

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance
and Accreditation in Africa



External Agency Reviews, Consultancy Visits and Follow-up Visits

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS OF
QUALIFIED QUALITY ASSURANCE
EXPERTS

July 2026

The [HAQAA3 initiative](#) is pleased to invite African quality assurance agencies and ministries with responsibility for the quality assurance of higher education to nominate qualified quality assurance experts to carry out [agency reviews, consultancy visits and follow-up visits](#) to assess alignment with the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ASG-QA) and support quality assurance governing bodies in Africa that are setting up their quality assurance systems.

INTRODUCTION

Quality assurance in higher education is recognized as a key strategic area in the African Union's Agenda 2063, which prioritizes a number of tools and measures to harmonize the African higher education sector and make it both locally responsive and globally competitive. Collaboration on quality assurance in higher education, and harmonization more generally, is also an area of successful collaboration under the joint Africa-EU Strategy. The aim is to establish compatible structures and systems that would facilitate academic mobility and promote the comparability of qualifications.

Support for the achievement of these objectives is provided by the Harmonization of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in African Higher Education (HAQAA3) Initiative, funded by the European Union as part of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership. This initiative has led to the development of the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ASG-QA) and a methodology for peer review of external quality assurance agencies against the ASG-QA Part B and C standards.

In order to further develop and strengthen external quality assurance in Africa, the interim Technical Unit for the Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Alliance (PAQAA), supported by the European Association for QA in Higher Education (ENQA), will coordinate under the HAQAA3 Initiative agency reviews, consultancy visits and follow-up visits for interested quality assurance agencies and countries where there is a newly established quality assurance agency or that are preparing to set one up. The consortium responsible for implementing HAQAA3 is therefore delighted to launch this call for nominations of experts to conduct these reviews and visits.

HAQAA3 AGENCY REVIEWS

An external review of a quality assurance agency is an evidence-based process conducted by independent experts (the Review Panel). Its primary aim is to assess whether, and to what extent, the agency complies with the standards outlined in Parts B and C of the ASG-QA in a professional, critical and independent manner, and each member of the Review Panel should actively contribute to the activity. The process will be conducted in a formative manner based on the principle of collegiate peer reviews, while the review panel will still issue a judgment on compliance with the ASG-QA.

The information provided by the agency under review is assumed to be fact-based and correct unless evidence suggests otherwise. During the review, the Review Panel verifies and crosschecks the gathered information, including the self-assessment report and other documents. The management of the review process is independent of the agency being reviewed. The external review report produced by the panel must be detailed enough for any external reader to ensure the robustness of the review. It must include sufficient, verified information that clearly demonstrates how the agency understands and complies with the standards. To qualify for a full external review, it is recommended that an agency has been operating in quality assurance for at least two years and has completed a minimum of five external quality assurance reviews, such as institutional or program review reports.

For agencies that were recently created and do not fulfil this requirement, HAQAA3 offers the opportunity to host a consultancy during which selected standards are covered. For agencies that already had a full review under previous HAQAA phases, the follow-up visit offers a tailored approach based on the recommendations received as a result of the previous review. For more information about review types, please refer to the [briefing note for experts](#).

INVOLVEMENT OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS

The Review Panel members must ensure that they have adequate time to participate in the review. Failure to contribute actively may lead to being discontinued from the review. The Panel should work as a team and act independently to ensure that their judgements are not influenced by the agency under review or any higher education institution or any other interested party. Panel members should embody a spirit of cooperation and demonstrate mutual respect both among themselves and towards the agency under review. They are expected to engage in a balanced distribution of work roles and remain committed to their assigned responsibilities within the team. Furthermore, all Panel members must attend every coordination meeting - whether held physically or virtually - before, during, and after the site visit, while ensuring punctuality. It is also essential that any evidence or review-related information discovered during the review process is shared with the entire team for consideration in decision making. Finally, active participation in discussions is crucial to reach a collective understanding of the QAA's status in light of the review outcomes.

