

# EQUAL

## ***Application for Consultative Membership of BFUG***

### **1. Added value to the Bologna Process**

EQUAL (European Quality Link) is a consortium of national and regional accreditation bodies, associations of educational institutions and professional networks aimed at the improvement of management education in Europe and abroad.

Its website address is:

[http://www.efmd.org/html/Schools/cont\\_detail.asp?id=041103ljdn&aid=041103qoit&tid=1&ref=ind](http://www.efmd.org/html/Schools/cont_detail.asp?id=041103ljdn&aid=041103qoit&tid=1&ref=ind)

The main objectives of EQUAL are:

#### **A) Create an Open Forum**

One of EQUALs key roles is to establish a permanent forum for exchange of information, benchmarking and cooperation between its members in order to promote continuous improvement of quality in management education across Europe. EQUALs particular concern is to improve the quality of the processes through which institutions and programmes are assessed. To achieve this, it creates a context for ongoing reflection by the management education community on what standards and criteria should be. By comparing the procedures and criteria of those members who are actively engaged in accreditation at the national or regional level, member organisations learn from each other and converge on best practice.

EQUAL also provides support for the development of national and regional agencies where these do not exist. Expert advice and help in setting up accreditation or quality assessment processes can be made available upon request.

Another major objective is to provide a forum for fruitful collaboration between established agencies in Western Europe and their Central and Eastern European counterparts.

In this perspective EQUAL will promote bilateral or multilateral agreements among its members in order to strengthen their collaboration and in order to recognise the validity of their accreditation and/or quality assessment systems.

## **B) Create an Open Market for management education services in Europe**

EQUALs goal is to contribute to the opening-up of a Europe wide market for management education in line with the Bologna process. In order to achieve this goal, it provides accurate information on evaluation systems in different countries to help prospective students and employers to identify those institutions and programmes that have gone through a valid accreditation or quality assessment process. EQUAL seeks to promote greater market transparency and increase the cross-border flows of students entering management programmes and of graduates entering the job market.

EQUAL thus aims to raise general awareness around Europe of the importance of a concern for quality improvement and quality assessment, as well as to help people to make informed cross-border choices. Accreditation can play a vital role in helping individuals and organisations to maximise the considerable investment associated with management development programmes.

## **C) Constitute the Support Group for a European accreditation system**

An important objective is to constitute a broad basis of reflection on what a European-wide accreditation system should seek to achieve. In an era of accelerating globalisation, it is essential to promote agreement on the major values and characteristics of management education and management practice in Europe. How should European quality standards be defined and by what criteria and through what procedures should they be measured? EQUAL will continue to contribute to a specifically European approach to accreditation and quality assessment, taking into account both the diversity of national systems and the common core of shared values that distinguish the practice of management and management education in Europe.

EQUALs role is to provide the expertise necessary for the setting up of the European accreditation scheme known as EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System):

[http://www.efmd.net/html/Accreditations/cont\\_detail.asp?id=040929rpku&aid=041029wupz&tid=1](http://www.efmd.net/html/Accreditations/cont_detail.asp?id=040929rpku&aid=041029wupz&tid=1)).

The EQUIS project is run by a separate unit within the EFMD which has been set up to manage the accreditation process. EQUAL is the vehicle by which the various national systems make their specific contributions to the common vision. Auditors for the peer review system which EQUIS is designing are drawn from EQUAL institutions.

Recognition by an appropriate national or regional agency is seen as the first step towards European accreditation. The EQUIS accreditation procedures will take into account criteria that have already been met through the national system.

#### **D) Further the Internationalisation of European management education**

The ambition of both EQUAL and the proposed European accreditation scheme called EQUIS is to define the criteria by which institutions can be deemed to have reached an international standing in their operations. EQUAL will thus encourage institutions to accelerate the internationalisation process and contribute to the general upgrading of European management education systems.

EQUAL will also interface with non-European accreditation agencies and help integrate European management education into the global market.

## **2. Relevance of the stakeholder group**

EQUAL is, in terms of the number of its members and its impact in the corporate world, the most relevant consortium of non-governmental accreditation bodies and professional networks in the field of management higher education in Europe.

