



OPEN CALL FOR PARTICIPATION OF UNIVERSITIES

The HAQAA Initiative would like to announce Institutional Evaluations for Quality Enhancement utilizing the African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM)

INTRODUCTION

Quality assurance in higher education institutions is one core basis for revitalizing higher education in Africa. The Commission of the African Union therefore spearheaded the development of the African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM) to establish an African system that will ensure that the performance of higher education institutions can be measured against a set of agreed criteria, and to help the institutions carry out self-evaluation exercises to support the development of institutional culture of quality.

The importance of harmonization and quality assurance in higher education is recognized as a key area of collaboration under the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, to establish compatible structures and systems which would facilitate academic mobility and foster comparability among qualifications.

As part of the HAQAA Initiative (Harmonization of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation), a three-year initiative funded by the European Union in the context of the Africa-EU Partnership, **15 institutional evaluations will be conducted in 2017, utilizing the AQRM as a key evaluation tool.** The 15 institutions evaluated will come from different African regions, and have the opportunity to participate in a training workshop that will guide their institutional assessment process.

The Association of African Universities, on behalf of the HAQAA Initiative consortium partners, is pleased to make an open call to African Universities to participate in this institutional evaluation exercise.

ABOUT THE HAQAA INITIATIVE

The Harmonisation of African Higher Education, Quality Assurance and Accreditation (**HAQAA**) Initiative has been established to support the development of a harmonised quality assurance and accreditation system at institutional, national, regional and Pan-African continental level. It is funded by the European Union Commission, in the context of the **Africa-EU Strategic Partnership**.

This initiative is implemented on behalf of the European and African Union Commissions by:



DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service



UNIVERSITAT DE
BARCELONA



EUA
European University Association



ENQA
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN HIGHER EDUCATION



More specifically, the HAQAA initiative aims to support PAQAF – the Pan-Africa Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework – (endorsed by the African Union), under which the AQRM is recognized as a continental tool to support quality assessment of universities.

The activities to be carried out under HAQAA Initiative consider the different facets of PAQAF: The initiative will

- i. simultaneously reinforce national quality assurance agencies/bodies and higher education institutional quality culture.
- ii. plant the seeds for aligning different existing regional QA initiatives with PAQAF, and help to prop up new regional initiatives and QA networks.
- iii. give all regions (Northern, Western, Central, Eastern and Southern Africa) and countries common tools with which to both relate and build their QA systems, while respecting diverse needs.

The HAQAA initiative is implemented on behalf of the African Union Commission and European Union by a consortium consisting of:

- University of Barcelona (coordinator)
- Association of African Universities (AAU)
- German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)
- European University Association (EUA)
- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

ABOUT AQRM

Adopted by the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union in 2007, the AQRM implementation supports the work of national, regional and continental quality assurance bodies. It also supports African higher education institutions to take ownership of their own quality assurance processes and use the quality rating mechanism as one means of supporting continuous quality improvements. A pilot self-rating exercise was conducted in 2010 in which 32 institutions participated. Based on the experience and feedback gained from the pilot survey, a revised version of the AQRM questionnaire and rating instrument has been developed in 2014 and a validation evaluation exercise was carried out by teams of experts in nine universities.

AQRM IN THE CONTEXT OF HAQAA

The European Union, African Union Commission and the HAQAA Implementing Consortium will facilitate the selection of 15 universities to participate in an institutional assessment programme that will use AQRM. The process will consist of the following:

1. November 2016: Application period and assessment of applications.
2. December 2016: Selection of 15 universities and communication of results

This initiative is implemented on behalf of the European and African Union Commissions by:



DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service



UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA



EUA
European University Association



ENQA
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN HIGHER EDUCATION



3. March 2017: Two members of each selected university participate in a preparation workshop in Accra Ghana, where they will learn about institutional assessment and be introduced to the AQRM.
4. April-July 2017: Universities complete the self-assessment via the AQRM survey.
5. July-December 2017: Evaluation visits are organized – One per university
6. December 2017/January 2018: Evaluation reports are finalized and published.

For selected Universities, the self-rating of the institutions will be validated by international external reviewers through site visits to the respective universities. The outcome of the AQRM exercise will be published and disseminated to various stakeholders of the academic community.

HOW UNIVERSITIES CAN APPLY AND CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

1. Interested universities are asked to fill out this **ONLINE APPLICATION FORM**:
<https://www.research.net/r/AQRMConfirmation>
2. Selection will be based on: Commitment (of the university leadership) as expressed in the application form, needs and also preparedness to undertake the exercise, and geographical distribution.
3. Deadline for submission is 30th November 2016

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SELECTED UNIVERSITIES

Selected institutions will be responsible for:

1. Providing a contact person to lead the evaluation
2. Attending the preparation workshop
3. Mobilising a team of individuals that can support the collection of data for the AQRM survey and organising the assessment visit
4. Providing local transport for the expert team conducting the assessment visit and organising their stay accordingly (experts will be paid a per diem but the host institution should arrange for accommodation and meals).
5. Publishing, publically, the evaluation results

Visits will be conducted in English (for English, Arabic and Portuguese speaking institutions) and in French for French speaking institutions. Expert teams may include one Arabic and one Portuguese speaker in needed.

CONTACT INFORMATION

1. If you face any technical challenges as you apply online please email Frank Asefuah on: fasefuah@aau.org
2. If you have questions about this call please email Dr. Violet Makuku on vmakuku@aau.org

