

INQAHEE MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA AND PROCESS

December 2018

1. Introduction

The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) is a worldwide association of near 300 organizations active in the theory and practice of quality assurance in higher education. The great majority of its members are quality assurance agencies that operate in many different ways, although the Network also welcomes (as associate members) other organizations that have an interest in QA in HE.

Since its inception, the INQAAHE has established clear membership criteria and processes as outlined in the Constitution and Procedures Manual, which supported the Network in providing its services to a broad range of QA providers.

Following the amendments to the Constitution introduced in 2018, based on the accumulated experience throughout the years, as well as introduction of a new membership category, the INQAAHE Members and Membership Committee has undertaken a revision of the membership criteria and processes. The current membership criteria and procedures is the result of the hard work conducted by the Board to ensure only credible organizations become members of INQAAHE. In addition to improving the membership application process, an attempt has been made to ensure quality, accountability, and responsibilities of the applicants and current members keep instilling trust and credibility among the wider HE community.

The main objective of this document is to clearly define the criteria and process for membership the applicants must take into consideration while filing an application. The current members should also make a reference to this document to reassure their membership with the INQAAHE.

2. Membership Committee

The INQAAHE Board charged the Membership/Member Services Committee with the task to analyze the developmental trends with INQAAHE membership applications and propose a set of revised criteria and a respective process for the INQAAHE membership.

The members of the Committee are as follows:

- Angela Yung-Chi Hou (Chair)
- Susanna Karakhanyan
- Salim Ahmed Khan
- Anely Ramírez Sánchez
- Martí Casadesús Fa

3. Membership Categories

INQAAHE offers **four** categories of membership:

- A. **GGP ALIGNED MEMBERS** are organizations responsible for assuring the quality of post-secondary provisions – institutions and programs, such as accreditation, audit or other bodies responsible for the external evaluation of institutions and/or programs, which have successfully undergone the INQAAHE GGP Alignment procedure and whose alignment is current.
- B. **FULL MEMBERS** are organizations responsible for assuring the quality of post-secondary provisions – institutions and programs, such as accreditation, audit or other bodies responsible for the external evaluation of institutions and/or programs.
- C. **ASSOCIATE MEMBERS** are tertiary education institutions or organizations with a major interest in evaluation, accreditation and quality assurance in higher education, but without the responsibility for assuring the quality of institutions or education programs.
- D. **AFFILIATE MEMBERS** are individuals with a major interest in evaluation, accreditation and quality assurance in higher education and a proven track record of involvement in tertiary education quality assurance.

4. Rights, responsibilities and benefits for each membership category

4.1 Rights and Responsibilities

GGP Aligned, Full and Associate members may participate in the Governing Bodies of the Network with voting rights.

Affiliate members may participate in the General Assembly, but without the right to vote.

The member should remit, in due time, the subscriptions or any other contributions determined in accordance with the Constitution.

The members of INQAAHE should not use their membership or affiliation to claim any authority or recognition beyond that implied by the definition of their membership category, or by their formally recognized alignment with the Guidelines of Good Practice.

The Members of INQAAHE should refrain from actions that might, by the member's association with INQAAHE, bring the Network itself into disrepute.

If the INQAAHE Board receives a criticism of any INQAAHE member that appears to be related to their activities in QA, the Board will acknowledge the criticism, and will if possible investigate it and may discuss it with the member if appropriate. Anonymous criticisms will be ignored.

4.2 Benefits

A. GGP Aligned Member

- Access to the Good Practice Database
- Access to the Query Service and Support
- Access to the database of consultants
- Receive three annual editions of the Academic Journal “Quality in Higher Education”*
- Receive the electronic INQAAHE Bulletin and Communiqué quarterly
- Participate in decision-making according to the rights listed in the Constitution
- Promote events through INQAAHE’s Website
- Access to General Assembly documentation (minutes, annexes, other documents, etc.) through the INQAAHE’s intranet
- Participate in and/or host INQAAHE events such as the Biannual Conference and Forum
- Members who have paid or are up to date with their membership, can apply to discounts on conferences and forums registration fees
- Use of INQAAHE’s trademark and logo according to the Guidelines
- Involvement in the INQAAHE review panels
- Avail the priority of being involved in and granted the INQAAHE multiple projects

