

INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION PROGRAMME (IAP)

IAP-I-2 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Participation in the International Society for Quality in Health Care External Evaluation Association (ISQua EEA) International Accreditation Programme (IAP) is conditional upon the applicant organisation (“Participant”) agreeing to be bound by the terms and conditions set out below.

1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1.1. The organisation that submits a standard set must meet one of the following criteria:

- i) Be an established external evaluation organisation*.
- ii) Be in the process of establishing itself as an external evaluation organisation.
- iii) Have a formal agreement to develop standards for use by an external evaluation organisation.

*An organisation which carries out an external, independent assessment of a health or social care organisation against standards, guidelines, indicators or other measures. The external evaluation organisation is not affiliated with the service being assessed.

1.2. If there are any doubts as to whether an organisation is an external evaluation organisation, ISQua EEA will make a decision based on the criteria for independence, impartiality and conflicts of interest:

- i) An organisation is not considered to be an independent external evaluation organisation if it owns or shares ownership with healthcare providers that are (or are eligible to become) clients of that organisation. The same is the case if the organisation buys, commissions, or procures health care services from providers that are (or are eligible to become) clients of that organisation.
- ii) This does not exclude a government (national or regional) from establishing an external evaluation organisation that will have publicly or privately owned healthcare providers as clients.
- iii) It also does not exclude associations of healthcare providers or healthcare professionals from ownership or a governance role if the association as such does not deliver healthcare services (even though its members may do).

1.3. Standards used for internal evaluation or standards that form internal quality manuals are not eligible for entry into the programme. To be assessed by ISQua EEA, standards must be exclusively used for external evaluation purposes.

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2. PARTICIPATION POLICY

IAP participation is granted on the following basis:

- The participation is based on an ongoing four-year cycle. The Participant acknowledges that the International Society for Quality in Health Care External Evaluation Association (ISQua EEA) allocates resources based upon Participants committing to the programme for four years.
- The Participant must pay the fees set out in the IAP fee schedule. The fees shall be invoiced in annual instalments and ISQua EEA will advise of the date by which payment must be made. The annual instalment is subject to review and any alteration in the fees will reflect changes in the cost of providing the programme. ISQua EEA will notify client organisations in advance of any changes to fees.
- ISQua EEA reserves the right to cancel or postpone scheduled surveys due to non-payment of fees and in other circumstances it considers appropriate. The cancellation or postponement of surveys will be carried out on a case-by-case basis. Such circumstances may include but not be limited to, significant international events or domestic disturbance such that ISQua EEA surveyors may be placed at risk; where there have been sudden or unexpected changes in the governance and/or structure of the client organisation; or where the evidence indicates that an organisation, its standards, surveyor training or quality and patient safety training programme are not at a sufficient stage of development or readiness for external evaluation.
- Where the Participant cancels its IAP participation, including the cancelling or postponement of a scheduled survey, prepaid fees will not be refunded. Where there are unpaid annual instalments in respect of the remainder of the participation period, such fees will be payable in full by the Participant.
- An organisation with outstanding fees (beyond 90 days) shall have their accreditation status revoked and their details will be removed from the ISQua EEA website. They may no longer use or display any of the ISQua EEA IAP award logos on their website or other materials.

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3. IAP PARTICIPANT'S ENTITLEMENTS

The Participant is entitled to the following:

- 3.1. Receipt of a peer review based international accreditation service.
- 3.2. Access to IAP-related materials including all relevant ISQua EEA guides and publications.
- 3.3. Access to technical advice from ISQua EEA on the IAP process.
- 3.4. Access to a technical review: the organisation should submit its draft self-assessment tool and supporting evidence to ISQua EEA for a technical review eight weeks in advance of the survey start date. This will include a review of the organisation's understanding of the requirements and appropriate presentation of evidence. It does not include an evaluation or assessment of the level of achievement demonstrated by the self-assessment.
- 3.5. Receipt of an accreditation report outlining areas of best practice, opportunities for improvement, and recommendations in relation to the applicant service.
- 3.6. Upon receipt of the award of accreditation, the right to display ISQua EEA accreditation logo(s) and certificate(s), subject to ISQua EEA's Use of IAP Award Logo policy.

