

HAQAA3 AGENCY REVIEWS

EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT

**National Authority of Quality Assurance
and Accreditation of Education, (NAQAEE),
Egypt**

May 2026

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CHAPTER 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of the external review of the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE), conducted under the third phase of the Harmonization, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in African Higher Education Initiative (HAQAA3). The review was coordinated by the Association of African Universities (AAU) on behalf of the HAQAA3 Initiative. The HAQAA3 Initiative supports the strengthening of quality assurance systems and practices in African higher education through external reviews, consultancy visits, capacity-building activities, and follow-up enhancement engagements for Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs).

The primary objective of the external review was to evaluate the extent to which NAQAAE complies with the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA) and to support the continuous enhancement of its External Quality Assurance (EQA) systems and practices. The review adopted an enhancement-led and evidence-based approach consistent with the principles and expectations of the ASG-QA.

The review process followed a structured and comprehensive methodology comprising analysis of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR), desk review of supporting documentation, onsite verification, and extensive stakeholder engagements. The external review visit was conducted from 29th to 31st March 2026. During the visit, the review panel held meetings and interviews with the leadership and staff of NAQAAE, representatives of higher education institutions (HEIs), Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) officers, students, employers, peer reviewers, and other relevant stakeholders. These interactions enabled the panel to assess the effectiveness, transparency, credibility, and impact of the Authority's quality assurance systems and operations.

NAQAAE was established by Presidential Decree No. 82 of 2006 as the national authority responsible for quality assurance and accreditation in Egypt's education sector. The Authority's mission is "to disseminate the culture of quality and enhance the quality of education and sustainable professional development through accreditation of educational and training institutions and programmes according to standards characterized by transparency and aligned with international standards and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)." In fulfilling this mandate, NAQAAE undertakes institutional and programme accreditation, post-accreditation follow-up, capacity-building, and professional training activities for educational institutions and training providers. Through these activities, the Authority plays a critical role in promoting a sustainable culture of quality and continuous improvement within the Egyptian higher education system.

The review panel found that NAQAAE is legally established and operates within a clearly defined governance and management framework supported by formal policies, procedures, and operational guidelines. The Authority has developed comprehensive standards and mechanisms governing both Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) and External Quality Assurance (EQA), thereby ensuring that higher education institutions operate within a transparent, consistent, and structured accreditation framework.

The panel further observed that NAQAAE's accreditation standards and quality assurance frameworks have been benchmarked against regional and international reference frameworks, including the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA), the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE),

and the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME). In addition, the Authority has developed detailed guidelines and indicators for Internal Quality Assurance units within HEIs under its institutional accreditation standards.

NAQAAE has also established robust operational tools and procedures, including comprehensive self-assessment guidelines, structured review preparation instruments, standardized reporting templates, and clearly defined cyclical review mechanisms. The renewable five-year accreditation cycle reflects a strong institutional commitment to continuous quality enhancement and periodic reassessment. Transparency is reinforced through the publication of accreditation standards, procedures, review processes, and accreditation decisions on the Authority's official platforms, as well as through the use of standardized external review reporting formats and digital access to relevant information.

One of the major strengths identified during the review is the Authority's sustained investment in capacity development. NAQAAE regularly organizes workshops, training programmes, and orientation sessions aimed at strengthening Internal Quality Assurance systems within HEIs. The Authority also maintains a large, competent, and well-trained pool of peer reviewers supported by Continuous Professional Development (CPD) initiatives. Ethical and professional standards are safeguarded through contractual obligations, a formal Code of Ethics, and clearly established complaints and appeals mechanisms designed to ensure fairness, objectivity, consistency, and due process.

The review further established that the governance and management structures of the Authority are well defined, legally grounded, and supported by documented policies and operational procedures. Formal mechanisms exist for executive appointments, board operations, decision-making, and institutional communication. NAQAAE also demonstrates strong stakeholder engagement and participation. Stakeholders are actively involved in the development and revision of evaluation tools and procedures, while feedback collected from institutions and reviewers is utilized to support institutional learning and continuous improvement. This participatory approach contributes significantly to institutional trust, transparency, and stakeholder confidence in the Authority's operations.

At the regional and international levels, NAQAAE actively participates in quality assurance networks, benchmarking initiatives, and collaborative engagements, thereby strengthening its visibility, credibility, and alignment with international good practices. Strategically, the Authority aligns its vision, mission, and operational priorities with national development objectives through structured planning frameworks. Financial sustainability and human resource development are integrated into the Strategic Plan 2025–2030, while the Authority's activities are aligned with Egypt Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), positioning quality assurance as a strategic instrument for educational transformation and national development.

The review also acknowledges NAQAAE's commitment to continuous self-improvement through voluntary participation in external evaluations, including reviews conducted in 2018 and 2025/2026 against the ASG-QA framework. Since its establishment in 2006, NAQAAE remains one of the few Quality Assurance Agencies in Africa to have undergone such external reviews twice, demonstrating a strong institutional culture of reflection, accountability, and continuous enhancement.

While the overall findings of the review are positive, the panel identified several areas requiring further strengthening. These include the need to enhance systematic follow-up

mechanisms for institutional improvement plans, strengthen documentation relating to stakeholder engagement and the utilization of feedback, improve transparency through the publication of complaints and appeals statistics, enhance integrated reviewer performance monitoring and trend analysis systems, and expand access to operational manuals and guidelines.

Overall, the review panel concludes that NAQAAE operates a comprehensive, transparent, ethically grounded, and legally established quality assurance system. The Authority demonstrates significant strengths in governance, operational effectiveness, stakeholder engagement, and international alignment, while also exhibiting a clear commitment to continuous improvement and institutional enhancement.

The review panel reached the following judgements regarding NAQAAE's level of compliance with the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA), as summarized in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Summary of Judgements

Standard Description	Judgement
Part B 1 Objectives of EQA and consideration for IQA	Compliant
Part B 2 Designing EQA mechanisms fit-for-purpose	Compliant
Part B 3 Implementation processes of EQA	Compliant
Part B 4 Independence of evaluation	Partially Compliant
Part B 5 Decision and reporting of EQA outcomes	Compliant
Part B 6 Periodic review of institutions and programmes	Compliant
Part B 7 Complaints and appeals	Compliant
Part C 1 Legal status	Compliant
Part C 2 Vision and mission statement	Compliant
Part C 3 Governance and management	Compliant
Part C 4 Independence of QAA	Compliant
Part C 5 Policies, processes and activities	Compliant
Part C 6 Internal Quality Assurance	Compliant
Part C 7 Financial and human resources	Compliant
Part C 8 Benchmarking, networking and collaboration	Compliant
Part C 9 Periodic review of QAAs	Partially Compliant

The review panel therefore concludes that NAQAAE is **Compliant** with the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA). While certain areas require further strengthening, the Authority has established a credible and effective quality assurance framework capable of safeguarding academic standards, promoting transparency, and advancing continuous improvement within Egypt's higher education sector. By implementing the recommendations outlined in this report, NAQAAE will further strengthen its effectiveness and reinforce international recognition and confidence in Egyptian higher education qualifications.

CHAPTER 2. INTRODUCTION

Aims and Purpose of the Review Exercise

The external review of National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) was conducted within the framework of the third phase of the Harmonization, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in African Higher Education Initiative (HAQAA3). The review formed part of the continental effort to strengthen quality assurance systems, promote mutual trust, and support the alignment of Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs) in Africa with the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA).

The review panel noted that NAQAAE voluntarily subjected itself to this external review process as part of its commitment to institutional improvement, accountability, and continuous enhancement of its External Quality Assurance (EQA) systems and practices. The panel further observed that the review provided an opportunity for the Authority to benchmark its operations against continental standards and internationally recognized quality assurance practices. The purpose of the review was therefore to evaluate the extent to which NAQAAE complies with the ASG-QA and to assess the effectiveness, transparency, credibility, and sustainability of its quality assurance mechanisms. In addition, the review sought to identify areas of good practice as well as areas requiring further strengthening in order to support the continuous development of the Authority. The panel also recognized that NAQAAE previously participated in the Harmonization of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation (HAQAA) pilot review conducted in 2018. Consequently, the current HAQAA3 review enabled the panel to assess developments and improvements made since the earlier external evaluation, while also examining the Authority's continued alignment with emerging continental and international quality assurance trends, including the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF). Through this review exercise, the panel sought to provide an independent, evidence-based evaluation that would contribute to strengthening quality assurance practices within NAQAAE and support broader efforts towards harmonization and quality enhancement in African higher education systems.

Panel Composition

The external review panel comprised four members drawn from different African countries based on their expertise in higher education quality assurance, governance, and student representation. The composition of the panel was as follows:

(a) **Florence Kanze Lenga** (Chairperson), formerly of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya.

(b) **Johnson Olukehinde** (Secretary), Deputy Director, Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance, Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Nigeria.

(c) **Mohamed Lemine Haless** (Panel Member), Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research / University of Nouakchott, Mauritania.

(d) **Anuoluwapo Ruth Fakunmoju** (Panel Member – Student Representative), Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Nigeria.

The composition of the panel ensured an appropriate balance of institutional, national, regional, and student perspectives during the review process. The review exercise was coordinated by Adewale Olusegun Obadina, Project Officer for Quality Assurance and Accreditation at the Association of African Universities (AAU). The review was also observed by Mounerou Salou and Larissa Odzebe Gidisu from AAU, as well as Luis Miranda from the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

Introduction to NAQAAE

The National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) is the statutory external quality assurance agency responsible for accreditation and quality assurance in Egypt's education sector. The Authority was established under Presidential Decree No. 82 of 2006 as an autonomous public legal entity with administrative and financial independence under the supervision of the Prime Minister.

The panel observed that NAQAAE's mandate includes:

1. Development of accreditation standards;
2. Institutional and programme accreditation;
3. Monitoring and follow-up of institutional improvement plans;
4. Capacity-building and dissemination of quality culture;
5. Oversight and alignment with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF); and
6. Regional and international benchmarking, networking, and collaboration activities.

The review panel further noted that the Authority's Strategic Plan 2025–2030 is structured around seven key strategic pillars relating to governance, continuous development, competitiveness, sustainability, quality, digitalization and innovation, and human development.

Higher Education System in Egypt

The panel observed that Egypt's higher education system comprises six categories of institutions reflecting historical, legal, administrative, and functional distinctions. These

categories include: public universities, private universities, national (civil) universities, institutions established under special laws and international agreements, Al-Azhar University, and higher education institutes and technical colleges.

Public universities constitute the traditional state-funded universities coordinated through the Supreme Council of Universities (SCU), chaired by the Minister responsible for higher education and comprising the presidents of public universities. Private universities operate under the supervision of the Supreme Council of Private Universities and are financed through private or non-state sources. The panel further noted that National (Civil) Universities are relatively new institutions established through governmental initiatives aimed at combining public oversight with increased institutional autonomy. Institutions established under special laws and agreements include entities such as American University in Cairo (AUC), Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST), Zewail City of Science and Technology, and the Open Arab University, among others established through presidential decrees or international agreements. The panel also observed that Al-Azhar University operates under a distinct governance structure linked to Al-Azhar Al-Sharif and is responsible for religious higher education, while maintaining coordination with the Ministry responsible for higher education on regulatory and policy matters. Higher education institutes and technical colleges comprise private institutes offering technical diplomas and applied bachelor's degree programmes, as well as technical colleges and institutes operating under ministerial supervision.

According to the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), the higher education sector enrolled approximately 3.8 million students in the academic year 2023/2024, distributed across a wide range of institutional types. Public universities, including Al-Azhar University, represented the largest share with 2.1 million students in theoretical tracks and 644.7 thousand students in practical tracks, across 547 faculties. Private and non-profit universities enrolled 365 thousand students, accounting for 9.7% of total higher education enrollment, within 62 universities offering 448 faculties. Technological universities contributed 20.9 thousand students, representing 0.6% of total enrollment. Higher institutes formed a major component of the system with 775.7 thousand students (20.6%), while public and private post-secondary technical institutes enrolled an additional 199.6 thousand students (5.3%). Military academies accounted for 35.3 thousand students, representing 0.9% of national enrollment. Table 2.1 presents a summary of the HEIs by category and student enrollment.

Table 2.1: Summary of HEIs per Category and Student Enrollment in Egypt

Category / Type of Institution	Number of Universities / Number of Institutions	Number of Faculties	of Student Enrollment ('000)
Public ¹	28	547	-
Private	62	448	365
National (Civil)	20	-	-
Institutions under Special Laws and Agreements ⁹	-	-	-

Category / Type of Institution	Number of Universities / Number Institutions	Number Faculties	of Student Enrollment ('000)
Al-Azhar University ¹	1	102	-
Higher Education Institutes and Technical Colleges	170	-	775.7

Source: SAR (pp. 9–11)

¹ Public universities and Al-Azhar University had a combined student enrollment of approximately 2.1 million students.

The panel observed that the Agency applies accreditation cycles, programme reviews, and compliance monitoring processes in alignment with national academic reference standards and internationally recognized quality assurance practices. The review panel further noted that NAQAAE's quality assurance mechanisms are designed to accommodate the diversity, legal status, and academic orientations of the various categories of institutions within the Egyptian higher education system.

Period of the Review Exercise

The Self-Assessment Report (SAR) of NAQAAE, Egypt, was received together with supporting evidence documents on 18th December 2025 by the review panel. Preliminary briefing meetings involving the review panel, the Association of African Universities (AAU), and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) coordinators were subsequently held on 22nd January 2026 and 28th January 2026. The external review site visit to NAQAAE was conducted from 29th to 31st March 2026 and involved meetings with the Authority's leadership, staff, peer reviewers, representatives of higher education institutions, students, employers, and representatives of professional bodies. Following the completion of the site visit and subsequent analysis of the evidence gathered, the External Review Report (ERR) was finalized and submitted to NAQAAE at the end of June 2026. A detailed presentation of the review timeline and methodology is provided in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

The external review of National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE), Egypt, was conducted in accordance with the methodology and procedures established under the third phase of the Harmonization, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in African Higher Education Initiative (HAQAA3) and guided by the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA). The review process adopted an enhancement-led approach combining document analysis, evidence mapping, stakeholder interviews, institutional observation, and peer evaluation.

The NAQAAE's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and supporting documents were received on Thursday 18th December 2025. Following receipt of the documents, individual panel members undertook independent analysis of the SAR and accompanying evidence in preparation for the review process. Initial briefing meetings facilitated by the HAQAA3 coordinator were subsequently held on Thursday 22nd January and Wednesday 28th January 2026. These meetings provided orientation on the objectives, principles, timelines, methodology, and expected outcomes of the review exercise in line with HAQAA3 and ASG-QA requirements. The preliminary impressions arising from the SAR, key areas requiring further clarification, roles and responsibilities of the Chairperson, Secretary and panel members throughout the review process were discussed.

An additional preparatory meeting convened by the Chairperson was held online on Friday 6th February 2026 to further analyze the evidence provided and identify additional documentation required to support the review. Following this analysis, supplementary evidence relating to strategic planning, governance and organizational structures, internal quality assurance policies, infrastructure and ICT facilities, annual budgeting and audited financial statements, human resource management policies, staff statistics, professional development activities, and operational frameworks were requested. During this meeting, preparation of the evidence mapping grid was initiated and the schedule for the site visit was discussed.

The draft site visit programme was prepared by the Secretary of the panel and submitted to the HAQAA3 coordinator on Tuesday 10th February 2026 for review and input before onward transmission to the NAQAAE contact person for coordination and confirmation. In addition, an online clarification meeting was held on Friday 13th February 2026 between the review panel and representatives of NAQAAE. During the engagement, an overview of the Egyptian higher education system and the national quality assurance framework were presented to support contextual understanding to the review panel members. Clarification was also sought on issues arising from the SAR, supporting annexes, governance arrangements, operational procedures, and implementation of quality assurance processes. The review panel subsequently held two further online working meetings on Tuesday 17th March and Thursday 19th March 2026 to review the compiled evidence, refine the mapping grid, and discuss preliminary analyses of Part B and Part C Standards of the ASG-QA. These meetings enabled the panel to identify key themes, strengths, gaps, and areas requiring further verification during the site visit. The meetings were facilitated by the Chairperson, with the HAQAA3 coordinator attending to provide procedural guidance and clarification where necessary.

