

2023 WORK AND FINANCIAL PLAN OF THE SLOVENIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



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Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

**WORK AND FINANCIAL PLAN OF THE
SLOVENIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE
AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

2023



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Introduction

Following a thorough self-evaluation and review of its work in the 2020–2022 strategic period, the Agency concludes that it has realised or is realising all of its objectives and will plan its future development on this basis.

The Agency's main activity, associated with quality assurance and accreditation and evaluation procedures, continues to be the main line of development and operation of the entire Agency. We will continue to conduct accreditations and external evaluations of higher education institutions, study programmes and higher vocational colleges. We will also strive to improve assessment according to quality standards and accreditation and evaluation procedures.

Various expert and employee trainings will be organised with a view to exchanging practical experience and working together to develop guidelines for the proper assessment of quality standards in all areas of assessment based on the Accreditation and External Evaluation Criteria. We will finalise the English version of the Guide to Assessments and release it in a printed version. We will continue activities for the preparation of a systemic analysis, which will comprise quality, quantity and comparative analyses of the outcomes and characteristics of evaluation practices.

Preparing for the visit of a group of experts from the European Association of Quality Agencies in Higher Education (ENQA) is another of the major tasks planned for 2023. The main objective of the Agency's self-evaluation is to improve the quality of the Agency's activities and to fulfil the conditions for extending membership in ENQA and the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

To improve the quality of Slovenian higher and higher vocational education, we will continue to deepen our cooperation with different stakeholders. We will strive to increase the visibility and recognition of the Agency's work through communication with internal and external stakeholders. In the international context, we are planning on strengthening international collaboration, both in international working groups and in visits to different agencies.

The 2023 Work and Financial Plan of the Agency (AWP) has a standard structure. The introduction is followed by an overview of accreditations and evaluations of higher education institutions, higher vocational colleges and study programmes as at 31 December 2022 and the 2023 plans. Next is the Action Plan by departments prepared on the basis of the Agency's new strategic goals and values and areas of quality assessment according to the Quality Manual. Finally, the AWP concludes with a plan of financial and human resources.

Franci Demšar, Ph.D., Director



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I. ABOUT THE AGENCY

The Republic of Slovenia established the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency) in 2010 as a public body for quality assurance in higher education and for development and advisory work. The Agency is a direct non-governmental budget user. Acting under public authority, it issues general acts for the exercise of public authorities and individual administrative acts. In carrying out its work, the Agency is independent and autonomous and committed to the principles of professionalism, impartiality, legality and political neutrality. The Agency is a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA), the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA), the presidency of which it assumed in 2020, and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). Its membership in international associations for quality assurance in higher education proves the compliance of its operation with European standards and guidelines.

Mission

The Agency provides for comparability and international recognition of Slovenian higher education area and strives for continuous improvement of its quality. It operates with substantive and formal responsibility, in expert, professional and independent manner, and provides counselling for all stakeholders in tertiary education in accordance with the European and global development orientations.

Vision

By activities in the implementation of processes in the field of assuring and improving quality in higher education, the Agency will change the national and international higher education area.

INTERNAL ORGANISATION OF THE AGENCY

In order to improve its work, the Agency has undergone several organisational transformations since 2018. In 2020 and 2021, its operations were divided into four departments: Quality Assurance; Analytics; International Cooperation and Information Technology; and General Affairs. As practice has shown that it would be sensible to reorganise the four departments into three in order to ensure better cohesion of content in individual fields of work, the Agency's operations, starting from the beginning of 2022, consist of: **the Quality Assurance and International Cooperation Department, the Analytics and Information Technology Department and the General Affairs Department.** Each department has its own head.

The tasks carried out by individual departments are intertwined or closely linked. As a result, they must often be performed by professional staff from various departments. The Agency's main activities, accreditation and evaluation procedures, are conducted by staff from both the Quality Assurance Department and the International Cooperation and the Analytics and Information Technology Department.



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The main fields of work by department are:

Director: Franci Demšar, Ph.D, alternate Jožica Kramar

Quality Assurance and International Cooperation Department

Head of the department: Klemen Šubic, alternates: Nataša Kramar and Gregor Rebernik.

Staff: Anita Kajtezović, Martina Mravlja, Zala Sečnik, Filip Draženović

- criteria and other provisions from the field of quality;
- accreditations and evaluations;
- modifications of study programmes;
- cooperation with stakeholders (institutions/colleges, experts);
- communications and public relations;
- international activities;
- organisation and cooperation in different national and international events (conferences, consultations, training courses, workshops);
- keeping and updating records (on accreditations, evaluations, modifications, VTI ...);
- project-based collaborations and activities (micro-credentials, European universities, etc.);
- intersectoral cooperation (integrity, promotion of health, self-evaluation, etc.);
- archiving applications and other documents.

Analytics and Information Technology Department:

Head of the department: Maja Milas, alternates Tatjana Debevec and Andrej Krček

Staff: Matjaž Štuhec, Ph. D., Tatjana Horvat and Tilen Heco

- plans and reports (annual work plan and report on the work and operations of the Agency, strategy);
- analyses, documents, publications;
- self-evaluation of the Agency;
- manuals, guides;
- organisation and cooperation in different events (conferences, consultations, training courses, workshops);
- translation;
- eNakvis information system and links with databases (SICRIS, IZUM, etc.);
-
- internal information system iNakvis;
- intersectoral cooperation (integrity, promotion of health, etc.);
- keeping and updating records (on accreditations, evaluations, modifications, VTI etc.).

General Affairs Department:

Head of the department: Barbara Zupančič Kočar, alternates: Mateja Bajuk Malešič and Snežana Mačar.

Staff: Slađana Tomić, Prudencija Perat.

