euaa
**EUROPEAN UNION
AGENCY FOR ASYLUM**

Training Quality Assurance Framework

Training Quality Assurance Framework

2022

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List of abbreviations

Term	Definition
ARTU	Asylum and Reception Training Unit
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
ESG 2015	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
ESQF	European Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Asylum and Reception
EU	European Union
EU+	European Union Member States and associated countries
Frontex	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
LMS	Learning Management System
MS	Member State
NCP	National Contact Point
QAAS	Quality Assurance and Accreditation Sector
TDDS	Training Design and Development Sector
TLMU	Training and Learning Management Unit
TLMS	Training and Learning Methods Sector

Term	Definition
TLRAS	Training and Learning Research and Analysis Sector
TLTS	Training and Learning Technologies Sector
TPDC	Training and Professional Development Centre
TPPS	Training Planning and Programming Sector
TQAAG	Training Quality Assurance Advisory Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

1.   Introduction

This document lays down an overarching quality assurance framework, as mandated by the EUAA's Management Board decision adopting the EUAA Training and Learning Strategy[1], for the training offered by the EUAA to members of its own staff and relevant national administrations, and in particular national authorities responsible for asylum and reception[2].[1]

1.1.   Mandate for EUAA Training

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) is a decentralised EU agency with a mandate to contribute to ensuring the efficient and uniform application of Union law on asylum in Member States in full respect of fundamental rights and facilitating and supporting the activities of Member States in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). The Agency is also tasked with improving the functioning of the CEAS, including by providing operational and technical assistance to Member States, in particular where their asylum and reception systems are under disproportionate pressure. The Agency's mandate is laid down in Regulation (EU) 2021/2303 of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum (the 'EUAA Regulation')[3]. In this respect, one of the key practical tools contributing to the efficient and uniform application of Union law on asylum is training.

In accordance with Article 1(3) of the EUAA Regulation, the EUAA shall be a centre of expertise by virtue of its independence, the scientific and technical quality of the assistance it provides and the information it collects and disseminates, the transparency of its operating procedures and methods, its diligence in performing the tasks assigned to it, and the information technology support needed to fulfil its mandate.

The EUAA's mandate in the area of training derives specifically from Article 8(1) of the EUAA Regulation, which states that the EUAA 'shall establish, develop and review training for members of its own staff and members of the staff of relevant national administrations, courts and tribunals, and of national authorities responsible for asylum and reception'. Such training shall be developed in close cooperation with Member States and, where appropriate, with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and relevant training entities, academic institutions, judicial associations, training networks and organisations. Moreover, Article 8(4) of the EUAA Regulation provides that the training offered by the Agency shall be of high quality.

Based on these principles, the EUAA's Management Board adopted the EUAA's Training and Learning Strategy, in the implementation of which, the EUAA takes an open, constructive and dynamic approach while remaining fully committed to upholding the highest standards of quality, efficiency and transparency.
Consistent with the EUAA's mandate and the strategy referenced above, the objective of this

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[1] Management Board Decision No 102 of 7 March 2022 on the EUAA Training and Learning Strategy.
[2] The development of professional material for the members of Courts and Tribunals is not in scope of the EUAA Training and Learning Strategy.
[3] Regulation (EU) 2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/2010, (OJ L 468, 30.12.2021, p. 1, in particular Article 1(2) thereof).

document is to outline the quality assurance system for the EUAA's training activities and to detail the procedures and methods in place to ensure that the training offered by the EUAA is of the required quality, in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015)[4].

Therefore, the intended users of this document are stakeholders who have a role in the design, development, review, delivery or evaluation of the EUAA's training activities, including staff members, remunerated external experts or experts from national administrations. The document is also a reference for all actual or prospective learners as regards the quality assurance standards that are to be expected of the EUAA's training activities.