The site visit to NAQAAE was conducted physically from 29th to 31st March 2026 and involved the four panel members together with the HAQAA3 coordinator acting as observer. During the three-day visit, the panel conducted interviews and consultative meetings with a broad range of stakeholders including the Authority's leadership, Board representatives, senior management staff, quality assurance officers, peer reviewers, university leaders, academic

staff, students, employers, representatives of professional bodies, and officials from relevant government and regulatory institutions. Additional documentary evidence provided onsite were reviewed. Operational facilities, office infrastructure, and ICT resources supporting the implementation of External Quality Assurance activities were also inspected.

The review methodology relied heavily on triangulation of evidence obtained from the SAR, supporting annexes, stakeholder interviews, documentary verification, and onsite observations. Particular attention was given to governance structures, quality assurance policies and procedures, implementation mechanisms, stakeholder participation, reviewer management, decision-making processes, internal quality assurance systems, financial and human resource management, benchmarking activities, and institutional effectiveness in relation to the ASG-QA standards.

At the conclusion of the site visit, the panel presented preliminary oral feedback to the leadership and staff of NAQAAE outlining key observations, commendations, and areas requiring improvement. Following the site visit, panel members drafted sections of the External Review Report (ERR) between April and May 2026 based on evidence reviewed throughout the process. The individual contributions were consolidated by the Secretary into a unified draft report.

A final panel meeting was held on Thursday 25th April 2026 to review, validate, and agree on the contents, findings, analyses, commendations, recommendations, suggestions for improvement, and compliance judgements contained in the External Review Report. The meeting was facilitated by the Chairperson with participation of the representative of the Association of African Universities (AAU), who provided procedural guidance and ensured consistency with HAQAA3 review expectations and ASG-QA requirements.

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND JUDGEMENTS

This chapter presents the observations and conclusions based on critical analyses of the various performance indicators of the standards in Part B and Part C during the review exercise.

PART B: STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

Standard 1. Objectives of External Quality Assurance and Consideration for Internal Quality Assurance

Standard: EQA shall ensure that the HEI has clearly articulated vision and mission statements, and it shall help the institution ensure the effectiveness of its IQA mechanisms, providing an additional instrument for assessing institutional quality.

Evidence

Evidence reviewed by the panel demonstrates that all higher education institutions (HEIs) in Egypt are required to establish Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) systems as part of the national quality assurance framework coordinated by National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE). The panel observed that the IQA framework within HEIs operates through a multi-layered structure comprising university-level quality assurance centres, faculty or departmental quality assurance units, and the Ministry's Higher Education and Research Project Management Unit. This integrated structure provides institutional support for the implementation, coordination, and monitoring of quality assurance activities at different operational levels within the higher education system.

The review panel further noted that accredited HEIs are required to establish clearly articulated vision and mission statements, strategic objectives, and institutional development plans aligned with national higher education priorities and societal expectations. Evidence examined by the panel showed that these institutional statements and plans are developed through participatory processes involving relevant stakeholders and are publicly communicated within the institutions. The panel observed that these requirements are embedded within the institutional accreditation framework and are used to guide institutional planning, governance, and quality enhancement processes.

The panel also established that Standard 3 of the institutional accreditation framework focuses specifically on the establishment and operationalization of IQA units or centres within HEIs. Evidence reviewed during the evaluation indicated that these IQA structures are responsible for promoting quality culture within institutions, coordinating self-evaluation activities, collecting stakeholder feedback, monitoring implementation of improvement plans, and conducting periodic performance reviews. Through these mechanisms, HEIs are expected to undertake continuous self-assessment and evidence-based quality improvement aimed at enhancing both academic and operational effectiveness.

The panel observed that the legal mandate establishing NAQAAE, particularly Articles 3 and 4 of Law No. 82 of 2006, provides the Authority with responsibility for coordinating quality assurance processes within HEIs, supporting institutional self-evaluation, developing accreditation standards and performance indicators, and establishing mechanisms for institutional assessment and continuous improvement. The review panel found that these legal provisions clearly position HEIs as primarily responsible for the quality of their educational provision, while NAQAAE provides the external quality assurance framework, standards, oversight, and developmental support necessary for institutional accountability and enhancement.

Evidence examined by the panel further showed that NAQAAE has developed an extensive set of quality assurance instruments and operational tools to support institutional self-evaluation and accreditation processes. These include institutional self-assessment templates and guidelines, accreditation eligibility procedures, programme and institutional accreditation standards, operational manuals, and guidance documents relating to human resources, infrastructure, governance, and Internal Quality Assurance systems. The panel noted that these tools collectively provide a structured framework through which HEIs conduct self-studies, evaluate institutional performance, identify gaps, and develop improvement plans in preparation for external review and accreditation.

The panel also observed that NAQAAE has developed National Academic Reference Standards (NARS) for various academic disciplines and professional fields, including Medicine and Basic Sciences. These standards provide academic benchmarks for curriculum design, programme delivery, and learning outcomes across higher education institutions in Egypt. The panel considered the NARS framework to be an important instrument for promoting consistency, comparability, and alignment of academic programmes with national and international expectations.

In addition, the review panel examined the external review reporting template used by peer reviewers during institutional evaluations. The template includes a dedicated section on quality management and institutional development, which focuses on the effectiveness of IQA structures, implementation of quality assurance systems, utilization of performance data, and institutional improvement mechanisms. The panel noted that the integration of IQA evaluation within external review processes reinforces the principle that higher education institutions bear primary responsibility for the quality and continuous improvement of their academic provision.

The panel also found evidence that NAQAAE undertakes extensive capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening quality assurance competencies within HEIs. These activities include training workshops, conferences, webinars, professional development programmes, and dissemination of quality assurance publications targeting QA officers, peer reviewers, and academic staff. Topics covered include institutional self-evaluation, programme accreditation, learning outcomes mapping, and alignment with the National Academic Reference Standards. The panel observed that these initiatives contribute significantly to improving institutional preparedness for accreditation and strengthening internal quality assurance capacity within HEIs.

Overall, the review panel concluded that NAQAAE has established a comprehensive framework that integrates Internal Quality Assurance and External Quality Assurance processes within the Egyptian higher education system. The combination of legal provisions, accreditation

standards, operational tools, national reference standards, external review mechanisms, and capacity-building initiatives demonstrates a strong emphasis on institutional responsibility for quality assurance and continuous quality enhancement across higher education institutions.

Analysis

From the onset, HEIs in Egypt have in place structured IQA systems. It is a mandatory requirement for the accreditation of institutions. The setting up of IQA units by the HEIs is guided by the standards and assessment tools developed by the NAQAAE for their establishment. The IQA systems are subject to annual reviews by the institutions themselves, and periodic review by experts during the institutional review cycle and also programme accreditation. The HEIs have institutionalized their vision, mission and core values into their programmes as per the NAQAAE accreditation standards, assessment tools and procedures. Results from the annual and periodic reviews are used in the formulation of improvement plans for quality delivery. These plans are also subjected to audits by the Agency, through expert reviews, hence ensuring a culture of quality management by the HEIs.

Conclusion

Compliant

Commendations

1. The NAQAAE has developed standards, tools and procedures for the management and development of IQA for HEIs, which articulate the need of the institutions to have a vision and mission statements, and strategic plan which are interrogated before the institutions and programmes are accredited.
2. The NAQAAE conducts capacity building workshops to strengthen the human resources in the institutions on IQA aspects.
3. The Agency, through expert reviews, evaluates the performance of the IQA units of HEIs and monitors the progress of the implementation plans for quality improvement and re-accreditation / post-accreditation monitoring.

Standard 2. Designing External Quality Assurance Mechanisms Fit-for-Purpose

Standard: Standards, guidelines and processes for EQA shall be designed to be fit-for-purpose, defined to achieve the intended aims and objectives of EQA, and to strengthen IQA systems at institutions.

Evidence

The review panel observed that the legal framework establishing National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE), namely Law No. 82 of 2006, clearly defines the Authority's mandate and operational responsibilities in relation to quality assurance and accreditation within Egypt's higher education system. Articles 2 and 4 of the Law provide the legal basis for the Authority's coordination with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), development of quality assurance standards and performance indicators, support for institutional self-evaluation, and implementation of accreditation and evaluation processes guided by national priorities and international good practices.

The review panel found evidence that NAQAAE operationalizes this mandate through a comprehensive External Quality Assurance (EQA) framework that incorporates policy development, standards setting, institutional and programme accreditation, monitoring, follow-up evaluation, and periodic review mechanisms. The panel examined several operational instruments developed and utilized by the Authority, including Norm Guidelines, institutional and programme accreditation standards, accreditation manuals and procedures, review templates, and National Academic Reference Standards (NARS) covering various academic and professional disciplines.

The panel further noted that these standards and guidelines contain explicit requirements relating to the establishment, strengthening, and operationalization of Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) systems within HEIs. Evidence reviewed during the evaluation demonstrated that institutions undergoing accreditation are required to establish functional IQA structures, undertake periodic self-assessment, monitor academic performance, collect stakeholder feedback, and implement continuous improvement plans. The panel considered these requirements to be consistent with internationally recognized principles of institutional responsibility for quality assurance and continuous enhancement.

The review panel also observed that NAQAAE's standards and quality assurance frameworks have undergone several revision cycles since their initial introduction in 2009. Evidence made available to the panel indicated that the standards had been revised on three previous occasions, with the fourth revised edition published in 2022. The panel noted that these revisions were undertaken to respond to emerging developments in higher education, evolving national priorities, advancements in quality assurance practice, and alignment with regional and international quality assurance frameworks.

The panel further established that the review and revision processes for standards and quality assurance instruments involve extensive stakeholder engagement conducted periodically through consultative mechanisms such as national workshops, focus group discussions, technical committees, expert panels, validation meetings, and institutional consultations. Evidence reviewed during the site visit showed that stakeholder consultations are organized during major review cycles of accreditation standards, revision of National Academic Reference Standards (NARS), development of operational manuals, and policy review exercises.

The panel observed that the stakeholder groups involved in these processes are broad and representative of the higher education sector. Participants include university presidents, vice presidents, deans, academic staff, directors of Internal Quality Assurance units, students, peer reviewers, professional bodies, employers, labour market representatives, sector experts, government agencies, and representatives of relevant ministries and regulatory bodies. The review panel noted that professional and discipline-based experts are particularly involved during the review and validation of programme accreditation standards and National Academic Reference Standards to ensure disciplinary relevance and alignment with labour market expectations.

In addition, the panel found evidence that NAQAAE regularly engages higher education institutions through institutional feedback mechanisms following accreditation reviews, training activities, consultative meetings, and reviewer engagements. The Authority also obtains feedback from peer reviewers and institutional representatives regarding the applicability, clarity, and effectiveness of accreditation procedures and evaluation tools. The

panel considered this continuous engagement important in strengthening stakeholder ownership, transparency, and confidence in the quality assurance system.

The review panel further noted that NAQAAE conducts frequent capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening quality assurance implementation within HEIs and improving institutional preparedness for accreditation. Evidence examined during the review indicated that these activities include training workshops, conferences, seminars, webinars, orientation programmes, and technical support sessions conducted throughout the year for academic staff, QA officers, institutional leaders, and peer reviewers.

The panel observed that the training activities focus on areas such as institutional self-evaluation, programme accreditation requirements, development and assessment of learning outcomes, implementation of Internal Quality Assurance systems, preparation of self-study reports, and alignment of academic programmes with the National Academic Reference Standards. These engagements were found to play a significant developmental role in enhancing institutional understanding of quality assurance principles and strengthening the effectiveness of IQA systems across HEIs.

The panel additionally noted that NAQAAE's quality assurance frameworks and accreditation mechanisms demonstrate substantial alignment with internationally recognized External Quality Assurance practices. Evidence reviewed during the evaluation included benchmarking exercises and international collaborations involving regional and global quality assurance bodies. The panel further observed that NAQAAE's medical education accreditation framework received recognition status from the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) in April 2019, thereby contributing to international recognition and confidence in Egyptian medical education qualifications.

Overall, the review panel concluded that NAQAAE demonstrates a structured and participatory approach to the development, implementation, and continuous review of its External Quality Assurance mechanisms. The panel considered the broad and recurring involvement of stakeholders in standards development, policy review, accreditation processes, and capacity-building activities as evidence of an inclusive quality assurance culture that supports transparency, institutional ownership, continuous improvement, and alignment with international good practices.

Analysis

The review panel found that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) operates within a clearly established legal and regulatory framework defined by Law No. 82 of 2006, which provides the Authority with responsibility for standards development, accreditation, institutional evaluation, support for self-evaluation, and enhancement of quality assurance within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The panel observed that the Authority has operationalized this mandate through a comprehensive External Quality Assurance (EQA) system comprising institutional and programme accreditation standards, Norm Guidelines, operational manuals, National Academic Reference Standards (NARS), monitoring mechanisms, and periodic review processes.

Evidence reviewed during the evaluation demonstrated that NAQAAE's quality assurance frameworks explicitly require HEIs to establish and operationalize Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) systems, undertake self-assessment, monitor institutional performance, collect stakeholder feedback, and implement continuous improvement plans. The panel noted that

these requirements reinforce institutional responsibility for quality assurance while aligning with internationally recognized quality assurance principles and the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA).

The review panel further established that NAQAAE periodically reviews and revises its accreditation standards and quality assurance instruments in response to developments in higher education, labour market expectations, and emerging international quality assurance trends. Evidence examined indicated that the standards have undergone four revision cycles since 2009, with the latest revision published in 2022. The panel observed that these revision exercises involve broad stakeholder participation through national workshops, focus group discussions, technical committees, expert panels, institutional consultations, and validation meetings.

Stakeholders involved in these processes include university presidents, vice presidents, deans, academic staff, and directors of IQA units, students, employers, professional bodies, peer reviewers, government agencies, and discipline-based experts. The panel noted that stakeholder engagement occurs regularly during standards revision exercises, accreditation reviews, institutional consultations, reviewer training, conferences, and feedback sessions. This recurring engagement demonstrates an inclusive and participatory approach to quality assurance implementation and policy development.

The panel also found evidence that NAQAAE conducts regular capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening quality assurance implementation within HEIs. These activities include workshops, conferences, webinars, orientation programmes, and reviewer training sessions organized throughout the year for academic staff, institutional leaders, QA officers, and peer reviewers. Topics covered include self-evaluation, programme accreditation, learning outcomes mapping, implementation of IQA systems, and alignment with National Academic Reference Standards.

The review panel further observed that NAQAAE's EQA mechanisms demonstrate substantial alignment with internationally recognised quality assurance practices through benchmarking activities and international collaborations. Evidence reviewed included the recognition granted by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) in 2019 for the accreditation of Egyptian medical schools and faculties. The panel considered this recognition as evidence of growing international confidence in Egypt's higher education quality assurance arrangements and academic standards.

Overall, the review panel concluded that NAQAAE has established a legally grounded, participatory, and enhancement-oriented quality assurance framework supported by recurring stakeholder engagement, periodic standards review, institutional capacity-building, and international benchmarking activities.

Conclusion

Compliant

Commendation

1. The NAQAAE's stakeholders are involved as partners in the development, implementation and revision for continuous improvement of its evaluation tools.

Recommendation

1. The NAQAAE should undertake continuous follow-ups of the HEIs to ensure that there is implementation of the improvement plans developed by the institutions, for mainstreaming a continuous quality culture into the HEIs. This could include periodic progress reviews, targeted feedback sessions, and site visits to evaluate corrective actions.

Suggestions for improvement

To enhance accountability, demonstrate ownership more clearly, and align the Agency more closely with international good practice in EQA governance, it is suggested that NAQAAE should:

1. Consider strengthening documentation of stakeholder engagement processes, and feedback for analyses and translation into concrete policy revisions.
2. Publish stakeholders' consultation reports, formal feedback and impact analyses reports to assist in in-depth analyses of stakeholder input in evaluation tools improvement / revisions.

Standard 3. Implementation Processes of External Quality Assurance

Standard: The standards, processes, and procedures for EQA shall be pre-defined, reliable, published, and consistently implemented for purposes of accountability.

