

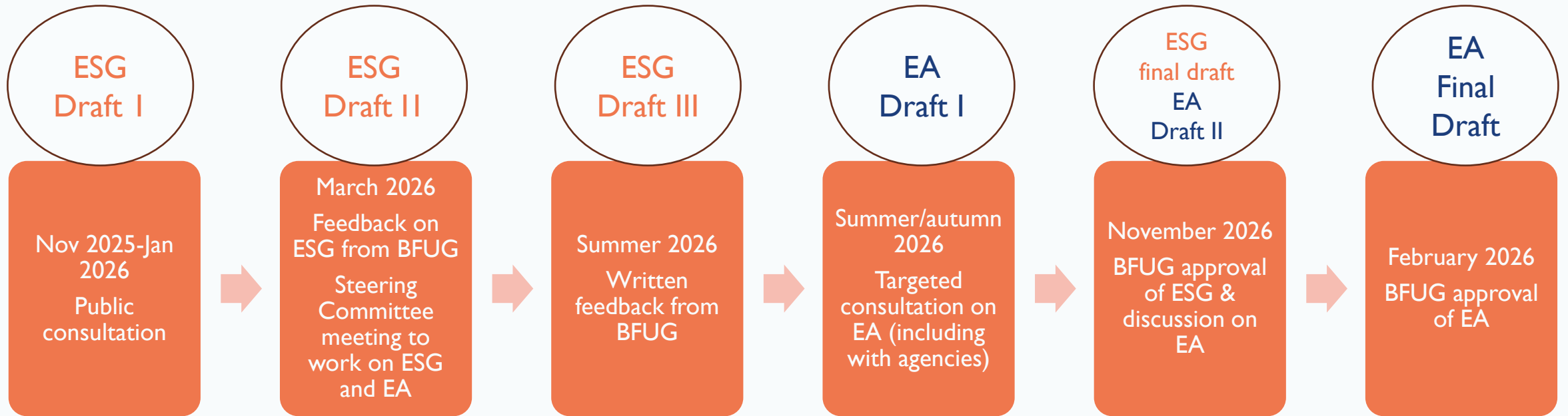
**CRISTINA GHITULICA
ENQA PRESIDENT**

REVISION OF ESG AND EA LATEST UPDATES

**THE 4TH TPG C ON QA MEETING
17TH OF APRIL 2026, ONLINE**

enqa.

TIMELINE



Approval of ESG and EA by EHEA ministers at Bologna Process Ministerial Conference, 26-27 May 2027

ESG CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Stakeholder category	Responses	Organisational	Individual
Higher education institution	122	80	42
Quality assurance agency	53	47	6
National/regional authority or government	22	21	1
Student	72	22	50
Stakeholder organisation/association	29	27	2
Independent/unaffiliated	7	6	1
Other	17	12	5
Total	322	215	107

ESG CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- Overall endorsement of the direction of changes
- Comments on general/transversal topics e.g. request for addition of artificial intelligence
- Comments on approach, language and consistency for standards vs guidelines
- Comments on new requirements that are unclear and/or feedback that demonstrates misunderstanding/different interpretations
- Concrete opinions and suggestions on changes to specific standards

LATEST CHANGES TO ESG

The following slides outline the main changes between Draft I (consultation version, November 2025) and Draft II (BFUG, March 2026)

Additional upcoming changes following latest SC meeting are marked in italics.

Further work to be done includes a thorough review of all standards and guidelines to:

- Check standards are not overloaded with **unnecessary details**
- Check wording related to **publication** and **stakeholders involvement**, to be consistent and appropriate across the document
- Ensure consistency in the language of **guidelines, so it is not prescriptive**
- Draft **foreword** explaining the revision process and main issues addressed

CONTEXT, SCOPE, PURPOSES AND PRINCIPLES

- Enhanced reference to **social dimension** and **fundamental values**, including links to relevant EHEA documents.
- Addition of **artificial intelligence** as developments that affect the context of quality assurance.
- *Increased clarity regarding the application of ESG to **all forms of education** (including smaller units of learning and cross-border education).*
- *Deletion of principle relating to international cooperation (overlap with similar statement in the purposes).*
- *Addition that QA should be **flexible** enough to support innovation.*
- *Clarify why some **stakeholders** are specifically mentioned in some places.*
- *Further development of the **glossary**.*

PART I

I.1 Policy for quality assurance

- Clearer expectations that quality assurance policies must be **public, communicated** internally and externally.
- Addition in the guidelines of **artificial intelligence** as an aspect to be addressed.

