

**EUR-ACE®**

**Label Authorisation Process**

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# EUR-ACE® Label Authorisation Process

## I GENERAL INTRODUCTION - DEFINITION

- 1.1 ENAAEE carries out its mission by evaluating quality assurance and accreditation agencies in respect of their standards and procedures when accrediting engineering degree programmes. Those agencies which satisfy ENAAEE in respect of these matters are authorised by ENAAEE to award the EUR-ACE® labels to the engineering degree programmes which they accredit.
- 1.2 Authorisation to award the EUR-ACE® label may be granted to:
- (a) accreditation agencies, within the [European Higher Education Area \(EHEA\)](#), dealing only with the accreditation of engineering programmes,
  - (b) quality assurance agencies, within the EHEA, which deal with institutional reviews and accreditation of programmes in engineering and other academic disciplines.
  - (c) accreditation agencies, outside the EHEA, dealing with the accreditation of engineering programmes.

If an engineering accreditation agency operates outside its own country the rules for authorisation to award EUR-ACE® label, outlined in the “[Standards and Procedures on Transnational Accreditation for ENAAEE Authorised Agencies](#)” have also to be applied.

- 1.3 ENAAEE membership is a prerequisite for authorisation or re-authorisation. Click [here](#) for the [List of current ENAAEE Authorised Agencies](#).
- 1.4 The [Standards and Guidelines for Accreditation Agencies](#) describe the standards and guidelines for agencies applying for authorisation or re-authorisation to award the EUR-ACE® label to accredited degree programmes in engineering.



- 1.5 Each applicant agency is required to declare in advance, its willingness and intention to sign the [ENAAEE Mutual Recognition Agreement](#), if authorisation is granted.
- 1.6 In the authorisation process, the agency will need to provide evidence that its standards, procedures and practices comply with the [Standards and Guidelines for Accreditation Agencies](#); and the programmes which it accredits fulfil the programme requirements as set out in the [Standards and Guidelines for Accreditation of Engineering Programmes](#).
- 1.7 In principle, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) seeking the EUR-ACE® label for their engineering degree programmes contact an authorised agency in their own country/jurisdiction where one exists, or if not, in another country/jurisdiction.
- 1.8 EUR-ACE® label accreditation by an ENAAEE Authorised Agency, of an (engineering) degree programme run by a Higher Education Institution (HEI) based in a country different from the Agency's country shall conform to the rules outlined in the "[Standards and Procedures on Transnational Accreditation for ENAAEE Authorised Agencies](#)".
- 1.9 The process described in this document applies to both the authorisation and re-authorisation of agencies.

## **2 ROLE OF EUR-ACE® LABEL COMMITTEE (LC)**

The role of the EUR-ACE® Label Committee (LC) is to make recommendations to the Administrative Council (AC) of ENAAEE in relation to the granting to accreditation and quality assurance agencies (which accredit engineering programmes) the authorisation to award the EUR-ACE® label to engineering degree programmes accredited by those agencies. The LC is a permanent committee, composed of one representative of each accreditation agency authorised to award the EUR-ACE® label.



The Chair of the LC is nominated by the members of the committee and appointed by the AC. See the Internal Rules of ENAAEE, Article B7, B) The EUR-ACE® Label Committee,

Click [here](#) for the [current members of the LC](#).

## 2.1 Terms of Reference for LC

The ENAAEE AC established [Terms of Reference](#) (doc approved by AC 10 October 2023) for the LC.

## 2.2 Criteria for LC Membership

Candidates for election to membership of the LC are determined in the ENAAEE Internal Rules Art B7 B).

# 3 REVIEW PROCESS FOR APPLICANT AGENCIES

## 3.1 The Application Process for Full Authorisation or Re-Authorisation

Any newly EUR-ACE® authorised agency can award the EUR-ACE® label for the first two years in its own country only. After two years it can also award the EUR-ACE® label in another country following the rules set out in the Standards and Procedures on Transnational Accreditation Agencies.

Authorisation can only be given following a procedure with physical visits and meetings.

For re-authorisation an online procedure can be followed in specific circumstances, as further determined in article 9).

3.1.1 Applicant agencies fill in the application form and send it to ENAAEE by e-mail ([secretariat@enaee.eu](mailto:secretariat@enaee.eu)). In June, the ENAAEE Secretariat informs all authorised agencies that are to be re-authorised in the following year. The process of re-authorisation will be initiated by the relevant authorised agency with an application submitted to ENAAEE at least one year in advance of the expiry of the existing authorisation.

3.1.2 The secretariat will send an acknowledgement of receiving the application



form to the applicant agency.

3.1.3 If an application is submitted from an Agency in a country where an authorised Agency already exists, the existing Agency should be informed by the Secretary General when the process is started and a possible agreement between the two Agencies should be encouraged and facilitated. Duplication between the two agencies should be avoided and a complementary way of working should be sought. If a compromise is not possible the agencies will solve this with a national mediation procedure.