- legislation, preparation of internal Agency acts;
- assistance in the implementation of activities from the field of quality assurance;
- work for the Appeal Committee;
- financial affairs (budget implementation);



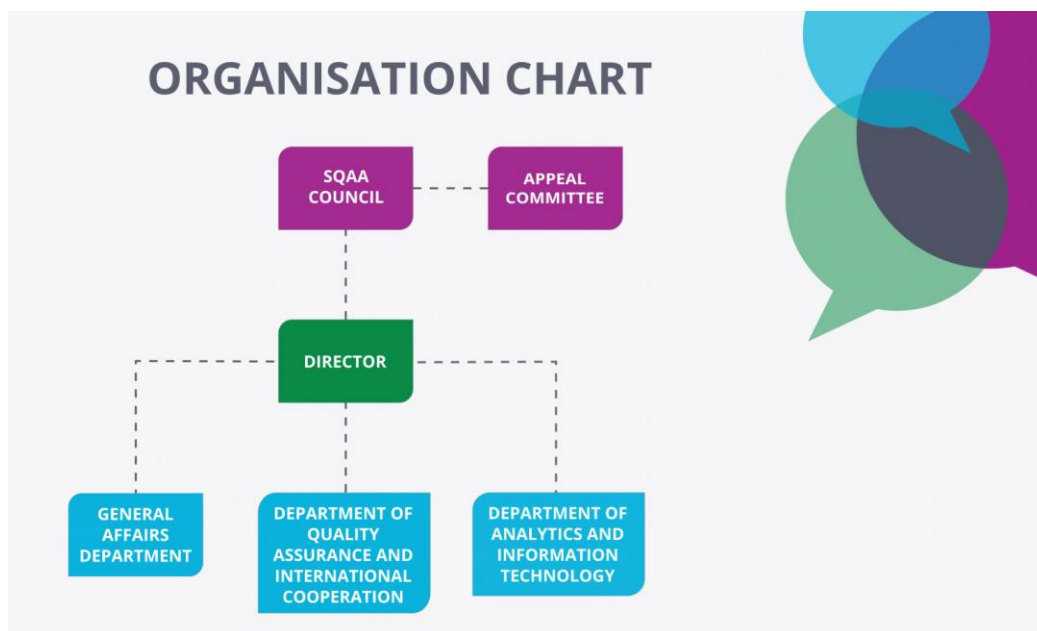
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- human resources affairs;
- access to public information;
- business and administrative tasks (contracts, receiving and sending mail, document records etc.);
- participation in external and internal supervision procedures;
- intersectoral cooperation (integrity, promotion of health, self-evaluation, etc.);
- keeping and updating human resource and other records within its powers.



The **AGENCY COUNCIL** is the highest decision-making body. Its composition enables decision-making independent of the politics and ensures the participation of all important stakeholders:

- 3 members are appointed by the Rectors' Conference,
- 1 member is appointed by the representative association of independent higher education institutions,
- 1 member is appointed by the representative association of higher vocational colleges,
- 2 members are appointed by the representative organisation of students in cooperation with student councils,
- 1 member is appointed by representative employers' associations by agreement,
- 1 member is appointed by representative trade unions in the field of higher education by agreement,
- 2 members are appointed by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia based on public invitation (1 is an expert in the field of higher education or its quality assurance + 1 is an expert in the field of higher education or its quality assurance who studies or works abroad).



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The Agency Council:

- determines and adopts criteria for accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions, study programmes, higher vocational colleges and other regulations related to it; all are published on the Agency's website;
- decides on the following:
 - initial accreditation of higher education institutions and their reaccreditation, which may be granted for a maximum of 5 years,
 - accreditation of study programmes, including international joint study programmes, for an indefinite period of time,
 - accreditation of transformations of higher education institutions,
 - compliance with conditions for the entry of a transnational higher education in the public records,
 - notifications of international study programmes accredited abroad;
 - adopts opinions about compliance with quality standards of higher vocational colleges;
 - issues recommendations to higher education institutions and higher vocational colleges to improve the quality of all their activities, and especially self-evaluation, updating and delivery of study programmes.

Table 1: Council members in 2023

Members	Institution appointing the member:
Boris Dular, Ph.D., President of the Council	Representative employer associations
Marjan Mernik, Ph.D., Agency Council Deputy President	Rectors' conference
Goran Turk, Ph.D.	Rectors' conference
Klemen Širok, Ph.D.	Rectors' conference
Sebastjan Kristovič, Ph.D.	Representative association of independent higher education institutions
Branko Škafar, Ph.D.	Representative association of higher vocational colleges
Andrej Pirjevec*	Representative organisation of students in cooperation with student councils
David Bohar	Representative organisation of students in cooperation with student councils
Bruno Završnik, Ph.D.	Representative trade unions in higher education
Julijana Kristl, Ph.D.	Government of the Republic of Slovenia
Peter Verovšek, Ph.D.	Government of the Republic of Slovenia

* *term of office expires*

The **APPEAL COMMITTEE** is a second-instance body deciding on appeals against decisions adopted by the Agency Council in the procedures for accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes.

The Appeal Committee is appointed by the Agency Council on the basis of a public invitation. The Appeal Committee consists of three members, each of whom has an alternate. The members elect from among themselves a chair and deputy chair. Alternates replace members in decision-making procedures in the event of their absence or exclusion.

