

I. Organization and Policies

I-A. The ECIU

The European Consortium of Innovative Universities ~ ECIU ~ consists of eleven universities with similar histories and interests. Founded within the past 35 years, their shared objectives include the development of high-quality innovative, interdisciplinary, and international programs to serve emerging needs, joint educational ventures, research relevant to business and industry, and regional entrepreneurial activities. The members are:

Aalborg University, Denmark	University of Joensuu, Finland
Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona, Spain	Universidade de Aveiro, Portugal
Chalmers Technological University, Sweden	University of Strathclyde, Scotland
Université de Technologie de Compiègne, France	University of Twente, Netherlands
University of Dortmund, Germany	University of Warwick, UK
University of Hamburg-Harburg, Germany	

The ECIU is a non-profit educational organization with a governing board comprised of the Rectors of the member institutions. The ECIU Quality Review Program (EQR) is available to all institutions interested in quality improvement through refereed self-evaluation or formal accreditation. ECIU membership is not required for participation in the EQR program.

I-B. EQRC ~ the Review and Accrediting Organization: The ECIU Quality Review Council (EQRC) is an autonomous body separate from the ECIU Board. The EQRC formulates the EQR self-evaluation instruments, criteria, and procedures for accreditation, subject to ECIU Board approval. The EQRC is solely responsible for the implementation of approved policies.

I-C. Objectives and Focus: the ECIU Quality Review Program (EQR)

- EQR provides institutions and faculties with concepts and tools for planning, implementing, and managing a variety of study programs according to a credible but flexible and transparent quality standard.
- EQR may be used to determine the claimed and actual academic level of higher education study programs, an issue that will assume greater importance as new Bachelors and Masters programs emerge.
- EQR focuses on the responsible academic or faculty unit and specific study program, insofar as the quality of education is ultimately determined at that level. The key issues are whether a study program has credible objectives, whether the results, as defined, indicate that those objectives have been met, whether the study program meets the needs of those who must be served, and whether the faculty will be able to maintain and improve the quality of the program.
- The EQR self-evaluation and accreditation programs are designed to help institutions and faculties develop an 'accreditation capability.'

I-D. Scope of Program: The ECIU/EQRC Quality Review Program provides both a refereed self-evaluation process and/or a full external review leading to accreditation for programs in these categories:

- Study programs leading to European higher education degrees described as 'basic' or 'advanced-level,' 'undergraduate' or 'graduate.' They may be academic or professional in orientation, traditional or non-traditional, innovative or interdisciplinary in nature. Therefore, they may fall beyond the disciplinary focus, scope, or capabilities of existing government review systems or international accrediting agencies. Ph.D. or "doctoral". programs are not included in the ECIU review program.
- Study programs developed in the spirit of the Bologna Declaration of 1999, notably European university "bachelors" and "masters" degree programs
- Study programs that fall outside the existing national framework, including those leading to an institutionally-approved diploma or a credential that is not nationally listed.
- Higher education study programs seeking an international program review and recognition in addition to, or in cooperation with, an existing national review process.

I-E Limitations:

- The ECIU is not a professional, technical, or discipline-based association. The EQRC, as an autonomous evaluation body, neither claims, nor implies, the status of a professional certification agency for regulated professions (such as architecture, engineering, the medical fields, etc.).
- Programs must be planned and implemented according to current disciplinary and professional standards, but EQR does not promote the interests of any given discipline, profession or occupational group.
- The positions that individual graduates may actually seek or obtain cannot be predicted. Therefore, an EQR review cannot predict the performance of a graduate in a specific position, especially those in licensed or regulated professions

I-F. All Rights Reserved

ECIU/EQRC reserves all rights to the printed and electronic versions of all documents pertaining to the ECIU Quality Review Program. These documents include: Organization & Policies, Criteria for Review, Self-Evaluation, and all materials used in the review process.

Higher education institutions may use the ECIU/EQRC Criteria and Self-Evaluation materials at no charge for the purpose of planning and improvement. Any reproduction of the ECIU/EQRC materials is limited to internal use on campus.