Evidence

Evidence of the implementation of External Quality Assurance (EQA) processes was demonstrated through a comprehensive set of standards, operational manuals, procedures, templates, and training records reviewed by the panel during the site visit. The panel examined the Institutional Accreditation Standards (Annex A2), which provide the criteria and benchmarks for evaluating institutional governance, academic provision, Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), resources, and continuous improvement mechanisms within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The Programme Accreditation Standards (Annex A3) were also reviewed and were found to provide discipline-based requirements for programme design, curriculum implementation, learning outcomes, teaching and learning processes, student assessment, and programme effectiveness. In addition, the Self-Assessment Guidelines and Templates (Annex A4) provide structured guidance to HEIs for undertaking institutional self-evaluation and preparation of self-study reports prior to external review.

The panel further observed that the Agency Website hosts a dedicated EQA Procedures Page containing accreditation procedures, standards, manuals, and related guidance documents, thereby supporting transparency and public accessibility of information relating to accreditation and review processes. Evidence reviewed during the visit also included translated EQA procedures from Arabic to English and institutional preparation checklists (Annexes A13 and A14), which are designed to improve institutional understanding of accreditation requirements, facilitate consistency in implementation, and support institutional preparedness for external review exercises.

In addition to the above the review panel examined procedures relating to instrument validation, reviewer calibration, appeals handling, and review integrity mechanisms. Evidence provided through Annexes A6, A10, and A14 (Annex 6 – Appeals Committee Regulations, Terms and Procedures, Annex 10 – NAQAAE Annual Achievement Report English Version, and Annex 14 – HAQAA Review Preparation Checklist) demonstrated that the Authority has established formal safeguards to ensure reliability, objectivity, consistency, and fairness within the evaluation process. These include validation procedures for review instruments, regulations governing appeals committees, reviewer guidance procedures, and mechanisms for addressing institutional concerns arising from accreditation decisions.

The panel also reviewed evidence relating to reviewer preparation and stakeholder capacity development. Reviewer orientation meetings, reviewer training workshops, and institutional capacity-building programmes (Annex A7 – Establishing and Developing Training Programmes and Coordinating Workshops)) demonstrated that the Authority systematically prepares peer reviewers and supports HEIs in understanding accreditation requirements and implementing quality assurance processes. The evidence further indicated that these activities are conducted periodically and focus on areas such as self-evaluation, accreditation standards, review methodologies, report writing, and implementation of Internal Quality Assurance systems within HEIs.

Analysis

The review panel found that NAQAAE has established a structured and well-documented framework for the implementation of its External Quality Assurance (EQA) processes. The evidence reviewed demonstrates that accreditation activities are guided by clearly defined standards, operational procedures, self-assessment guidelines, and review instruments that promote consistency, transparency, and reliability in evaluation processes. The availability of publicly accessible EQA procedures and guidance materials further supports institutional understanding and enhances transparency within the accreditation system.

The panel also observed that the Authority has instituted formal mechanisms for ensuring fairness and integrity in the review process through instrument validation procedures, reviewer guidance, and appeals regulations. In addition, regular reviewer orientation sessions, training workshops, and capacity-building activities indicate a systematic approach to competence development for both peer reviewers and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Overall, the evidence demonstrates that NAQAAE's EQA implementation processes are comprehensive, enhancement-oriented, and aligned with internationally recognised quality assurance practices.

Conclusion

Compliant

Commendations

1. The review panel commends National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) for establishing comprehensive and well-structured External Quality Assurance implementation processes supported by clearly defined standards, operational manuals, reporting templates, and reviewer training mechanisms that promote consistency, transparency, and reliability in accreditation activities.

2. The panel further commends the Authority for its strong commitment to capacity building through regular reviewer orientation programmes, institutional training workshops, and provision of publicly accessible accreditation procedures and guidance materials, which collectively strengthen institutional preparedness and quality assurance culture within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Standard 4. Independence of Evaluation

Standard: EQA shall be carried out by panels of external experts drawn from a wide range of expertise and experience.

Evidence

National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAEE) demonstrated the existence of a comprehensive framework designed to safeguard the independence, integrity, and objectivity of its External Quality Assurance (EQA) evaluation processes. Evidence reviewed by the panel included the Statistics and Demographics of External Reviewer Database (Annex A9), which serves as a structured repository containing information on reviewers' academic qualifications, disciplinary expertise, professional experience, and participation history in accreditation activities. The panel observed that the database supports the selection of appropriately qualified reviewers and contributes to balanced composition of review teams across different academic disciplines and institutional contexts.

The panel also examined the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) Post-Visit Feedback Instruments (Annex A8), which are used by institutions to evaluate the conduct, professionalism, objectivity, and effectiveness of peer reviewers following accreditation visits. The panel considered this mechanism important in supporting continuous monitoring of reviewer performance, strengthening accountability, and maintaining confidence in the credibility of the evaluation process.

Evidence relating to reviewer competence development was also reviewed through Reviewer Orientation and Training Records (Annex A7). These documents demonstrated that NAQAEE conducts structured induction programmes, orientation sessions, and periodic training workshops for peer reviewers prior to their participation in accreditation activities. The training activities focus on accreditation standards, evaluation methodologies, ethical conduct, report writing, and consistency in interpretation of review criteria. The panel observed that these activities contribute significantly to promoting professionalism, consistency, and reliability within the review process.

The review panel further examined the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for External Evaluators (Annex A5), which establishes principles governing professional conduct, confidentiality, impartiality, and conflict-of-interest management for reviewers involved in accreditation activities. These ethical requirements are reinforced through Reviewer Contractual Agreements (Annex A12), which are signed by reviewers prior to participation in external evaluations and formally commit them to independence, objectivity, confidentiality, and avoidance of conflicts of interest during review exercises.

Additional evidence reviewed included Replacement and Appeals Procedures (Annexes A6 and A10), which provide mechanisms for reviewer replacement, institutional objections, appeals handling, and procedural review. The panel observed that these procedures contribute to fairness, institutional confidence, and protection of the integrity of accreditation decisions. The evidence further demonstrated that HEIs are given the opportunity to raise objections to proposed reviewers where conflicts of interest may exist, while reviewers are also required to formally declare absence of conflicts of interest prior to participation in evaluation exercises.

The review panel also noted that NAQAAE's membership and participation in regional and international quality assurance networks, including the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), as evidenced in Annexes A11 and A12, support external benchmarking, alignment with international good practices, and enhancement of the Authority's regional and international credibility.

During interviews with representatives of peer reviewers, the panel observed that review teams were predominantly composed of academic staff drawn from higher education institutions. Although some reviewers possessed professional expertise, they primarily participated in their academic capacities rather than as formal representatives of professional bodies or industry sectors. The panel further noted that students and employer representatives were not included in external review teams. Discussions during the interviews indicated that student participation in external review activities was considered culturally sensitive within the national context. Nevertheless, some stakeholders interviewed acknowledged that students are central stakeholders within the higher education system and expressed the view that their involvement in EQA reviews would strengthen inclusiveness and alignment with emerging international quality assurance practices.

The panel further confirmed through interviews that students are actively involved in Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) processes within universities, particularly through institutional feedback systems and quality assurance committees at institutional level. The panel considered this an important foundation upon which broader participation in external quality assurance processes could gradually be developed. The review panel also recognized that student involvement in EQA reviews remains an emerging practice within several African quality assurance systems and continues to evolve progressively across the continent.

In addition, the panel established those international experts were not included in external review teams, primarily due to financial constraints. Evidence gathered during interviews indicated that NAQAAE's major source of funding is derived from accreditation fees paid by HEIs, with the fee structure prescribed by Law No. 82 of 2006. Stakeholders explained that the existing funding framework limits the Authority's capacity to engage international reviewers and external experts. The panel further noted that the process of amending the Law to expand the Authority's financial flexibility has been ongoing for several years.

Overall, the review panel found that NAQAAE has established substantial mechanisms to safeguard reviewer independence, ethical conduct, and procedural fairness within its EQA system. However, opportunities remain for further strengthening stakeholder diversity within review teams and enhancing the Authority's financial capacity to support broader international participation in external evaluations.

Analysis

The review panel found that NAQAAE has established a structured framework to safeguard the independence, integrity, and fairness of its External Quality Assurance (EQA) processes. The evidence reviewed demonstrates the existence of formal mechanisms for reviewer selection, competence development, ethical conduct, conflict-of-interest management, appeals handling, and reviewer performance monitoring. These mechanisms contribute to the credibility, objectivity, and consistency of accreditation decisions.

The panel also observed that reviewer training and contractual obligations strengthen professionalism and accountability within the evaluation process, while institutional feedback mechanisms support continuous improvement of reviewer performance. In addition, NAQAAE's participation in regional and international quality assurance networks enhances external benchmarking and alignment with internationally recognized quality assurance practices.

The panel noted that the composition of review teams remains largely academic, with limited participation from employers, professional bodies, students, and international experts. While cultural and financial constraints were identified as contributing factors, the panel considered that broader stakeholder inclusion would further strengthen diversity of perspectives, transparency, and alignment with emerging good practices in External Quality Assurance within Africa and internationally.

Conclusion

Partially Compliant.

Commendations

The NAQAAE has:

1. Comprehensive and well-maintained reviewer database with disciplinary balance.
2. Strong ethical framework supported by enforceable contractual arrangements.
3. Functional appeal and replacement mechanisms protecting institutional fairness.
4. Effective use of post-visit feedback for performance monitoring, and
5. Active engagement in regional and international QA networks.

Recommendation

The NAQAAE should make the necessary steps towards inclusion of professional bodies, employers and students in the external review teams. Such inclusion would strengthen diversity of perspectives, enhance stakeholder confidence, and further align the Authority's review processes with emerging regional and international good practices in quality assurance

Suggestions for Improvement

The NAQAAE should:

1. Consider involving international experts in the external review teams, using the many international networks, alliances and agreements it has established and also the partnerships in collaborative projects.
2. Digitize and integrate reviewer performance data into a centralized quality dashboard.
3. Publish anonymous reviewer performance summaries to enhance transparency.

4. Periodically review and update the Code of Ethics to reflect evolving QA practices.

Standard 5. Decision and Reporting of External Quality Assurance Outcomes

Standard: Reports and decisions made as a result of EQA shall be clear, based on published standards, processes and procedures, and made accessible, for purposes of accountability.

Evidence

Evidence reviewed by the panel demonstrated that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) has established formal mechanisms to ensure transparency, consistency, fairness, and integrity in decision-making and reporting processes relating to External Quality Assurance (EQA). The panel observed that the Authority publishes accreditation standards, procedures, manuals, and final accreditation decisions through its official website and digital portal, thereby ensuring public accessibility to key quality assurance information and enhancing transparency within the accreditation system.

The panel further examined evidence showing that NAQAAE provides formal guidance and capacity-building activities to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) regarding accreditation requirements, reporting procedures, and institutional responsibilities within the EQA process. The Authority also operates a structured communication and information management system that supports dissemination of accreditation information, institutional correspondence, and access to EQA procedures and outcomes.

Evidence reviewed during the site visit demonstrated that final accreditation decisions are published after approval by the Board of Directors, while draft reports and internal deliberative processes remain confidential in order to preserve the integrity and independence of the evaluation process. The panel noted that only final accreditation decisions are publicly disclosed, whereas detailed review reports are shared directly with the concerned institutions through secured institutional access channels.

The panel also examined the Unified External Review Report Template used by NAQAAE during institutional and programme evaluations. The template provides a standardized structure for reporting and includes key elements such as: the purpose and scope of the review, institutional context, review methodology, composition of review teams, evidence presented, analysis and findings, commendations and examples of good practice, conclusions, recommendations, and required follow-up actions. The panel considered the use of a unified reporting template important in ensuring consistency, comparability, and clarity across evaluation reports.

Additional evidence reviewed indicated that peer reviewers receive orientation and training on report writing procedures, evidence triangulation, and application of reporting protocols to support consistency and objectivity in external review reporting. The panel observed that these measures contribute to the reliability and credibility of evaluation outcomes.

The review panel further noted that institutions are provided with opportunities to review draft external review reports and identify factual inaccuracies prior to finalization of accreditation decisions. Evidence examined during the visit demonstrated the existence of a structured digital “response to external review report” mechanism through which institutions

access draft reports on the NAQAAE portal and submit comments or factual corrections electronically. The panel considered this mechanism to be an important safeguard for accuracy, procedural fairness, and institutional participation within the review process.

The panel also observed that institutions are formally notified through official electronic communication when review reports are uploaded to the institutional portal. Institutions receive the external review reports before wider dissemination of final decisions, thereby maintaining institutional confidentiality while supporting transparency and fairness in communication processes.

Evidence reviewed by the panel further demonstrated that accreditation decisions are protected from undue external influence through legally established governance arrangements under Law No. 82 of 2006. Final accreditation decisions are taken by the Board of Directors, which operates within formally approved governance procedures and ethical requirements. The panel examined the Board Charter and Terms of Reference for decision-making committees, which define responsibilities, decision-making processes, and institutional safeguards supporting independence and objectivity in accreditation outcomes.

The panel also reviewed signed Conflict-of-Interest and Code of Ethics declarations used by Board members and reviewers. These documents formally commit participants involved in accreditation decisions to principles of impartiality, confidentiality, integrity, and independence from external influence.

The review panel further noted that accreditation outcomes are communicated to institutions in a clearly structured format containing commendations, recommendations, accreditation status, and required follow-up actions. Final accreditation decisions are made available to institutions through the NAQAAE portal, while accredited institutions receive formal accreditation certificates from the Authority.

Overall, the evidence reviewed demonstrated that NAQAAE has established structured and transparent mechanisms for decision-making, reporting, institutional communication, and procedural fairness within its External Quality Assurance system.

Analysis

NAQAAE publishes accreditation standards, procedures, and outcomes on its website and digital portal, ensuring transparency and accessibility. The organization provides guidance and capacity-building workshops to higher education institutions (HEIs). External quality assurance decisions are published without compromising the integrity of the review process. NAQAAE maintains confidentiality of internal review deliberations and draft reports. EQA reports are clear, precise, and include required elements, such as purpose, context, procedures, evidence, and recommendations. Institutions are given the opportunity to review and comment on factual errors in the report. NAQAAE ensures independence of decisions through its legal mandate and a Board of Directors with a formal Code of Ethics.

Conclusion

Compliant.

Commendations

The NAQAAE:

1. Has a structured and transparent approach to external quality assurance, with clear procedures and communication channels.
2. Processes align with EQA standards and procedures, including the publication of accreditation decisions and the use of a unified External Review Report Template.
3. Publishes accreditation standards, procedures, and outcomes on its website and digital portal, ensuring transparency and accessibility.
4. Provides guidance and capacity-building workshops to HEIs, and
5. Maintains independence of decisions through its legal mandate and a Board of Directors with a formal Code of Ethics.

Standard 6. Periodic Review of Institutions and Programmes

Standard: EQA of institutions and programmes shall be undertaken on a cyclical basis.

Evidence

Evidence reviewed by the panel demonstrated that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) operates structured cyclical review mechanisms for both institutional and programme accreditation. The panel observed that programme accreditation cycles are aligned with the duration and validity period of the respective academic programmes, thereby ensuring periodic evaluation and continued compliance with accreditation standards. Evidence supporting these arrangements was found in the Authority's accreditation publications, templates, and Terms and Procedures issued for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

The review panel further noted that NAQAAE applies a renewable five-year institutional accreditation cycle requiring institutions to undergo periodic re-accreditation. The cyclical review framework is supported by provisions contained in the Executive Regulations of Law No. 82 of 2006, particularly Article 24, which stipulates that licensure to undertake evaluation activities remains valid for five years subject to renewal procedures.

Additional evidence examined by the panel included External Review and Audit Reporting Guidelines, accreditation procedures, and institutional follow-up requirements. The panel observed that each cyclical review process results in the issuance of formal external review or audit report containing findings, commendations, recommendations, and required follow-up actions. Institutions are subsequently required to respond to the review outcomes through improvement plans and corrective actions aimed at addressing identified gaps and strengthening institutional quality enhancement processes.

Overall, the panel found that NAQAAE has established clearly defined and operational periodic review mechanisms that support continuous monitoring, accountability, and quality improvement within higher education institutions and academic programmes.

