

LAW 4009/2011

(Government Gazette [FEK A' 195/06.09.2011])

Structure, function, quality assurance of studies and internationalization of institutions of higher education.

CHAPTER I

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Article 14 Quality Assurance Unit

1. Each institution is responsible for ensuring and continually improving the quality of its teaching and research work, as well as for the effective operation and performance of its services in accordance with international practices, especially those of the European Higher Education Area, and the principles and guidelines of the HQA.

2. The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of each HEI is responsible for ensuring the above. The HQA is constituted on a decision of the Council of the Institution and is comprised of the rector or one of his/her deputies, as president, five professors of the university, one representative of each category of staff foreseen in the Articles 28 and 29, with voting rights when issues relating to the category of staff are discussed, a representative of the undergraduate students, and a representative of the postgraduate and doctoral candidates, if available, as members, as specifically defined by the Institution.

The QAU is responsible, in particular, for:

- a) the development of policy, strategy and the necessary procedures for the continuous improvement in the quality of the Institution's work and services, which constitutes the Institution's internal quality assurance system,
- b) the organisation, operation and continuous improvement of the Institution's internal quality assurance system,
- c) coordination and support for the procedures for the evaluation of the Institute's academic units and other services, and
- d) support for the procedures of external evaluation and accreditation of the programmes of study and the Institution's internal quality assurance system, in accordance with the principles, standards and guidelines of the HQA.

1. The Institution's internal quality assurance system and the procedures for its implementation are defined by a decision of the Council, issued on a proposal of the rector and published in the *Government Gazette*, as well as the website of the institution. These are revised at least every six years.
2. For the above purposes, the QAU collaborates with the HQA, it develops an electronic system for the management of the evaluation data and is responsible for its systematic monitoring and for publishing on its website information on its evaluation procedures and their results.
3. The Institution's Internal Regulations define the organisation and operations of the QAU, as well as its more specific responsibilities.

Article 64

Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency

1. The independent administrative Agency under the name of the "Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education" (A.D.I.P.), established by paragraph 1 of Article 10 of Law 3374/2005 (A' 189), is renamed the "Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency in Higher Education" (ADIP) with the international name "Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency" (HQA) and is governed by the provisions of the present Law.

2. The Agency is based in Athens, has administrative autonomy, and is overseen by the Minister of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs in regard to the legality of its actions.

3. By Presidential decree, issued upon the recommendation of the Ministers of Administrative Reform and Electronic Governance, Finance, and Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, the Agency Bylaws shall be established, to be constituted by the same Ministers within six months from the publication of this Law, and which shall set up its internal organization and mode of operation, as well as the conditions of service for its members and staff.

Article 65

Mission

1. The Mission of the Agency is to ensure high quality in higher education. As part of its mission, the Agency supports the state and institutions of higher education in the formulation and implementation of the national strategy for higher education and certifies the quality of the operations of institutions of higher education.
2. The Agency guarantees the transparency of all of its actions in the area of the evaluation and accreditation of the quality of institutions of higher education.

Article 66

Functions in regard to accreditation of quality

1. As part of its mission, the Agency exercises, in particular, the following functions:
 - a) It periodically accredits the quality:
 - aa) of internal quality assurance systems of institutions of higher education as provided for in Article 14, and
 - bb) the programmes of study of higher education, including both short-cycle programs, lifelong learning, distance learning, and collaboration with other domestic or foreign educational or research institutions.
 - b) It recommends to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, and the governing bodies of institutions of higher education, ways and means to ensure continued high quality in higher education.
2. To fulfill its mission and exercise its powers, the Agency:
 - a) establishes, organizes, specifies, standardizes and disseminates in advance the relevant procedures, criteria and indicators in the framework, in particular, of the common principles and guidelines of the European Higher Education Area,
 - b) develops an integrated information management system and assessment database, in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of institutions of higher education,
 - c) supports institutions of higher education and their individual units in the planning of quality assurance and accreditation procedures, and
 - d) carries out studies and research related to its mission or assigns them to other agencies.
3. In the framework of its activities, the Agency may:
 - a) Differentiate the procedures and criteria for the accreditation of quality of programs of study set out in Articles 71 and 72, for:
 - aa) institutions that have received accreditation of internal quality assurance systems and institutions that have not received similar accreditation, and
 - bb) new programs of study and those that are already in operation.
 - b) Postpone or suspend the evaluation and accreditation of a program of studies or an internal quality assurance system, if the request for assessment or accreditation is not accompanied by the required informational material and the necessary documentation.
 - c) Designate a language for carrying out its activities in addition to Greek.
4. Accreditation is a process of external evaluation based on specific, predetermined, internationally accepted quantitative and qualitative criteria and indicators that have been published in advance. The purpose of accreditation is the external assurance of the quality of higher education, as well as the effectiveness and transparency of the overall functioning of institutions of higher education.