The unauthorized use of these materials for any purpose, by individuals, business firms, organizations (non-profit, for-profit), and publishers is not permitted. ECIU/EQRC reserves all rights to the use of these materials for the purpose of consulting, accreditation planning, audited self-evaluation, and accreditation.

I-G. The Self-Evaluation Program:

The self-evaluation can be done as a separate diagnostic and improvement activity, or it can be the first stage in a full accreditation process. The self-evaluation has two primary goals: first, to stimulate quality improvement by examining programs in the

context of contemporary accreditation criteria; second, to provide a specific assessment of the 'accreditation capability' of the faculty and program.

In the stand-alone option, an expert panel makes an assessment of the self-evaluation document and supporting materials. A preliminary report and recommendations are sent to the institution for comment. The panel weighs those comments and any new information in the formulation of the final report and recommendations for action.

If the institution and faculty choose only the self-evaluation process, that document, suitably updated, may be used in a later accreditation review.

The self-evaluation panel normally consists of two experts, selected for relevant expertise, and the EQR Program Director. The panel conducts an assessment of the self-evaluation document and supporting materials.

I-H. EQRC Accreditation Program

An EQRC accreditation review focuses on three aspects of quality: planning, results and assessment, and improvement. The process begins with a structured self-evaluation based upon the EQRC Criteria for Accreditation. The self-evaluation provides an indication of the "accreditation capability" of the faculty and program. A faculty may wish to do the self-evaluation and then decide whether to pursue formal accreditation.

The basic EQR accreditation review team consists of three persons, headed by a Chairperson from an ECIU member institution. Other team members will be selected on the basis of relevant expertise, inside or outside of the ECIU. Program size, type, and specialization will be considered in determining the size and background of the team. The EQR Director normally accompanies the team on the visit, to provide on-site guidance and to assist in the preparation of reports.

The accreditation site visit includes a team-based review of instructional materials and student work samples; meetings with administrators, faculty, students, and recent graduates (it is assumed that notice of the EQR visit will be given to all concerned parties); observation of classes in session, demonstrations (if appropriate), and observation of the facilities and working environment. The faculty may wish to involve employers who sponsor the program, supervise interns, or hire its graduates.

Preliminary findings are reviewed at a closing executive session with the chief executive officer, head of faculty, and the program director. A confidential visit report will be issued for comment, correction of factual errors, and response to specific findings. The faculty response will be considered in the preparation of a final visit report and executive summary.

The period of recognition is five years. Continued recognition is based upon evaluation visits that run in five-year cycles. Future evaluations may be arranged independently, or in conjunction with other national and institutional review activities.

I-I. Initiating a Review: An institution and faculty may decide to engage only in a self-evaluation and advisory process, or to undertake a full accreditation process, consisting of the self-evaluation and a site visit. Both options utilize the same self-evaluation format.

The initial request for self-evaluation and/or accreditation is submitted to the ECIU Quality Review Council (EQRC). Candidates should provide a brief statement about the study program, its level and objectives, and facts such as faculty size, student enrollment, graduation data, significant program features, and study options. The

Quality Review Council (EQRC) will determine whether the program can be properly served. Assuming that to be the case, it will instruct the EQR Program Director to prepare an initial plan for the proposed review, including pertinent procedures, composition of the self-evaluation review panel or visiting team, issues specific to the institution and program, and projected costs. The plan will then be discussed and finalized with the dean, program head, and other appropriate staff members.

Upon mutual acceptance of a self-evaluation plan, an initial payment of 50% of the projected cost is due, with the balance payable upon completion of the evaluation report. Where a full accreditation review is planned, the balance is due 90 days prior to the site visit, so that arrangements and logistics may be finalized.

Visit Arrangements: The institution covers the cost of air travel, ground transportation, meals during the visit, and lodging for the evening prior to the visit and each of the visiting days. The institution may reduce costs by making team travel arrangements through internal channels, but the reviewer's travel requirements and schedule must be met. The team and EQR Director normally arrive on the day before the start of the two-day visit for orientation and planning activities.

I-J. Reviewers and Visitors

Review panels for the self-evaluation program and accreditation visitors are selected on the basis of experience and expertise relevant to the program under review. The chairperson is normally from an ECIU institution; the other members may be drawn from higher education, business, or industry, as appropriate.