Analysis

The review panel found that NAQAAE has established a clearly defined and legally supported cyclical review system for both institutional and programme accreditation. The evidence demonstrates that the periodic review arrangements are systematic, predictable, and aligned with the principles of continuous quality enhancement and accountability expected within an effective External Quality Assurance (EQA) framework.

The panel observed that the alignment of programme accreditation cycles with programme duration and accreditation validity reflects a risk-sensitive and context-responsive approach to quality assurance. This ensures that academic programmes are periodically reassessed in relation to curriculum relevance, learning outcomes, institutional capacity, and compliance with accreditation standards. The review cycle therefore promotes sustained quality monitoring rather than one-time accreditation compliance.

The panel further noted that the renewable five-year institutional accreditation cycle provides a structured mechanism for continuous institutional evaluation and improvement. By requiring institutions to undergo periodic re-accreditation, the Authority reinforces the principle that quality assurance is a continuous process rather than a static achievement. The panel considered this approach consistent with internationally recognized quality assurance practices and aligned with the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA).

Evidence reviewed also demonstrated that cyclical reviews are supported by formal reporting and follow-up mechanisms. The issuance of external review and audit reports containing findings, commendations, recommendations, and required follow-up actions contributes to transparency, institutional accountability, and evidence-based quality enhancement. The requirement for institutions to submit improvement plans in response to review findings further strengthens the enhancement-led nature of the accreditation process and promotes institutional ownership of quality improvement initiatives.

The panel also observed that the cyclical review framework is supported by legal and operational instruments, including Executive Regulations, reporting guidelines, accreditation procedures, and institutional follow-up requirements. This provides stability, consistency, and procedural clarity within the accreditation system.

Overall, the panel concluded that NAQAAE's periodic review mechanisms demonstrate a mature and operational quality assurance system that effectively integrates accreditation, monitoring, reporting, and institutional improvement within the Egyptian higher education sector.

Conclusion

Compliant.

Standard 7. Complaints and Appeals

Standard: The procedure for lodging complaints and appeals shall be clearly defined and communicated to the institution concerned.

Evidence

Evidence reviewed by the panel demonstrated that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) has established formal complaints and appeals mechanisms supported by legal, procedural, and operational frameworks to ensure fairness, transparency, and institutional confidence in its External Quality Assurance (EQA) processes. The panel examined provisions contained in Articles 12 and 14 of Law No. 82 of 2006, which

provide the legal basis for institutions to appeal accreditation decisions and challenge aspects of the evaluation process where concerns arise.

The review panel further observed that the Authority has constituted formally approved committees responsible for handling complaints and appeals relating to accreditation outcomes, evaluation procedures, and reviewer conduct. These committees operate within defined procedural regulations and are intended to ensure impartial consideration of institutional concerns and protection of due process within the accreditation system.

Additional evidence reviewed included the Terms and Procedures for Higher Education Accreditation, which clearly outline the rights of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to submit appeals, requests for clarification, and complaints relating to accreditation decisions or the integrity of the evaluation process. The panel noted that these procedures are publicly accessible through the Agency's official website, thereby supporting transparency and institutional awareness of available redress mechanisms.

The panel also established that institutions are permitted to formally raise concerns through a structured electronic submission portal. The digital system allows institutions to submit appeal requests, complaints, supporting documentation, and clarification requests electronically. Evidence examined during the site visit demonstrated that the process is electronically tracked and documented, enabling monitoring of submission status, timelines, responses, and outcomes. The panel considered this mechanism important in promoting procedural transparency, accountability, and traceability within the complaints and appeals process.

The review panel further noted that NAQAAE has established defined timelines for processing complaints and appeals, typically ranging between 30 and 60 days following formal submission. Evidence reviewed indicated that the Authority communicates decisions and outcomes formally to the concerned institutions after completion of the review process. In addition, the panel observed that lessons derived from previous complaints and appeal cases are utilized by the Authority to strengthen evaluation procedures, refine accreditation guidelines, and improve consistency within review processes. The panel considered this feedback and learning mechanism indicative of an enhancement-oriented approach to quality assurance and institutional governance.

Overall, the evidence reviewed demonstrated that NAQAAE has established formal, accessible, and operational complaints and appeals procedures that support fairness, transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement within its External Quality Assurance framework.

Analysis

The review panel found that NAQAAE has established a formal, legally grounded, and operational complaints and appeals system that supports fairness, transparency, and accountability within its External Quality Assurance (EQA) processes. The evidence demonstrates that the complaints and appeals mechanisms are supported by both statutory provisions and operational procedures, thereby providing institutions with clearly defined channels for seeking redress or clarification regarding accreditation outcomes and evaluation processes.

The panel observed that the existence of formally constituted appeals and complaints committees contributes to institutional confidence in the integrity and impartiality of accreditation decisions. The availability of publicly accessible procedures through the Agency's

website further strengthens transparency and ensures that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and stakeholders are adequately informed about their rights, responsibilities, and available procedural remedies.

The review panel also noted that the use of an electronic submission and tracking system enhances procedural efficiency, traceability, and accountability in the management of complaints and appeals. The establishment of defined timelines for handling appeals and complaints further demonstrates a structured and responsive approach to institutional concerns and due process.

In addition, the panel considered it a positive practice that outcomes and lessons from previous complaints and appeal cases are utilized to refine evaluation guidelines and strengthen review procedures. This reflects an enhancement-oriented quality assurance culture in which feedback from operational experiences contributes to continuous improvement of the accreditation system.

Overall, the panel concluded that NAQAAE's complaints and appeals framework is comprehensive and operational, and effectively supports procedural fairness, institutional trust, and continuous improvement within the quality assurance system.

Conclusion

Compliant.

Commendation

1. The review panel commends the Authority for implementing an electronic complaints and appeals submission and tracking system with defined timelines, thereby enhancing procedural efficiency, traceability, and institutional confidence in the accreditation process.

Suggestions for improvement

1. The review panel suggests that NAQAAE strengthens public transparency by periodically publishing anonymized summary statistics and trends relating to complaints and appeals handled by the Authority, while maintaining institutional confidentiality where necessary.
2. The panel further suggests that the Authority continues strengthening awareness and sensitization activities for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and stakeholders regarding complaints and appeals procedures, timelines, and available redress mechanisms to ensure consistent understanding and utilization of the system across the higher education sector.

PART C: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES

Standard 1. Legal Status

Standard: The QAA shall be an autonomous legal entity with clearly defined mandate, scope and powers. It will be recognized as a QAA at a national/regional level.

Evidence

NAQAAE is a public authority established by presidential decree No. 82 of 2006, functioning as an independent legal entity with financial and administrative autonomy under the supervision of the prime minister. Its legal mandate authorizes it to develop, implement and monitor quality assurance and accreditation systems for all education sectors. The decree defines NAQAAE as an autonomous authority possessing its own juridical personality, budget and governance structure. Subsequent bylaws and prime ministerial decisions specify organizational divisions and operational mandates, ensuring lawful continuity. The strategic plan 2025-2030 (Pillars 1 & 4) confirms the autonomy and governance, and also competitiveness – NQF (Pillar 2) and continuous development (Pillar 3) as given in Annex A1.

The Agency has been assigned comprehensive responsibilities and functions including the scope of quality - assurance activities such as development of quality standards, institutional and programme accreditation, training and capacity building, policy research and operation of the National Qualifications Framework established by a competent authority (Annex 2 – Institutional Accreditation Standards, Annex 3 – Programme Accreditation Standards, and Public register of accredited institutions and programmes on the NAQAAE website). These responsibilities are reviewed periodically through the strategic plan 2025-2030 and international best practices. Recognition of the Agency is granted by the Egyptian government and the ministry of higher education and scientific research and affirmed regionally through NAQAAE's membership in ANQAHE, and the HAQAA initiative, and internationally by CHEA (Annex 11 - Annual Achievement Report of the International Cooperation Department (ICD) January to October 2025, and Annex 12 – Signed Protocols and Agreements of the ICD), and WFME (23 April 2019 – WFME Press Release).

Despite NAQAAE having the legal mandate as per its establishment, the Panel members learnt that the authority for the establishment of HIEs is vested in the Ministry of Higher Education, including the programmes to be offered. Except for private HEIs, accreditation of institutions and programmes is not mandatory. The NAQAAE therefore has no control over the public institutions. The accreditation by such institutions is voluntary and more often than not the institutions may opt for some of their programmes to be accredited but not all that are on offer. These sentiments were echoed by the various stakeholders interviewed including the representatives from the Ministry and professional bodies, reviewers, the CEO and senior management staff of the Agency. The panel was also informed that the institutions were directly under the Minister for Higher Education, while the NAQAAE directly submitted decisions from her activities to the Prime Minister. The mandatory accreditation of programmes by public HEIs came only after the programme capacity given during the institution's authorization was likely to exceed. Above the set capacity for a given programme by the Ministry, the institution had to be accredited for it to receive government capitation. It was therefore apparent to the panel members that NAQAAE does not have full control in overseeing the accreditation and quality assurance of all institutions and programmes in Egypt's higher education system. All the groups that narrated the above were unanimous that there was need to accredit all HEIs and the programmes that they

offer, in order to safe guard the quality of the graduates produced and give the entire higher education system both regional and international credibility. (TO BE REMOVED)

Analysis

Evidence of the updated organizational structure indicates that the Agency is formally constituted with defined governance arrangements, reporting lines, and functional units that support the execution of its mandate. This structure demonstrates institutional legitimacy and confirms that NAQAAE operates as an established body with clear roles and responsibilities for decision making and implementation. Furthermore, the accreditation manuals and standards (Annexes 2 and 3) demonstrate NAQAAE's legal and operational authority by showing that the Agency has formally adopted frameworks, procedures and criteria used to conduct institutional and programme accreditation.

The NAQAAE has no full control of public HEIs and the programmes they offer with respect to accreditation and quality assurance. These are carried out on voluntary basis, which may affect the overall quality of output (graduates) of the HEIs in the country.

Conclusion

Compliant.

Suggestions for improvement

1. The review panel suggests that the law for the establishment of NAQAAE be reviewed to ensure mandatory accreditation of both private and government HEIs and their programmes for quality delivery of all the institutions' outputs.
2. The panel further suggests that NAQAAE strengthen collaboration and coordination mechanisms with the Ministry responsible for higher education and other regulatory bodies to enhance coherence between institutional establishment, programme approval, accreditation, and quality assurance oversight within the higher education system.

Standard 2. Vision and Mission Statement

Standard: The QAA shall have written and published vision and mission statements or objectives taking the higher education context into account.

Evidence

Evidence reviewed by the panel demonstrated that the vision and mission statements of National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) are formally articulated, institutionally approved, and periodically reviewed to ensure continued relevance and alignment with national, regional, and international higher education priorities. The panel examined the Authority's Strategic Plan 2025–2030 (Annex A1, p. 14), which contains the approved vision, mission, strategic pillars, and operational priorities of the Agency. Additional evidence reviewed in the Self-Assessment Report (SAR, p. 13) confirmed that the vision and mission statements are approved by the Board of Directors and subject to periodic review as part of the Authority's strategic planning and governance processes.

The panel observed that NAQAAE's vision is articulated as: *"A leading authority for quality assurance and accreditation at the national, regional and international levels, and a key partner in the development of education and the building of Egyptian human capital."* The mission of the Authority is stated as: *"Committed to disseminating the culture of quality and enhancing the quality of education and sustainable professional development through accreditation of educational and training institutions and programs according to standards characterized by transparency and consistent with international standards and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)."*

The review panel further established that the Authority's vision and mission are supported by a clearly defined legal mandate contained in Articles 4–6 of Presidential Decree No. 82 of 2006, which outlines NAQAAE's responsibilities relating to quality assurance, accreditation, standards development, institutional evaluation, and capacity building within Egypt's education sector.

Evidence reviewed also demonstrated that the vision and mission are operationalized through the Strategic Plan 2025–2030, particularly through Pillar 3 relating to continuous development and Pillar 5 focusing on dissemination of quality culture. The panel observed that these strategic priorities are reflected in the Authority's operational activities, including institutional and programme accreditation, post-accreditation follow-up, reviewer training, institutional capacity-building, and development of quality assurance frameworks and standards.

Additional evidence examined during the review included the Institutional Accreditation Standards (Annex A2), Programme Accreditation Standards (Annex A3), National Academic Reference Standards (NARS) for disciplines such as Medicine and Basic Sciences, accreditation manuals, and operational frameworks. The panel considered these instruments as evidence of the practical implementation of the Authority's mission and strategic objectives within the higher education system.

The review panel further noted that NAQAAE's vision and mission statements are periodically reviewed, typically within five-year strategic planning cycles or as required by emerging developments in higher education and quality assurance. Evidence reviewed indicated that these reviews are undertaken to ensure alignment with national and international development priorities, including Egypt Vision 2030, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), and the African Union Agenda 2063.

Overall, the panel found that NAQAAE's vision and mission are clearly defined, legally supported, strategically integrated, and operationally reflected in the Authority's quality assurance activities and strategic planning frameworks.

Analysis

The review panel found that NAQAAE has established clearly articulated and formally approved vision and mission statements that provide strategic direction for its quality assurance and accreditation activities. The evidence demonstrates that the vision and mission are not merely declarative statements, but are institutionally embedded within the Authority's governance framework, legal mandate, and strategic planning processes. The panel observed that the alignment between the vision, mission, legal mandate, and strategic pillars of the Strategic Plan 2025–2030 reflects institutional coherence and strategic consistency. The integration of quality culture dissemination, continuous development, accreditation, and

capacity-building activities within the strategic framework demonstrates that the Authority's operational activities are directly linked to its stated mission and long-term objectives.

The review panel further noted that the Authority's vision and mission are strongly aligned with national, regional, and international priorities, including Egypt Vision 2030, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), and the African Union Agenda 2063. This alignment demonstrates that NAQAAE positions quality assurance not only as a regulatory function but also as a strategic instrument for educational transformation, human capital development, and international competitiveness. The panel also considered the periodic review of the vision and mission statements as evidence of an adaptive and forward-looking governance approach. The regular review cycles enable the Authority to respond to emerging developments in higher education, evolving quality assurance practices, and changing stakeholder expectations. In addition, the existence of comprehensive accreditation standards, National Academic Reference Standards (NARS), accreditation manuals, and operational frameworks demonstrates that the Authority has translated its strategic vision and mission into practical quality assurance instruments and implementation mechanisms. This reflects institutional maturity and operational effectiveness within the External Quality Assurance system.

Overall, the review panel concluded that NAQAAE's vision and mission statements are clear, strategically aligned, operationally integrated, and effectively reflected in the Authority's governance structures, quality assurance activities, and long-term development priorities.

Conclusion

Compliant.

Commendations

1. The review panel commends National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) for establishing clearly articulated vision and mission statements that are legally supported, strategically aligned, and effectively integrated into the Authority's governance, quality assurance, and accreditation activities.
2. The panel further commends the Authority for aligning its strategic priorities and operational frameworks with national, regional, and international development agendas, including Egypt Vision 2030, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), and the African Union Agenda 2063, thereby positioning quality assurance as a key instrument for educational transformation and human capital development.

Standard 3. Governance and management

Standard: The QAA shall have clearly defined structures that ensure sound and ethical governance and management, including good practices of QA that support its mission and legal mandate.

Evidence

The NAQAAE's governance model ensures transparent leadership, ethical accountability, and compliance with national law through a clear legal mandate, collective decision-making structures, and codified operational procedures. Established under Law No. 82 of 2006, the Authority operates with defined autonomy while remaining subject to Parliamentary oversight. Strategic and accreditation decisions are taken collectively by the Board of Directors, supported by strict codes of conduct that safeguard impartiality and manage conflicts of interest. Transparency is reinforced through publicly available standards and procedures, while legally regulated appeals and financial oversight ensure due process and accountability. The Board of Directors provides strategic oversight; the executive leadership manages daily operations within an integrated governance framework defined in the Strategic Plan 2025–2030 (Section 9). Pillar 1 (Governance) of the strategic plan emphasizes organizational development, accountability systems, and KPI-based performance monitoring (Annex 1 – Strategic Plan, Pillar 1 on Governance and Organizational Chart (2024)).

