

WORK AND FINANCIAL PLAN FOR 2014



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Introduction

Unfortunately, we are always late with the preparation of the annual Work and Financial Plan. This is also partly due to the fact that the Business Report needs to be adopted for the previous year, as well as the Statement of Accounts, Self-evaluation and the future Action Plan. Apart from that, this is a consuming task. I think that certain reports should simply be merged in order to simplify the work of the Agency.

Like with the adoption of Work and Financial Plan for 2012 and 2013, the plan for 2014 will be adopted with a delay. In this period, the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency) has set two very important objectives. Apart from daily intensive work on numerous accreditation and external evaluation procedures, it intends to apply for full membership in ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education). This is one of important objectives of the National Higher Education Programme of the Republic of Slovenia 2011-2020. It leads to international recognition of the Agency. In 2013, the Agency has successfully entered EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education). This document also includes the Action Plan for the Agency's work in 2013.

The Agency has been functioning for five years now. Even though many stakeholders in higher education are still convinced that the Agency's primary role is providing control, inspection and supervision in the Slovenian higher education and higher vocational education area, its purpose is to contribute with its work to the improvement of the internal and external quality system. This is also stated in the Resolution on the Founding of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No 114/2009): The Agency performs the expert and development tasks in higher education and regulatory tasks for external quality assurance in higher education. The external quality assurance includes accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes, including external evaluation. The Agency performs statutory duties in the public interest with the aim to provide for continuous, expert and independent assistance in quality assurance and development in Slovenian higher education. It functions as a public service.

Notably, it must promote the development of quality culture among the stakeholders. At the same time, it has to perform its duties while observing the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area – ESG and all good European practices. Together with its stakeholders, it will strive to fulfil its mission and observe the set values.

Ivan Leban

Ljubljana, June 2014.



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Table of contents

Table of contents	3
SLOVENIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION	4
Organisation	4
From the Agency Development Strategy for the Period 2011–2016	5
Activities of the Agency in 2013	6
WORK PLAN FOR 2014	7
A) ACCREDITATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND STUDY PROGRAMMES AND EVALUATION OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGES (AS OF 1 JANUARY 2014)	8
B) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM OF THE AGENCY	9
(also included in the 2014 Action Plan)	9
C) ADMISSION TO ENQA (included in the 2014 Action Plan)	10
D) REVISION STRATEGIJE AGENCIJE OF THE AGENCY STRATEGY AND DEFINING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2014-2016 (in the 2014 Action Plan)	11
E) SYSTEM OF INFORMING STAKEHOLDERS ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY (in 2014 Action Plan)	12
RESOURCES	14
Financial resources	14
Human resources	17
ACTION PLAN FOR SELF-EVALUATION OF SQAA FOR 2014	20
CONCLUSION	29



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SLOVENIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Organisation

The Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency) was founded on the basis of the Act Amending the Higher Education Act – ZViS-G (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 86/2009); the Higher Education Act (official consolidated version) ZViS-UPB7 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 32/2012); while its bodies, competences and tasks are determined in the Higher Education Act and Resolution on the Founding of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 114/2009).

The basis for the establishment and operation of the Agency is Article 51e of ZViS-UPB7 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 32/2012). The Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education is a public body established by the Republic of Slovenia to assure quality in higher education and to carry out development and consulting activities in the field for which it was founded.

Subject to statutory provisions, the Agency has the following purpose and objectives:

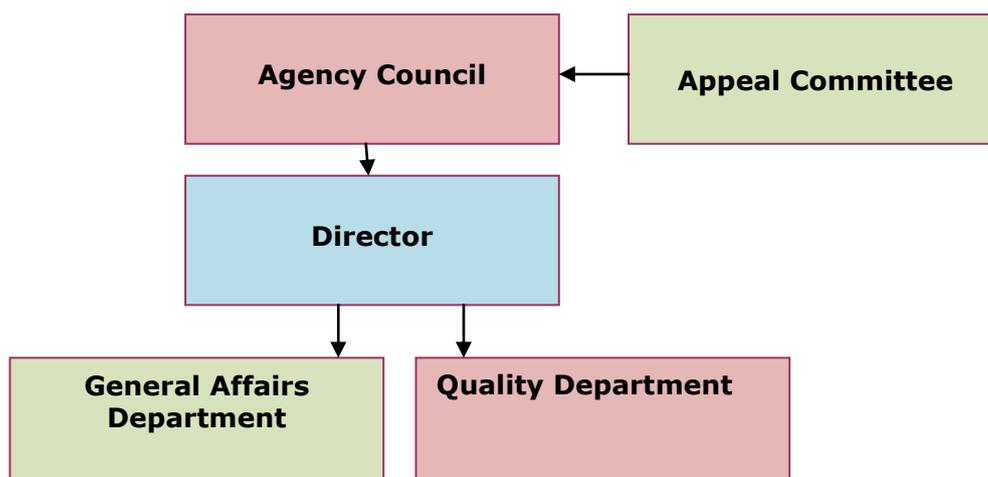
- quality assurance and improvement in higher education;
- professionalization of quality assessment;
- obtaining public trust into the quality assessment system;
- operating in line with the relevant European standards.

