

# *Quality assurance of elearning in line with the ESG – what key considerations for student-centered learning?*

Esther Huertas Hidalgo, AQU Catalunya  
Maria Kelo, ENQA

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# The European Higher Education Area



- 48 HE systems, huge diversity, need for a common framework
- For QA: the ESG in 2005 → revised in 2015
- Prepared by stakeholders
- Applicable to all QA approaches, all HEIs, all modes of delivery

# The European framework for QA – the ESG

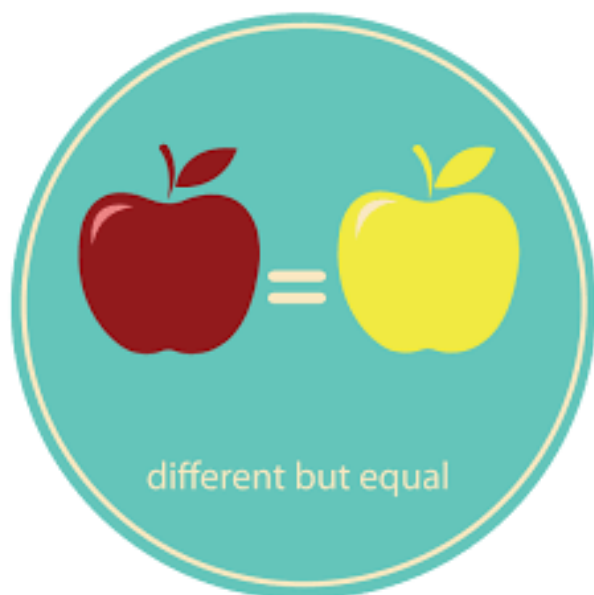
*“The ESG are not standards for quality, nor do they prescribe how the quality assurance processes are implemented, but they provide guidance, covering the areas which are vital for successful quality provision and learning environments in higher education.”*



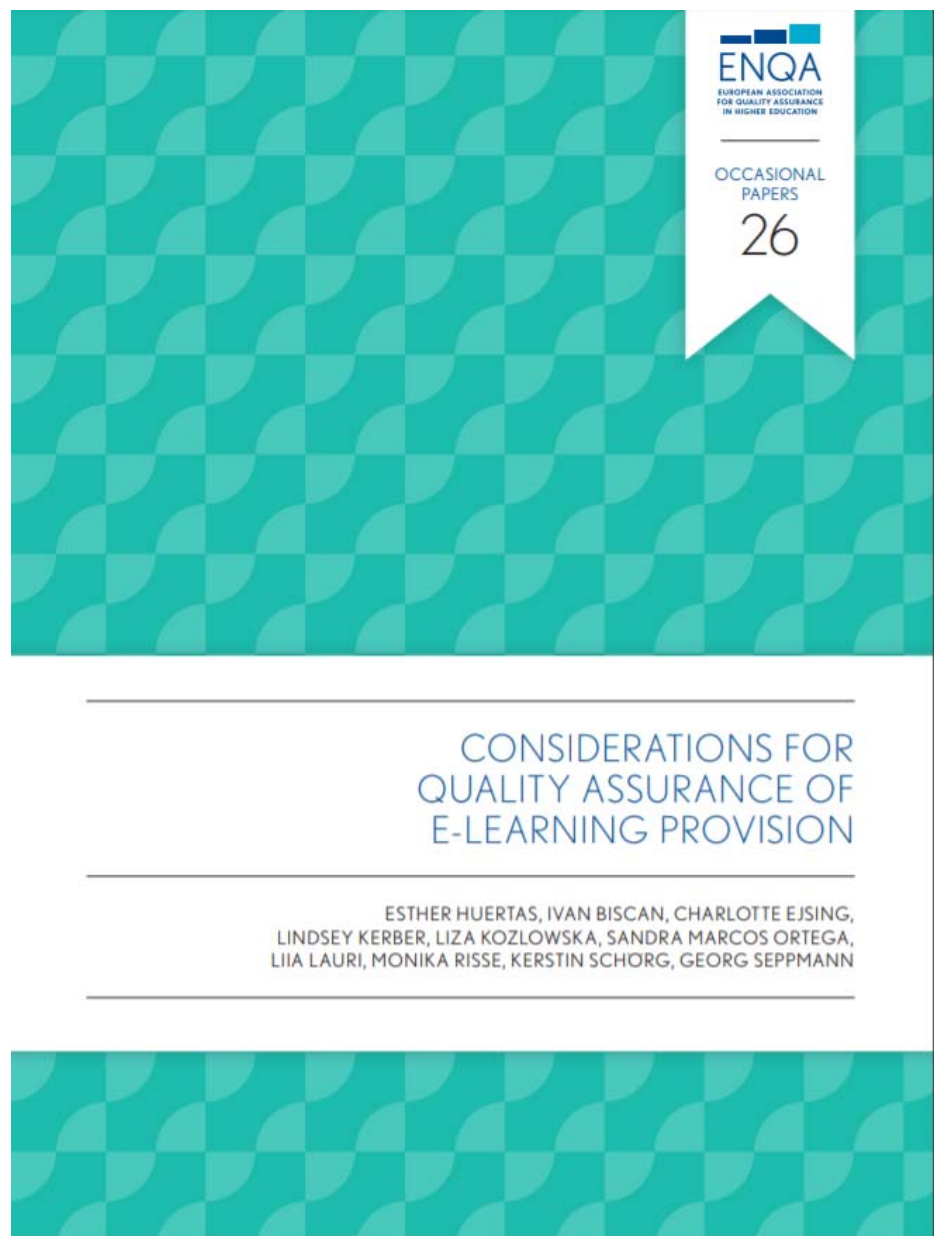
- Generic standards → allow for diversity within a common framework
- Focus on learning and teaching (links to research and the learning environment), with a **strong focus on student-centred learning**
- Three parts: IQA, EQA, and QA of agencies (peer review) → cover the whole QA cycle