B. Full Member

- Access to the Query Service and Support
- Access to the database of consultants
- Receive three annual editions of the Academic Journal “Quality in Higher Education”
- Receive the electronic INQAAHE Bulletin and Communiqué quarterly
- Participate in decision-making according to the rights listed in the Constitution
- Promote events through INQAAHE’s Website
- Access to General Assembly documentation (minutes, annexes, other documents, etc.) through the INQAAHE’s intranet
- Participate in and/or host INQAAHE events such as the Biannual Conference and Forum
- Members who have paid or are up to date with their membership, can apply to discounts on conferences and forums registration fees
- Use of INQAAHE’s trademark and logo according to the Guidelines

C. Associate / Institutional Member

- Receive three annual editions of the Academic Journal “Quality in Higher Education”
- Receive the electronic INQAAHE Bulletin and Communiqué quarterly
- Access to General Assembly documentation (minutes, annexes, other documents, etc.) through the INQAHEE’s intranet
- Associate/Institutional members may participate in INQAHEE annual events such as the Biannual Conference and Forum. However, only QA agencies can host these events
- Members who have paid or are up to date with their membership, can apply to discounts on conferences and forums registration fees
- Use of INQAHEE’s trademark and logo according to the Guidelines

D. Affiliate Member

- Receive the electronic INQAAHE Bulletin and Communiqué quarterly
- Access to General Assembly documentation (minutes, annexes, other documents, etc.) through the INQAHEE’s intranet
- Participate in INQAHEE events such as the Biannual Conference and Forum
- Members who have paid or are up to date with their membership, can apply to discounts on conferences and forums registration fees

*Members whose fees are in arrears by more than a year will not receive the Journal, Bulletin, and Newsletter until they have paid their fees.

Members whose fees have not been paid for two consecutive years will be automatically excluded from the membership.

5. Application process

The degree of compliance with the membership criteria is assessed through an internal review conducted by the INQAAHE Membership/Member Services Committee.

- A. INQAAHE membership applicants need to submit their online application form through the INQAAHE website (www.inqaahe.org) depending on the requested category (Full member, Associate member, Affiliate).

The application form asks for additional information required for a decision on membership, as this information is used for the members' database. This saves the member of having to provide further information.

The application fee (USD 100) is charged to applicants and is non-refundable in case the application is declined.

- B. The application is then reviewed by the INQAAHE Membership/Member Services Committee. This committee has the right to ask additional questions when the information provided by the applicant is not clear.

The INQAAHE Membership/Member Services Committee decides if the application fulfills the membership criteria through voting.

The Secretary acts as a liaison for the Membership/Member Services Committee and communicates the decision of the Membership/Member Services Committee to the applicant.

- C. Once the INQAAHE membership application is accepted, the annual membership fee is invoiced (applying pro-rata amount of the annual fee based on the quarter in which they join).

- D. The organization's details are uploaded in the INQAAHE database and the organization is given full access to the INQAAHE website intranet area after the INQAAHE Secretariat has received the INQAAHE Membership fee.
- E. The applicant will be able to reapply within six months period in the case of a negative decision on the membership application.

6. Criteria for Each Membership

The criteria for each of the membership categories are described below:

A. Criteria for the GGP Aligned members:

- i. The applicant must be already a Full member of INQAAHE.
- ii. The applicant (QAA) must have an organization's profile that can include an overview of their operations and processes.
- iii. The applicant must be aligned with the GGP as per the INQAAHE GGP Alignment procedure (full review, joint review, mutual recognition).
- iv. The GGP alignment membership of the applicant should be renewed according to the INQAAHE's guidelines within the validity of the approved time period.
- v. The applicant's GGP report must be published on their official website.
- vi. The organization website needs to be updated and accessible in the English language.

B. Criteria for Full Membership:

- i. The applicant (QAA) must have an organization's profile that can include an overview of their operations and processes.
- ii. The applicant should demonstrate credibility through the legal documentation that supports its operations and experience in conducting external reviews at least for two years.
- iii. The organization website needs to be updated and accessible in the English language.

C. Criteria for Associate/Institutional Membership:

- i. The Higher education institution should be accredited by their respective national or local accreditors.