Members of NAQAAE's Board of Directors with qualified experienced leadership skills to oversee the development and management of best practices in QA in higher education are appointed by the Prime Minister in accordance with the law that established the Agency. This appointment mechanism combines state-level accountability with statutory safeguards on independence, conflict of interest, and collective competence, ensuring that the Board provides strategic oversight without interference in operational or accreditation decisions. The Strategic Plan (Annex 1) Section 10 (Enabler 1) identifies “effective governance and administrative efficiency” as a core enabler, noting NAQAAE's experienced senior leadership and focus on capacity building. Mechanisms for the appointment of the members of the governing Board and the chief executive officer have been given in the law of the Agency's establishment and are supported by a well-structured criteria. The Board of Directors and committees have clear mandate, powers, responsibilities and tenure. They operate under mandates defined in the Presidential Decree 2006 Articles 2 and 3 and bylaws. Pillar 1 of the Strategic Plan specifies updating the organizational structure, procedures, and internal accountability systems.

Stakeholder engagement mechanisms (consultative committees, focus groups) align with the participatory approach described in Pillar 1 and Section 9 of the Strategic Plan, ensuring feedback loops and evidence-based revisions of standards. The NAQAAE's Code of Ethics and Integrity Policy corresponds with the Enabler 1 framework, which emphasizes transparency, accountability, and equitable governance. Internal Audit and Legal Units operate under policies aligned with Pillar 1 (Governance), which includes activation of internal review and complaints systems to support decision-making and ethics monitoring.

The Agency maintains a structured internal grievance and appeals mechanism for employees and reviewers, ensuring equity, confidentiality, and procedural justice. Complaints or appeals related processes are embedded within the Internal Quality Assurance Policy (2023) and governed by Pillar 1 (Governance) and Section 9 of the Strategic Plan 2025 – 2030, which mandate transparent internal review, complaint-handling, and corrective action as key indicators of good governance. Regular staff satisfaction and feedback surveys form

organizational improvement and feed into the Strategic Improvement Matrix, ensuring accountability and a learning culture.

Analysis

The leadership and board documentation together with board meeting minutes and the organizational chart provide evidence of an established governance system with defined roles, reporting lines and active oversight. The evidence also demonstrates that governance functions are operational through documented meetings and decisions while executive appointment records confirm that senior management positions are formally constituted through legitimate processes, supporting leadership continuity and accountability.

Furthermore, financial documentation, communication strategy and evidence of stakeholder participation show that NAQAAE operates with systems that support institutional sustainability, transparency and inclusive engagement with relevant stakeholders. The staff training policy, disciplinary procedures, staff code of conduct and ethics policy further demonstrate that NAQAAE maintains internal management control that promotes professionalism, integrity and continuous staff development, thereby strengthening the effectiveness and credibility of its governance and management framework.

Conclusion

Compliant.

Commendations

1. The review panel commends the Authority for integrating ethical governance, stakeholder participation, internal quality assurance, and performance monitoring within its Strategic Plan 2025–2030, thereby strengthening institutional sustainability, professionalism, and evidence-based management practices.
2. The review panel further commends NAQAAE for enhancing internal capacity development initiatives for Board members, senior management, and staff in areas such as strategic governance, risk management, digital transformation, and emerging quality assurance practices to support continuous institutional improvement and long-term sustainability.

Suggestions for Improvement

1. The review panel suggests that the Authority strengthens documentation and communication of governance outcomes, performance indicators, and stakeholder feedback utilization to enhance institutional transparency and public understanding of governance effectiveness.

Standard 4. Independence of Quality Assurance Agency

Standard: The QAA shall be independent in its operations, outcomes, judgements and decisions.

Evidence

The NAQAAE's independence is legally guaranteed, operationally safeguarded, and ethically reinforced. Organizationally, the Authority functions as an autonomous entity established by law with its own governance and budgetary control. Operationally, it defines and implements its quality-assurance methodologies, selects and trains reviewers, and manages procedures without interference. In terms of formal outcomes, accreditation decisions are taken and published by NAQAAE itself, subject to internal appeals procedures. The Strategic Plan 2025–2030, particularly Pillar 1 (Governance) and Section 9 (Plan Governance), embeds mechanisms to strengthen transparency, accountability, and performance-based oversight, thereby ensuring that independence is both legally anchored and practically observed. These provisions affirm full compliance with ASG QA Standard 4 and demonstrate NAQAAE's credibility as an impartial and autonomous national quality-assurance authority. NAQAAE's independence is enshrined in its legal mandate and operationalized through governance systems that guarantee impartiality of judgment. The Authority exercises autonomous decision making in accreditation, standard setting, and publication of results, free from external interference. Independence is maintained through a multi-tier governance structure that separates policy oversight (Board of Directors) from operational execution (executive leadership and review committees). The Strategic Plan 2025–2030 (Pillar 1 – Governance) underscores the need for integrity, transparency, and accountability as essential dimensions of autonomy.

The NAQAAE organizational independence is guaranteed by Presidential Decree No. 82 of 2006, which established NAQAAE as an independent legal entity with its own financial and administrative authority. The Authority operates under the supervision of the Prime Minister but is not subordinate to any ministry or university. The Strategic Plan 2025–2030 (Pillar 1) confirms that governance reforms are designed to strengthen accountability while protecting the Authority's autonomy. Operational independence is maintained through internally approved evaluation manuals, review criteria, and expert nomination procedures developed solely by NAQAAE. The Board approves standards and methods, but external stakeholders, such as ministries or HEIs, cannot influence accreditation of outcomes. Expert reviewers are selected through a transparent qualification and training system, aligned with the Strategic Plan 2025–2030 (Pillar 3 – Continuous Development), which ensures consistent reviewer quality and impartiality.

Accreditation and quality assurance decisions are legally vested in NAQAAE. The final outcomes (accreditation decisions) in compliance with its statutory mandate, are made by the authority itself, not by external bodies, HEIs, or reviewers. No external authority may alter or veto a decision once ratified by the Board. Final reports and accreditation outcomes are published on the Authority's website, ensuring public transparency and demonstrating the Authority's independent responsibility for judgments. Section 9 of the Strategic Plan confirms that decision-making remains internal, guided by formal review and feedback mechanisms.

Analysis

The NAQAAE's independence is guaranteed by law and safeguarded operationally and ethically. The organizational independence is established by Presidential Decree No. 82 of 2006 which enables NAQAAE to operate autonomously with its own governance and budget. Its operational independence allows NAQAAE to define and implement its quality-assurance methodologies without external interference. Based on its independence of formal outcomes, the accreditation decisions are made and published by NAQAAE, with internal appeals

procedures. NAQAAE's Strategic Plan 2025-2030 strengthens transparency, accountability, and performance-based oversight, ensuring independence and compliance with ASG QA Standard.

Conclusion

Compliant.

Commendations

1. The review panel commends National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) for establishing a legally grounded and operationally safeguarded framework that ensures institutional, operational, and decision-making independence in the conduct of External Quality Assurance activities.
2. The panel further commends the Authority for embedding transparency, accountability, ethical conduct, and performance-based governance mechanisms within its Strategic Plan 2025–2030, thereby reinforcing the credibility, impartiality, and integrity of accreditation decisions and quality assurance processes.

Standard 5. Policies, Processes and Activities

Standard: The QAA shall undertake its QA activities in accordance with the standards and guidelines articulated in Part B of the ASG-QA.

Evidence

Evidence reviewed by the panel demonstrated that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) has established comprehensive policies, processes, and operational activities embedded within its Strategic Plan 2025–2030, particularly under Pillar 2 relating to continuous development, standards, and frameworks. The Strategic Plan establishes mechanisms for periodic review and updating of quality assurance standards and frameworks across educational sectors to ensure alignment with developments in quality assurance, outcome-based education (OBE), and performance measurement systems.

The panel examined evidence showing that all quality assurance activities, including institutional accreditation, programme accreditation, thematic evaluation, and follow-up processes, are governed by formally approved standards, manuals, procedures, and operational tools. Evidence further demonstrated that accreditation standards, operational manuals, procedures, and final accreditation decisions are publicly accessible through the Authority's official website, thereby supporting transparency and accessibility of information.

Additional evidence reviewed indicated that the Strategic Plan 2025–2030, particularly Section 9 relating to Plan Governance, assigns responsibility for monitoring, implementation, and periodic review of quality assurance processes to the Internal Quality Assurance Unit and the Board of Directors. This governance arrangement supports institutional accountability and oversight of quality assurance activities.

The panel further observed that NAQAAE's evaluation frameworks cover key domains including teaching and learning, scientific research, governance, community engagement, staffing, learning resources, financial sustainability, and institutional effectiveness. These

domains are operationalized through institutional accreditation standards, programme accreditation standards, National Academic Reference Standards (NARS), self-assessment templates, and evaluation manuals that guide institutional evidence collection and external review processes. The evidence examined also demonstrated that the Authority operates a structured external review workflow comprising institutional self-assessment validation, peer review panel formation, site visits, oral feedback sessions, draft report verification, final accreditation decisions, and follow-up monitoring mechanisms. Peer reviewers are selected from a structured reviewer database and are required to comply with confidentiality and conflict-of-interest requirements.

The review panel also noted that stakeholder engagement forms an integral component of NAQAAE's operational processes. Evidence reviewed showed that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), ministries, employers, professional experts, and civil society representatives participate in consultations, standards review exercises, validation meetings, workshops, and piloting activities relating to quality assurance frameworks and procedures. The evidence further demonstrated that NAQAAE implements continuous capacity-building activities for peer reviewers, quality assurance officers, and institutional representatives under Pillar 7 of the Strategic Plan relating to Human Capital Development. The Authority also maintains reviewer qualification, training, and performance monitoring systems aimed at strengthening professionalism, consistency, and integrity within external review processes.

The panel also examined evidence relating to internal monitoring and quality improvement mechanisms, including annual reports, KPI dashboards, reviewer evaluations, institutional feedback systems, and periodic strategic reviews conducted by the Board of Directors and Strategic Planning Unit. The Strategic Plan further provides for mid-term and biennial evaluations aimed at monitoring operational effectiveness and alignment with national quality improvement objectives. Additional evidence reviewed demonstrated that NAQAAE actively participates in regional and international quality assurance initiatives and benchmarking activities through engagement with the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), HAQAA3, African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN), and International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAHE). The panel observed that these engagements support alignment with continental and international quality assurance frameworks and best practices.

Analysis

The review panel found that NAQAAE has established a comprehensive, integrated, and operational quality assurance system supported by clearly defined policies, procedures, governance mechanisms, and strategic planning frameworks. The evidence demonstrates strong alignment between the Authority's strategic objectives and its operational quality assurance activities, thereby ensuring coherence between policy direction and implementation.

The panel observed that the existence of publicly accessible standards, accreditation manuals, operational procedures, and reporting mechanisms reflects a strong commitment to transparency, accountability, and procedural consistency within the External Quality Assurance system. The structured workflow guiding accreditation processes further demonstrates institutional maturity and alignment with internationally recognized quality assurance practices.

The review panel further noted that NAQAAE's quality assurance framework comprehensively addresses key higher education functions including teaching and learning, research, governance, community engagement, staffing, infrastructure, and institutional sustainability. The integration of learning outcomes, National Academic Reference Standards (NARS), and performance indicators within accreditation processes reflects a strong enhancement-oriented and evidence-based approach to quality assurance.

The panel also considered stakeholder engagement and capacity-building activities to be significant strengths within the Authority's operational framework. The involvement of HEIs, ministries, employers, professional experts, and civil society in standards development and review processes contributes to institutional ownership, contextual relevance, and public confidence in accreditation outcomes. In addition, the panel found that the Authority has established systematic monitoring and continuous improvement mechanisms through KPI dashboards, annual reviews, strategic evaluations, reviewer monitoring, and institutional feedback systems. These mechanisms demonstrate a commitment to evidence-based management, institutional learning, and continuous enhancement of quality assurance processes. The panel further observed that NAQAAE's participation in regional and international quality assurance networks and benchmarking initiatives strengthens alignment with continental and global good practices and contributes to the international credibility of the Authority's quality assurance system.

Overall, the review panel concluded that NAQAAE operates a robust, participatory, and strategically aligned quality assurance ecosystem characterized by transparency, accountability, operational consistency, and continuous improvement.

Conclusion

Compliant.

Commendations

1. The review panel commends National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) for establishing a comprehensive and strategically integrated quality assurance framework supported by clearly defined policies, operational procedures, accreditation standards, and governance mechanisms that ensure consistency, transparency, and accountability within its External Quality Assurance system.
2. The panel further commends the Authority for implementing a structured and transparent accreditation workflow that incorporates institutional self-assessment, peer review, stakeholder engagement, draft report verification, follow-up monitoring, and continuous improvement mechanisms aligned with international good practices.
3. The review panel also commends NAQAAE for its strong commitment to stakeholder participation, capacity building, and regional and international benchmarking through active engagement with HEIs, professional stakeholders, and international quality assurance networks, thereby strengthening institutional credibility and alignment with continental and global quality assurance frameworks.

Standard 6. Internal Quality Assurance

Standard: The QAA shall have in place policies and processes for its own IQA related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of its activities.

Evidence

Evidence reviewed by the panel demonstrated that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAEE) has established a structured and operational Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system embedded within its governance, strategic planning, monitoring, and continuous improvement frameworks. The IQA policy has been reviewed twice and the latest edition was published in 2023. The Internal Quality Assurance arrangements are institutionally anchored within the Strategic Plan 2025–2030 (Annex 1), particularly under Pillar 1 relating to Governance and Organizational Development, which emphasizes accountability systems, institutional effectiveness, transparency, performance monitoring, and continuous quality enhancement.

The panel examined evidence indicating that the Authority operates systematic internal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms through Annual Achievement Reports (Annex 10), performance review systems, operational dashboards, and strategic monitoring tools. These mechanisms are used to assess institutional performance, monitor implementation of strategic objectives, evaluate operational effectiveness, and support evidence-based decision-making across the Authority's quality assurance activities. Additional evidence reviewed included accreditation workflow charts, operational procedures, and internal process maps, which provide clarity regarding institutional responsibilities, reporting lines, operational sequencing, and decision-making processes within the Authority. The panel observed that these operational tools support consistency, procedural transparency, and institutional coordination in the implementation of both Internal and External Quality Assurance activities.

The review panel further examined the Authority's Code of Ethics, reviewer conduct guidelines, and conflict-of-interest procedures (Annexes 5 and 6), which establish principles relating to professionalism, integrity, confidentiality, impartiality, and accountability. These ethical frameworks apply to staff members, peer reviewers, and participants involved in accreditation and quality assurance activities and are intended to safeguard institutional credibility and public confidence in the Authority's operations. The evidence also demonstrated that NAQAEE maintains structured peer reviewer databases and reviewer management systems (Annex A9), supported by regular reviewer orientation programmes, staff development initiatives, and capacity-building activities (Annex A7). The panel noted that these mechanisms support continuous professional development, reviewer competence, methodological consistency, and institutional learning within the quality assurance system.

The panel also reviewed stakeholder feedback and satisfaction survey mechanisms (Annex 10), which are used to collect feedback from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), reviewers, trainees, and other stakeholders regarding accreditation processes, training activities, operational effectiveness, and institutional services. Evidence reviewed indicated that the outcomes of these surveys are incorporated into institutional review and improvement processes, thereby supporting a feedback-driven quality culture and continuous enhancement of operational practices.

Further evidence examined by the panel included records of regional and international cooperation activities, benchmarking initiatives, and quality assurance partnerships (Annexes

11 and 12). These activities involve engagement with regional and international quality assurance networks, collaborative projects, benchmarking exercises, and international partnerships aimed at strengthening institutional learning, alignment with international standards, and continuous improvement of quality assurance practices.

The review panel also noted that internal review, monitoring, and improvement activities are integrated within the Authority's governance and strategic management structures through periodic reporting, strategic evaluations, institutional performance reviews, and continuous monitoring mechanisms. These arrangements support institutional accountability, operational sustainability, and responsiveness to emerging developments within higher education and quality assurance.

Analysis

The review panel found that NAQAAE has established a comprehensive, integrated, and operational Internal Quality Assurance system that effectively supports institutional accountability, continuous improvement, operational consistency, and strategic management within the Authority.