Review committees operate within the criteria and visit guidelines of the EQRC, and are responsible for producing an assessment and recommendations based upon the self-evaluation document, or a full accreditation report and recommendation. The EQRC may approve the report and/or recommendation, or if questions exist, ask the committee to address those issues. Changes in a report or recommendation must then originate in the review committee.

I-K. Timing: When the self-evaluation is done as a stand-alone activity, a completion date will be established at the outset. When done as part of an accreditation process, the self-evaluation should be completed and sent to the EQR Program Director not less than 90 days before the date set for the site visit. The site visit date should be set with 5-6 months of lead time for consultation, completion of the self-evaluation, and formation of an evaluation team.

I-L. Language: To facilitate an international review and to eliminate translation costs, EQR reviews are conducted in English. Questions about the translation of specific items of program information should be directed to the EQR Director.

I-M. Confidentiality: The self-evaluation, supporting materials, all reports and communications are considered confidential. Any verbal or written release of these materials to third parties is solely at the discretion of the institution and faculty. The institution and faculty assumes any and all liability arising from the release of such materials.

A final Executive Summary, suitable for public release, will be sent to the institution and faculty. Actual release of that document remains an institutional decision. The EQR Director will send the Executive Summary and a confirmation of accreditation to persons or agencies identified by the faculty.

I-N. Estimated Cost: ECIU/EQRC charges only for direct costs; there are no organizational overhead charges. As noted, the self-evaluation review panel consist of

three persons. The basic accreditation review team includes an ECIU chairperson and two reviewers, each of whom devotes 50 or more hours to preparation, the site visit, and post-visit reporting. However, accreditation review team size and composition may depend on program size, level, complexity, and disciplinary characteristics.

During the preparation of a self-evaluation for accreditation purposes, the faculty may ask the EQR Program Director for interpretation of the questions and advice on the presentation of information. The goal is to identify gaps in information or misunderstandings that might hinder the review.

ECIU/EQR Self-Evaluation Cost

The components of the self-evaluation process are as follows:

1. A one-day visit including a presentation on the concept of planning programs from the standpoint of international "accreditation capability" and an orientation to the EQRC self-evaluation.
2. Consultation during preparation of the self-evaluation.
3. Expert review of the initial self-evaluation report; preliminary comments and recommendations; evaluation of institutional response; preparation of a final advisory report and recommendations on 'accreditation capability.'
4. A final one-day visit for presentation of the report and discussion.

Panel of two experts and EQR Director. Staff support included. \$7,500.usd
 Plus travel and accommodations for initial and final consulting visits.

ECIU/EQR Accreditation Costs

	[only direct cost]
Team leader	\$ 3500.usd
Each reviewer, \$3000.	\$ 6000. [two reviewers]
EQR review manager & staff support	<u>\$ 3500.usd</u>
	\$13,000

Plus

Travel cost	TBD, between EU countries
Lodging, meals, ground transport	TBD, per institutional arrangements

All financial transactions are administered by the EQRC in cooperation with the ECIU Secretariat.

I-O. Optional Accreditation Capability Planning Process (ACP):

"ACP" is an assisted process for faculties interested in planning programs from the standpoint of 'accreditation capability,' but without the full-scale self-evaluation or accreditation review.

There are two options: 1. An intensive two-day visit to assess the "accreditation capability" of the faculty and study program; or 2., the initial diagnostic, five accreditation planning modules, and a final consulting visit. The modules cover issues that are critical both for planning and eventual accreditation: the need for the program; the way in which program objectives and outcomes are defined, operationalized, and validated; feasibility from an academic, material, financial and market perspective; evaluation practices; and measures for improvement.

In the five-part sequence, the EQR Consultant will analyze the faculty response, providing detailed comments and specific recommendations at each stage. The desired outcomes are: first, an understanding of accreditation policies and practices; and second, documentation that can be updated, expanded, and used for a full accreditation review. This reduces the work that will be needed if the faculty later decides to seek accreditation.

Cost of an ACP two-day consultation, including preparation, execution, and report is \$1500usd + travel & accommodations. For the assisted five-part ACP process: \$4500 usd + travel & accommodations for the initial consultation and two visits over the course of the project.

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