- ii. The applicants must have an organization's profile that can include an overview of their operations and processes.
- iii. The applicants must state the nature of their major interest in QA and awareness of the developments in QA.
- iv. HEIs have (or should have) a major interest in QA in HE, but normally of a different nature to that of an external QA (EQA) Agency. The institution's primary interest is in QA within the institution itself and is expressed through self-review rather than an external review.
- v. It has a systematic approach to QA, e.g. by having a QA office and/or by carrying out a regular structured review of parts of the institution, so that it finds value in sharing review experiences with EQA Agencies.
- vi. The organization website should be updated and accessible in English.
- vii. An applicant whose interest in QA stems solely from providing consultancy related to QA is not eligible for Associate / Institutional Membership.

D. Criteria for Affiliate membership:

- i. The applicants must have an organization's profile that can include an overview of their operations and processes.
- ii. Any individual including scholars, researchers, academics with a strong history of QA in tertiary education;
- iii. Newly established QA body with less than two years of QA practice, a tertiary education NGO.
- iv. The organization website (if any) should be updated and accessible in English.

7. Membership Review Criteria and Documentation

In order to facilitate the review application all applicants, QA agencies, or Higher Education Institutions must meet the following criteria and prepare the respective documentation according to the type of membership that they are applying for. The following table presents the checklist of the support documentation for each membership category:

Criteria	Support Documentation	GGP Aligned	Full	Associate/ Institutional	Affiliate
INQAAHE's Guidelines of Good Practice (GGP).	The applicant must be aligned with INQAAHE's Guidelines of Good Practice (GGP) and the alignment should be current.	✓			
Legal Status	The applicant must have a legal status/ acknowledgment in their country.	✓	✓	✓	
Organizations' Profile	The applicant or organization is in line with its mission statement and demonstrates the consistency of the organizational objectives according to the nature of the organization. *Individuals, Researchers, and Faculty members/Staff must submit their updated CV.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Human Resources	The profile of the staff is consistent with the organizational profile.	✓	✓	✓	
Financial Resources	The organization has sufficient resources to run its operations in accordance with its mission statement and objectives.	✓	✓		
External quality assurance criteria and processes	The description of the processes and criteria applied should be transparent and publicly available and normally include: self-evaluation, site visit, public report, and follow-up.	✓	✓		
Reviewers	The profile of the reviewers is consistent with the Organizations' Profile	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quality assurance	The applicant or organization has a quality assurance system and indicators with proper follow-up and constant review.	✓	✓		
Transparency	GGP reports or other Quality Assurance related reports should be published on the applicant's website.	✓	✓	✓	
Online Accessibility	The applicant's website should be updated and accessible in an English version.	✓	✓	✓	✓

8. Membership Fee

The fee amount is determined by the General Assembly for the following year and can be increased only once a year.

The current INQAAHE membership fees are:

- A. GGP Aligned Member, Full/Associate / Institutional Members, and Affiliates: USD 690.65
- B. GGP Aligned Member, Full/Associate Members, and Affiliates from Less Developed/Low Income (LDC/LIC) * countries: USD 345.33

The Secretariat will send out the invoices early in the year, normally in January. The fee is always paid for one calendar year (January 1 until December 31). New members that are applying during the year will receive the invoice immediately after their application is accepted.

The following reductions are applicable during the year:

- i. Memberships and affiliates applications April-June: 25% reduction on the annual fee.
- ii. Memberships and affiliates applications July-September: 50% reduction on the annual fee.
- iii. Memberships and affiliates applications October-December: 75% reduction on the annual fee.

Payment Methods: membership fees can be paid by credit card or bank transfer in USD.

More information about the membership fee for INQAAHE for all the members can be found updated in the website www.inqaah.org.

*The complete list of LDC's can be found in UNE: <http://www.un.org/>

For a list of LIC's is detailed in the World Bank's official website: <http://data.worldbank.org/>

9. Exclusion and Resignation

Membership or Affiliation may be withdrawn if the Member or Affiliate:

- Fails to maintain the conditions that allowed its initial admission, as set out in this document.
- Does not fulfill the obligations set out in the Constitution.
- Acts in the Network’s name without authorization.
- Misrepresents its association with the Network as implying any level of recognition (beyond the criteria that allowed its admission to the Network).
- Proves to demonstrate a misbehavior.

INQAAHE members may resign at any time by submitting a written notification of resignation to the INQAAHE Secretariat and the resignation becomes effective immediately.