# Quality in elearning

- Can online education be equivalent to face-to-face



- Equivalent  $\neq$  the same **BUT**: the learning outcomes should be equivalent
- Equivalent = same quality/"as good as"  
→ equal "value" and recognition of programme/degree is expected
- Good online education is not so different from good face-to-face education, but **some criteria used to measure "good" may not be adapted**



# How can elearning support SCL?

- More flexible (time and place)
- Supports LLL and can help address needs of **a diverse student body**
- Equips students with digital skills needed in the labour market
- May allow for/encourage/require use of more innovative learning and teaching methods (flipped class-room etc.)



# SCL in elearning – what quality considerations?

**ESG 1.3: “(HEIs) ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach”**

- Steps to overcome potential lack of interaction: encouragement and tools to engage online e.g. in **well monitored** discussion groups
- Institutions are invited to **reflect on the most appropriate pedagogical model**, and how to integrate that in elearning mode, to ensure achievement of (all) the intended learning outcomes
- Teachers (and technical staff!) need to be trained to be able to **provide content and assignments** to ensure students reach the learning outcomes
- Appropriate assessment methods and technologically sound assessment tools





**“My course lacks interactivity and it has no point.  
I assumed the software would take care of that!”**



# Student support in elearning – what quality considerations?

**ESG 1.6: “Institutions should (...) ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided”**

For elearning particularly important to take into consideration the **diversity of learners** and **the specificities of elearning**

- Institutions should **be aware of and analyse the learner profiles** of their elearning students, and reflect on their needs, in order to develop appropriate and well thought-through support systems (not the same even for all elearning programmes!)
- **Learning analytics** can be an important resource in this context, while at the same time need **scrupolous data protection**

# Conclusions on QA of elearning

- **Main messages from the (E)QA community:**
  - The ESG form the base-line (“core”) – can add but not deduct
  - Accept that not all existing (national) criteria are adequate measures of “equivalent quality” in elearning (staff-student ration, m2/student, drop out rate...)
  - Challenge of understanding what is a “good student experience” in elearning (SCL, the learning environment, etc.) → need to experiment with measures and indicators
  - ENQA working group’s report can support institutional reflections on this
  - What makes education of high quality (or low quality) is NOT the mode of delivery (elearning is “value neutral”)

For full report:

<https://enqa.eu/indirme/Considerations%20for%20QA%20of%20e-learning%20provision.pdf>



Thank you!

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