Membership to EQUAL is open to accrediting bodies, national or regional associations of business schools, quality improvement agencies, government agencies involved in certification, and organisations in the process of developing their own accreditation processes, associations of graduates in Business Administration - in short, organisations which contribute something to European initiatives in the field of quality assurance and improvement.

Some members have established procedures for assessing management institutions or programmes. Other national or regional associations in Europe are in the process of developing similar standards and procedures. All are committed to the enhancement of management education and draw their legitimacy and reputation from the quality of their member institutions.

#### **Full members**

- [Association of Business Schools](#), UNITED KINGDOM
- [AEEDE](#), SPAIN
- [ASFOR](#), ITALY
- [Association Nationale des IAE](#), FRANCE

- [Association of Danish Business Economists](#), DENMARK
- [CAMBAS](#), CZECH REPUBLIC
- [CEEMAN](#), CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE
- [Chapitre](#), FRANCE
- [EFMD](#), BELGIUM
- [FIBAA](#), GERMANY, AUSTRIA & SWITZERLAND
- [FORUM](#), POLAND
- [SIVILØKONOMENE - The Norwegian Association of Masters of Science in Business](#), NORWAY
- [RABE, Russian Association of Business Education](#), RUSSIA
- [SEFE](#), FINLAND
- [Swedish Association of Graduates in Economics and Business Administration](#), SWEDEN
- [VSNU](#), THE NETHERLANDS

### **Associate members**

- [AACSB](#), UNITED STATES
- [Akkreditierungsrat](#), GERMANY
- [CFBSD](#), CANADA
- [CLADEA](#), LATIN AMERICA

### **Chairman**

- [Dr. Santiago Iñiguez de Onzoño](#), Dean, Instituto de Empresa, E

### **Vice-Chairman**

- [Jonathan Slack](#), Chief Executive, ABS-Association of Business Schools, GB

### **EQUAL Secretariat**

- [Griet Houbrechts](#), Director, Network Services Business Schools & Executive Centres, EFMD

### 3. Representativeness

EQUAL fulfils the following requirements for BFUG consultative membership:

- It is the most representative organisation in its field of interest, namely, non-governmental accreditation bodies, quality agencies and professional networks in the field of management higher education in Europe.
- It is a European organisation, hosted by EFMD (the European Foundation for Management Development).
- It accepts organisations from all the Bologna member states as full members,
- It has full members representing over 50 % of the Bologna countries,
- It has associate members from countries outside the EU/EEA and EU candidate countries.

Some of the key achievements of EQUAL in the past years include:

- Establishment of EQUAL as the first consortium of non-governmental accreditation bodies in the field of management education in Europe in June 1996.
- Enlargement of EQUAL to include new members from Europe and abroad.
- Creation and management of a thematic network involving all 15 member states and most of the accession countries of the European Union with funding by the European Commission under the Socrates Thematic Network Projects (from 1996 to 1999 and from 2000 to 2002).
- European Quality link EQUAL-SOCRATES Dissemination Conference, 26-28 May 2002, Helsinki, Finland
- Drafting of the "Dynamic Model for Quality Development", which served as the basis for the design of the EQUIS accreditation system

EQUAL has also produced an significant number of documents in the field of higher management education which include the following (in pdf format):

#### **EQUAL Documents**

 [EQUAL Position Paper on First Degrees \(51 kb\)](#)


 [EQUAL Position Paper on Master's Degree Titles \(93 kb\)](#)

 [Rankings - Guide for Students and Employers \(70 kb\)](#)

 [Research Guidelines \(203 kb\)](#)

 [MBA Guidelines \(437 kb\)](#)

 [Rankings - Guide for the Media \(69 kb\)](#)

 [EQUAL Position Paper on Doctoral Degrees \(46 kb\)](#)

#### **4. Organisational form**

EQUAL is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) hosted by EFMD (the European Foundation for Management Development: [www.efmd.org](http://www.efmd.org) ).

Given its membership and geographical coverage, EQUAL members believe that they can make a relevant and valuable contribution to the Bologna Process in the field of management education, one of the segments of higher education which has become more internationalised and global in the past decades.

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Santiago Iniguez  
Chairman  
EQUAL