The Appeal Committee of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education is composed of:

Table 2: Appeal Committee members in 2023

Members	Term of office	Alternate
Uršula Habe Nagode, member	20 June 2019 to 20 June 2023	
Marko Novak, Ph.D., president	20 June 2019 to 20 June 2023	Andreja Rakuša
Barbara Toplak Perović, Ph.D., member	20 June 2019 to 20 June 2023	Tina Tratnik

THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIC GUIDELINES UNTIL 2025

In December 2020, the Agency adopted a medium-term development strategy until 2025 entitled *the Strategic Development of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education for the 2021–2025 Period (hereinafter: the Strategy, adopted at the 157 meeting of the Agency Council on 17 December 2020)*. The Agency connects the strategic orientations for this period mainly with the further development of analytical and development work; preparation of a special guide to accreditations and evaluations with an emphasis on in-depth substantive assessment according to quality standards; with continuous and more focused training of participants in accreditation and evaluation procedures; with strengthening international activity in current areas; and with proactive communication. In order to facilitate the experts' work, the Agency is planning on establishing up-to-date databases on research and library activities at higher education institutions, their spaces and equipment. The main strategic goal until 2025 is the adoption and entry into force of an independent Agency Act – the Act on Quality in Higher Education.

In the Agency's strategy, its values are divided into three groups, namely **professionalism (P); transparency (T) and development (D), linked to the strategic goals for the 2021–2025 period.**

1. Adoption of the Act on Quality in Higher and Education (R)

In 2020, the Agency started to step up its activities to adopt the Act on Quality in Higher and Higher Vocational Education to ensure a more stable regulatory environment. The commission of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, which included representatives of the Agency and various higher education stakeholders, started working. The working group drafted extensive substantive baselines and set good foundations for further procedures of adoption of the Act. With the change of government in spring 2021, the draft Act has not yet been prioritised by the Ministry, and the Agency is still awaiting further action. Next steps regarding the Act will probably begin in 2023.

By providing solutions different from those determined for the work of the Agency by the ZViS, the Act will enable high-quality and full implementation of the tasks related to strategic orientations. The Act will stipulate that procedures place emphasis on accreditation and evaluation decisions reached on the basis of expert assessments or findings, provide



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the basis for accreditations and evaluations abroad, rectify inconsistencies in regulations in force and bring together all their provisions in a single document.

2. Improving assessment according to quality standards and accreditation and evaluation procedures (S)

With the aim to improve assessment according to quality standards and accreditation and evaluation procedures, the Agency can boast the development of the Guide to External Assessments. Its Slovenian version has been published in book form and, since the publication of the first draft on the Agency's website in March 2021 and a second updated draft at the end of the same year, it has been updated and improved in cooperation with representatives of higher education institutions, higher vocational colleges, the Agency's experts and other stakeholders. Numerous meetings, presentations and consultations have been organised.

The Guide to Assessments in Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures had been developed over several years as a result of careful study of work in practice, expert reports and self-evaluation reports from institutions/colleges. In addition to presenting the results of different analyses and characteristics of assessments, it highlights errors in assessments and provides a thorough insight into the high-quality, in-depth professional assessment across all standards of quality in the Criteria and across types of accreditation or evaluation. At the end of 2022, the guide was translated into English, and the English version will be published in book form at the beginning of 2023.

In accordance with the Strategy, the Agency will strive to further raise the level of expert external assessments that will take into account the specifics of higher education and be related to various cycles and types of study, disciplines in which study programmes are embedded and status and organisational differences between higher education institutions. It will therefore focus on improving the assessments of experts and, on their basis, the decisions of the Agency Council. It is planning on organising a lot of education, training and meetings with all major stakeholders in accreditation and evaluation procedures.

3. In-depth substantive analytical work in selected areas (S)

In 2019, the Agency created a dedicated Analytics Department, initially also working in the area of international cooperation and the Agency's IT activities, and later as a department in its own right. In early 2022, it was reorganised as a stand-alone Analytics and Information Technology Department.

The Agency carries out periodic thematic and systemic analyses to further develop its external quality system; in the years since the last ENQA review, it has prepared an analysis of expert group reports on the quality standards to be met by universities and other higher education institutions for the reaccreditation, and other thematic reports. It has prepared an analysis of evaluations of samples of study programmes with the so-called international dimension, an analysis of employability of graduates of Slovenian higher education institutions and an analysis of the independence of quality assurance agencies in higher education. It continued the analysis of the scientific, research, professional and artistic work of the holders of courses in the programmes being accredited.

The Agency will continue to work together with external professionals to conduct analyses of specific issues in higher education, which will be presented at national and international consultations and will provide the basis for the Agency's topic-specific contributions to annual publications. It will continue to develop further guidelines for external assessments which, instead of operations and protocols, will focus more on substantive assessment



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dilemmas and starting points and a more thorough interpretation of regulations. They will seek greater compliance with various academic standards.

4. Establishing up-to-date databases on selected activities in higher education institutions (T)

In the field of databases on selected activities at higher education institutions, the Agency continuously upgrades data records. The iNakvis internal information system provides a strong support in the creation of up-to-date databases and internal records of the Agency. The databases are used on a regular basis for accreditation or evaluation procedures and shared with experts to help them in their professional assessment.

The Agency will develop the eNakvis external information system for gathering data and connecting with external information systems, and iNakvis for the creation of various databases and their updates, which will be of even greater help in the work of the Agency Council and the Appeal Committee, experts and Agency staff. In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, a database on the employability of students by higher education institutions and study programmes is also planned, taking into account the cycle, type or nature of the latter. iNakvis will also support the self-evaluation of the Agency and its analytical activities.

The Agency will provide access to a variety of data to the general public, especially students and prospective students.

5. Pursuing sustainable development goals (R)

In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Agency has been carrying out distance site visits, education and training courses, annual consultations and meetings since 2019. The relocation to the new premises has reduced monthly rental expenses; work from home, distance site and accreditation visits have slightly reduced expenditure on travel and accommodation for experts. In doing so, the Agency is also doing its bit for sustainable development.

