



# Quality Assurance and Government

Who is responsible for quality in higher education?

What role for governments?

The European perspective

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# Quality of higher education and quality assurance in the Bologna Process

## **European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)**

# European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) Principles

“The ESG are based on the following four principles for quality assurance in the EHEA:

- Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance
- ...”

(Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. Draft version, endorsed for adoption by ministers in May 2015)

# European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) Agencies

## Standard 3.3: Independence

“Agencies should be independent and act autonomously. They should have full responsibility for their operations and the outcomes of those operations without third party influence.”

(Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. Draft version, endorsed for adoption by ministers in May 2015)

# European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) Agencies

## Standard 3.3: Independence

“Autonomous institutions need independent agencies as counterparts. In considering the independence of an agency the following are important:

- Organisational independence, demonstrated by official documentation...;
- Operational independence: the definition and operation of the agency's procedures...;
- Independence of formal outcomes... ”




No role for governments in quality assurance?

# European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) Government

## Standard 3.2: Official Status

“Agencies should have an established legal basis and should be formally recognised as quality assurance agencies by competent public authorities.”

HE as a public good!  QA as public responsibility?

(Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. Draft version, endorsed for adoption by ministers in May 2015)



No role for governments in quality?



No role for governments in quality?

In addition to qualifications frameworks and ECTS some governments stipulate criteria for accreditation and licensing of HEIs/programmes.

- The more they do, the more the recognition of the system and the agency is at risk!



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