Article 67

The Council of the Agency

1. The supreme governing body of the Agency is the Council. The Council of the Agency shall consist of fifteen members appointed by decision of the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, to be published in the Government Gazette. Council members have personal and functional independence in the performance of their duties.

2. The Council of the Agency shall consist of the following members:

a) The President, who is a scientist/scholar of high distinction, with internationally recognized scientific/scholarly work and demonstrated international academic experience, preferably with experience of management and quality assurance in higher education, and who is appointed by the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religion, after consultation with the competent committee according to the Rules of Parliament.

b) Six active first-rank professors of Universities (AEI) with expertise, respectively, in the fields of:

aa) the humanities or fine arts,

bb) the legal, political or social sciences,

cc) the health sciences or biology,

dd) economics or business administration,

ee) the civil or geotechnical engineering sciences, and

ff) the exact sciences or IT.

c) Four active first-rank professors of Technical Institutes (TEI) with expertise, respectively, in the fields of:

aa) administration or economics,

bb) the health or social welfare professions,

cc) the technological engineering sciences, and

dd) the technological or geotechnical sciences or food sciences.

d) A representative of undergraduate university students who has participated in the quality assurance body of his institution, who is proposed by the National University Student Union of Greece (EFEE).

e) A representative of undergraduate students at technical institutes who has participated in the quality assurance body of his institution, who is proposed by the National Technical Institute Student Union of Greece (ESEE).

f) An active first-rank researcher of non-academic research institutions supervised by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology.

g) A public representative of the Technical, Geotechnical and the Economic Chamber of Greece, proposed jointly by these chambers.

The members of the Council in cases b, c and f are scholars/scientists with high-level, internationally recognized scholarly/scientific work. One of the members in cases b and c can be a university professor from abroad.

3. a) The positions of the members of the Council of the Agency in cases b, c and f of the preceding paragraph are to be publicly announced, by decision of the President.

b) The evaluation of candidates is to be assigned by the President, with the consent of the Council of the Agency, to three-member committees set up for sub-cases b and c and for case f of paragraph 2. The committees shall consist of first-rank professors of domestic or foreign institutions of high education, with corresponding expertise, who prepare evaluative ranked lists of candidates who have the formal and practical qualifications, based on their scientific, scholarly, research and educational

work. This ranking will take into account their experience in quality assurance and accreditation in higher education, resulting from participation in quality assurance bodies for higher education and relevant scientific, scholarly, and research work, and administrative experience, especially at institutions of higher education.

c) The President of the Agency shall distribute the ranked lists of candidates to: aa) rectors of all universities for the candidates of case b of paragraph 2, bb) the Presidents of all Technical Institutes for candidates of case c of paragraph 2, and cc) the meeting of directors of the research centres supervised by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology for the candidates of case f of the same paragraph. If three-quarters of the university rectors or Presidents of Technical Institutes or members of the meeting of directors of research centres, respectively, object to a particular candidate, the candidate is removed from the relevant listing.

d) The Council of the Agency is constituted by the Minister of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, upon the recommendation of the President of the Agency for the members of cases b, c and f of paragraph 2, as set out in accordance with the above evaluative ranking. For the constitution of the Council paragraph 2 of Article 13 shall apply.

4. The Council of the Agency, following its constitution as a body, elects from among its members two Vice-Presidents, the first with responsibility for quality accreditation and the second for finance. The Vice-President for quality accreditation assists the President of the Agency on matters relating to quality assurance and accreditation in higher education. The Vice-President for finance assists the President in matters relating to the funding of Higher Education.