The panel observed that the Internal Quality Assurance arrangements are strongly embedded within the Authority's governance structures, strategic planning framework, and operational management systems. The existence of structured monitoring tools, Annual Achievement Reports, operational dashboards, process maps, and performance review mechanisms demonstrates a mature institutional approach to quality management and evidence-based decision-making.

The review panel further noted that the integration of ethical frameworks, reviewer conduct guidelines, and conflict-of-interest procedures strengthens institutional integrity, transparency, and professionalism within both internal operations and external review activities. These mechanisms contribute significantly to maintaining public trust and safeguarding the credibility of accreditation outcomes.

The panel also considered continuous staff development, reviewer training, and capacity-building initiatives to be important strengths within the Authority's Internal Quality Assurance system. The structured reviewer databases, training programmes, and professional development activities demonstrate a commitment to institutional learning, competence enhancement, and consistency in quality assurance implementation.

In addition, the panel observed that stakeholder feedback mechanisms and satisfaction surveys are systematically integrated into the Authority's improvement processes. The use of feedback from institutions, reviewers, trainees, and stakeholders to inform operational review and quality enhancement reflects the existence of a participatory and feedback-driven quality culture within the organization.

The review panel further found that NAQAAE's engagement in regional and international cooperation, benchmarking activities, and quality assurance networks contributes to institutional learning, alignment with international good practices, and continuous enhancement of its Internal Quality Assurance system.

Overall, the panel concluded that NAQAAE demonstrates a well-established and effective Internal Quality Assurance system characterized by strong governance oversight, operational monitoring, ethical accountability, stakeholder engagement, institutional learning, and commitment to continuous quality enhancement in alignment with internationally recognized quality assurance practices.

Conclusion

Compliant.

Commendations

1. The review panel commends National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) for establishing a comprehensive and well-integrated Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system that is strategically embedded within its governance structures, operational processes, and Strategic Plan 2025–2030.
2. The panel further commends the Authority for implementing effective monitoring, ethical oversight, and performance management mechanisms, including Annual Achievement Reports, operational monitoring tools, reviewer conduct guidelines, and conflict-of-interest procedures, which collectively strengthen accountability, transparency, and institutional credibility.
3. The review panel also commends NAQAAE for fostering a strong culture of continuous improvement through structured reviewer development programmes, stakeholder feedback systems, benchmarking activities, and active engagement in regional and international quality assurance networks and collaborations.

Suggestions for Improvement

1. The review panel suggests that the Authority enhances documentation and reporting of the impact of its Internal Quality Assurance activities, particularly regarding how stakeholder feedback, internal audits, and performance reviews inform strategic planning, operational reforms, and continuous improvement actions.

Standard 7. Financial and Human Resources

Standard: The QAA shall have adequate and appropriate human, financial and material resources to carry out its QA mandate effectively and efficiently.

Evidence

In accordance with the Presidential Decree No. 82 of 2006, Article 20 and 23, the NAQAAE's funds are derived from namely; (1) Funds allocated by the state in the first five years after the institution or commencement of its activity, (2) Charges of the services and consultations provided by the Authority in the context of achieving its goals, (3) Fees of issuing accreditation certificates to educational institutions and the fees of the petitions complaining of the decisions made by the Authority, (4) Grants, donations, gifts, advice and subsidies approved by the board of directors, provided that these do not conflict with its goals and that they fit with the rules of the law, (5) Investment return of the Authority's funds, and (6) Fines stipulated in

Article 23 of the law. The NAQAAE was established in 2006, hence the state of five years since its establishment has long elapsed. The Authority therefore no longer receives any funds for its annual budget from the state.

As stipulated in the law under Article 8, the “Authority’s board of directors determines the fees of issuing the accreditation certificate to the educational institution so that they do not exceed L.E. 50,000 (fifty thousand Egyptian pounds) according to the nature of each certificate and institution. The board of directors also determines the fees of the petitions complaining of the decisions made by the Authority which should not exceed L.E. 5,000 (five thousand Egyptian pounds) for every decision”. During the interview the management of NAQAAE informed the review panel that the funds from the major source, accreditation processes, was dictated by the law and the amount collected could only increase appreciably if the fees in the law were revised upwards. There has been no revision of the ceiling of accreditation fees since the establishment of the law in 2006, yet the cost of the quality assurance processes have increased over the years. The revision of the accreditation fees was becoming a necessity as the Authority’s activities increased with additional activities related to quality audits and revision of the current standards and norms that are in use.

The annual budget for 2024/2025 as given by the Financial and Administrative Affairs department was L.E. 66,304,389 (Egyptian pounds) of which L.E. 61,810,311 was from accreditation activities, L.E. 3,121,762 from grants and donations and L.E. 1,372,317 from other revenues and profits. The other revenue streams included moneys from training, workshops and webinars coordinated by the NAQAAE staff in the areas of capacity building in quality assurance matters for higher education institutions. From the interviews with the staff from Financial and Administrative Affairs department, coupled with the availed signed audited accounts for 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 fiscal years, the review panel was satisfied with the prudent utilization of the annual budgets for the processes and activities undertaken by NAQAAE. The evidence reviewed demonstrated the existence of budgetary planning processes, financial oversight arrangements, operational expenditure management, and external financial accountability mechanisms supporting the sustainability of the Authority’s operations.

The NAQAAE is located at 5 Mahmoud El Meligy Street, Nasr City – Cairo, Egypt. The Authority occupies two floors of the building that formerly housed the headquarters of the Information and Decision Support Centre in Haram. The review panel examined the Authority’s asset inventory, walked around the premises observing the facilities and also interviewed staff members on the working environment as per their designated duties. The facilities included desktop computers, laptops, IP telephones, printers, scanners, projectors, and servers. The panel noted that although the staff members shared offices, they had adequate infrastructure and ICT facilities for the implementation of the Authority’s external quality assurance activities within a conducive working environment.

The review panel established that human resource development forms an integral component of the Authority’s Strategic Plan 2025–2030 (Annex A1), particularly under Pillar 7 relating to Human Capital Development. This strategic pillar emphasizes staff development, continuous professional learning, reviewer competence enhancement, and institutional capacity strengthening. The panel reviewed Reviewer Training Records and Capacity-Building Activities (Annex A7), which provide evidence of continuous professional development programmes, workshops, orientation sessions, and reviewer training initiatives aimed at strengthening methodological consistency, professional competence, and quality assurance expertise. The

panel also reviewed staffing structures, staff appraisal forms, staff evaluation results, and human resource operational practices during meetings with management and administrative personnel. Evidence examined demonstrated that staff performance monitoring and evaluation systems are operational and integrated into institutional management and accountability processes. The panel further observed that staff development and performance assessment are linked to institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement objectives.

The panel members noted that the NAQAAE had a total of 91 staff compliment as per the legal reference for the human resources activity data shown to the review panel. Of these 17 held leadership and supervisory roles. The panel observed that 11 members had earned doctoral degrees while 7 had earned Master's degree in diverse disciplines. Also all three Vice Presidents that deputized the President (CEO) were female. The gender distribution of staff in NAQAAE between male and female was at the ratio of 61:30, approximately a 2:1 ratio. The panel members noted that the staff were qualified and equipped with the necessary experience to undertake the activities of NAQAAE.

Evidence reviewed by the panel demonstrated that NAQAAE has established strategic frameworks aimed at supporting the sustainability and effective management of its financial, human, and material resources. Financial sustainability and resource management are embedded within the Strategic Plan 2025–2030 (Annex A1), particularly under Pillar 6 relating to Sustainability, which outlines institutional objectives concerning efficient resource utilization, diversification of income sources, operational sustainability, and institutional resilience.

Analysis

The NAQAAE's main source of income comes from accreditation fees paid by higher education institutions. Other sources of income include charges from services and consultancy, grants, donations, gifts, subsidies, and investment returns. Furthermore, the NAQAAE has two floors which are partitioned to cater for the staff and top management, with adequate space for carrying out the external quality assurance activities. The review panel also found out that NAQAAE has adequate infrastructure and ICT facilities for use by staff in the course of their duty.

The review panel noted that the NAQAAE had in place the following policies, namely; (1) Job structure, (2) Employee recruitment and appointment procedures, (3) Evaluation and promotion policies, (4) Job retention policy, and (5) Disciplinary policy. It was observed that the employment recruitment and appointment policy was adhered to as the staff members were found qualified for the external quality assurance work in the Authority. The panel also found gender ratio of male: female of 2:1 to be satisfactory. The panel also confirmed the existence of operational staff appraisal and evaluation systems through review of appraisal forms, and staff evaluation records. This was through discussions with management and staff members, and validation of some excerpts of the documents by members of the panel. These mechanisms demonstrate that staff performance monitoring and accountability processes are implemented within the Authority's management system.

The review panel found that NAQAAE has established a sound strategic and operational framework supporting the management, sustainability, and effective deployment of its financial, human, and material resources. The existence of continuous professional

development programmes, and strategic planning arrangements reflects a well-organized institutional approach to capacity development and implementation of quality assurance activities. The evidence reviewed demonstrated that resource planning, staff development and monitoring, and operational sustainability are integrated within the Authority's Strategic Plan 2025–2030 and embedded within its governance and quality assurance structures. The review panel therefore has confidence in the Authority's financial governance systems and human resource management practices. The Authority also has infrastructural adequacy and human capital for the external quality assurance activities.

Conclusion

Compliant

Commendation

1. The review panel commends the NAQAAE for maintaining staff development and performance monitoring systems, including continuous professional development programmes, and operational staff appraisal processes that contribute to accountability and professionalism within the organization.

Suggestions for Improvement

1. The review panel suggests that NAQAAE, with the relevant Ministry and stakeholders enhance their efforts in having the law that establishment the Authority amended to reflect more flexibility in the fees charged for accreditation processes.

Standard 8. Benchmarking, Networking and Collaboration

Standard: The QAA shall promote and participate in international initiatives, workshops and conferences, and collaborate with relevant bodies on QA to exchange and share experiences and best practices.

Evidence

Evidence reviewed by the panel demonstrated that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) has established strong regional and international benchmarking, networking, and collaboration mechanisms that support alignment with international good practices and enhance the credibility of Egypt's External Quality Assurance (EQA) system. The panel observed that the legal mandate establishing NAQAAE under Law No. 82 of 2006 explicitly provides for regional and international cooperation in quality assurance and accreditation. Specifically, Article 4, subsections 12 and 13 mandate the Authority to establish exchange relations with regional and international quality assurance and accreditation agencies for purposes of mutual recognition of qualifications and to participate in regional, international, and national forums relating to quality assurance and accreditation systems.

The review panel further established that NAQAAE's accreditation standards and quality assurance frameworks have been benchmarked against several regional and international reference frameworks, including the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), the African

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA), standards of the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), and requirements of the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME). The panel considered this benchmarking process important in supporting comparability, international recognition, and alignment with evolving global quality assurance practices.

Evidence reviewed during the evaluation further demonstrated that NAQAAE actively participates in several regional and international quality assurance networks and professional bodies. According to evidence reviewed in the Self-Assessment Report (SAR, p. 70) and confirmed during the site visit, these networks include the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN), and International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAHE). The panel further confirmed during interviews and review of supporting documentation that NAQAAE maintains active participation and membership engagement within these networks. However, a lapse in membership payment to AfriQAN was noted by the review panel.

Additional evidence examined included bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements, memoranda of understanding, partnership protocols, and collaborative initiatives documented in Annexes A11 and A12. These agreements demonstrate the Authority's commitment to international cooperation, benchmarking, joint capacity-building, and exchange of quality assurance expertise. Key examples reviewed by the panel included: (1) A 2018 Memorandum of Alliance with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) focusing on exchange of quality assurance standards and joint workshops; (2) A 2022 Memorandum of Understanding with the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) aimed at mutual recognition of qualifications and cooperation in higher education quality assurance; (3) A 2024 Cooperation Protocol with the Council for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Higher Education in the Republic of Yemen relating to academic accreditation and quality assurance collaboration; (4) A 2025 Memorandum of Cooperation with the Libyan Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Educational and Training Institutions; (5) A Memorandum of Agreement with the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) for joint organization of quality assurance workshops in Egypt; and (6) A grant agreement with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) supporting a quality enhancement project implemented jointly with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the Association of African Universities (AAU). The panel observed that these collaborations support benchmarking, institutional learning, technical assistance, capacity building, harmonization of standards, and regional cooperation in higher education quality assurance.

Evidence further demonstrated that NAQAAE actively participates in continental and international projects aimed at strengthening quality assurance and harmonization within higher education systems. Examples reviewed by the panel included participation in the Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF), the African Credit Transfer System (ACTS) initiative, and HAQAA3 dissemination projects aimed at promoting the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ASG-QA) and strengthening quality culture within African higher education systems. The review panel also noted that NAQAAE staff members regularly participate in regional and international conferences, workshops, forums, and knowledge exchange initiatives relating to higher education quality assurance. Evidence reviewed included participation in the "Good Practices and Future Challenges of Higher Education Quality" Forum held in Kuwait in February 2025 and the "International Missions for Knowledge Exchange" Project in Accra, Ghana in September 2025.

The panel further established that NAQAAE developed and oversees implementation of Egypt's National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which contributes significantly to comparability, recognition, harmonization of qualifications, and regional and international mobility within higher education systems.

Analysis

The review panel found that NAQAAE demonstrates a strong commitment to regional and international benchmarking, collaboration, and networking as part of its quality assurance strategy. The evidence reviewed indicates that the Authority actively engages with continental and international quality assurance frameworks, professional networks, and collaborative initiatives to strengthen institutional learning, harmonization, and alignment with international good practices.

The panel observed that the legal mandate supporting international cooperation provides a strong foundation for the Authority's engagement in regional and global quality assurance activities. The benchmarking of accreditation standards against internationally recognized frameworks such as ESG, ASG-QA, ANQAHE, and WFME demonstrates a deliberate effort to ensure comparability, credibility, and international recognition of Egypt's higher education quality assurance arrangements. The review panel further noted that NAQAAE's active participation in regional and international quality assurance networks enhances opportunities for professional exchange, institutional learning, capacity building, and adoption of emerging quality assurance practices. The Authority's membership and collaboration activities contribute positively to strengthening regional harmonization and mutual recognition of academic qualifications.

The panel also considered the bilateral and multilateral agreements, memoranda of understanding, and collaborative projects as evidence of a mature and outward-looking institutional approach to quality assurance development. These collaborations support joint learning, benchmarking, technical cooperation, reviewer development, and dissemination of quality assurance good practices across regions. In addition, the panel observed that participation in continental initiatives such as PAQAF, ACTS, and HAQAA3 demonstrates NAQAAE's commitment to African higher education harmonization, academic mobility, quality culture promotion, and implementation of continental quality assurance frameworks. The review panel further found that NAQAAE's role in the development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) strengthens comparability, transparency, and recognition of qualifications both regionally and internationally. This role significantly enhances the Authority's contribution to higher education integration and internationalization.

Overall, the panel concluded that NAQAAE demonstrates strong regional and international engagement, effective benchmarking practices, and substantial collaboration activities that contribute significantly to the strengthening, credibility, harmonization, and international recognition of Egypt's External Quality Assurance system.

Conclusion

Compliant

Suggestion for Improvement

1. The NAQAAE should re-affirm its membership within AfriQAN.

Standard 9. Periodic Review of Quality Assurance Agencies

Standard: The QAA shall undergo periodic internal and external reviews for continuous improvement.

Evidence

Evidence reviewed by the panel demonstrated that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) has established an Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) framework that supports periodic institutional self-evaluation, monitoring of operational effectiveness, and continuous improvement of its quality assurance activities. The panel examined the Internal Quality Assurance Policy (2023), which provides mechanisms for periodic evaluation of the Authority's activities, stakeholder engagement processes, and institutional performance monitoring. Additional evidence reviewed in the Self-Assessment Report (SAR, pp. 66 and 72) and the Strategic Plan 2025–2030 (Annex A1, Section 9 on Plan Governance, pp. 73–75) demonstrated that annual evaluations of operational activities and institutional performance are conducted and that the outcomes are integrated into strategic planning, monitoring, and improvement processes. The panel observed that the governance framework provides for institutional oversight, monitoring of implementation activities, and follow-up of strategic objectives through defined review and accountability mechanisms.