Taking into account the sustainable development goals (SDG 2030) adopted at the UN General Assembly in 2015 and amendments made as a result of the epidemiological situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Agency's operation will continue to be aimed at improving its internal quality assurance system and activities associated with these aims and at cooperation in harmonising the elements of an external quality assurance system with sustainable development goals in Slovenian higher education.

The Agency will continue to ensure work from home for its employees, a sensible planning of foreign travel, and carry out distance accreditations, evaluations, education and consultations, including international meetings.

6. Enhanced international cooperation (S)

The Agency is active in various associations of agencies (ENQA, EQAR, CEENQA, BFUG, ECA) based on the common field of improving external quality assurance systems. We carried out study visits to a number of foreign agencies such as AKKV, HCERES, QAA, AZVO, ACQAHE, which are primarily aimed at strengthening cooperation in the European area, identifying common problems of agencies, proposing appropriate solutions and exchanging examples of good practice. During the presidency of CEENQA, the Agency introduced innovations according to which all members of the association prepare contributions in delineated subject fields and present them publicly. The Agency has actively participated in various education and training courses and exchanges of experts and employees.



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In accordance with the adopted plan, international activities will be strengthened further so that the Agency has a broad overview of examples of good practice, policies, analyses and comparisons on the European and global levels and adapt their application in the Slovenian higher education area to its specifics. It will strive to maintain or renew ENQA and EQAR membership, which, if the Agency works well, can be done every five years.

The Agency's work related to the establishment and operation of European associations of universities (European universities), the so-called universities of the future, will pose a special challenge.

7. Proactive communication (T)

Since the Agency's last external evaluation (in 2018), it has devoted a lot of time and attention to active, clear, accurate and timely communication, both with internal and external stakeholders. To this end, the Agency uses its website as a key communication tool to inform the public. Accompanying tools are social networks (Twitter and YouTube) and electronic communication (e-newsletter). The Agency keeps up-to-date and communicates all events, news and important announcements on its website and social media. As part of its promotional activities, the Agency has continued its project of making presentation films in 2022, this time focusing on higher vocational colleges. The project will close in 2023.

The Agency wants to continue to provide its stakeholders with the most up-to-date, accurate and diverse information on Slovenian higher and higher vocational education.



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II. WORK PLAN

The 2023 Work Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Quality Manual. It starts with tables about envisaged accreditations and evaluations, followed by an action plan outlining the tasks up to the end of 2023, the plan for the use of available financial resources and the plan for the education and training of human resources.

PLANNED ACCREDITATIONS AND EVALUATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND STUDY PROGRAMMES AND HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGES

Table 3:

NUMBER OF UNRESOLVED APPLICATIONS ON 31 DECEMBER 2022			
Type of procedure	Type of accreditation	Number of unresolved applications	Notes
Higher education institution	Reaccreditation	12	5 applications were submitted in the autumn, 2 applications were under appeal, 1 application is for reaccreditation of universities, which is extremely complex.
Higher education institution	Transformation of institution	1	The application was under appeal.
Higher education institution	Accreditation of location	1	The application was submitted at the end of October 2022.
Study programme	Accreditation	8 + 2	4 applications were submitted in the second half of the year, 3 applications are expected to be decided on by March 2023.
Study programme	Extraordinary evaluation of programme	1	The application was submitted in November 2022.
Study programme	Reaccreditation	1	Administrative dispute pending before the Administrative Court of the Republic of Slovenia.
Study programme	Evaluation of a sample	6	One application for a sample for 2023 was submitted in 2022, 2 applications were planned to be assessed in autumn.
Higher vocational college	External evaluation	3	1 application was submitted in September, 2 applications were submitted just before summer.



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EXPLANATORY NOTE:

The reasons for unresolved applications in the procedures for accreditation of study programmes are the following:

- a) 3 applications were submitted between September and December 2022, so the procedures in accordance with the law and the Accreditation Criteria could not be completed yet and will continue in 2023;
- b) applicants supplementing their applications;
- c) obtaining the opinion of the competent ministry in the case of a regulated study programme;
- d) an action was filed in two procedures, which must be decided by the Administrative Court of the Republic of Slovenia.

The reasons for unresolved applications in the procedures for reaccreditation of a higher education institution are the following:

- a) 5 applications were submitted in September 2022, which means that the procedures in question have only just begun;
- b) According to the law and the Accreditation Criteria, the procedures for reaccreditation of higher education institutions are longer and more complex. The procedure envisages two site visits and a wider group of (international) experts, especially in the procedures of reaccreditation of universities;
- c) Due to the absence of various stakeholder groups (students, graduates, teachers, employers' representatives, etc.), it is generally not possible to carry out site visits during study holidays, which slightly extends the duration of the procedures.

Table 4:

CONSIDERATION OF ENVISAGED APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED IN 2023						
Type of procedure	Type of accreditation	Envisaged number of applications in 2023	Envisaged number of visits	Envisaged number of processed applications	Envisaged completion of procedures in 2024	
Higher education institution	Initial accreditation	1	1	0	1	
Higher education institution	Reaccreditation	9	2*	0	9	
Higher education institution	Transformation of institution	1	1	0	1	
Higher education institution	Accreditation of location	2	0	2	0	
Higher vocational college	External evaluation	12	8	8	4	
Study programme	Accreditation	20	5	10	10	
Study programme	Evaluation of a sample	20	20	15	5	



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Notes to the table:

*Even though nine higher education institutions must submit a reaccreditation application in 2023 and one of the compulsory components is a visit (generally two) to the institution, only two potential institution visits are envisaged in 2023. The reasons for this are the complexity of these procedures and the fact that applications must be submitted by 30 September 2023. According to the rules of procedure for the reaccreditation of an institution, the procedure leading up to the first visit to the institution takes nearly 4 months.