4. IAP PARTICIPANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Participant agrees:

- 4.1. To provide all evidence, self-assessments, standards and training programme materials in English.
- 4.2. To co-operate fully with ISQua EEA and its surveyors. To grant ISQua EEA access to records including any relevant evidence of quality activities during the organisation survey.
- 4.3. To undertake the ISQua EEA service applied for or forfeit any annual fees paid.
- 4.4. To agree and adhere to a critical path relating to the key dates of the IAP process including self-assessment submission and survey.
- 4.5. To review the surveyor allocations for the survey team and to provide a rationale to ISQua EEA in the event of a veto for a proposed survey team member.
- 4.6. Travel arrangements for the survey team:
 - a. In the case of on-site surveys where the Participant is booking the flights for surveyors, to discuss and agree flexible economy flight options with the surveyors prior to booking these flights. The definition of flexible economy flights may differ per airline. From an ISQua EEA perspective, flexible economy flights are those which are fully refundable; changes are permitted and upgrades to business class are possible.
 - b. In the case of on-site surveys where the surveyors are making their own travel arrangements, to review and approve flexible economy flight quotes submitted by the surveyors to facilitate booking.
 - c. To review the reimbursement arrangements for each airline ticket **prior to approval** as these vary per airline to ensure that appropriate cover is in place if a surveyor cannot travel for any reason. Some airlines may offer vouchers as opposed to cash refunds if an individual cannot travel or a flight is cancelled. In approving a flight quote the participant accepts responsibility for all associated costs in the event of cancellation by the surveyor or the airline.
 - d. To reimburse the surveyors for the flight costs upon production of an invoice or ticket for the flights by the surveyors. This should be completed within one month of booking. Please note that flights are generally booked 3-4 months in advance of the survey.
 - e. To book and pay for accommodation for the duration of the on-site survey.
 - f. To reimburse additional expenses incurred by the surveyors during the on-site survey

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including travel, accommodation, and meals, at the end of the on-site survey if possible, and within at least a month of the on-site survey.

- g. To discuss and agree with the surveyors an appropriate method of payment and currency for the reimbursement of such expenses.
- 4.7. To notify ISQua EEA as soon as possible of their intention to cancel or postpone a survey and to explicitly outline to ISQua EEA why they are requesting to cancel or postpone a survey. Surveys may only be **cancelled** on request from the participant's CEO or equivalent. Rescheduling of surveys where specific dates have been requested will be considered on an individual basis. Participants who request postponement of a scheduled survey will be contacted by ISQua EEA within **14 working days** regarding their request. In the event of a successful request for postponement, ISQua EEA will contact the Participant with a new survey date. ISQua EEA will work with each Participant to re-schedule a survey for an appropriate date while being cognisant that this may be longer than 12 months depending on the circumstances for postponement.
- 4.8. To work with ISQua EEA to identify suitable dates for a re-scheduled survey and to confirm to ISQua EEA when the survey dates are appropriate.
- 4.9. In the event of cancellation or postponement of a scheduled on-site survey, to pay any outstanding annual fees and to cover any incurred costs such as flight costs for surveyors if the surveyors have already booked flights based on the agreed survey dates.
- 4.10. To submit continuous assessment reports to ISQua EEA 12- and 30-months post award or annually in the case of quality and patient safety training programmes.
- 4.11. To provide written notification to ISQua EEA of any change of ownership or governance of the Participant and/or any major changes to services, within **30 days** of that change.
- 4.12. The Participant acknowledges that:
 - a) continuing accreditation status will be subject to the submission of continuous assessment reports for the respective programme(s) they are participating in and payment of relevant fees.
 - b) where the Participant is not awarded accreditation following a survey, the costs of any additional survey must be met by the Participant.
- 4.13. ISQua EEA has the right to terminate the Participant's involvement and accreditation status by notice in writing to the Participant if:
 - a) the Participant's fees are more than 90 days in arrears of the stated payment date. In which case the Participant will remain liable for any outstanding fee, regardless of when participation is cancelled.
 - b) there is a change in the ownership or control of the Participant that affects the Participant's ability or willingness to meet the requirements of ISQua EEA accreditation.
 - c) there is a significant failure in the standard of service provided by the Participant.
 - d) the Participant's standards have changed significantly, and these changes have not been approved by ISQua EEA.
 - e) the Participant fails to reasonably comply with programme requirements.
- 4.14. The relationship between ISQua EEA and the Participant, shall to the full extent permissible, be governed by the laws of Switzerland, or such other jurisdiction as nominated in writing by ISQua EEA.
- 4.15. To accurately communicate its accreditation status with ISQua EEA in all marketing and communications outlining the specific programme(s) accredited by ISQua EEA. This includes promotion of ISQua EEA accreditation status on the organisation's website, social media channels and related posts, press releases, promotional videos, blogs, as well as associated marketing materials such as advertisements (in online or print format), brochures, flyers, banners, and pull-ups.
- 4.16. An organisation that has obtained accreditation for one or more set(s) of standards can refer to these standards as being "accredited by ISQua EEA" or as being "ISQua EEA accredited standards". Standards accreditation alone does not allow the organisation to use the phrases "ISQua EEA accredited", "ISQua accredited" or similar. Only an organisation that has achieved accreditation against the *Guidelines and Standards for External Evaluation Organisations* can call itself "ISQua EEA accredited" or an "ISQua EEA accredited organisation".