The review panel further established that NAQAAE previously participated in an external regional review conducted under the Harmonization of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation (HAQAA) Initiative in 2018. Evidence reviewed included the published HAQAA External Pilot Review Report (Annex A13), issued in March 2019, which assessed the Authority against the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA). The panel noted that the external review commended the Authority for developing and embedding an internal quality culture within its operations.

During interviews with the Chief Executive Officer and senior management staff, the panel received evidence indicating that several recommendations and suggestions arising from the 2019 external review had not been comprehensively implemented. The panel was informed that this situation resulted partly from leadership transition following changes in executive management and the absence of a formal tracking and follow-up mechanism for monitoring implementation of external review recommendations. The panel also established that the current HAQAA3 review represents a subsequent external evaluation of the Authority following the 2018 pilot review. Evidence reviewed indicated that the current review process is intended to further support alignment with regional and international quality assurance good practices and contribute to strengthening the quality assurance system within Egypt's higher education sector.

Analysis

The review panel found that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) demonstrates commitment to periodic self-evaluation and external

review as part of its Internal Quality Assurance framework. The evidence reviewed indicates that the Authority has established internal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms through its Internal Quality Assurance Policy (2023), annual performance reviews, and governance arrangements embedded within the Strategic Plan 2025–2030. These mechanisms support institutional reflection, performance monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement within the Authority's operations.

The panel also noted positively that NAQAAE voluntarily participated in the HAQAA External Pilot Review conducted in 2018 and subsequently engaged in the current HAQAA3 review process. This demonstrates openness to external scrutiny, benchmarking, and alignment with the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA). The publication of the 2019 external review report further reflects transparency and institutional willingness to subject its operations to independent evaluation.

However, despite the existence of internal review mechanisms and participation in external evaluations, the panel observed important limitations in the systematic implementation and follow-up of recommendations arising from the previous external review. Interviews conducted during the site visit confirmed that several recommendations and suggestions from the 2019 external review had not been fully implemented due to leadership transition challenges and the absence of a formal institutional tracking mechanism for monitoring implementation progress.

The review panel considered the lack of a structured and operational follow-up system for external review recommendations to be a significant weakness in the Authority's quality enhancement cycle. In addition, the interval of approximately seven years between the 2018 review and the current HAQAA3 review does not fully demonstrate a regular and systematic cyclical external review process as envisaged under ASG-QA expectations for periodic review of Quality Assurance Agencies. The panel therefore concluded that, while NAQAAE demonstrates clear commitment to self-evaluation, quality culture, and participation in external review activities, the absence of effective implementation tracking mechanisms and irregularity in periodic external review cycles limit full compliance to this Standard of the ASG-QA.

Conclusion

Partially Compliant

Suggestions for Improvement

1. The review panel suggests that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) establish a formal and operational tracking mechanism for monitoring implementation of recommendations arising from external reviews, internal evaluations, and strategic assessments to ensure systematic follow-up and continuous institutional improvement.
2. The review panel further suggests that the Authority institutionalizes a clearly defined cyclical schedule for periodic external reviews in alignment with ASG-QA expectations to ensure regular benchmarking, accountability, and sustained quality enhancement.
3. The review panel also suggests that NAQAAE strengthens institutional continuity and knowledge management systems to ensure that leadership transitions do not disrupt

implementation of strategic improvement actions and external review recommendations.

CHAPTER 5. COMMENDATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS

Summary of commendations

Part B S1:	1. The NAQAAE has developed standards, tools and procedures for the management and development of IQA for HEIs, which articulate the need of the institutions to have a vision and mission statements, and strategic plans which are interrogated before the institutions and programmes are accredited. 2. The NAQAAE conducts capacity building workshops to strengthen the human resources in the institutions on IQA aspects. 3. The Agency, through expert reviews, evaluates the performance of the IQA units of HEIs and monitors the progress of the implementation plans for quality improvement and re-accreditation / post-accreditation monitoring.
Part B S2:	The NAQAAE's stakeholders are involved as partners in the development, implementation and revision for continuous improvement of its evaluation tools.
Part B S3:	1. The review panel commends National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) for establishing comprehensive and well-structured External Quality Assurance implementation processes supported by clearly defined standards, operational manuals, reporting templates, and reviewer training mechanisms that promote consistency, transparency, and reliability in accreditation activities. 2. The panel further commends the Authority for its strong commitment to capacity building through regular reviewer orientation programmes, institutional training workshops, and provision of publicly accessible accreditation procedures and guidance materials, which collectively strengthen institutional preparedness and quality assurance culture within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
Part B S4:	The NAQAAE has: 1. Comprehensive and well-maintained reviewer database with disciplinary balance. 2. Strong ethical framework supported by enforceable contractual arrangements. 3. Functional appeal and replacement mechanisms protecting institutional fairness. 4. Effective use of post-visit feedback for performance monitoring, and 5. Active engagement in regional and international QA networks.
Part B S5:	The NAQAAE: 1. Has a structured and transparent approach to external quality assurance, with clear procedures and communication channels. 2. Processes align with EQA standards and procedures, including the publication of accreditation decisions and the use of a unified External Review Report Template. 3. Publishes accreditation standards, procedures, and outcomes on its website and digital portal, ensuring transparency and accessibility. 4. Provides guidance and capacity-building workshops to HEIs, and

	5. Maintains independence of decisions through its legal mandate and a Board of Directors with a formal Code of Ethics.
Part B S7:	The review panel commends the Authority for implementing an electronic complaints and appeals submission and tracking system with defined timelines, thereby enhancing procedural efficiency, traceability, and institutional confidence in the accreditation process.
Part C S2:	1. The review panel commends National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) for establishing clearly articulated vision and mission statements that are legally supported, strategically aligned, and effectively integrated into the Authority's governance, quality assurance, and accreditation activities. 2. The panel further commends the Authority for aligning its strategic priorities and operational frameworks with national, regional, and international development agendas, including Egypt Vision 2030, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), and the African Union Agenda 2063, thereby positioning quality assurance as a key instrument for educational transformation and human capital development.
Part C S3:	1. The review panel commends the Authority for integrating ethical governance, stakeholder participation, internal quality assurance, and performance monitoring within its Strategic Plan 2025–2030, thereby strengthening institutional sustainability, professionalism, and evidence-based management practices. 2. The review panel further commends NAQAAE for enhancing internal capacity development initiatives for Board members, senior management, and staff in areas such as strategic governance, risk management, digital transformation, and emerging quality assurance practices to support continuous institutional improvement and long-term sustainability.
Part C S4:	1. The review panel commends National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) for establishing a legally grounded and operationally safeguarded framework that ensures institutional, operational, and decision-making independence in the conduct of External Quality Assurance activities. 2. The panel further commends the Authority for embedding transparency, accountability, ethical conduct, and performance-based governance mechanisms within its Strategic Plan 2025–2030, thereby reinforcing the credibility, impartiality, and integrity of accreditation decisions and quality assurance processes.
Part C S5:	1. The review panel commends National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) for establishing a comprehensive and strategically integrated quality assurance framework supported by clearly defined policies, operational procedures, accreditation standards, and governance mechanisms that ensure consistency, transparency, and accountability within its External Quality Assurance system. 2. The panel further commends the Authority for implementing a structured and transparent accreditation workflow that incorporates institutional self-assessment, peer review, stakeholder engagement, draft report verification, follow-up monitoring,

	and continuous improvement mechanisms aligned with international good practices. 3. The review panel also commends NAQAAE for its strong commitment to stakeholder participation, capacity building, and regional and international benchmarking through active engagement with HEIs, professional stakeholders, and international quality assurance networks, thereby strengthening institutional credibility and alignment with continental and global quality assurance frameworks.
Part C S6:	1. The review panel commends National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) for establishing a comprehensive and well-integrated Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system that is strategically embedded within its governance structures, operational processes, and Strategic Plan 2025–2030. 2. The panel further commends the Authority for implementing effective monitoring, ethical oversight, and performance management mechanisms, including Annual Achievement Reports, operational monitoring tools, reviewer conduct guidelines, and conflict-of-interest procedures, which collectively strengthen accountability, transparency, and institutional credibility. 3. The review panel also commends NAQAAE for fostering a strong culture of continuous improvement through structured reviewer development programmes, stakeholder feedback systems, benchmarking activities, and active engagement in regional and international quality assurance networks and collaborations.
Part C S7:	The review panel commends the NAQAAE for maintaining staff development and performance monitoring systems, including continuous professional development programmes, and operational staff appraisal processes that contribute to accountability and professionalism within the organization.

Summary of recommendations

Part B S2:	The NAQAAE should undertake continuous follow-ups of the HEIs to ensure that there is implementation of the improvement plans developed by the institutions, for mainstreaming a continuous quality culture into the HEIs. This could include periodic progress reviews, targeted feedback sessions, and site visits to evaluate corrective actions.
Part B S4:	The NAQAAE should: 1. Consider involving international experts in the external review teams, using the many international networks, alliances and agreements it has established and also the partnerships in collaborative projects. 2. Digitize and integrate reviewer performance data into a centralized quality dashboard. 3. Publish anonymous reviewer performance summaries to enhance transparency. 4. Periodically review and update the Code of Ethics to reflect evolving QA practices.

Suggestions for further improvement

Part B S7:	3. The review panel suggests that NAQAAE strengthens public transparency by periodically publishing anonymized summary statistics and trends relating to complaints and appeals handled by the Authority, while maintaining institutional confidentiality where necessary. 4. The panel further suggests that the Authority continues strengthening awareness and sensitization activities for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and stakeholders regarding complaints and appeals procedures, timelines, and available redress mechanisms to ensure consistent understanding and utilization of the system across the higher education sector.
Part C S1:	3. The review panel suggests that the law for the establishment of NAQAAE be reviewed to ensure mandatory accreditation of both private and government HEIs and their programmes for quality delivery of all the institutions' outputs. 4. The panel further suggests that NAQAAE strengthen collaboration and coordination mechanisms with the Ministry responsible for higher education and other regulatory bodies to enhance coherence between institutional establishment, programme approval, accreditation, and quality assurance oversight within the higher education system.
Part C S3:	The review panel suggests that the Authority strengthens documentation and communication of governance outcomes, performance indicators, and stakeholder feedback utilization to enhance institutional transparency and public understanding of governance effectiveness.
Part C S6:	The review panel suggests that the Authority enhances documentation and reporting of the impact of its Internal Quality Assurance activities, particularly regarding how stakeholder feedback, internal audits, and performance reviews inform strategic planning, operational reforms, and continuous improvement actions.
Part C S7:	The review panel suggests that NAQAAE, with the relevant Ministry and stakeholders enhance their efforts in having the law that establishment the Authority amended to reflect more flexibility in the fees charged for accreditation processes.
Part C S8:	The NAQAAE should re-affirm its membership within AfriQAN.
Part C S9:	4. The review panel suggests that National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) establish a formal and operational tracking mechanism for monitoring implementation of recommendations arising from external reviews, internal evaluations, and strategic assessments to ensure systematic follow-up and continuous institutional improvement. 5. The review panel further suggests that the Authority institutionalizes a clearly defined cyclical schedule for periodic external reviews in alignment with ASG-QA expectations to ensure regular benchmarking, accountability, and sustained quality enhancement. 6. The review panel also suggests that NAQAAE strengthens institutional

	continuity and knowledge management systems to ensure that leadership transitions do not disrupt implementation of strategic improvement actions and external review recommendations.
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CHAPTER 6. ENDORSEMENT OF THE REPORT

This is the second draft of the external review report by the panel of reviewers. I, Florence Kanze Lenga, support and agree with the content of this report and any Annex items within the context of my role as the Chairperson of the NAQAAE - Egypt Review Panel and in respect to my experience and skills in academia and quality assurance.

I understand that:

- (1) The content of this report and Annex items needs to be reviewed in relative detail by the Coordinating Team and NAQAAE - Egypt.
- (2) Feedback should be provided to the Chairperson of the External Review Report in relation to any items that may appear incorrect or may need further detail; and
- (3) Any risks and issues against the interests of the external review exercise and the broader organization are adequately represented.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSIONS

Considering the documentary and oral evidence analyzed by the review panel, the experts found, in the performance of its functions, the NAQAAE is **substantially compliant with the ASG-QA**. The panel found the NAQAAE to be compliant with fourteen (14) of the standards (Part B: S1, S2, S3, S5, S6, S7 and Part C: S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, and S8). The NAQAAE is partially compliant with two (2) standards (Part B: S4, and Part C: S9). For Part B Standard 4, the judgement reflects specific enhancement needs relating to the composition of external review teams and the systematic monitoring of reviewer performance, notwithstanding the existence of established safeguards supporting reviewer independence, ethical conduct, and procedural fairness.

Table 7.1: Summary Matrix of Judgements

ASG - QA		Compliant	Partially Compliant	Non-Compliant
Part B	Standard 1: Objectives of External Quality Assurance and Consideration for Internal Quality Assurance	Y		
	Standard 2: Designing External Quality Assurance Mechanisms Fit-for-Purpose	Y		
	Standard 3: Implementation Processes of External Quality Assurance	Y		
	Standard 4: Independence of Evaluation		Y	
	Standard 5: Decision and Reporting of External Quality Assurance Outcomes	Y		
	Standard 6: Periodic Review of Institutions and Programmes	Y		
	Standard 7: Complaints and Appeals	Y		
Part C	Standard 1: Legal Status	Y		
	Standard 2: Vision and Mission Statement	Y		
	Standard 3: Governance and Management	Y		
	Standard 4: Independence of Quality Assurance Agency	Y		
	Standard 5: Policies, Processes and Activities	Y		
	Standard 6: Internal Quality Assurance	Y		
	Standard 7: Financial and Human Resources	Y		
	Standard 8: Benchmarking, Networking and Collaboration	Y		
	Standard 9: Periodic Review of Quality Assurance Agencies		Y	

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

SESSION No.	DATE AND TIME	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	LEAD PANEL MEMBER
1	13 February 2026 09h00-11h00 (GMT) (120 min)	An <i>online clarifications</i> meeting with the agency's resource person regarding the specific national/ legal context in which an agency operates, specific quality assurance system to which it belongs and key characteristics of the agency's external QA activities	-	- HAQAA3 Coordinator -Review Panel Chairperson
SESSION No.	DATE AND TIME	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	LEAD PANEL MEMBER
[29.03.2026] – Day 1				
2	08h00-09h00 (60 min)	Review panel's pre-visit meeting and preparations for Day 1	-	Review Panel Chairperson
	As necessary 09h00-09h30 (30 min)	A pre-visit meeting with the agency's resource person to clarify any remaining questions after the online clarifications meeting	<i>Shereen Ahmed Nossair (Expert, Technical Office, NAQAAE, Head of SAR team)</i>	Review Panel Chairperson
	09h30-10h00 (30 min)	Review panel's private meeting	-	Review Panel Chairperson
3	10h00-10h45 (45 min)	Meeting with the CEO and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board (or equivalent)	<i>Prof. Alaa Ashmawy (CEO/ President), Prof. Sanaa Radi (Vice President, Higher Education), Prof. Ragia Taha (Vice President, Al-azhar Education), Prof. Asmaa Mostafa (Vice President, Pre-University Education)</i>	Review Panel Chairperson
	10h45-11h15 (30 min)	Review panel's private discussion over Refreshment Break		All panel members
4	11h15-12h00 (45 min)	Meeting with the team responsible for preparation of	<i>Prof. Mohamed Abdullah (Chair),</i>	Review Panel Chairperson