5. The term of office of the President is four years, while the term of Council members is six years. No person may be appointed a member for more than two terms, consecutive or not. The representatives of the university students and technical institute students must serve during the last two years of their respective programmes of study and are appointed for a single one-year term.

6. In the case of the absence, resignation or disqualification of a member of the Council of the Agency, a new member is appointed for a new term. The term of the President and other members of the Council shall be extended automatically pending the appointment of new members, following the procedure of the preceding paragraphs and in no case for longer than three months from the end of their terms.

7. Council members who are university professors cannot hold management positions in their institutions. The Agency Bylaws shall determine the detailed conditions and restrictions applying to members of the Council of the Agency for the impartial exercise of the duties.

8. The President and other members of the Council of the Agency shall receive compensation for their participation in the meetings of the Council. The amount of compensation per meeting shall be determined by joint decision of the Ministers of Finance and Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, to be published in the Government Gazette.

9. Travel and other expenses of members of the Council of the Agency for performance of their duties shall be covered by the Agency.

10. No member of the Council may be appointed who is blocked from being appointed as a public servant in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 8 of the Code on the Status of Public Civil Administrative Servants and NPDD Employees. Anyone who meets the conditions for disqualification to be a public servant in accordance with the provisions of Article 149 of the same Code is disqualified from being able to serve in the capacity of member of the Council. Disciplinary responsibility for those serving as Council members is regulated by the Agency Bylaws.

11. The decisions of the Agency shall be communicated to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. Each year by the end of May, a report on the quality of higher education for the previous year is drawn up by the Agency, which is submitted to the President of Parliament and the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs.

Article 68

Powers of the President and the Council

1. The President of the Agency shall have overall responsibility for achieving the goals and fulfilling the mission of the Agency and shall exercise, in particular, the power to:

a) represent the Agency judicially and extra-judicially,

- b) convene the Council and preside at its meetings,
- c) prepare the agenda, upon recommendation of the Director General,
- d) monitor the progress of implementation of Council decisions and the overall work of the Agency,
- e) be responsible for the procedures for the election of members of the Council in cases b, c and f of paragraph 2 of the preceding Article, and
- f) appoint the Director General and other staff of the Agency.

If the President is absent or unable to attend, he is replaced by the Vice-President whom he designates. In case of prolonged absence, the replacement continues until the appointment of a new President.

2. The Council is responsible for coordinating all activities of the Agency necessary to achieve its objectives and mission. It determines the framework, objectives, criteria, procedures and methods of handling the functions of administrative services and scientific support for the Agency.

Members of cases b, c and f of paragraph 2 of the preceding Article may also assume specific responsibilities assigned to them by decision of the Council upon the recommendation of the President of the Agency, and, in particular, support the process of assembling the Register of Independent Experts and the establishment of accreditation committees with scientists/scholars recognized internationally for their work.

3. The Agency shall collaborate or participate as a member of international networks, bodies, or organizations that develop activities related to its mission.

Article 69

Scientific and administrative service

1. The Agency is supported in its operations by an administrative and scientific service, which is headed by the Director General.

2. The Director General of the Agency shall be appointed by the President of the Agency, after public notice of the position and evaluation of candidates by a three-member committee appointed by the Council from among its members, following the recommendation of the President.

3. Candidates for the position of Director General may hold a postgraduate degree and have demonstrated knowledge and experience in higher education. Additional and more specific qualifications, as well as the procedure and selection criteria, shall be set by the Agency Bylaws. If the Director General appointed is a university professor, he or she falls into the category of part-time employment with the institution concerned.

4. The Director General is responsible for the administration and operation of the Agency and shall exercise, in particular, the following powers:

- a) coordinate and direct the scientific and administrative service and its units,
- b) recommend to the President that the Council convene, propose the agenda, and participate in meetings without voting,
- c) be responsible for implementing the decisions, guidelines and any other acts of the Agency,
- d) act as administrative and disciplinary head of special scientific and administrative staff,
- e) delegate the right to sign documents and authorize the staff of the Agency to sign documents or other instruments "as ordered by the Director General",
- f) authorize expenditures for the Agency, and
- g) represent the Agency in and out of court in case of absence or incapacity on the part of the President.

Additional and more specific responsibilities can be assigned in the Agency Bylaws.