3.1.4 The LC will appoint a Chair of the Review Team (CRT), see pt 3.2.1.

3.1.5 Review of the application

- (a) The CRT reviews the application for completeness.
- (b) If it is incomplete, the CRT drafts a reply to be sent to the applicant agency by the ENAE secretariat as soon as possible and no later than 6 weeks after CRT was appointed by LC, setting out what additional material is required.
- (c) The CRT will inform the ENAE secretariat about the completeness of the dossier and the AC decides and informs the agency.

## 3.2 **Composition of the ENAE Review Team (ERT)**

3.2.1 The LC appoints an ENAE Review Team (ERT) composed of the Chair and three members selected for their expertise and experience. However, if one member is absent from any of the activities, the process will still be valid. The composition is such that all members can be regarded as a reserve. The authorisation visit is valid with minimum 3 members; a different composition of members is accepted in the two visits. For re-authorisation exceptionally minimum 2 members are accepted for one of the visits. All appointed members participating in the visits will be involved in the entire procedure.

The Chair of the Review Team (CRT) is nominated by the LC Chair and approved by the LC. The CRT must have been a member of LC for at least 3 years or have had normally 3 participations as a member of an ERT (ENAE Review Team) before taking the role of CRT.



The other members of the Review Team (ERT) are normally nominated by the LC Chair or the CRT and approved by the LC.

3.2.2 The members of the ERT will be completely independent of the applicant agency and will have the necessary knowledge, experience and expertise to conduct the review. Team members should come from different countries and conflict-of-interest issues should be taken into consideration during their selection. Anyone who is appointed as a potential member of an ERT should declare spontaneously a conflict of interest at the beginning of their mandate (he/she cannot be, for example, expert in the agency evaluated).

At least one member of the ERT should have industrial experience. A Mentor of an applicant agency cannot become a member of the ERT to visit that agency (see pt 6 criteria for mentoring applicant agencies).

3.2.3 The Secretary General will inform the applicant agency on the composition of the ERT and ask within a period of 7 days to communicate if it has any grounds to object any of the members.

3.2.4 Preparation for the ERT visits

- (a) The CRT will contact the applicant agency to propose suitable dates of visits.
- (b) The CRT will confirm the dates of visits after received feedback from the ERT and ask the agency to provide details of the arrangements for accommodation and local transport.
- (c) The CRT will confirm the dates of visits to ERT and LC Chair.
- (d) If possible, expenses of travel and accommodation must be covered in advance by the agency itself, if not possible, reimbursement must be done as quickly as possible.

### 3.3 The ERT Visit

3.3.1 If an applicant agency is seeking authorisation or re-authorisation to grant the EUR-ACE® label at one level only (Bachelor or Master), then the ERT will observe two site visits in two different HEI's, each for the accreditation of at least one programme, at least one of them applying for EUR-ACE® label.



- 3.3.2 Where an applicant agency has applied for authorisation or re-authorisation to grant the EUR-ACE® label to Bachelor and Master degree or integrated Master degree programmes, the ERT will observe site visits for the accreditation of at least one degree programme at each programme level covered by the agency (Bachelor degree, Master degree and/or Integrated Master degree programmes). The site visits observed will be located in at least two different HEI's. At least one of the programmes must be applying for EUR-ACE® label.
- 3.3.3 The CRT will also attend as an observer at one meeting of the agency's accreditation decision-making body, corresponding to the programmes observed.
- 3.3.4 The programmes of the HEI where the onsite visit takes place are not under review by the ENAAEE Review Team (ERT). The ERT will simply observe the way the applicant agency carries out the visit and the evaluation of these programmes.
- 3.3.5 At the end of the visit, the CRT will outline to the applicant agency its opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of the application but will not communicate the recommendations it will be making to the LC.

## **4 CRITERIA FOR MENTORING APPLICANT AGENCIES**

If an applicant agency wishes, mentors can be nominated to assist the agency towards fulfilling the requirements. [Click here for more information](#)



## 5 LANGUAGE/TRANSLATION ISSUES

Article S4 of the ENAAEE statutes states “***The working language of ENAAEE is English***”.

Therefore, ENAAEE requires applicants to submit documentation in English. However, ENAAEE recognises that English may not be the first language in the jurisdictions of applicant agencies. To facilitate applicants and ERT’s in carrying out their work, ENAAEE has established a [policy on language for reviews](#).

## 6 REPORT OF ERT

- 6.1 The ERT prepares a report on the application and visits. A template for the ERT report is provided, contact the [secretariat@enaee.eu](mailto:secretariat@enaee.eu). The CRT has the responsibility for coordinating the report with the support and consent of the other members of the Review Team. The report made in accordance with the EUR-ACE® Report Template is agreed by all the members of the ERT normally one month after the last visit.
- 6.2 When finalised by the ERT, the report, excluding the recommendations (given by consensus) to the LC, will be sent to the applicant agency for correction of any factual errors and to provide the agency with an opportunity to submit within 15 calendar days (or 2 weeks), excluding holidays, upon receipt a “Statement of the Reviewed Agency” to include its comments on the review process and the review report.

## 7 PROCESSING OF ERT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION BY LC

- 7.1 The ERT report will be sent to the LC no later than 2 weeks prior to the LC meeting at which the recommendation to the AC shall be formulated. The LC recommendation to the AC will be based on the ERT report and the discussion at LC.