SESSION No.	DATE AND TIME	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	LEAD PANEL MEMBER
		the self-assessment report (Chair, Vice-chair and Secretary of the drafting team + 3-5 other members)	<i>Prof. Ahmed Mostafa Helony (Vice Chair), Mrs Nermine Abdul Halim Saad (Secretary), Prof. Hodu Ahamed Aylam, Safaa Shehata, Azza Ezz Elarab, Safrinaz Elhabashy, Prof. Eman Mohamed Mahmoud, Prof. Mohamed Ibrahim.</i>	
	12h00-12h15 (15 min)	Review panel's private discussion	-	All panel members
5	12h15-13h00 (45 min)	Meeting with representatives from the Senior Management Team	<i>Prof. Shima Abdullah Mostafa, Dr. Saad Ahmed Rawash, Prof. Osama Saleh (president advisor of NQF), Prof. Attia Es-Sayed Attia</i>	Review Panel Chairperson
	13h00-14h00 (60 min)	Lunch (panel only)		
6	14h00-14h45 (45 min)	Meeting with staff in charge of external QA activities	<i>Prof. Sanaa Radi (NAQAAE Vice President for Higher Education), Prof. Ragia Taha (NAQAAE Vice President for Al-azhar Education), Dr. Shareen Nossair (Member Technical Office, Head of SAR team), Prof. Osama Saleh (President Advisor of NQF), Mohamed Abdou (Member</i>	Review Panel Chairperson

SESSION No.	DATE AND TIME	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	LEAD PANEL MEMBER
			<i>Strategic Planning Department), Nermine Diab (International Cooperation Officer)</i>	
	14h45-15h00 (15 min)	Review panel's private discussion	-	All panel members
7	15h00-15h45 (45 min)	Meeting with the QA and Accreditation Committee of the Council	<i>Prof. Alaa Ashmawy (CEO/ President), Prof. Sanaa Radi (Vice President, Higher Education), Prof. Ragia Taha (Vice President, Al-azhar Education), Prof. Asmaa Mostafa (Vice President, Pre-University Education) Prof. Alaa El sayed Abdelchaffor (MOB), Prof. Zainab A. El-Nagger (MOB), Prof. Somaya Hosni (MOB), Prof. Hoda Al-Talawy (MOB)</i>	Review Panel Chairperson
8	15h45-16h45 (60 min)	Wrap-up meeting among panel members and preparations for Day 2 – Working Refreshment Break	-	Review Panel Chairperson
Dinner (panel only)				
[30.03.2026] – Day 2				
	08h00-09h00 (60 min)	Review panel's private meeting	-	Review Panel Chairperson
9	09h00-09h45 (45 min)	Meeting with the Finance and Administration Department of the Agency	<i>Mr. Ibrahim Saleh (procurement manager), Mr. Mohamed Salah (financial manager), Mr. Mohamed El Bakry (secretary general), Mr. Eman Farouk (HR Manager), Dr. Shaereen Nossair (member, Technical Office)</i>	Review Panel Chairperson

SESSION No.	DATE AND TIME	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	LEAD PANEL MEMBER
	09h45-10h00 (15 min)	Review panel's private discussion	-	All panel members
10	10h00-10h45 (45 min)	Meeting with ministry representatives (Permanent Secretary/Executive Director/equivalent of the Ministry of Higher Education)	<i>Prof. Hussein Khaled (Former Minister of Higher education, Member of NAQAAE BOD), Prof. Maged Mahmoud Abouelenain (Vice President of educational sector), Prof. Sayed Bakry (Vice President, Al-azhar University), Prof. Mona Hagra (Deputy General Supreme Council of Universities), Prof. Tarek Elnabarawy (President of Arab Engineering Union, Cost President of Egyptian Engineering Syndicate).</i>	Review Panel Chairperson
	10h45-11h15 (30 min)	Review panel's private discussion over Refreshment Break	-	All panel members
11	11h15-12h00 (45 min)	Meeting with heads of some reviewed HEIs/HEI representatives	<i>Prof. Catherine Harper (Deputy Vice Chancellor, the British University), Prof. Ebadusarhan (President, Future University), Prof. Ghaola Farouk Hassan (Vice President Aim Shams Univeristy), Prof. Mahmoud Seddi Hasson (Vice President, Alazhr University)</i>	Review Panel Chairperson

SESSION No.	DATE AND TIME	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	LEAD PANEL MEMBER
	12h00-12h15 (15 min)	Review panel's private discussion	-	All panel members
12	12h15-13h00 (45 min)	Meeting with quality assurance officers of HEIs	<i>Prof. Maha Aboshadi (Vice Maanager of Al-azhar quality assurance and training center), Prof. Mohamed Ghanem (Director of Quality Assurance and Accreditation center Benha university), Prof. Ahmed Nada (Head of QAA for MSA), Prof Khaled Soliman (Head of QA center, Cairo University), Prof. Miriam Farid Ayad (Head of QA center, Ain Shams University)</i>	Review Panel Chairperson
	13h00-14h00 (60 min)	Lunch (panel only)		
13	14h00-14h45 (45 min)	Meeting with representatives from the reviewers' pool	Prof. Maha Ali Prof Abdou Soaud Prof. Moustafa Aliya Prof. Zeinab Nobil Ahmed Said Prof. Maqed Zaki	Review Panel Chairperson
	14h45-15h00 (15 min)	Review panel's private discussion	-	All panel members
14	15h00-15h45 (45 min)	Meeting with student representative councils from some reviewed HEIs (SRC president and SRC for academic affairs)	<i>3 Nile University, 4 Ain Shams University, 3 MSA University, 3 Cairo University, 4 Benha University</i>	Review Panel Chairperson
15	15h45-16h45 (60 min)	Wrap-up meeting among panel members and preparations for Day 3 – Working Refreshment Break	-	Review Panel Chairperson
Dinner (panel only)				

SESSION No.	DATE AND TIME	TOPIC	PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW	LEAD PANEL MEMBER
[31.03.2026] – Day 3				
	08h00-09h00 (60 min)	Review panel's private meeting	-	Review Panel Chairperson
16	09h00-09h45 (45 min)	Meeting with professional bodies and employers	<i>President of Dental Syndicate, Professor Dr.. Ihab Hekal Head of Cairo Pharmacist Syndicate, Dr. Mohammed El-Sheikh.</i>	Review Panel Chairperson
	09h45-10h15 (30 min)	Review panel's private discussion over Refreshment Break	-	All panel members
17	10h15-11h15 (60 min)	Meeting among panel members to agree on final issues to clarify	-	All panel members
18	11h15-12h15 (60 min)	Meeting with CEO to clarify any pending issues	<i>Dr Alaa Ashmawy (CEO NAQAAE)</i>	Review Panel Chairperson
19	12h15-13h00 (45 min)	Private meeting between panel members to agree on the main findings	-	Review Panel Chairperson
	13h00-14h00 (60 min)	Lunch (panel only)		
20	14h00-15h00 (60 min)	Private meeting between panel members to agree on the main findings (continue)	-	Review Panel Chairperson
21	15h00-15h30 (30 min)	Final de-briefing meeting with staff and Board members of the agency to inform about preliminary findings	<i>NAQAAE General Management, QA staff and Board/Council Members</i>	Review Panel Chairperson

ANNEX 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE REVIEW

External review of the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education, Egypt, by the HAQAA3 initiative

1. Background and Context

The National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) in Egypt was established in 2006 by virtue of the law, a Presidential Decree. The NAQAAE is a body corporate with a 15 – member Board of Directors comprising of the President (CEO of NAQAAE), the 3 Vice Presidents, and 11 Board members representing state universities, NGOs, Supreme Council of Egyptian universities (SCU), and other experts in quality assurance in higher education.

Therefore, NAQAAE, Egypt (“the QAA”), is applying for a review of its quality assurance practices and processes, coordinated by the HAQAA3 implementation team (“Coordinating Body”), composed of OBREAL, DAAD, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the Association of African Universities (AAU).

For this external review of NAQAAE, Egypt, AAU will coordinate the practical implementation of the review and act as main contact point for the QAA and the review panel on behalf of the HAQAA3 initiative. The ENQA will act as an observer throughout the process and will be allowed to access any documents and meetings in relation to the agency review to the same extent as AAU.

The official language for the external review of NAQAAE, Egypt, shall be English. The agency commits to provide a translation into English for any documents related to the review (if not available already in English), as well as interpretation services during any meetings held in the context of the review if needed. Likewise, contact with the Coordinating Body shall be in English.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

This review will evaluate the way in which and to what extent the QAA fulfils the African *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA)*. Consequently, the review panel is expected to make a judgement on whether the agency is in compliance with the ASG-QA.

2.1 Activities of the QAA within the scope of the ASG-QA

This review will analyze all quality assurance activities of the QAA that are within the scope of the ASG-QA, i.e. reviews, spot checks, audits, evaluations, registration or accreditation of higher education institutions or programmes that relate to teaching and learning (and their relevant links to research and community work/engagement).

The following activities of the QAA shall be addressed in the external review, as the QAA:

- Accredits universities, faculties, and programmes to ensure compliance with national academic and professional standards.
- Develops and updates quality assurance policies and standards in line with international best practices.
- Conducts institutional and programme reviews to promote continuous improvement in educational quality.
- Provides capacity-building and training programmes for higher education institutions to enhance quality culture and compliance with quality assurance standards.

3. The Review Process

The evaluation consists of the following steps:

- Formulation of the Terms of Reference and protocol/procedures for the review;
- Self-assessment by the QAA, including the preparation of a self-assessment report;
- Nomination and appointment of the review panel;
- A site visit by the review panel to the QAA;
- Preparation and completion of the final evaluation report by the review panel;
- Follow-up of the review panel's recommendations by the QAA.

3.1 Nomination and appointment of the review panel

The review panel consists of four members: three quality assurance experts, including at least one from a quality assurance agency and one from a higher education institution, and a student. One of the members will serve as the chair of the review panel, and another member as a review secretary. The panel will be supported by the coordinating body who will monitor the integrity of the process.

Experts will be selected and appointed by the coordinating body, following nominations from HAQAA3 Implementing Partners and Strategic Partners. The student representative is selected from the nominations of the All-Africa Students Union (AASU).

The Coordinating Body will provide the QAA with the curriculum vitae of the potential reviewers to ensure that there are no known conflicts of interest (no objection). The experts will have to sign a non-conflict of interest statement as regards the review of the QAA. Staff members of the Coordinating Body are not eligible to serve as reviewers.

3.2 Self-assessment by the QAA, including the preparation of the self-assessment report

The QAA is responsible for the execution and organization of its own self-assessment process and shall take into account the following guidance:

- Self-assessment is organized as a project with a clearly defined schedule and includes all relevant internal and external stakeholders.
- The self-assessment report is broken down by the topics of the evaluation and is expected to contain, amongst other: a description on how the self-assessment was carried out; a brief description of the national higher education and quality assurance systems; background description of the current situation of the QAA; an analysis and appraisal of the current situation; proposals for improvement and measures already planned; a SWOT analysis; and each standard (ASG-QA part B and C) addressed

individually. All quality assurance activities of the QAA will be described and their compliance with the ASG-QA analyzed.

- The report is well-structured, concise and comprehensively prepared. It clearly demonstrates the extent to which the QAA fulfils its tasks of external quality assurance and meets the ASG-QA.
- The self-assessment report is submitted to the Coordinating Body, who has four weeks to pre-scrutinize it, before forwarding the report to the panel of experts. The purpose of the pre-scrutiny is to ensure that the self-assessment report is satisfactory for the consideration of the review panel. The Coordinating Body will not judge the content or information itself but whether the necessary information, as stated in the *Guidelines for the Review of African QAAs*, is present.
- For the second reviews in case the QAA already underwent a review or consultancy visit under HAQAA1 or HAQAA2, the QAA is expected to list the recommendations provided in the previous review and to outline actions taken to meet these recommendations OR the QAA is expected to provide the improvement plan and/progress report of the previous review. In case the self-assessment report does not contain the necessary information and fails to respect the requested form and content, the Coordinating Body reserves the right to reject the report and ask for a revised version within four weeks.
- The report is submitted to the review panel a minimum of six weeks prior to the site visit.

3.3 Site visit by the Review Panel

The schedule for the site visit will be developed by the QAA in collaboration with the Coordinating Body, to be submitted to the review panel at least two months before the planned dates of the visit. The schedule includes an indicative timetable of the meetings and other exercises to be undertaken by the review panel during the site visit, the duration of which is normally three days. The approved schedule shall be given to the QAA at least one month before the site visit, in order to properly organize the requested interviews.

The QAA will make the necessary practical arrangements for the review panel for the duration of the site visit (including arrival information, hotel recommendations, and local transportation if needed). Exceptionally, a hybrid scenario for the remote participation of some panel members can be foreseen if duly justified.

The site visit will close with a final de-briefing meeting outlining the review panel's overall impressions but not its judgement.

3.4 Preparation and completion of the final evaluation report

On the basis of the review panel's findings, the review panel will draft the report. The report will take into account the purpose and scope of the evaluation as defined under articles 2 and 2.1. It will also provide a clear rationale for its findings with regards to each standard of the ASG-QA.

A draft will be first submitted to the Coordinating Body who will check the report for consistency, clarity and language, and then it will be submitted to the QAA within two weeks of the site visit for comments on factual accuracy. Thereafter, the review panel will take into account the comments on factual accuracy by the QAA, finalize the document and submit it to the Coordinating Body.

The report is to be finalized within three months of the site visit and will not exceed 40-60 pages in length.

4. Follow-up process and publication of the report

The QAA will consider the report and accepts that it might be published. The QAA commits to follow up on the recommendations of the review panel.

The Coordinating Body shall retain ownership of the report. The intellectual property of all works created by the Panel in connection with the review contract, including specifically any written reports, shall be vested in the Coordinating Body.

5. Budget

For the HAQAA3 agency reviews and consultancy visits, the direct costs (travel and accommodation for external reviewers) are covered by the HAQAA3 Initiative. However, agencies should still ensure that they have sufficient human resources for the preparation and implementation of the exercise. Likewise, any costs related to the venue for the site visit and attendance of interviewees will be covered by the agency.

6. Indicative schedule of the review

Agreement on terms of reference	January 2025
Appointment of review panel members	September 2025
Self-assessment completed	December 2025
Pre-screening of SAR by Coordinating Body	January 2026
Preparation of site visit schedule and indicative timetable	January 2026
Briefing of review panel members	January 2026
Review panel site visit	March 2026
Draft of review report and submitting it to Coordinating Body for pre-screening	May 2026
Draft of review report to the QAA	June 2026
Statement of the QAA to review panel, if necessary	June 2026
Submission of final report	July 2026
Publication of report	July 2026

ANNEX 3: DOCUMENTS THAT SUPPORTED THE REVIEW

The SAR, including various attachments, plus additional evidence requested by the review panel provided by the NAQAAE before and during the site visit. The review panel also used the documents downloaded from the NAQAAE's website: (1) Annual reports, (2) List of accredited institutions, and (3) Press releases, and also from the provided links such as:

- IQA policy
- HR policy
- Translated HR Statistics
- NAQAAE staff professional development statistics
- Staff Evaluation templates
- Examples / Excerpts of Staff evaluation
- Asset Inventory list
- Signed Audited Financial Report 2023/2024
- Signed Audited Financial Report 2024/2025
- Annual Budget Report 2024/2025 Fiscal Year
- Quality Manual
- NQF registry
- Membership of lists of AfriQAN, ANQAHE. INQAAHE and CHEA to confirm NAQAAE's membership in these Networks.

ANNEX 4: GLOSSARY

AAU	Association of African Universities
ACQF	African Continental Qualifications Framework
ACTS	African Credit Transfer System
AfriQAN	African Quality Assurance Network
ANQAHE	Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
AUC	American University of Cairo
AUF	Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie
ASG-QA	African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHEA	Council for Higher Education in USA (United States of America)
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Services
E-JUST	Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology
ENQA	European Network for Quality Assurance
EQA	External Quality Assurance
ERR	External Review Report
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
HAQAA	Harmonization of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation
HAQAA3	Harmonization of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation – Phase 3 initiative
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICD	International Cooperation Department

ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILOs	Intended Learning Outcomes
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MQA	Malasyian Qualifications Agency
NAQAAE	National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education in Egypt
NARS	National Academic Reference Standards (Discipline-specific specifying graduate attributes, expected learning outcomes and curriculum requirements in Egyptian HEIs)
NQF	National Qualifications Framework classifying qualifications by learning levels
OBE	Outcome-Based Education
PAQAAF	Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework
QA	Quality Assurance
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SAR	Self-Assessment Report
SCU	Supreme Council of Universities
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToR	Terms of Reference
WFME	World Federation for Medical Education (For recognition of QA systems in medical education)