During the site visit, the Panel members must commit to the code of conduct established by the Coordinating Body. They should collect evidence in accordance with the data collection guidelines. Additionally, panel meetings should be held to discuss the findings and draft an exit debriefing statement. After the site visit, the external review report must be drafted using the template provided by the PAQAA Technical Unit. The team should reach a consensus on the recommendation regarding the agency's state of compliance and remain available for any clarifications or discussions that the PAQAA Technical Unit may require concerning the report.

NOMINATION, APPOINTMENT AND TRAINING OF THE REVIEW PANEL

The principle of best practices of external quality assurance is based on the consistent use of a wide range of expertise and experience. Panel members are drawn from senior staff from external quality assurance agencies, higher education and academic leadership, and international experts on quality assurance.

The Panel consists normally of four external reviewers, appointed by the Coordinating Body. The Panel should include at least one former or current senior staff member of a quality assurance agency, one representative of higher education leadership and one student. Due consideration will also be given to achieving an appropriate gender balance, alongside the required expertise, experience, and regional representation. Agencies are therefore encouraged to take gender diversity into account when nominating candidates for consideration.

Steps and criteria for nomination and appointment:

1. QA agencies and ministries in Africa nominate up to three experts to be part of the HAQAA3 expert database. Upon completion of the nomination and database inclusion process, experts will be eligible to take part in HAQAA3 agency reviews up to 2028. However, this does not automatically imply that they will be selected for a review process. Selection of Panel members will be done individually for each review process by the Coordinating body (see point 2). Nominated experts shall possess the following expertise and experience:
 - Good knowledge and understanding of internal/external quality assurance.
 - Be able to work effectively in a multicultural team.
 - Possess effective communication, writing, and IT skills.
 - Commit to attending training or orientation/induction session provided by the Coordinating body in preparation for the review process.
 - Agencies must respect a gender balance principle when submitting nominations.
 - Nominated experts must be fluent in at least one of the following languages: English, French, Portuguese.
2. Panel Members are selected by the coordinating body (HAQAA3) for each HAQAA3 review exercise. Panels are composed for each review exercise considering different criteria:
 - The knowledge and experience of the different candidates.
 - Absence of conflict of interest with the agency under review and agreement to sign Confidentiality and Non-conflict of Interest form.
 - Balance among panel members in terms of experience in quality assurance of higher education, geographical distribution, gender, and higher education sector represented.
 - The number of experts required to conduct the activities.
 - All members are fluent in the working language of the country in which the agency under review operates. The working languages considered for the 2026-28 exercise are English, French and Portuguese.

TRAINING OF EXPERTS

In order to be included in the HAQAA3 expert database, experts must complete a short training and test about the Pan-African Quality Assurance Framework (PAQAF), ASG-QA and agency reviews methodology. Only upon completion of the short test they will be officially included in the HAQAA3 database and might be contacted to conduct reviews.

Complementarily, an online training program will be organized for them once they are part of the database, and further briefing meetings will be held individually with each panel. The aim is to familiarize the reviewers with the ASG-QA, with the review methodology and with the context in which the review is conducted. Panel briefings are also an opportunity for Panel members to discuss among themselves prior to the site visit.

INVITATION TO AGENCIES TO NOMINATE EXPERTS

Agencies, ministries, and HAQAA3 strategic partners are invited to nominate up to three experts: at least one from a QA agency or ministry with expertise in external quality assurance and at least one from a HEI with experience as an external expert for the agency/ministry and with expertise in internal quality assurance of higher education.

The interim PAQAA Technical Unit team at the AAU will review the nominations and provide selected nominees with the link to follow the first phase of the training and complete their registration in the database by uploading their CVs and information about their experience in quality assurance of higher education.

Please complete the nomination form available [HERE](#). Applications may be submitted in English, French, or Portuguese. If you have any questions, please get in touch with Prof. Adewale Obadina, Coordinator of the PAQAA Interim Technical Unit at AAU: obadinaw@aau.org.

The deadline to submit nominations is **31st August 2026**