Table 5:

PLANNED EVALUATIONS AND ACCREDITATIONS IN 2023				
	Existing applications*	Obligations in 2023	Envisaged new applications in 2023**	Total
Institutions	14	9***	4	27
Programmes	14	20****	20	54
Colleges	4	12	/	16
TOTAL	32	41	24	97

Notes to the table:

*"Existing applications" are all applications submitted before 2023.

**These are applications for the accreditation of new higher education institutions (initial accreditation and transformation of a higher education institution) and applications for the accreditation of new study programmes.

*****List of higher education institutions that will submit a reaccreditation application in 2023:**

1. Academy of Visual Arts
2. ERUDIO Education Group
3. Faculty for Industrial Engineering (FINI), Novo mesto
4. Faculty of Commercial and Business Sciences
5. Faculty of Health and Social Sciences Slovenj Gradec
6. IBS International Business School Ljubljana
7. Jožef Stefan International Postgraduate School
8. MLC Management and Law College Ljubljana
9. Landscape Governance College GRM Novo Mesto

At its 143th meeting, the Agency Council confirmed the Sample Evaluation Plan for 2023. The plan included doctoral study programmes.



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Table 6:

LIST OF STUDY PROGRAMMES IN THE 2023 EVALUATION OF SAMPLE				
University/independent higher education institution	Higher education institution	Study programme	Cycle	Type of programme
Independent higher education institution	DOBA Business School, Maribor;	Innovation and sustainable business in a digital society	3	Doctoral
Independent higher education institution	School of Advanced Social Sciences in Nova Gorica	Strategic communication and management	3	Doctoral
Independent higher education institution	Faculty for Industrial Engineering (FINI), Novo mesto	Engineering and motor vehicle industry	3	Doctoral
Independent higher education institution	International School for Social and Business Studies of Celje	Knowledge management	3	Doctoral
Independent higher education institution	Postgraduate School ZRC SAZU	Comparative studies of ideas and cultures	3	Doctoral
University of Ljubljana		Science and material engineering	3	Doctoral
University of Ljubljana		Arts and humanities	3	Doctoral
University of Ljubljana	Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering	Chemical sciences	3	Doctoral
University of Ljubljana	Faculty of Computer and Information Science	Computer Science and Informatics	3	Doctoral
University of Ljubljana	Faculty of Education	Education of Teachers and Educational Sciences	3	Doctoral
University of Maribor	Faculty of Arts	Pedagogy	3	Doctoral
University of Maribor	Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences	Agricultural economics	3	Doctoral
University of Maribor	Faculty of Logistics	System logistics	3	Doctoral
University of Maribor	Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics	Technology – education field	3	Doctoral
University of Maribor	Faculty of Organisation Studies	Organisation and management of human resources and	3	Doctoral



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		education systems		
University of Novo mesto	Faculty of Mechanical Engineering	Sustainable technologies and systems in mechanical engineering	3	Doctoral
University of Primorska	Faculty of Tourism Studies – Turistica	Innovative tourism	3	Doctoral
University of Primorska	Faculty of Education	Education sciences	3	Doctoral
University of Primorska	Faculty of Education	Early learning and teaching	3	Doctoral

Table 7:

ENVISAGED VISITS IN 2023			
Institute/college	Number of visits*	Number of days**	Notes
University of Ljubljana	5	10	5 sample from 2023
University of Maribor	7	14	1 sample from 2022, 1 extraordinary evaluation from 2022, 5 sample evaluations from 2023
University of Primorska	3	6	3 sample evaluations from 2023
New University	2	5	RA from 2019
University of Novo mesto	2	5	RA from 2022
Independent higher education institutions	15	30	7 RA from 2022, 5 sample accreditations from 2023
Colleges	14	28	2 evaluations from 2022, 12 evaluations from 2023
TOTAL	48	98	

Notes to the table:

RA: reaccreditation of a higher education institution

*Visits related to all planned evaluations of samples of study programmes, planned evaluations of colleges and the remaining evaluations or accreditations from previous years are taken into account.

**The number of visit days depends on the complexity of the institution/college or the evaluation, modification and delivery of study programmes.



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III. ACTION PLAN FOR 2023

The Action Plan tasks are set out or determined by taking into consideration:

A) The **Agency's strategic objectives** from 2021 to 2025:

- a) Adoption of the Act on Quality in Higher and Education (R)
- b) Improving assessment according to quality standards and accreditation and evaluation procedures (S)
- c) In-depth substantive analytical work in selected areas (S)
- d) Establishing up-to-date databases on selected activities in higher education institutions (T)
- e) Pursuing sustainable development goals (R)
- f) Enhanced international cooperation (S)
- g) Proactive communication (T)

B) **Areas of assessment** according to the Quality Manual:

- a) accreditations and external evaluations
- b) internal quality assurance system of the Agency
- c) external quality assurance system of the Agency
- d) criteria and other provisions of the Agency
- e) information system and provision of information

C) The **Agency's values**:

- a) professionalism
- b) transparency
- c) development

WORK PLAN BY DEPARTMENTS

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DEPARTMENT

Department's main fields of work: criteria and other provisions from the field of quality; accreditations and evaluations; modifications of study programmes; cooperation with stakeholders (institutions/colleges, experts); communications and public relations; international cooperation; organisation and cooperation in different national and international events (conferences, consultations, training courses, workshops); keeping and updating records (on accreditations, evaluations, modifications, VTI, etc.); project collaborations and activities (micro-credentials, European universities, etc.); intersectoral cooperation (integrity, promotion of health, self-evaluation, etc.); and archiving applications and other documents.

Head of the department: Klemen Šubic, alternates: Nataša Kramar and Gregor Rebernik.