The Agency encourages higher education institutions to:

- assume the responsibility for quality creation and implementation of study programmes;
- constant development and establishment of quality culture;
- perform regular annual self-evaluations and periodic external evaluations on the grounds of clear and consistent criteria and professional assessment.

The Agency is composed of: the Council as the first-instance decision-making body, the Appeal Committee as the second-instance decision-making body and Specialist Service led by the Director.

Organisation chart of the Agency





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From the Agency Development Strategy for the Period 2011–2016

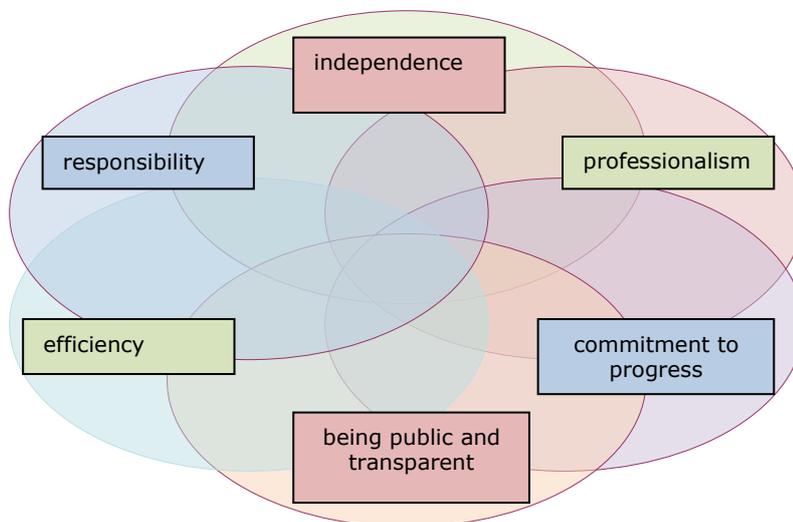
Mission

The Agency provides for development and operation of the quality assurance system in the Slovenian higher education area. It operates responsibly, both formally and contextually, and counsels all stakeholders and participants in tertiary education in line with European and global development trends.

Vision

The Agency shall, with its system of quality assurance development, contribute to higher education in Slovenia being of high quality in terms of education and research, internationally recognisable, competitive and equally integrated in the global higher education area.

Values



Strategic objectives

1. admission of the Agency to international associations (ENQA and EQAR)
2. development and operation of the quality assurance system
3. monitoring progress and strengthening quality culture in higher education
4. presenting the role, importance and quality of operation of the Agency in public for better recognition
5. co-creating and developing higher education policy in the field of quality
6. promoting the quality of transnational education
7. providing high quality counselling services of the Agency by suitable personnel.



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Activities of the Agency in 2013

(summarised from the concluding section of the Report on Work and Operation of the Agency in 2013)

In 2013, the Agency was relatively successful in fulfilling its mission: "The Agency provides for development and operation of the quality assurance system in the Slovenian higher education area. It operates responsibly, both formally and contextually, and counsels all stakeholders and participants in tertiary education in line with European and global development trends."

In addition to the tasks the Agency has to perform by the law and other acts, it strived to establish better and more encouraging working environment in order to complete numerous and demanding tasks listed in the work plan. At the end of 2013, there were 98 higher education institutions and higher vocational colleges in Slovenia, and 918 study programmes entered in the Ministry's register that are provided by higher education institutions.

The Agency was rather successful in fulfilling its mission. Although the re-accreditation of universities is among the most demanding and lengthy procedures, the Agency re-accredited (thereby completing the procedure) all four Slovenian universities: University of Ljubljana, University of Maribor, University of Primorska and University of Nova Gorica. In total, they enrol 88% of all students in Slovenia.