5. The administrative service of the Agency is structured into the following service units:

- a) Directorate of Quality Assurance and Accreditation
- b) Directorate of Programme Planning and Finance Agreements,
- c) Directorate of Information Systems and Documentation, and
- d) Directorate of Administrative Support.

The responsibilities of the Directorates, their further division into departments and categories and the fields or specialties of their supervisors are determined in the Bylaws of Agency.

6. The scientific service of the Agency is the Centre for Studies and Research, which operates at the level of a Directorate.

The Centre for Studies and Research collects data, maintains databases, conducts research, carries out studies, publishes reports and organizes scientific meetings and international conferences on issues related to the mission of the Agency.

The activities of the Centre are designated by decision of the Council of the Agency, upon the recommendation of the Director of the Centre, as drafted in collaboration with the Director General of the Agency.

The Centre for Studies and Research shall prepare and submit for approval to the Council of the Agency an annual report on higher education that shall be submitted to the President of Parliament and the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, in accordance with paragraph 11 of Article 67.

7. The Centre is headed by a Director of Research and Studies, who holds a doctorate in the field of higher education. For the scientific support of the Centre's activities, the Board of the Agency, by a decision to be published in the Government Gazette, may establish a Scientific Council composed of university professors with expertise or experience in higher education. By the same decision matters pertaining to its establishment and operation, the duties of its members, and any related matter shall be determined. The travel expenses of the members of the Scientific Council shall be covered by the HQA.

The responsibilities of the Centre and matters regarding its operation shall be specified by the Organization of the Agency.

8. For its administrative and scientific support, the Agency shall establish 25 special scientific staff positions and 20 permanent administrative staff positions. The categories and fields or specialties of the staff, special qualifications for their appointment or hiring, the establishment of a service and disciplinary board to handle matters of staff status and disciplinary oversight of personnel, and all related matters are regulated by the Agency Bylaws.

9. The positions of the administrative and special scientific staff may be compensated with transfers, or the related service needs may be covered with permanent staff secondments or through private contracts of indefinite duration or by teachers of primary and secondary education, in accordance with the requirements applicable to each case.

10. The special scientific staff are engaged by private contract of indefinite duration. For qualifications of such personnel, the provisions of Article 2 of Presidential Decree 50/2001 (A' 39) apply. The possession of a doctoral degree or specialization in the organization of higher education or of education policy may also be taken into account in the selection process. The procedures for filling these positions are determined by the Agency Bylaws, in accordance with the provisions of Article 19 of Law 2190/1994.

11. The remuneration of the staff of the Agency is determined in accordance with the provisions of Law 3205/2003, as applicable. The staff is also paid a special additional fee, the amount and conditions of payment of which shall be determined by joint decision of the Ministers of Finance and Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs and published in the Government Gazette.

12. By decision of the Council, the special scientific staff of the Agency may take a leave of absence for further education according to terms and conditions set by the Agency.

13. For the scientific support of its activities, the Agency, by decision of its Council, may invite and collaborate with members of the faculties of domestic or foreign institutions of higher education who have qualifications and experience relevant to the work and mission of the Agency. For the involvement of a member of the faculty at a domestic university, duties will be assigned by the Council of the Agency

as part of this collaboration, with the consent of the relevant Dean. The Dean may then fully or partially exempt the teacher from his or her duties at the school.

For the same purpose, the Agency may invite specialists from similar authorities and from the assessment, quality accreditation, and funding services for higher education of other European countries.

It can also grant special leave to members of the specialized scientific staff special for employment in the respective agencies and services of other countries, for a period not exceeding three months, for continued training and briefing in their field.

In cases such as those in the preceding paragraph the Agency may pay a special extra fee, per diem, and travel and lodging expenses the amount and conditions of which shall be determined by joint decision of the Ministers of Finance and Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs and published in the Government Gazette.

14. The Judicial Office of the Legal Council of the State shall operate at the Agency, which was established with the last section of paragraph 1 of Article 12 of Law 3374/2005.

Article 70

Accreditation of quality

1. The Agency shall establish an accreditation committee for the evaluation of a program of study or of the internal quality assurance system of an institution.