- 7.2 The recommendations in relation to the authorisation or re-authorisation of the EUR-ACE® Label for any period of time must be unanimous with all LC members voting. Agencies not present in a decision-making meeting, should be asked for their consent with the recommendation in writing or by giving a proxy to another LC member before communicating the decision to the AC.
- 7.3 The recommendation of the LC will be sent by the LC Chair through the minutes of LC. Normally the decision on an application for authorisation or re-authorisation is made within one calendar year from the date of receipt of the application to the date of communication of the AC decision to the applicant agency.
- 7.4 When “authorisation” or “reauthorisation” is being recommended, the duration of the authorisation is five years, plus the remaining months of the year in which the AC has made its decision, terminating on the 31<sup>st</sup> December of the fifth year.
- 7.5 The recommendation “recommended for authorisation or reauthorisation with requirements” is for two years, plus the remaining months of the year in which the AC has made its decision, terminating on the 31<sup>st</sup> December of the second year.

No later than six months before the end of this two-year period, the applicant agency must provide evidence for fulfilling the requirements. The ENAE secretariat will remind the agency two months before.

When the LC is satisfied that the evidence provided demonstrates that these requirements have been satisfactorily fulfilled, the LC will recommend to the AC that the authorisation may be extended to the 31<sup>st</sup> December of the fifth year following the original AC decision.



## **8 ROLE/FINAL DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL (AC)**

- 8.1 The AC takes the final decision on authorisation and re-authorisation.
- 8.2 All decisions in relation to the authorisation or re-authorisation of the EUR-ACE® label for any period of time must be taken by two thirds (2/3) majority of the votes of all AC members voting.
- 8.3 All authorisation decisions are conditional upon the agency for authorisation signing the ENAE Mutual Recognition Agreement.
- 8.4 If the AC decides not to accept the LC recommendation, it may not change the recommendation but must refer, outlining its reasons, the report and recommendation back to the LC, for further consideration.
- 8.5 The decision “recommended for authorisation with requirements” is for two years, plus the remaining months of the year in which the AC has made its decision, terminating on the 31<sup>st</sup> December of the second year. Example 26 May 2023 LC recommendation – 26 June 2023 AC decision -> 31/12/2025 end of two years.
- 8.6 The decision “recommended for authorisation” is for five years, plus the remaining months of the year in which the AC has made its decision, terminating on the 31<sup>st</sup> December of the fifth year. Ex 26 May 2023 LC recommendation – 26 June 2023 AC decision -> 31/12/2028 end of 5 years.
- 8.7 On the recommendation of the LC, an authorisation period may be extended by decision of the AC. Before considering any extension, the concerned agency needs to send a letter addressed to the LC Chair requesting for extension with motivation of its reasons.
- 8.8 In the event of an application for authorisation being rejected by the AC, the applicant agency may request a re-examination of its application conducted by another ERT designated by the LC Chair.



- 8.9 In the event of a positive decision by the AC, the agency will be listed as an authorised agency on the ENAE website.
- 8.10 A letter including the decision, the final report, and, if applicable, the authorisation certificate is presented to the applicant by the ENAE President.

## **9 THE SPECIFIC CASE OF RE-AUTHORISATION PROCEDURE ONLINE**

- 9.1 Introduction: The online procedure is restricted to re-authorisation only.
- 9.2 For the agency authorised for the first time, the standard EUR-ACE® label Authorisation face to face procedure applies.
- 9.3 The online procedure is the same as the face-to-face procedure with exception for the activities mentioned below:
- 1) The CRT receives a copy of all e-mails relating to the preliminary organisation of the online evaluation sent by the Agency to the universities.
  - 2) The CRT receives all the necessary information for ERT's online connection. This information will be distributed in time to all ERT members.
  - 3) A deontology chart must be signed between the agency and the ERT.
  - 4) In the case of audits carried out in a language other than English, the agency arranges for the members of the ERT to be in direct contact with a translator while receiving the images from the audited university. The same practice applies to the CRT participation to the meeting of the agency's accreditation decision, if this meeting is organised online.
- 9.4 Recommendations for the ERT for an adequate observation of an online evaluation:
- 1) At the beginning of each new sequence of the audit, the LC Chair briefly introduces the members of the ERT and their mission.



- 2) The ERT ensures that the evaluation procedures complies with the guidelines on programme self-assessment review by the HEI and the accreditation requirements of the agency (Appendix 1 of EAFSG).
- 3) The ERT ensures that evaluation procedures comply with the guidelines on programme accreditation process (Appendix 2 of EAFSG).
- 4) The ERT ensures in particular that learning outcomes are evaluated in an appropriate manner, even though the audit takes place online; this concerns in particular the review of student work.

## **10 COSTS**

Only full members of ENAAEE, accreditation and quality agencies, which are paying their annual membership fee can apply to become EUR-ACE® label authorised agency. The fee per EUR-ACE® label awarded is to be paid to ENAAEE by all authorised agencies.

ENAAEE currently does not charge for the review process but applicant agencies are expected to cover the travel and subsistence costs of the ERT during the on-site visits. The ERT is not paid for their services which are voluntary.