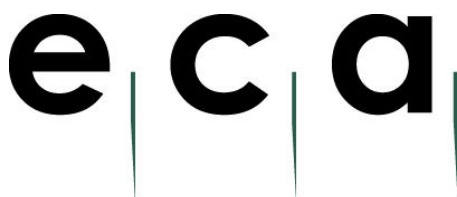


Original Name  
Organisation (Country)

Author (Acronym organisation) &  
Author (Acronym organisation)



european consortium for accreditation

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## 1. Introduction

The European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA) has been founded in 2003 with the aim of mutual recognition of accreditation and quality assurance decisions. A first step towards reaching this goal was the signing of twelve bilateral mutual recognition agreements between ECA members. These agreements are most useful for joint programmes, but twelve bilateral agreements, restricted to a limited number of ECA member countries, only fully covers a limited number of joint programmes. A multilateral mutual recognition agreement (MULTRA) with a focus on joint programmes was conceived to improve this situation. As a result, joint programmes can be assessed in a single procedure rather than through multiple national accreditation procedures.

The MULTRA stands for a high level of trust between accreditation agencies. This trust is based on evidence gained through intense cooperation and observations of procedures amongst the MULTRA agencies. The observation is not meant to repeat the external evaluation of an agency but aims to gain mutual trust through observing accreditation practice. The observation should provide evidence if the accreditation procedures and standards are free of significant differences from those of MULTRA agencies and if the results of accreditation procedures of joint programmes can thus be accepted by MULTRA agencies.

For agencies seeking to sign MULTRA, two MULTRA members will write an observation report and give a recommendation to all MULTRA members.

## 2. General information

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Accreditation organisation observed:</i> | <b>Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden.</b>                      |
| <i>Country</i>                              | <b>Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden.</b>                      |
| <i>Accreditation procedure regarding:</i>   | <name of the programme and/or institution>                       |
| <i>Date(s) of the observation:</i>          | <example: 1 June 2011>   |
| <i>Name/organisation of the observers</i>   | <name/organisation observer 1><br><name/organisation observer 2> |

## 3. Observations

The following observations are based on the self evaluation report and the external evaluation report of the agency and the evidence gained through the observation visit.

The observation report should provide evidence if the accreditation procedures and standards are free of significant differences from those of MULTRA agencies.

The observation report should also provide evidence if the results of accreditation procedures of joint programmes can be accepted by MULTRA agencies.

### 3.1 Framework of the procedure

In which framework did the procedure take place? This section should address the elements listed below in order to provide an in-depth understanding of the accreditation practice of the observed agency.

1. Structure of accreditation framework (including relevant documents, e.g. legislation, ...)
2. Accreditation standards
3. Additional requirements for the assessment of joint programmes

4. Focus of the accreditation procedure (e.g. input factors, internal quality assurance, ... )
5. Assessment of achievement of learning outcomes
6. Enhancement strategies for institutions
7. Responsibility for accreditation procedures
8. Steps in the accreditation procedure
9. Assessment rules and decision scale when accreditation is granted (e.g. excellent, insufficient; conditions, ...)
10. Decision-making process of the agency (rules and responsibility)
11. Period of accreditation
12. Appeal system
13. Publication policy
14. Average number of procedures per year

<Your observations regarding the framework of the procedure>

## 3.2 Site visit

### 3.2.1. The expert panel

This section of the observation report is based on the ECA Principles for the Selection of Experts. Here the observations concerning the selection of the expert panel are presented.

*Number of panel members:* <Total amount>

*Gender balance* <Comment on the gender balance>

#### **EXPERTISE INCLUDED IN THE PANEL OF THE OBSERVED PROCEDURE**

| EXPERTISE   | INCLUDED |
|---|----------|
| • experience in quality assurance in higher education   | <Yes/No> |
| • appropriate academic qualifications and scientific or professional reputation in the relevant area(s) |          |
| • relevant international experience that provides a basis for making international comparisons          |          |
| • knowledge on teaching and learning methods  |          |
| • expertise in development, design, provision and evaluation of higher education programmes             |          |
| • knowledge of the country-specific system of higher education, institutions and applicable legislation |          |
| • student representatives in the respective area(s)   |          |
| • representatives from the labour market  |          |
| • a significant proportion of panel members from outside the country                                    |          |

<Your observations regarding the panel composition>

### 3.2.2. The procedure

This section of the observation report is mainly based on the ECA Code of Good Practice. Here the observations concerning the ECA standards relating to the accreditation procedure and standards are presented.

<Your observations regarding the procedure>

### 3.2.3. Learning Outcomes

How and by what means is the assessment of achieved learning outcomes taken into account during the procedure?

<Your observations regarding the learning outcomes>

### 3.2.4. ECA Code of Good Practice: standard 14

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <i>Standard</i>         | <b>The accreditation procedures must include self-documentation/-evaluation by the higher education institution and external review (as a rule on site)</b>  |
| <i>Question</i>         | - <i>How is the accreditation procedure structured?</i>  |
| <i>Reference points</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-documentation/-evaluation and external review are part of the accreditation procedure</li> <li>- External reviews encompass on site visits at the higher education institutions</li> <li>- The external review team is instructed clearly about its tasks</li> <li>- The accreditation organisation provides specific regulations in case of ex ante-accreditations</li> </ul> |

<Your observations regarding compliance with this standard>

### 3.2.5. ECA Code of Good Practice: standard 15

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <i>Standard</i>         | <b>The accreditation procedures must guarantee the independence and competence of the external panels or teams</b>   |
| <i>Question</i>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>How is the independence of external panels guaranteed?</i></li> <li>- <i>Are selection criteria for expert panels set up?</i></li> </ul>   |
| <i>Reference points</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Selection criteria for external panels/expert committees are set up and published by the accreditation organisation.</li> <li>- Selection criteria assure competence and independence of external experts</li> <li>- Independence of the experts is assured by a written statement</li> <li>- The decision about the composition of the expert team is made by the accreditation organisation in a transparent way</li> </ul> |

<Your observations regarding compliance with this standard>

### 3.2.6. ECA Code of Good Practice: standard 16

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <i>Standard</i>         | <b>The accreditation procedures must be geared at enhancement of quality</b>   |
| <i>Question</i>         | - Which elements and mechanisms within the accreditation process are used to enhance quality at the higher education institution?  |
| <i>Reference points</i> | - The accreditation process contains elements that promote quality development and improvement of the higher education institution<br>- The accreditation process should respect autonomy, identity and integrity of the higher education institutions |

<Your observations regarding compliance with this standard>

### 3.2.7. ECA Code of Good Practice: standard 17

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <i>Standard</i>         | <b>The accreditation standards must be made public and comply with European practices taking into account the development of agreed sets of quality standards</b>  |
| <i>Questions</i>        | - Which are the quality standards and criteria used for accreditation procedures?<br>- Do they meet international standards?   |
| <i>Reference points</i> | - The quality standards and criteria used in the accreditation procedures correspond to European good practices<br>- The quality standards and criteria are made public<br>- The process of formulation of the quality standards and criteria is transparent and involves all important stakeholders |

<Your observations regarding compliance with this standard>

## 4. Recommendation to the MULTRA members



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[www.grossroads.eu](http://www.grossroads.eu)