2. The accreditation committee is composed of independent experts drawn from the Register of Independent Experts, prepared in accordance with paragraph 2 of Article 8 of Law 3374/2005. The Register shall be kept and maintained by the Agency, which for this purpose shall take into account the recommendations of institutions of higher education and other bodies relevant to the work of the Agency. The process of renewal and maintenance of the Register shall be determined by decision of the Agency and published in the Government Gazette. The Register shall obligatorily include Greeks or foreign experts of acknowledged reputation or specialists who teach in universities of similar status abroad or researchers in similar higher education and research institutions abroad, preferably with experience in the evaluation of institutions of higher education. Members of the Council of the Agency, as well as special scientific staff working with it in any way, cannot be included in the Register. In the case of accreditation of the quality of a programme of studies which leads to the exercise of legislatively regulated professions according to the first case of paragraph 1 of Article 3 of Presidential Decree 38/2010 (A' 78), one member of the accreditation committee must necessarily come from the professional association or chamber which has appointed that member.

3. The accreditation committee evaluates the quality of the programme of studies or of the internal quality assurance system of the institution on the basis of predetermined criteria, studies the material and information which the Agency puts at its disposal, and visits, when required, the unit or institution in question. The same accreditation committee may: a) evaluate more than one programme of study, especially if one is a prerequisite for admission to another, and b) assess relevant programmes of study or internal quality assurance systems of different institutions.

4. The accreditation committee shall prepare an accreditation report, which is submitted to the Council of the Agency so that the accreditation decision can be issued and publicized in accordance with the following Article.

5. The members of the Accreditation Committee are paid a daily fee for their work, the amount of which is not subject to the restrictions of Article 17 of Law 3205/2003, as ordinarily applicable. Travel and lodging expenses of the members for the performance of their duties (transport fares or expense of private or rented means of transport and accommodation expenses) are covered by the Agency. The daily remuneration of the members of the Accreditation Committee, the amount of travel and lodging expenses, the procedure by which they are covered, the necessary documentation and any related matters are determined by joint decision of the Ministers of Finance and Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, to be published in the Government Gazette.

Article 71

Accreditation decisions

1. By decision of the Council of the Agency certifies programmes of study and internal quality assurance systems of institutions, based on the reports of accreditation committees. The decision of the Council of the Agency may be positive, positive with conditions, or negative.
2. The length of time for which the accreditation decision shall be valid is set for each programme or internal assurance system by the Agency and may not exceed eight years. No accreditation is required for revisions to individual aspects of programmes and internal quality assurance systems. During the validity period of a positive accreditation decision, the Council of the Agency, ex officio or at the prompting of the Minister of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, may examine whether the accreditation criteria are still being met. If the accreditation criteria are not being met, the Council of the Agency shall revoke the accreditation decision and shall immediately inform the university in question and the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs.
3. The rector must inform the Agency if the accreditation criteria are no longer being met or if there is some doubt in the matter.
4. In the case of the positive conditional decision, the criteria that were not met are noted and a timetable is set for compliance with these criteria and for review of the decision. The Council, after submission of a supplementary accreditation report regarding compliance or non-compliance with the above criteria, issues a new decision.
5. If a negative accreditation decision is issued, the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs may make the decision to limit the funding of the institution and to admit new students into the programme of study or the institution, depending on the nature of the accreditation (of a programme of studies or the internal quality assurance system of the institution). The same decision shall provide students in these programmes of study or in these institutions the opportunity of continuing their studies at another accredited programme of study or institution, respectively, and for the resolution of related issues.
6. The accreditation reports of accreditation committees, and the accreditation decisions of the Council of the Agency, shall be communicated to the institution in question and the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs and published on the Agency's website. The Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs shall keep a register of accredited programmes of study and of institutions with an accredited internal system of quality assurance.
7. Accreditation of the quality of a particular programme of study or internal system of quality assurance of an institution of higher education under the provisions of the present Law may be substituted for by accreditation by an accredited foreign higher education accreditation body, as designated by decision of the Council of the Agency. The Council of the Agency accredits foreign accreditation bodies that are internationally recognized and apply criteria that correspond to those applied by the Agency.