PART I

1.2 Design, approval, ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes

- Change of terminology from “learning outcomes methodology” to “**learning-outcomes-based approach**”
- Added alignment with professional and disciplinary **standards**.

PART I

1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

- Explicit mention that any use of **artificial intelligence** in learning, teaching and assessment must be responsible, human-centred and subject to human oversight.

1.5 Teaching staff

- New emphasis on staff **well-being and mental health**.
- Added reference to the importance of having staff under **long-term employment** (*change from permanent employment in March 2026 version*)

PART I

I.6 Learning environment

- Mention of adequate **physical and digital infrastructure** to be provided to students as encompassing all types of resources.
- *Change of standard title to ‘**Learning environment and resources**’*

I.7 Information management

- New emphasis on **periodic** collection of reliable and up-to-date data.
- *Addition of ‘**profile of staff**’ to the list of relevant data.*

PART I

I.8 Public information

- Clarification on what information should be published as a **result of internal QA**.
- More **flexibility** regarding the information collected by institutions in the guidelines (“where available and appropriate”).
- *Review of all other standards/guidelines to ensure that requirements for **communication and publication are consistent** and where possible moved to I.8.*

PART I

I.9 Cyclical external quality assurance

- Explicit expectation to for institutions to **address outcomes** from previous external reviews, where relevant.
- *Requirement for institutions to **ensure that the external QA process meets their regulatory requirements, if needed.***

PART 2

2.1 Addressing internal quality assurance

- *Revision of wording to better explain the **holistic approach** to part 1 standards by external QA to make clear that this applies to each institution, not across the system, as well as retaining the responsibility for internal QA to address these.*

PART 2

2.3 Implementing processes

- Maintain the requirement for in-person site visits but include in the guidelines that **online and hybrid participation** of different stakeholder groups in the site visit could lead to wider participation.
- **Flexibility** in organising the different activities specific to quality assurance processes is also mentioned in the guidelines.
- *Addition of a sentence about the use of **artificial intelligence**, equivalent to the addition under 1.3.*
- *Consider the addition of the **publication of self-assessment** reports to guidelines.*

PART 2

2.4 Peer reviewers

- *Move the requirement for **training and preparation** of peer reviewers from the guidelines to the standard.*

2.5 Reporting

- *The order of standards on *Processes and criteria for outcomes* (previous 2.5) and *Reporting* (previous 2.6) is switched.*
- *Addition of publication of reports in **DEQAR** to guidelines.*

PART 2

2.6 Processes and criteria for outcomes

- **All documents on which decision making is based have to be published**, in addition to the review report and decision/outcome. The requirement is moved here from the standard on reporting to make clear that it relates to documents regarding the final decision-making.

PART 2

2.7 Complaints and appeals

- Clarified that the formulation “by a different structure than the one whose decision is appealed against” means a **structure which is part of the agency**.
- *Reinstate sentence from 2015 version that appeals can be made if criteria or processes have not been correctly applied.*

PART 3

3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

- Added in the guidelines that **stakeholders can be involved in diverse ways** depending on the structure and mission of agencies.

3.3 Activities for enhancement

- **Expanded** the description of the standard to include more diverse activities and retain focus on the analytical dimension that was present in the 2015 version (ESG 3.4).

PART 3

3.5 Professional conduct and integrity

- Decision still to be made on whether this will remain as a **stand-alone standard or to be merged back** with ESG 3.6. In case it remains as a stand-alone standard, the distinction between integrity and internal quality assurance to be further discussed.

3.6 Internal quality assurance

- **Reference to integrity removed** to address overlap with proposed ESG 3.5.

EUROPEAN APPROACH MAIN DEVELOPMENTS (I)

- Changes to bring the EA **in line with the latest version of the ESG** (to be reviewed again once the ESG has been approved by the BFUG)
- Reinforce **circumstances and principles** for use:
 - When programme accreditation is required
 - No additional national requirements
 - Can also be used for national joint programmes and for internal QA
- Proposal to move some basic aspects from current standards into **eligibility** standards:
 - Status of institutions offering the joint programme
 - Existence of a cooperation agreement

EUROPEAN APPROACH MAIN DEVELOPMENTS (2)

- Strengthen key aspects required for **'jointness'**, including explicit requirement for joint internal QA processes, and involvement of stakeholders in internal QA.
- Reorganisation of standards for **improved logic** regarding defining learning outcomes, development of curriculum, and learning, teaching and assessment methods.
- Additional attention to **professional development for staff** working in an international and multi-cultural setting.
- Requirement for **agencies to support institutions in requesting recognition of decisions** in other systems e.g. through provision of all necessary information.



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