In 2013, the Agency achieved one of its important strategic objectives. In April 2013, an independent international group of experts performed external evaluation of the Agency's operation under Parts 2 and 3 of ESG. For this purpose, the Agency made an extensive self-evaluation report for the period from 2010 till 2012. The experts' report was complimentary, and in the summer of 2013, the Agency submitted the application for entry into EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education – <http://www.eqar.eu>). On 19 October 2013, the international committee of EQAR decided to accept the Agency into its register. The Agency was entered in the register together with the Estonian agency and the agency of the UK and Northern Ireland. Accreditations issued to Slovenian higher education institutions and their study programmes and to higher vocational colleges thus obtained added value at the European level.

The Agency tried to gain more trust from higher education and higher vocational education stakeholders and general public, and strengthened its visibility in Slovenia. It continuously strived for the improvement of its own quality, which is the foundation for an efficient, with all stakeholders agreed upon and generally acknowledged external quality assurance system in higher education and higher vocational education. This is the area where the Agency demonstrated a certain progress.



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WORK PLAN FOR 2014

The tasks in the work plan have been defined with regard to the strategic objectives of the Agency and activities for the period 2011–2016, adopted at the Agency Council session in November 2011, and the operation of the Agency is directed towards the following:

1. establishment and development of the quality assurance system of the Agency (especially the establishment of the information system)
2. transforming the quality assurance system in higher and vocational education, and
3. participation in the development of higher education in Slovenia
4. international recognition of the Agency

The stated strategic focuses are related to concern for quality work of the Agency by means of regular annual self-evaluations and external evaluations of the Agency, cooperation with external stakeholders and establishment of an efficient and mutually agreed upon system of external quality assurance and cooperation with the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) subject to European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (hereinafter: ESG).

Concrete tasks in 2014 will be shown together with the findings and recommendations from the Self-Evaluation Report of the Agency for 2010-2012 and 2013, and will reflect the action plan made on the basis of these Reports. The action plan for 2014 is presented at the end of the annual work plan. It also includes some of the recommendations from the report compiled by international experts who performed the external evaluation of the Agency in line with the ESG criteria in April 2013. It includes priority tasks.

Individual tasks of the Agency in 2014 will be elaborated and presented so as to facilitate subsequent drafting of the annual report on the work of the Agency in 2014.

Attention is also devoted to unrealised tasks. These are mostly: setting up of the information system, which is essential for the smooth operation of the Agency and the preparation of various analyses. At the same time, the Agency started publishing the reports of groups of experts on its website.

In 2014, the Agency will strive to gain more trust among stakeholders in higher education and to strengthen its independent advisory role in the Slovenian higher education area.

A) ACCREDITATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND STUDY PROGRAMMES AND EVALUATION OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGES (AS OF 1 JANUARY 2014)

DEALING WITH THE APPLICATIONS EXPECTED TO BE SUBMITTED IN 2014			
1. Activity: Accreditations in higher education			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Anticipated No. of applications	Notes
Initial accreditation of study programmes	Quality Department/ Agency Council	5	Data on initial accreditation are estimations.
Re-accreditation of study programmes		126	
Initial accreditation of higher education institutions		2	
Re-accreditation of higher education institutions		5	
Transformation of higher education institutions		3	
Applications submitted in 2013		76	
2. Activity: Evaluation of higher vocational colleges			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Planned no of applications	
External evaluation of higher vocational colleges	Quality Department/ Agency Council	8	

Note: *The applications to change study programmes are not considered in the table. According to the Fiscal Balance Act (ZUJF, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 40/2012), a private higher education institution may change the compulsory components of study programmes according to the same procedure under which they have been adopted. A university shall change the compulsory components of study programmes on its own. It informs the Agency about the modified compulsory components of study programmes within 30 days of their adoption. The Agency considers the modifications when re-accrediting study programmes. In 2015, we expect **267** re-accreditations of study programmes.*

Explanations:

The list of publicly available records of the accredited higher education institutions and study programmes is published on the Agency's website <http://www.nakvis.si> under three links

- [Public records on the accreditations of study programmes from 2004 to 2010](#)
- [Public records on the accreditations of study programmes accredited after 1 March 2010](#)
- [Plan for re-accreditations and public records on the accreditations of higher education institutions](#)



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B) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM OF THE AGENCY

(also included in the 2014 Action Plan)

Activity: Establishment of a comprehensive information system			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Period of performance	Expected result
Publication of the last version of the public procurement.	Staff/ Director	June 2014	Comprehensive information system for the Agency, the applicants for accreditation or evaluation and other stakeholders
Implementation of the public procurement	Staff/ Director	July 2014	More efficient and rational work of higher quality, and simplification and improvement of accreditation and evaluation procedures and other work processes at the Agency.
Selecting a contractor	Staff/ Director	November 2014	Connection with the e-VŠ system.
Activity for the implementation of the information system	Staff/ Director	until the establishment of the system, expected at the beginning of 2015	Reduction of administrative burden of technical assistants, applicants and other stakeholders.



