

## **HAC International Advisory Board Meeting**

26-27 October 2018

### **Meeting Summary and Recommendations**

#### **Meeting Summary**

The International Advisory Board (IAB) of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee held its annual meeting at the HAC offices on Friday and Saturday, **26-27 October 2018**. Board members received the meeting documents prior to the meeting. These comprised the ENQA evaluation report on HAC; HAC's Statement to the report submitted to EQAR; the HAC Annual Report 2017/18; and the Follow-up on 2017 IAB Recommendations.

The Friday meeting was devoted to the **recommendations of the ENQA panel and HAC actions** needed, as well as the planned **HAC Strategy 2019-2024**. On Saturday, the participants discussed the work of the HAC in the past year and actions taken on the IAB 2017 Recommendations.

On both days, HAC President Valéria Csépe chaired the meetings, which also staff members Christina Rozsnyai and Zsófia Zimányi attended. On Friday, László L. Kiss, HAC member and chair of the Strategy ad hoc committee presented the concept of the new Strategy discussion. HAC members László T. Kóczy, László Hunyadi and Péter Vámosi also joined this part of the meeting.

Participants from the International Advisory Board were Achim Hopbach, Lucka Lorber, Liudvika Leisyte, Mieczyslaw W. Socha and Tove Bull. As in 2017, Dhurata Bozo and Peter Findlay were unable to participate and will not continue in the IAB. Discussions on recruiting new members are ongoing. Opening the Friday session, the President welcomed the participants and the agenda was accepted. The meeting proceeded in accordance with the agenda.

At the Saturday working session, the President and IAB agreed on the next meeting to take place on 25-26 October 2019.

Concluding the meeting, the Board formulated its recommendations with the assistance of the staff members.

#### **Recommendations of the HAC's International Advisory Board**

The IAB expresses its appreciation for the developments the HAC has made in the past year. The ENQA panel report reflects the HAC's achievements. The IAB fully agrees with the recommendations made by the ENQA panel in its report. It encourages the HAC to discuss them in detail not just among its internal but also a broad range of external stakeholders in preparation for the ENQA follow-up report the HAC will submit in two years.

1. The IAB heard in the meeting about the plans for a new HAC strategy to follow the one that concludes at the end of the year. The IAB recommends **linking the strategy to the observations and recommendations set down in the ENQA panel report**. The IAB especially points to the need for deeper **communication with a broad range of stakeholders** in elaborating as well as in raising awareness of the HAC's work.

A second key point is increasing the **HAC's activity in the international arena**, crucially by intensifying the involvement of foreign experts but also in becoming involved in international activities. The IAB realizes that the HAC continues to be in need of additional staff for such activities. At the same time it would like to stress that contributing as a partner to international projects, e.g. by sending experts from among its expert pool for a designated activity, would



increase both the HAC's visibility and, conversely, its expertise without requiring considerable human and financial resources. Ongoing project activity could even warrant taking on a staff member dedicated to, and financed from, the project incomes.

The IAB would welcome the opportunity to comment on the draft strategy when it is ready.

2. The IAB agrees with the ENQA panel, where the reports states, "In order to ease external QA of joint programmes, it suggests the HAC adopts and adapts the procedures of the present European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes." The IAB recognizes that Hungarian legislation has not enacted the European Approach; nonetheless, it recommends that the HAC develop its own criteria in line with ESG standards in order to **have a clear procedure for evaluating the growing number of international joint programmes** in higher education institutions.
3. The IAB was pleased to learn that the HAC's budget has increased, both from the amount received from government and by way of increased income from fees for specific tasks. That makes it possible for the HAC to recruit additional staff and to **differentiate staff positions** as well as to start **additional activities**, such as organizing the upcoming higher education forum. Nevertheless, the IAB recommends **persisting in the acquisition of further funding to be able to invite foreign experts** to participate in the HAC's evaluations. Moreover, the HAC will need additional money for carrying out complementary activities, in accordance with the ESG and set down in the ENQA panel report, such as thematic analyses and stakeholder meetings.
4. The IAB agrees with the ENQA panel recommendation to conduct trainings for internal and external experts involved in all activities of the HAC, including those working through the HAC database. The IAB recommends **setting down a formal training procedure** that comprises the HAC approach to quality assurance in addition to concrete information on what is expected of the expert in the particular activity.
5. The IAB agrees with the ENQA panel recommendation to expand internal quality assurance measures. The IAB recommends **developing a comprehensive internal quality assurance scheme** that extends to all stakeholders actively participating in the work of the HAC.
6. As regards **doctoral schools**, the IAB supports the planned move away from the biannual data-based checking control-oriented procedure to a **site-visit-based enhancement-oriented scheme** that is in line with the ESG. The IAB learned about the draft standards that are to be circulated for feedback from members of various HAC committees. The IAB considers it important that standards go beyond formal requirements and set threshold criteria for all doctoral schools.

The IAB recommends making both the **new criteria and subsequently the accreditation results**, including recommendations and conditions for monitoring, **readily accessible for all stakeholders**. That would include extensive communication with institution about the new procedure and its enhancement-driven features.

*Recorded by Christina Rozsnyai*

*Amended and approved by the HAC International Advisory Board via electronic mail*

*8 November 2018*