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An ISQua EEA accredited programme is one of the following:

- An external evaluation programme that is delivered by an organisation accredited against the *Guidelines and Standards for External Evaluation Organisations*, using either standards that are accredited against the *Guidelines and Principles for Development of Health and Social Care Standards* or standards defined by national regulations or the equivalent.
 - A surveyor training programme that has been accredited against the *Guidelines and Standards for Surveyor Training Programmes*.
 - A quality or patient safety training programme that has been accredited against the *Guidelines and Standards for Quality and Patient Safety Training Programmes*.
- 4.17. To refrain from naming or drawing comparisons to other external evaluation organisations directly in its marketing and communications activities.
- 4.18. Misrepresentation of an organisation's ISQua EEA accreditation status or derogatory references to other external evaluation organisations in its marketing or communications will not be tolerated and will be subject to sanctions by ISQua EEA up to and including suspension or withdrawal of an accreditation award.
- 4.19. To use the appropriate award logo(s) in line with its accreditation status and to adhere to the ISQua EEA policy on the use of the award logo.
- 4.20. Organisations that do not abide by these terms and conditions and the associated policy on use of the ISQua EEA logo(s) will be subject to sanctions up to and including suspension or withdrawal of an accreditation award.

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5. ISQua EEA ACCREDITATION

ISQua EEA is committed to improving its services and post-survey each organisation is asked to complete an online questionnaire on their experiences of the survey.

The External Evaluation Award Committee's (EEAC's) award decision will not be communicated to the participant organisation until:

- It has been confirmed that all accreditation-related fees have been paid; and
- In the case of an on-site survey confirmation is received from the survey team that all outstanding surveyor expenses have been reimbursed.

Where ISQua EEA accreditation is granted, a Certificate of Accreditation will be issued to the Participant following confirmation the above conditions have been met.

5.1. Disclosure

Subject to all relevant privacy legislation and regulations, ISQua EEA may publicly disclose the full details of the accreditation status of the Participant. ISQua EEA may publish de-identified aggregated data from ISQua EEA surveyors and surveys to encourage improvement in the quality of care.

5.2. Corrections

ISQua EEA reserves the right to publish a public correction of any incorrect material that the Participant publishes related to its participation in the IAP.

5.3. Services Surveyed

The ISQua EEA Certificate(s) of Accreditation shall specify the service(s) surveyed and accredited, and the Certificate(s) of Accreditation shall be limited to those services specified. ISQua EEA has the right to refuse accreditation of any service offered by the Participant.

5.4. Licences, Authorities and Approvals

ISQua EEA accreditation will only be granted to a Participant or programme that has all required licences, authorities and approvals, legally required to perform their designated activities. Accreditation will be suspended or cancelled if any required licence, authority or approval is suspended or cancelled.

5.5. Certificates

The ISQua EEA Certificate(s) of Accreditation and any ISQua EEA signage shall remain the sole property of ISQua EEA. The Certificate(s) and ISQua EEA signage shall be held by the Participant under the licence of ISQua EEA and may be recalled by ISQua EEA for non-compliance with standards, non-payment of IAP fees, termination of IAP participation or for any reasonable cause as determined by ISQua EEA. The Participant must promptly surrender the Certificate(s) and ISQua EEA signage upon request.

6. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

If there is concern about any aspect of the findings by ISQua EEA following any of the ISQua EEA services, there are a number of dispute mechanisms available.

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6.1. Complaints

Formal complaints to ISQua EEA must be in writing. They will be processed according to the ISQua EEA complaints management policy.

6.2. Appeals

Participants may appeal in writing against an accreditation decision. All appeals must be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of ISQua EEA within **28 days** of receipt of written advice of the accreditation decision. The appeal must be accompanied by a detailed outline of the grounds for appeal plus the fee (25% of the annual fee).

Appeals can be submitted on any of the following grounds:

- If a client is dissatisfied with the outcome of an accreditation survey and decision because:
 - An error was made in the making of the accreditation decision.
 - Relevant and significant evidence was not properly considered or was incorrectly interpreted.
 - Inappropriate weighting was given to the evidence.
 - The original decision was inconsistent with the published criteria for accreditation.
- If a client has their accreditation award suspended for any reason.
- If a client has their accreditation award withdrawn for any reason

The ISQua EEA Board determines the final outcome of an appeal after consideration of the recommendations made by the Appeal Panel. The Participant will be notified in writing of the outcome of its appeal. If the appeal is upheld, the appeal fee is refunded.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

All ISQua EEA Staff (including surveyors) sign a Confidentiality Agreement with ISQua EEA to ensure that all information accessed/viewed/described remains confidential and secure to the Participant.

As part of the survey process, ISQua EEA surveyors review randomly selected employee, surveyor and client records when visiting the Participant. The aim is to ensure that records are adequately kept in accordance with both legislative requirements and good management practice principles.

ISQua EEA is aware that privacy implications may arise from its need to access personal records such as employee, surveyor or learner/trainee records for accreditation purposes. Similarly, the Participant needs to provide ISQua EEA and its surveyors with access to personal records without breaching their privacy obligations.

Privacy legislation and guidelines differ across jurisdictions, and it is not possible to generalise the requirements to comply with all privacy requirements. ISQua EEA therefore strongly encourages participants to include wording in their employee and client consent forms, privacy policies and other relevant patient documentation notifying them that their information may be accessed by organisations, such as ISQua EEA, for the purpose of accreditation activities.

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DISCLAIMER

ISQua EEA or any person acting on behalf of ISQua EEA shall not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by a Participant as a result of an act, said or reported on.

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