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C) ADMISSION TO ENQA (included in the 2014 Action Plan)

Activity: Full ENQA membership			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Period of performance	Expected result
Appointing the working group for ENQA membership	Quality Department, Director	January 2014	ENQA membership is one of key strategic objectives of the Agency and is also required in the NHEP 2011-2020 (The Agency is already a member of EQAR)
Adoption of the plan and implementing the activity	Quality Department/ Staff/Director		
Preparing the Self-evaluation Report for 2013		March 2014	The Self-evaluation Report is the basis for the Action Plan
Preparing and organising the visit by the ENQA experts	Quality Department/ Staff/Director	June 2014	Agency's work is based on the report of the international group of experts
Site visit		November 2014	



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D) REVISION STRATEGIJE AGENCIJE OF THE AGENCY STRATEGY AND DEFINING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2014-2016 (in the 2014 Action Plan)

Activity: Strategic objectives 2014–2016			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Period of performance	Expected result
Possible revision of mission and vision of the Agency Defining strategic objectives of the Agency for 2014-2016 by considering NHEP 2011-2020	Quality Department/Director	June 2014	Appointing the working group
		September 2014	Drafting the Agency strategy and defining priority objectives till 2016
		November 2014	Discussion at the Agency Council
		December 2014	Adoption and publication



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E) SYSTEM OF INFORMING STAKEHOLDERS ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY (in 2014 Action Plan)

Activity: System of informing stakeholders in higher education			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Period of performance	Expected result
Implementing an effective system of informing stakeholders about important events, good practices and amendments of Agency's acts	Quality Department/Director	June 2014	Designating responsible persons at the Agency
		September 2014	Preparing the plan for informing stakeholders
		October 2014	Regular monitoring and informing (newsletter)



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F) TRAINING THE MEMBERS OF THE AGENCY COUNCIL AND EXPERTS (in 2014 Action plan)

1. EXECUTIVE OBJECTIVE: Training new members of the Agency Council			
Activity: Training			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Period of performance	Expected result
Implementing the training for new members of the Agency Council	Director, Agency Council foreign expert	September 2014	Acquaintance with the Agency acts and procedures, implementation of training
2. EXECUTIVE OBJECTIVE: Training of candidates for experts			
Activity: Training			
Task	Implementation and accountability	Period of performance	Expected result
Training of candidates for entry in the register of experts	Quality Department Director	June 2014	Appointing the working group
		September 2014	Supplementing the training programme
		September 2014	Discussion at the Council session
		October 2014	Implementing two trainings
		January 2015	

RESOURCES

Financial resources

The Agency's activities are funded by integral and project budgetary funds:

- the former originate directly from the national budget;
- the latter come from the European Structural Funds (hereinafter the ESF funds) for the project "Establishment of a National Quality Assurance System in Higher Education 2010-2014". These are also budgetary resources. These funds are used to cover
 - the salaries of persons employed on the project,
 - the costs incurred by accreditations of higher education institutions and study programmes and external evaluations of higher education institutions, study programmes and higher vocational colleges (site visits of the groups of experts),
 - business trip expenses,
 - information and communication expenses,
 - costs of publications,
 - promotional material,
 - costs of conferences, seminars and workshops,
 - computer services,
 - representation expenses,
 - partial purchase of computer and office equipment,
 - indirect costs.

It must be noted that the ESF funds are mostly used to finance the basic activity of the Agency and that both the staff employed on the project and the resources are essential for the normal operation of the Agency. The project terminates in 2015,

In 2014, the Agency as a direct non-governmental budget user received funds in the total amount of **EUR 1.841.907**, distributed as follows:

Integral resources (for 9 employees employed for an indefinite period + Acting Director)

Salaries	EUR 324.366,38
Mat. costs	EUR 133.041,32
Investments	EUR 2.000
Quality of higher education (Council meeting fees)	EUR 50.000

Material costs mainly cover the cost of the rent and operational costs. They are also partially covered by the ESF funds.