Staff: Anita Kajtazović, Martina Mravlja, Zala Sečnik, Filip Draženović

Activity/task	Contents	Category
Proposing amendments, criteria, forms, templates for writing reports	Updating criteria according to the new Act.	Criteria and other provisions
Accreditation and evaluation procedures (assigning, conducting and deciding)	Assigning procedures, conducting procedures, reviewing and preparing materials for Council meetings, reviewing and considering at Agency Council meetings, letters and decisions.	Accreditations and evaluations
Managing iNakvis (rules of procedure)	Proposal to optimise the rules of procedure in iNakvis.	Accreditations and evaluations
Intersectoral cooperation	Inter-department cooperation on changes of legislation in higher education, the resolution of the National Programme for Higher Education and other topics related to the development and upgrading of the quality assurance system of Slovenian higher education.	Cooperation with stakeholders
Visits to institutions and cooperation with stakeholders	Online or in-person meetings with representatives of different higher education institutions and colleges to inform stakeholders about the work of the Agency and to build trusting relationships.	Cooperation with stakeholders
Monitoring relevant practices and new developments and preparing proposals	Through participation in working groups of international associations and participation in various international and national events, the Agency monitors examples of current practices and innovations in the field of quality improvement and integrates them into its procedures and practices as appropriate.	Cooperation with stakeholders



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Activity/task	Contents	Category
Planning and carrying out expert training	Preparation of a training programme for experts and holding of workshops and events for the Agency's experts.	Training courses
Public records	Activities related to the establishment, maintenance and updating of public records kept by the Agency under the ZViS.	Records
Archiving	In accordance with the Protection of Documents and Archives and Archival Institutions Act (ZVDAGA), resolved cases are regularly archived.	Records
Register of experts	Reviewing and monitoring entries in the Register of Experts, keeping records and preparing the call for candidates for the Agency's experts.	Records
Participation in associations and organisations (ENQA, ECA, CEENQA, etc.)	Active participation in associations of quality assurance agencies of which NAKVIS is a member.	International
Project collaboration	Participation in projects, involvement in projects related to the preparation of micro-credentials.	International
Communications and public relations	Activities related to the ongoing and two-way communication and information to the public (higher education stakeholders) on the activities of NAKVIS.	Communication
- Preparing statements, responses, presentations, social media	Preparing press releases, answers to journalists' questions and Agency presentation texts, interaction on social media; contact with journalists from the field.	
- Internal and external communication	Internal and external regular communication on the Agency's operation and planned activities.	
Website and social media management	Keeping the website up-to-date (Slovenian and English versions) and publishing and following the latest posts.	Communication
- News and publishing key messages, multimedia content production and processing	Preparing and publishing news (+ other documents) on the website, updating and adapting the website as needed, publishing key information/other interactive content on social media (Twitter + Youtube), preparing and processing various multimedia content (video, images, logos etc.).	
E-newsletter	Monthly preparation and publication of an e-newsletter on the Agency's website and electronic communication to stakeholders.	Communication



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ANALYTICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Department's, main fields of work: plans and reports (annual work plan and report on the work and operation of the Agency, strategy); analyses, documents, publications; self-evaluation of the Agency; manuals, guides; organisation and cooperation in different events (conferences, consultations, training courses, workshops); translation; eNakvis information system and links with databases (SICRIS, IZUM, etc.); internal information system iNakvis; intersectoral cooperation (integrity, promotion of health, etc.); and keeping and updating records (on accreditations, evaluations, modifications, VTI, etc.).

Head of the department: Maja Milas, alternates Tatjana Debevec and Andrej Krček

Staff: Matjaž Štuhec, Ph. D., Tatjana Horvat and Tilen Heco

Activity/task	Contents	Category
Report on the work and operation of the Agency in 2022	Overview of the completed tasks from the 2022 Action Plan, the work of the Agency Council, Appeal Committee and resources.	Plans and reports
Annual Work Plan of the Agency 2023	Preparation of the Annual Work Plan (AWP 2023).	Plans and reports
Self-evaluation of the Agency and evaluation visit by ENQA Expert Group	Through self-evaluation, the Agency analyses the quality of its work and reviews strengths and opportunities for improvement. In March 2023, the Agency will undergo external evaluation by a group of ENQA representatives; this is the third external review as part of the so-called targeted review by an ENQA group of experts.	Self-evaluation of the Agency
Making and designing the English version of the Guide for print	The Guide to Assessments in Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures has been developed over several years as a result of careful study of work in practice, expert reports and self-evaluation reports from institutions/colleges. In addition to presenting the results of different analyses and characteristics of assessments, it highlights errors in assessments and provides a thorough insight into the high-quality, in-depth professional assessment across all standards of quality in the Criteria and across types of accreditation or evaluation.	Plans and reports
Report on evaluations of samples of study programmes and thematic analysis	Analysing reports on evaluation of samples of study programmes by delineated topics.	Plans and reports