The procedures outlined in this document shall be without prejudice to the legal framework which is applicable to the temporary and contract staff employed by the EUAA, in particular the Staff Regulations and the CEOS[5] and the implementing rules adopted by the Agency pursuant to Article 110(2) of the Staff Regulations, including but not limited to the rules governing the appraisal of staff members and those pertaining to the requests and complaints (or appeals) submitted by staff members pursuant to Article 90 of the Staff Regulations[6], as well as the legal framework applicable to Seconded National Experts (SNEs), including Management Board Decision No 1 of 25 November 2010 laying down rules on the secondment of national experts (SNE) to the European Asylum Support Office.

1.2.　　Strategic Approach to Training Quality

Since the beginning of its operations, the EUAA (formerly the 'European Asylum Support Office – EASO') built a strong reputation as a centre-of-excellence for training across the entire field of international protection. It has done so by putting training at the core of its mission, drawing on expertise from the EU Member States and associated countries[7], the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international organisations active in the field of asylum, migration and fundamental rights protection as well as academia, and involving all relevant stakeholders in the development and delivery of its training.

The EUAA applies a train-the-trainer methodology to training delivery, thereby ensuring a multiplier effect. This approach maximises the reach of its training while ensuring that it is adapted to the distinct organisational environments and structures of national administrations.

This decentralised approach however does not come at the cost of the EUAA's commitment to the highest standards of professional and ethical behaviour or of its commitment to its core values of respect for fundamental rights, equality and the protection of the most vulnerable. All participants in the EUAA's training activities, wherever they take place, must comply with and observe these standards and values as enshrined in the Code of Conduct for participants in the

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[4] Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). (2015). Brussels, Belgium (weblink: https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf).

[5] Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union ('Staff Regulations') and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union ('CEOS') laid down by Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom, ECSC) N° 259/68, OJ L 56, 4.3.1968, p. 1, as last amended by Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1023/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013, OJ L 287, 29.10.2013, p. 15.

[6] Applicable by analogy to temporary and contract staff by virtue of Articles 46 and 117 of the CEOS respectively.

[7] Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

EUAA's training activities established by the Agency's Training and Professional Development Centre (TPDC).

The content of the training delivered by the EUAA is based on the European asylum curriculum, which is a vocational training system built around a series of interactive modules reflecting the requirements of the CEAS. These modules are divided in a series of core, advanced and optional training modules, enabling flexible learning pathways for asylum and reception officials depending on their specific roles and tasks.

The vocational nature of the EUAA's training activities has been further reinforced with the development of the European Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Asylum and Reception Officials (ESQF)[8], which identifies the knowledge, skills and levels of responsibility and autonomy necessary for asylum and reception officials to perform their tasks. These occupational standards are matched to educational standards which correspond to the learning outcomes of modules in the European asylum curriculum. As a result, participants in the EUAA's training activities only follow training which is relevant to the performance of their tasks, and which respond to the needs of their organisations.

The strategic importance that the EUAA attaches to training is further underlined in its internal organisation, which includes a centre entirely dedicated to training. This internal structure enables the EUAA to continue putting quality and excellence at the heart of its training activities whilst allocating training resources in an optimal manner.

The EUAA, however, recognizes that building and maintaining confidence in the quality of its training also entails a commitment to quality assurance standards and to the external verification of its compliance with those standards. For this reason, the Management Board took the strategic decision to task the Agency's Executive Director with adopting this Training Quality Assurance Framework with the aim of ensuring compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. The development of the framework was carried out in collaboration with a Certification and Accreditation Working Group, composed of representatives of interested EU Member States and associated countries.

The document also takes into account the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), as implemented, based on the Recommendation on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 23 April 2008[9].

This document, which represents the EUAA's commitment to quality assurance in its training activities, enjoys broad support across the EU Member States and associated countries and is publicly accessible on the EUAA's website.

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[8] ESQF Occupational and Educational Standards (weblinks:
https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Occupational_Standards_EN.pdf
and https://www.easo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Educational_Standards_EN.pdf).
[9] Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, (OJ C 111, 6.5.2008, p. 1), (weblink: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32008H0506(01)).