ESF funds (project lasting until 31. October 2015) (for the salaries of 14 employees employed for a limited period and cumulative costs for the Agency's operation and all accreditations)

ESF funds are presented in the table below "ESF funds" and thoroughly according to types of expenses in the table Financial plan for 2014 by the type of expenses (ESF funds)"

Problem will occur when ESF funds expire in 2015. By then, the operation of the agency will have become strongly impeded or completely disabled.

The National Higher Education Programme 2011-2020 imposes on the Agency a high number of duties, while stating in the action no. 20: "the SQAA shall develop and constantly update the external quality assurance system, including all higher education stakeholders, with the explanations

-Explanation: SQAA will create and update the external quality assurance system in full compliance with European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in higher education.

-Financing of the action: From 2015, when the (co)funding of the SQAA from the European Structural Fund expires, **approximately EUR 6 million of budgetary funds annually** shall be earmarked for the SQAA increasing in line with the extent of work and complexity of operation." - end of quote.

The Agency currently finances all of its activities (salaries, accreditations, material costs, external experts, Agency Council, Appeal Committee) with approximately EUR 1.3 million annually. If the Agency received only a third (2 million) of the announced EUR 6 million in 2015 (when the ESF funds expire), this would enable it to continue with good work, otherwise a black scenario awaits. In 2014, we expect a total of **EUR 1.841.907, 70**, however, revision and amendment of the budget are expected as well.

Financial situation as of 9.June 2014 is presented in more detail below. In Autumn, the budget may get revised.

INTEGRAL RESOURCES (in EUR) - employees employed for an unlimited period

Budget heading	2014 established budget
Salaries	324.366,38
Material costs	133.041,32
Investments	2.000,00
Quality of Higher education	50.000
TOTAL	509.407,70



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for Higher Education

ESF FUNDS (in EUR)

Budget heading	2014 established budget
ESF – EU (85%)	1.132.625,00
ESF - Slovenian participation (15%)	199.875,00
Total ESF	1.332.500,00

TOTAL RESOURCES of the Agency

Budget heading	2014 established budget
Total integral budget. resour. + ESF	1.841.907,70

* According to the proposal of the Ministry of Finance of 2 July 2013.

a) Salaries

b) Material costs

Financial plan for 2014 by the type of expenses (ESF funds)

Type of expense	SQAA plan for 2014
Salaries and other employees' expenses	350.000,00
Student work	5.000,00
External experts (implementation of external evaluations and accreditations)	450.000,00
Daily allowances, accommodation and travel expenses (for the employees)	20.000,00
Information and communication	5.000,00
Publications	20.000,00
Promotional material	8.000,00
Costs for conferences/symposia/seminars/trainings	30.000,00
Representation expenses	5.000,00
VAT	40.000,00
Other outsourced services	60.000,00
Computer services	200.000,00
Purchase of furniture and office equipment	5.000,00
Computer equipment - inform. system	10.000,00
Indirect costs - lump sum (up to 15%)	124.500,00
Planned expenditure - total	1.332.500,00
ESF funds (85%)	1.132.625,00
Slovenian participation (15%)	199.875,00

In the beginning of September 2013, the project "Establishment of a National Quality Assurance System in Higher Education 2010-2014" was extended until 31 October 2015. To a certain extent, the Agency's work has thus been facilitated, since many demanding tasks associated with the Agency's self-evaluation and external evaluation must be completed, a comprehensive information system must be established, more active participation in international projects must be provided and all activities necessary first for the membership of the Agency in ENQA must be carried out.

The years of experience have shown that in order to implement the planned activities in a quality manner and achieve the objectives, not all funds available by the end of the project, i.e. by 2015, are needed or will be used until 2015. The revised total amount available to the Agency according to the project is EUR 4,606,499.48, which is enough to achieve all the objectives from the project and to hire two new employees.

Human resources

New hirings at the Agency are planned:

- in the human resources plan for those financed from the integral resources,;
- and in the ESF project documentation for those financed by the ESF funds.

The Agency's human resources plan for 2014 and 2015 (submitted to the Ministry of Finance) includes 14 systematised positions; there were 12 employees in 2011, now there are 11 after one left in January 2012. Unfortunately, it was not possible to hire another employee to fill the vacant position in line with the human resources plan due to financial limitations and the adopted revised state budget, so the employment situation in 2012 is worse compared to 31 December 2011.

The situation regarding employments funded from the ESF funds is different. Twelve employees are employed in this context on a contract basis.

