised for the first time the newly-developed training **European Higher Education for Entry-Level Quality Assurance Professionals**, hosted by Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

Trainers **Sebastian Steele** and **Yvonne Overdeest** welcomed a very diverse group of participants to discuss and share some basic theory, personal perspectives and experiences, and suggestions in the field of quality assurance in higher education.

This training offered entry-level QA professionals an introduction to how various European HE stakeholders are involved in accreditation and external quality assurance, recognition of qualifications, and internationalisation of higher education.

The trainers were greatly impressed with the participants, all of whom had diligently prepared for the training, and who all contributed enthusiastically to the discussions and activities in an open and curious manner.



Welcome to new ECA member, evalag

By ECA

We extend our warm welcome to new **ECA Member evalag**.

Evalag was established in 2000 as a foundation under public law and is committed to non-profit purposes. In 2009, it was authorised as Accreditation Agency by the German Accreditation Council for the first time. In its activities, evalag is independent on the basis of internationally accepted standards.

Evalag is a centre of excellence for quality assurance and enhancement. It supports higher education institutions and other scientific institutions with its broad range of external quality assurance procedures, workshops and consulting services. Evalag is active as a quality assurance agency for higher education within Germany and outside Germany.



Join us in Stockholm!

7-9 October 2024

Members Seminar & Training



European Approach Training in Cologne

By ECA

On **6 and 7 June 2024** ECA Member **AQAS** hosted a new **training on the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes**.

The participants had the opportunity to learn more about joint programmes and how they are assessed following the European Approach, focusing on the specific standards and procedure. The training held lively discussions and addressed the challenges of assessing joint programmes from the perspectives of institutions and quality assurance agencies considering also the specific features as of self-accrediting institutions and the European University Alliances.



Presenting CeqInt Certificate at EURIE Summit

By ECA

Earlier this year ECA had the privilege of participating in the **Eurie Summit** held in Istanbul, where we showcased our experience with the **CeqInt Certificate for Quality of Internationalisation**.

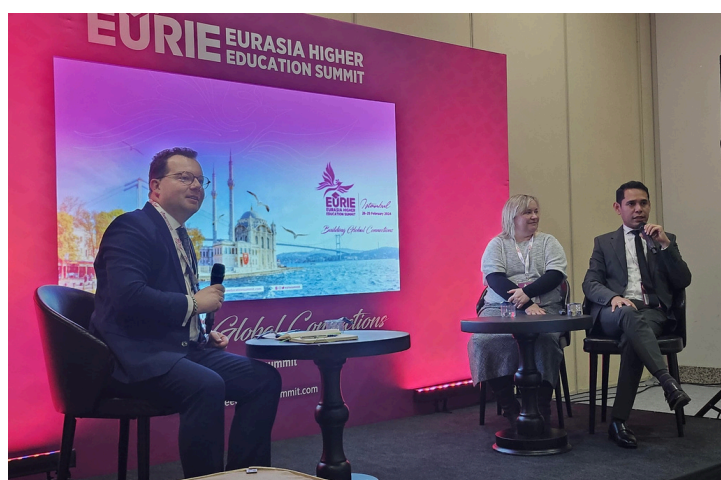
ECA Chair, **Eva Fernandez de Labastida (Unibasq)**, shared insights into the frameworks used by ECA member agencies to identify excellence in internationalisation.

Joining her was **Libardo Gutiérrez Mengual** from **Universidad de la Salle (Bogota)**, who illustrated his university's significant progress in internationalisation over recent years.

The panel discussion, expertly moderated by **Ronny Heintze (AQAS)**, Chair of the ECA Certification Group and Board Member of ECA, drew a full house of attendees from around the globe. Discussions centered on success factors for quality in internationalisation and the essential institutional support and strategy needed for success.

Remember, the CeQInt label for Excellence in Internationalisation can be conferred by ECA member agencies for both programs and institutions. For detailed requirements, visit www.ceqint.eu.

CeQInt.
Excellence in Internationalisation



NEWS FROM ECA MEMBERS

Six ECA members' agencies contributed to a new study on institutional evaluation frameworks published by the Quality Audit Network

By HCERES

A variety of networks has blossomed in the field of quality assurance. Among them, the Quality Audit Network (QAN) is an informal network of agencies conducting institutional quality assurance procedures.

As ECA, it is a network for exchanging ideas and experiences and learning from one another. The QAN has recently issued a study focusing on the design and revision of institutional evaluation frameworks.

Indeed, these are key documents steering the external evaluation process, defining the scope of the evaluation, its objectives, standards and/or criteria, methodology and outcomes. While the content of ESG is discussed at the European level, it was a good time to reflect on the design of evaluation frameworks and methodologies for improvement, including the involvement of stakeholders. Among the 16 surveyed agencies, six are ECA members' agencies (AI, ARACIS, ASHE, Hcéres, NVAO, UKÄ).

The full study can be retrieved on [this page](#).

