

Principle of accreditation introduced in the Directive 2005/36/EC

The Council of European Dentists (CED) and the Federation of European Dental Competent Authorities and Regulators (FEDCAR) call for the European Commission to **recognise the need for an accreditation system to ensure a minimum common standard in the quality of dental education for a proper implementation of Directive 2005/36/EC.**

We recognise the minimum duration for dental programmes and the minimum content already set out in Annex V.3.1 of the Directive. We also recognise that all member states are already required to establish systems to assess the quality of education in third level institutions. We respect these processes, in particular those linked to the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG)¹.

We acknowledge the principle of institutional autonomy and that there are many different models of dental training in Europe. In addition, different models can be used to achieve this common objective and that each member state should be free to design a model that takes account of national circumstances.

Nevertheless, the current automatic recognition system based on the mutual confidence of the competent authorities is not sufficiently ensuring the harmonised and comparable assessment of dental education. This may account for the disparity in the standards of dental education in Europe.

To achieve a sound transition between dental education and professional practice, which ultimately benefits the patients, we should rely on:

- a) comparable standards agreed between the educators and professional stakeholders;
- b) an independent system of quality assurance to ensure that such standards are met.

To allow appropriate assessment and comparison of ability and readiness for professional activity, it is of utmost importance that in a near future the structural content of the Annex V.3/5.3.1. of Directive 2005/36/EC to be reviewed in order to include a measure of competences and skills rather than just a list of subjects.

All national systems of dental education should have comparable standards and have an independent system of quality assurance to ensure that these standards are met, to establish this mutual confidence and proper functioning of the Single Market.

¹ The ESG 2015 were adopted by the Ministers responsible for higher education in the European Higher Education Area in May 2015.

“The ESG are a set of standards and guidelines for internal and external quality assurance in higher education. The ESG are not standards for quality, nor do they prescribe how the quality assurance processes are implemented, but they provide guidance, covering the areas which are vital for successful quality provision and learning environments in higher education.”
https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

We call for an additional measure through a delegated act to ensure that the quality of dental education, and especially **the clinical component**, is evaluated:

- a) within an acceptable and minimum quality framework;
- b) with reference to competencies sufficient to equip graduating students to practice dentistry safely, and;
- c) independently of the institution providing the training.

These requirements should be broadly similar as dental qualifications are part of automatic recognition systems of the Directive.

We suggest the addition of a new provision that could for instance state that:

'Member States must ensure the quality of the delivered qualifications in Chapter III, Title III, by setting up a mandatory system of a public, regular and independent assessment of all institutions providing a qualification listed in Annex 5.3.2 of the Directive. Once obtained, the results must be notified to the Commission.'

Each Member State must be empowered to remove recognition from institutions that fall seriously short of the standards required to train dental students to practice safely after graduation.