Compared to the end of 2011, when the Agency had 22 employees - all members of the staff, the staffing situation as of 15 June 2012 has become less favourable, with two employees fewer (three when taking into account the termination of employment of the previous Director), so the current number is 19. The situation will improve with the planned hiring from the ESF funds; the call for applicants to fill a new vacancy (archivist) was published in August 2013. The archivist was employed in 2013. The staffing situation changed in 2013. In April 2013, a new director was appointed and the employee previously performing as Acting Director returned to her position.

The staffing situation on 1 June 2014 is as follows: director of the Agency, 9 employees employed for an indefinite period (integral resources) and 14 employees employed for a definite period (ESF funds).

The staffing situation at the Agency will **thus be highly worrying** when employment contracts for 14 (out of 24) employees employed for a definite period

expire in 2015. The Agency must enforce its rights granted according to the Higher Education Act and the resolution of the National Higher Education Programme of the Republic of Slovenia 2011-2020.

There are not enough employees employed for an indefinite period to carry out all the tasks to be performed by the Agency. In 2014, in addition to improving the Agency's operation, the external evaluation of the Agency to become a member of ENQA will have to be performed. Moreover, the profile of employees is specific, as all of them have passed the exam in general administrative procedure. If these colleagues were to leave, extreme damage would be caused to quality assurance in higher education in Slovenia.

If we are to become members of ENQA, we have to comply with the ESG Standard 3.4 Resources, which reads "Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources, both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective and efficient manner, with appropriate provision for the development of their processes, procedures and staff."

In 2014, the Agency wishes to obtain an assurance from the Ministry of Finance to be assigned more integral resources in the budget, which is a prerequisite to hire employees for an indefinite period. This would prevent the Agency's operation to be impeded.

The plan is as follows:

1. to introduce an information system so that not all members of the Quality Department staff will have to perform administrative tasks or tasks which hinder fast, efficient and good content-focused work when dealing with applications, drafting findings and reports, decisions, resolutions, etc.
2. some employees in the Quality Department will, apart from managing accreditation and evaluation procedures, self-evaluation and preparation for the external evaluation of the Agency, renewal of acts and external evaluation of higher vocational colleges, assume permanent duties in substantially completed areas; the reassignment of duties will take into account the complexity of the position, professional qualification of the employees, their commitment, interests and wishes to perform a specific type of work:
 - to attend two regular monthly meetings with the Higher Education Directorate at the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport;
 - for the register of experts and all correspondence with experts until the appointment of the group of experts by the Agency Council;
 - for prompt updating of information on the Agency's website, public relations and organisation of events at the Agency;
 - for the establishment of a comprehensive information system;
 - for international cooperation and development, and monitoring of developments and good practice examples in other comparable agencies;
 - for presentation brochures, reports and other publications - translation-related;
 - for prompt updating of information on the applications and accredited higher education institutions and study programmes and external

- evaluations of higher vocational colleges, for proper archiving of applications, etc.;
- for the development of internal quality assurance systems at the institutions/colleges upon the transition to institutional evaluation
 - PR services of the Agency

This means that individual members of staff will have full insight into a specific area in order to accomplish tasks within the deadlines and to help their colleagues; simplification of procedures and efficient preparation of materials for the Agency Council sessions, revision of various protocols.

Intensive dialogue concerning the critical financial and staffing issues with the relevant stakeholders must continue.

The Sloka staff Union, member of the Pergam Confederation of Trade Unions of Slovenia, is active at the Agency and endeavours to participate in resolving financial and staffing issues of the Agency, mainly through direct dialogue with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

Self-evaluation of the Agency for 2014 and the action plan

In the last months of 2013 and at the beginning of 2014, the Agency underwent its self-evaluation for 2013 and carried out all corresponding activities. The Self-Evaluation report is the basis for completing the application for external evaluation of the Agency and its admission to ENQA. Below is the overview of the 2014 Action Plan.