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Activity/task	Contents	Category
Systemic analysis	The systemic analysis is carried out over a longer period – from 3 to 5 years according to a pre-agreed methodology. It is a comprehensive analysis of accreditations and evaluations in higher and higher vocational education, as well as self-evaluation of institutions and colleges over the period.	Analyses, documents, publications
Annual publication of the Agency	Each year, the Agency produces a publication presenting its organisation, tasks, mission and values, its work during the previous calendar year, topical issues and, as a rule, publishes the proceedings of the annual international conference. It is published in the Slovenian and English languages.	Analyses, documents, publications
Annual consultation with the Agency's experts and representatives of institutions/colleges	The Agency usually organises an annual consultation, inviting all relevant stakeholders in the accreditation and evaluation of institutions, colleges and study programmes.	Consultations
Research	The Agency provides information on the research achievements of study programme holders to the group of experts, who needs them to assess their scientific, professional, research or artistic work in accordance with the Accreditation and Evaluation Criteria. For each higher education teacher, the number of publications in indexed journals and the number of quality publications (those in the top quarter of quotations according to the SICRIS methodology) over the last five years are shown. The Agency obtains them from the Institute of Information Sciences (IZUM).	External databases
Libraries	The Agency cooperates with the Ministry of Culture to prepare the rules on higher education libraries, which is expected to be adopted in the first half of 2023.	External databases
Employment	The Agency carries out activities to obtain data on the employment of graduates of Slovenian higher education institutions.	External databases
Translation	The Agency ensures up-to-date translations of all relevant documents, from regulations (criteria, standards), analysis, guidelines, etc. to the Agency's annual publication.	Translation
Interpreting	Interpretation from Slovenian into English and vice versa is provided mainly during visits to institutions and colleges where the participants are unwilling or unable to communicate in English, which is the working language in accreditation and evaluation procedures due to the presence of foreign experts in the groups of experts (an obligation under the ZViS); it can also be provided at other events,	Translation



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Activity/task	Contents	Category
Information system maintenance: eNakvis	<p>such as external evaluation of the Agency during a visit by ENQA representatives.</p> <p>eNakvis is the information system targeting external users. It concerns especially the management of accreditation and evaluation procedures. Some of the tasks are related to routine maintenance (software updates, troubleshooting) and some are related to investment. This includes optimising the performance of the application, improving the user experience, increasing transparency, etc. Regular coordination meetings are organised with universities, institutes/colleges and other data users such as the Ministry of Higher Education and Science (eVŠ) and the CPI.</p> <p>In 2023, regular maintenance of the IT system, installation of the new eNavkvis on the production environment, preparation of an IT strategy and IT risks, preparation of a contingency plan, identification of business continuity needs and documentation of the rights administration process are planned.</p>	eNakvis
Information system maintenance: iNakvis	<p>iNakvis is the Agency's internal information system for professionals used for recording working time, holidays, etc., as well as for managing procedures, analyses, writing reports, plans, etc.</p> <p>In 2023, we plan to set up communication through in-app publications, a personalised desktop where relevant information is displayed to the user, automatic generation of standard procedural documents (letters, decisions), and establish the setting of the agenda for the Agency Council meetings (for the staff).</p>	iNakvis



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GENERAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

Department's main fields of work: legislation, preparation of internal Agency acts; assistance in the implementation of activities from the field of quality assurance; work for the Appeals Committee; financial affairs (budget implementation); HR affairs; access to public information; business and administrative tasks (contracts, receiving and sending mail, document records, etc.); participation in external and internal review procedures; intersectoral cooperation (integrity, promotion of health, self-evaluation, etc.); and keeping and updating HR and other records within its powers.

Head of the department: Barbara Zupančič Kočar, alternates: Mateja Bajuk Malešič and Snežana Mačar.

Staff: Slađana Tomić, Prudencija Perat.

Activity/task	Contents	Category
Legislation (higher and higher vocational education)	Participation in the working group responsible for the Act; reviewing and examining notes; harmonising the text of the draft Act; explaining the articles of the Act.	Regulations
Internal legal acts	Preparation of new rules and updates; acts on changes to job classification; clean copies of internal legal acts.	Regulations
GDPR	Counselling and raising awareness among employees about personal data processing; cooperating with the data protection officer; adapting personal data management according to the provisions of the ZVOP-2.	Regulations
Legal support to the Agency Council	Participating in Agency Council meetings; reviewing the minutes, help with drafting decisions; monitoring of members' term of office.	Quality assurance support
Calls for the appointment of new members at the end of terms	Calls for the appointment of new members and the arrangements for the new members to take up their duties.	
- Appointment of a new member on the expiry of Dr Završnik's term of office	one member is appointed by representative trade unions in the field of higher education by agreement – coordination with trade unions – 2 submitted the appointment of their member without proof of agreement.	
- Legal support to Agency Council activities	Participation in Agency Council meetings, overseeing the legality of decisions of the Agency Council.	
- Formulation of decisions of the Agency Council	Reviewing the session minutes, help with drafting decisions.	



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Activity/task	Contents	Category
Legal assistance to staff in conducting procedures	Legal assistance to staff in conducting procedures.	Quality assurance support
Preparation of legal opinions	Studying the issue and preparing legal opinions on specific dilemmas on the application of legislation.	Quality assurance support
- Legal opinions	Studying the issue and preparing legal opinions on specific dilemmas on the application of legislation.	
Structure of the Appeal Committee	Overseeing the composition/membership of the Appeal Committee.	Appeal Committee
- Appointment of the last alternate member of the Appeal Committee, new composition of the Appeal Committee	- Drafting and publishing public calls for appointing the last alternate member of the Appeal Committee.	
Support to the activities	Support to the activities of the Appeal Committee.	Appeal Committee
Employment	Implementation of employment procedures.	Human resource affairs
- Public call for the Agency Director	Implementation of the public call for the Agency Director (job posting) in 2023; examination of applications, work of the panel, interviews, selection process, etc	
Wages and salaries	Preparation of data for wage calculation.	Human resource affairs
Education and healthy working environment	Monitoring education needs, proposals, preparation of annual education plan, safety at work, promotion of health, Family-Friendly Enterprise, harmonisation of the 2023 Education Plan.	Human resource affairs
Copyright contracts for experts	Preparation of copyright contracts and financial documents for the payment of taxable disbursements to individuals.	Financial affairs
Payments	Preparation of financial documents for payment of the Agency's financial liabilities.	Financial affairs
Implementation of the budget	Activities related to budget implementation.	Financial affairs
Managing procedures related to requests for access to public information	Managing procedures related to public information.	Public information
Catalogue of public information	Preparation and updating of the catalogue.	Public information
Provision of general information from the Agency field of activities	Provision of general information and data from the Agency field of activities.	Public information