Article 72

Accreditation criteria

1. General criteria for accreditation of programmes of study include, in particular, the following:
 - a) the academic character and orientation of the programme of study,
 - b) learning outcomes and expected competences in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education as anticipated in case d of paragraph 4 of Article 16 of Law 3879/2010, as supplemented by Article 46 of the present Law,
 - c) the structure and organization of the programme of study,
 - d) the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as evidenced in particular by the assessment of students themselves,
 - e) the suitability of the teaching staff,
 - f) the quality of the research work of the academic unit,
 - g) the degree of linkage between teaching and research,

- h) the demand from the labor market for the qualifications obtained, and
 - i) the quality of support services, such as administrative services, libraries and student welfare services.
2. General criteria for certification of internal quality assurance systems of institutions of higher education include, in particular, the following:
- a) establishing clearly defined objectives and ensuring the continuous improvement of the quality of programmes of study and support services of the institution,
 - b) the process of policy planning, effective organization and the decision-making process for the continuous improvement of quality,
 - c) the process of implementing the policy of continuously improving quality, and
 - d) the documented improvement of quality.
3. By decision of the Council of the Agency, to be published in the Government Gazette, additional criteria shall be formulated for programmes of study leading to the exercise of regulated professions in accordance with case a' of paragraph 1 of Article 3 of Presidential Decree 38/2010 (A' 78) to ensure that these programmes of study effectively satisfy the educational and institutional requirements of the relevant professional disciplines. For this purpose, the Agency shall collaborate with the respective professional associations and chambers.
4. The criteria of the preceding paragraphs shall be supplemented, refined, and revised by decision of the Council of the Agency and published in the Government Gazette, based on the knowledge and experience of the implementation of accreditation procedures and relevant international developments. In specifying the criteria, the distinctive character and mission of universities and technical institutes, and each academic unit, will also taken into account.

Article 73

Responsibilities for the implementation of the national strategy for higher education and the funding of institutions of higher education

1. As part of its mission to ensure quality in higher education, the Agency:
- a) advises on the national strategic plan for higher education as outlined in Article 61,
 - b) supports the implementation of the national strategic plan for higher education and the funding of institutions of higher education,
 - c) ensures the transparency of the funding criteria for institutions of higher education, and
 - d) recommends to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, and the governance bodies of universities, ways and means to ensure continued high quality in higher education.
2. In particular, the Agency, in the context of the realization of the goals and directions of the national strategy for higher education:
- a) negotiates programme design agreements with individual institutions,
 - b) recommends to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs programme design agreements for institutions of higher education and the allocation of public funds to these institutions, and
 - c) monitors and assesses the extent of implementation of each institution's program design agreements on an annual basis and proposes amendments to them to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs.
3. In order to accomplish the above, the Agency:
- a) prepares and publishes the criteria, indicators and models of the cost of services provided by institutions of higher education, on the basis of international practices and in particular those of the European Higher Education Area,

- b) collects and analyzes data from individual institutions necessary for the exercise of its powers, and
- c) prepares or assigns the preparation of related studies and research.

4. The Agency may recommend to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs the total or partial suspension of funding of an institution if the institution is at fault for not providing the required information and materials and the obligatory documentation.

Article 74

Evaluation and funding of the Agency

1. The Agency shall carry out an internal assessment of its functioning and work in accordance with the provisions of its Organization, and shall assign an external evaluation to internationally recognized and accredited evaluators, assessment bodies, or organizations engaged in similar activities abroad and, in particular, in Europe.

2. The appropriations for the operation of the Agency shall be entered under the same body in the budget of the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. The President of the Agency shall propose the budget to the Minister of Finance.

3. The Agency shall conclude program design agreements for its activities and objectives with the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. The Agency shall also prepare and submit annual reports of its proceedings to the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs.

Article 75

Centres of Excellence

1. To recognize and support best practices in quality and innovation at institutions of higher education, Centres of Excellence in higher education shall be established, in accordance with the following.

2. Universities, faculties, or their schools shall be elevated to the status of Centres of Excellence by the HQA, following a call for the submission of candidacies and the establishment of special committees whose members are selected by lottery from the Register of Foreign Experts maintained by the Agency in accordance with Article 70. The criteria for the recognition of centres of excellence are, in particular, the exceptional quality and effectiveness of their teaching and research work, the efficient structure and organization of their programme of studies, the linkage of teaching and research, and the high quality of support services.