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ACTION PLAN FOR SELF-EVALUATION OF SQAA FOR 2014

Priority areas of quality enhancement	Objective	Participants	Activity co-ordinator	Deadline	Reporting	Activities
I. Enhancing the system of internal quality assurance	Revising the Accreditation Criteria	Tatjana Debevec Barbara Z. Kočar Braček Lalić Jožica Kramar	Tatjana Debevec			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drafting proposals for changes in accordance with the recommendations of the external evaluation of SQAA and findings of self-evaluation for 2013; - The Agency Council adopts the criteria; - Publication of revised criteria
	Report on the decision-making practices of the Agency Council in accreditation and evaluation procedures	Jernej Širok, Tatjana Horvat, Martina Mravlja				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining the staff, responsible for the activity; - Discussion of the report at the Agency Council session; - Publication and constant updating of data.
	Revising the Criteria for Entry in the Register of	Jernej Širok, Aleksandra				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointing the group for the revision of the



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for Higher Education

	Experts	Hanc, Tatjana Debevec, Barbara Z. Kočar				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - criteria; - Preparing the draft revision; - Harmonisation with stakeholders; - The Agency Council discusses and adopts the revised criteria; - Publication
	Revising the Criteria for Transferring between Study Programmes	Jožica Kramar				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointing the group for the revision of the criteria; - Preparing the draft revision; - Harmonisation with stakeholders; - The Agency Council discusses and adopts the revised criteria; - Publication
	Revising the Criteria for Evaluation of HVCs	Maja Milas, Gregor Rebernik				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointing the group for the revision of the criteria; - Preparing the draft revision; - Harmonisation with stakeholders; - The Agency Council discusses and adopts the revised criteria; - Publication



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for Higher Education

	System of continuous informing of experts about the quality of their assessments, Agency Council decisions, examples of good practice and news in the field of QA	Jernej Širok				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining the person, responsible; - Preparing a plan of informing the experts; - Changing of questionnaires on the efficiency of accreditation and evaluation procedures; - Continuous informing of experts.
	Active participation of the Agency (staff and Council members) in discussions on the development of higher (vocational) education and constant improvement of QA systems	Maja Milas, Tatjana Debevec Matjaž Štuhec				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring current discussions and active participation therein - Drafting the plan of participation and inclusion of Agency staff and Council members, continuous reporting at meetings; - Systematic participation in discussions and events
	Strengthening the belonging among the internal stakeholders and the motivation for work (staff and the Agency Council)	Maja Milas, Jožica Kramar				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing activities for improving the relations among the staff and the Council members ; - Organizing and implementing coordination meetings (key emphases:



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Nacionalna agencija Republike Slovenije
za kakovost v visokem šolstvu

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Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

						mediation, motivation, cooperation); - Preparing measures for common representation of interests of the Agency in public.
	Training for new Council members			September 2014		- Organization and implementation of training
	Training the candidates for entry in the register of experts	Klemen Šubic, Jernej Širok, Anita Kajtezovič, Aleksandra Hanc, Tatjana Debevec, Martina Mravlja, Barbara Z. Kočar Dražen Šumiga Jožica Kramar				- Appointment - Improving the training programme
	Plan for follow-up training of the Agency staff in the field of SQAA activities	Dražen Šumiga Katja Vončina				- Preparation and implementation of the plan



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Nacionalna agencija Republike Slovenije
za kakovost v visokem šolstvu

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Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

	Staff meetings for the purpose of coordination and unification	Maja Milas, Katja Vončina, Aleksandra Hanc, Tatjana Debevec, Barbara Z. Kočar Jožica Kramar				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organization and implementation of coordination meetings (periodical or when required) ; - Exchange of good practice; - Up-to-date informing of employees about relevant news and good practice.
	Revising the quality manual	Tatjana Debevec, Klemen Šubic				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining the staff, responsible for the activity; - Determining quality indicators and the procedures of applying these indicators - Determining the procedure for system-wide analyses (metareports) - (Formally) determine the counselling function of the Agency and its staff - Preparing the draft of the manual - Harmonization with internal stakeholders - Adopting the quality



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Nacionalna agencija Republike Slovenije
za kakovost v visokem šolstvu

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Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

						manual
	Revising the strategy of the Agency and determining priority objectives from 2014 to 2016	Braček Lalić Dražen Šumiga Jožica Kramar				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointing the working group for revision - Preparing the draft strategy with priority objectives till 2016 - Adopting the strategy and publication
	SEP for 2014	Klemen Šubic, Jernej Širok, Tatjana Debevec				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointing the working group - Implementing surveys, analysis, preparing the content of the report - Harmonization with internal stakeholders - Adoption, publication
	Interpretation of Accreditation Criteria	Jernej Širok Braček Lalić Jožica Kramar				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointing the working group; - Preparing the proposal - Harmonization with internal stakeholders; - Publication
II. Enhancing the system of external quality assurance	System of effective informing of stakeholders about important events, good practices and changes of legal acts of the Agency Council	Klemen Šubic, Katja Vončina	Klemen Šubic			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining the staff responsible for the activity; - Drafting the plan of informing; - Up-to-date informing of stakeholders (newsletters)