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Activity/task	Contents	Category
Contracts	Participation in below-threshold public contracts.	Business and administrative tasks
Receiving and sending mail and recording documents	Receiving and sending mail in physical and electronic form.	Business and administrative tasks
Business contacts	Participation on the organisation and coordination of business contacts.	Business and administrative tasks
External supervision	Preparation of required documentation and cooperation with supervisory authorities.	Supervisions
Internal audit	Preparation of required documentation and cooperation with internal auditor.	Supervisions
Human resource affairs	Keeping of human resource records.	Records and documentation
Financial affairs	Keeping of financial records.	Records and documentation
Records of personal data processing	Records of personal data processing.	Records and documentation

IV. RESOURCES

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Policy: EDUCATION AND SPORT

Programme: Higher and higher vocational education

Subprogramme: Promoting quality in higher education

Under the subprogramme Promoting quality in higher education, funds can be transferred between budget items in accordance with the legislation in force.

EXPENDITURE	ADOPTED BUDGET FOR 2023
WAGES AND SALARIES	865,527.00
MATERIAL COSTS	303,156.00
INVESTMENTS	92,261.00
QUALITY	380,056.00
	1,641,000.00

Explanation of individual types of expenditure on subgroup level

Salaries and other personnel expenditure

The planned expenditure for salaries and other personnel expenditure is EUR 865,527.00.

Material costs – expenditure on goods and services

Planned use of funds for:

- office and general materials and services EUR 60,450.40,
- special materials and services (promotion of health, professional support in reviewing the recovery plan) EUR 4,384.29,
- power, communications, water and public utility services EUR 24,299.03,
- transportation costs and services EUR 500.00,
- business trips EUR 29,410.00,
- regular maintenance (operating expenses) EUR 14,417.60,
- rent for equipment and office space EUR 144,141.15,
- other operating expenses EUR 25,553.53.

Investments and investment maintenance

Planned use of funds for:

- regular maintenance and upgrading of eNakvis EUR 37,323.75,
- development of iNakvis – the Agency's internal information system EUR 33,716.00,

- acquisition of computer hardware and intangible property (licenses)
EUR 21,221.25.

Quality

Planned use of funds for:

- Agency publications, publishing publications and analyses, translation of documents, publication of criteria in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, making presentation films, etc.
EUR 41,063.07,
- operating expenses for: costs of remuneration for Council and Appeals Committee members, payments to Agency experts, consultations with experts, services of higher education institutions/schools, education and training for experts, etc.
EUR 338,992.93.

HUMAN RESOURCES

In autumn 2018, the Agency adopted the Agency HR development plan. This is the first single document providing for: constant training, the staff's professional and personal growth, planning their education, study assistance, reward and promotion at work as well as future HR planning and care for a healthy and stimulative working environment. The plan was updated in 2023.

2023 PLAN OF STAFF EDUCATION

In 2023, the Agency will organise the following seminars or workshops for all employees:

- Menopause in the workplace (Magdalena Fabčič, Bachelor in Biology and experienced consultant on midlife challenges), Feb/March;
- Personal data protection – impact of the new ZVOP-2 (DPO), Feb/March;
- Decree on administrative operations and procedure until decision (refresher course) – adapted for NAKVIS, spring.

Envisaged trainings, education programmes, seminars, workshops and events in 2023:

- participation in international seminars and trainings of umbrella European quality assurance associations in higher education, mainly on the fields of work (ENQA, ECA, INQAAHE, ESU);
- 18TH EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE FORUM, November;
- annual NAKVIS international conference, autumn;
- in trends and developments in higher education: micro-credentials;
- course on document graphic and visual design;
- participation in two-day ECA training course CULTURAL COMPETENCE FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE PROFESSIONALS, 28 and 29 March;
- How to manage myself, my team and my organisation (for managers and alternates)
<https://clip2go.gzs.si/posnetki/kako-vodim-sebe-tim-in-organizacijo/>;
- individual English language course;

- reimbursement of work-related costs and payment of other remuneration from the employment relationship in the public sector (if needed);
- participation in the Privacy Days conference, 20-21 April;
- training to strengthen digital skills (Administrative Academy):
 - o efficient preparation and use of transparencies,
 - o how to make a good report,
 - o correct use of language in online texts,
 - o new technologies on the move,
 - o creative writing (storytelling);
- "Economic, Social and Environmental Sustainability: The Role of Technology and Political Dialogue", 18-20 May, Malta;
- 32nd IASP World Congress in Piran, 19-23. September;
- VAT in the public sector;
- new in personal data protection (ZVOP-2);
- reporting statistics on low-value below-threshold contracts;
- seminars on finance;
- seminar or conference on information technology and analytics;
- education courses on thematic analyses;
- The impact of the media and the web on information, informal, lifelong learning of adults (25 January 2023 in Ljubljana, Cankarjev dom Cultural Centre).

Employees may also attend seminars and events appearing during the year that are not listed in the plan if there are sufficient funds available.

The Agency will spend approximately EUR 15,000.00 to finance the continuous education in 2023. Employees wishing to enrol for further studies in the academic year 2023/2024 submit an application for study funding to the Director no later than 20 September 2023. The application should indicate the course in which they intend to enrol and the costs of the study.

The Agency will conclude a *contract on education* with an employee if the Director and the department head believe that their studies are related to the Agency's work or that the acquired competences will contribute to the employee's work performance. The contract on education will also determine the share of costs funded by the Agency, which depends on the number of employee applications to continue studies in the interest of the Agency and the available funds. In 2023, two posts have been added to the human resource plan.