3. By a decision of the Minister of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, issued following a proposal from the HQA and published in the Official Gazette, the criteria for evaluating candidacies shall be specified, and the specific procedure for recognizing Centres of Excellence, providing them with additional support, and any related matters shall be set out.

CHAPTER IA'

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Article 80

Other transitional provisions

1 - 11

12. a) No later than two months from the publication of the present law, the President of the HQA shall be appointed. No later than three months from the appointment of the President, the procedures for the election of members of the Council of the Agency and the Director General shall be completed. With the establishment of the Council, the term of Members of the Plenary of the HQA during the initial implementation of the present Law ceases; for the appointment of members of the evaluation committees of candidates for membership of the Council the assent of the Council shall not be required.

b) During the initial implementation of the present Law, half of the members of the Council of the Agency shall be appointed for a term of three years, after a drawing to take place at its first meeting, and the other half of the members for a term of six years.

c) Outstanding assessment procedures in accordance with the provisions of Law 3374/2005 shall be completed in accordance with the provisions of that same Law. For the academic units of institutions of higher education for which publication of the present law the evaluation procedure has not been initiated in accordance with the provisions of Law 3374/2005, this process shall begin and be completed in accordance with the provisions of the same Law. Upon completion of the evaluations of all academic units, the evaluation process based on the provisions of Law 3374/2005 ceases. For the implementation of these provisions, in which the plenary of the HQA is referred to, from the time of the establishment of the Council of the HQA, that Council is meant.

d) The programmes of study offered by academic units at the publication of this Law shall be considered accredited until the completion of the accreditation process according to the following section. The process of quality accreditation under the provisions of the present Law shall begin at each institution of higher education after a public invitation by the Agency and application of the relevant institution, after completion of the evaluation as defined in the previous case, and after the development of the internal quality assurance system of the institution, based on common principles and guidelines of the European Higher Education Area and the Agency.

e) Until the first implementation of Article 14 and the establishment of the QAU in accordance with paragraph 2 of this Article, the provisions of Law 3374/2005 concerning the QAU shall continue to apply.

13. The period of time of tenure in management bodies of the HQA that has elapsed by the time of publication of the present Law shall not be counted for the calculation of the maximum duration of the exercise of duties in bodies of the HQA, as specified under the provisions of the present Law.

Article 81

Provisions Repealed

With the exception of the transitional provisions of Articles 76 to 80, any general or special provision that is contrary to the provisions of the present Law is repealed, in particular:

23. paragraph 4 with the exception of the first section, and paragraph 5 of Article 2, as well as Articles 5, 6, 11 and 12 of Law 3374/2005 (A' 189), paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 2, Article 3, with the exception of paragraphs 2 and 3, paragraphs 5 and 6 of Article 4, paragraphs 2, 3 and 7, with the exception of the third section of Article 5, paragraphs 1-3, 7 and 8 of Article 6, paragraph 2 of Article 7 and Article 8 of Law 3391/2005 (A' 240).

Article 82

Entry into force

The entry into force of the present Law begins with its publication in the Government Gazette, unless otherwise specified in the individual provisions.

We order the publication hereof in the Government Gazette and its enforcement as a law of the State.

Athens, September 2, 2011

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

KAROLOS GR. PAPOULIAS

MINISTERS

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| FOREIGN AFFAIRS STAVROS LAMBRINIDIS | ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM AND ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT DIMITRIOS REPPAS |
| GROWTH, COMPETITIVENESS | EDUCATION, LIFELONG |

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| AND SHIPPING MICHAIL CHRYSOCHOIDIS | LEARNING AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS ANADIAMANTOPOULOU |
| INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT AND NETWORKS IOANNIS RAGOUSIS | LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS GEORGIOS KOUTROUMANIS |
| HEALTH AND WELFARE ANDREAS LOVERDOS | JUSTICE, TRANSPARENCY AND HUMAN RIGHTS MILTADIS PAPAIOANNOU |
| PROTECTION OF THE CITIZEN CHRISTOS PAPOUTSIS | CULTURE AND TOURISM PAVLOS GEROULANOS |

The Great Seal of the State has been applied.

Athens, September 5, 2011

MINISTER OF JUSTICE

MILTADIS PAPAIOANNOU