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za kakovost v visokem šolstvu

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Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

	<p>Guidelines for drafting the self-evaluation reports of HEIs and HVCs</p>	<p>Klemen Šubic, Jernej Širok, Katja Vončina Tatjana Horvat, Anita Kajtezović, Aleksandra Hanc Dražen Šumiga Jožica Kramar</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointing the working group; - Preparing the draft; - Harmonization with stakeholders; - Adopting the guidelines at the Agency Council; - Publication
	<p>Organization of regular conferences with stakeholders in higher education (discussing the guidelines for effective functioning and development of internal QA systems, strengthening the culture of quality and exchange of good practice)</p>	<p>Maja Milas, Katja Vončina Tatjana Horvat, Anita Kajtezović, Aleksandra Hanc Braček Lalić Dražen Šumiga Jožica Kramar Tatjana Debevec</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining the staff responsible for the activity; - Organization and implementation of conferences.



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Nacionalna agencija Republike Slovenije
za kakovost v visokem šolstvu

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Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

	Guidelines for improving architectural obstacles, tactile maps, adaptation of webpages, accessibility of learning materials and other solutions which would improve the conditions for disabled students and teachers, blind, partially blinded and others	Klemen Šubic, Barbara Z. Kočar, Martina Mravlja				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities for the organization of inter-sectoral group; - Appointing the staff responsible for this activity; - Organizing and implementing meetings; - Drafting and harmonizing the guidelines with relevant stakeholders
III. Information system SQAA	Immediate publication of public tender for the selection of IS-SQAA provider, and implementation of IS as soon as possible	Andrej Krček, Klemen Šubic, Gregor Rebernik		June 2014		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publish the last version of the public tender; - Implementation of the public tender; - Selecting the provider; - Activities for the implementation of IS-SQAA; - Testing and implementing IS-SQAA
IV. International cooperation	Strengthening the cooperation of in associations, inter-sectoral groups, international projects in which the Agency participates	Klemen Šubic Tatjana Horvat Matjaž Štuhec Braček Lalić	Ivan Leban			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging the Agency staff and Council members to active operation and cooperation in various inter-sectoral, domestic, and



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za kakovost v visokem šolstvu

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Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

						international projects from the field of QA in higher education
	Joining ENQA	Klemen Šubic Tatjana Horvat				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointing the working group responsible for applying for ENQA membership; - Preparing the plan and executing activities for joining ENQA; - Preparing and organizing the visit of the external review panel of ENQA and cooperating in the activities for achieving membership
V. Measures for improving the functioning of the Agency and its position in the Slovenian higher education area	Stable long-term financing of the Agency	Andrej Krček Braček Lalić Dražen Šumiga	Ivan Leban			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining the staff responsible for the activity; - Drafting the action plan; - Implementing activities for achieving this objective

CONCLUSION

2014 will be, in addition to numerous activities we have to perform by the law and other acts of the Agency, devoted to the Agency's international affirmation. Next to accreditations and external evaluations of higher education institutions and study programmes, and external evaluations of higher vocational colleges, the tasks are in particular the following:

- providing smooth operation of the Agency, particularly in terms of resolving the acute financial and staffing issues;
- selection of and cooperation with the contractor for the establishment of a comprehensive information system of the Agency;
- Self-evaluation of the Agency for 2013, as well as preparation for external evaluation and admission to ENQA;
- constant training of candidates for entry into the register of experts, analyses of accreditation and evaluation reports by the experts and other required materials;
- active cooperation with stakeholders in higher education and higher vocational education at workshops and professional conferences;
- participation in international projects related to the Agency's work;
- cooperation with foreign agencies;
- renewal of the Criteria for Accreditation and External Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes and of the application form as their integral part;
- collection of data from higher education institutions, higher vocational colleges, experts and other stakeholders on Agency's work, analysis of survey questionnaires and, on the basis of survey results, adoption of measures for improvements;
- planning of participation at various conferences and workshops at home and abroad;
- translation of important materials into English, and maintaining the Agency's website in English - publication of reports of groups of experts
- participation in amending the higher education legislation.

Gaining trust of all stakeholders and wider public into work of the Agency, and strengthening its recognition in Slovenia, will still be of significant importance.

The Agency must keep striving for assurance and improvement of its quality, being the foundation for efficient, with all stakeholders agreed upon and generally acknowledged external quality assurance system in higher education and higher vocational education.

Ljubljana, June 2014