2.   EUAA Training Governance System

2.1.   Structure of the EUAA

The EUAA is governed by a Management Board comprising nominated representatives of EU Member States, the European Commission and a non-voting representative of the UNHCR[10] and is managed by the Executive Director. The organisation of the core functions of the EUAA[11] is distributed between three centres: the Operational Support Centre, the Training and Professional Development Centre and the Asylum Knowledge Centre.

Responsibility for training quality assurance rests with the TPDC. The head of the centre reports directly to the Executive Director of the EUAA.

2.2.   Structure of the Training and Professional Development Centre

The TPDC comprises two units: the Asylum and Reception Training Unit and the Training and Learning Management Unit. Each unit has two sectors (Figure 1).

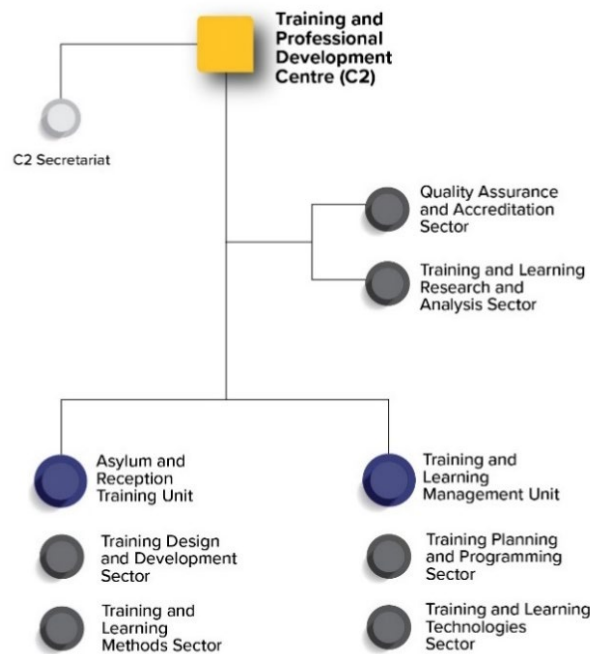Figure 1: Structure of the Training and Professional Development Centre

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[10] A representative of Denmark participates in all Management Board meetings, without the right to vote. Representatives of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland participate in meetings as observers.

[11] The organisational chart is available on the Agency's website at https://euaa.europa.eu/about-us/who-we-are.

The Asylum and Reception Training Unit is comprised of a Training Design and Development Sector (TDDS) and a Training and Learning Methods Sector (TLMS), whereas the Training and Learning Management Unit is comprised of a Training Planning and Programming Sector (TPPS) and a Training and Learning Technologies Sector (TLTS).

Two additional sectors report directly to the head of centre: the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Sector (QAAS) and the Training and Learning Research and Analysis Sector (TLRAS).

The Head of the TPDC is supported by an administration team. There is also dedicated administrative support for each of the units and sectors.

The duties and tasks of the personnel in each sector are outlined below.

2.3.　Asylum and Reception Training Unit

The unit is responsible for the design and development of all training material aimed at supporting asylum and reception officials, including officials of the national authorities of Member States whose asylum and reception system is subject to pressure, through the European asylum curriculum, enabling them to acquire the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy to perform their duties.

2.3.1.　Training Design and Development Sector

The TDDS is responsible for strengthening the European asylum curriculum and developing other training material including in the context of technical and operational assistance and the external dimension framework. It does so in collaboration with EU Member States' experts and other experts, based on established training needs required for the successful performance of asylum and reception officials' job tasks, particularly through the implementation of the European Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Asylum and Reception Officials (ESQF).

This sector, which includes Module Design Coordinators who are also content experts, is responsible for designing and reviewing learning outcomes to ensure a learner-centred approach, as well as designing entry requirements for each module and course, including for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

The sector designs assessment strategies and plans developments, updates and upgrades, coordinating for that purpose meetings with Member States and external experts. It also organises and implements the process of consultation with stakeholders involved in the development and/or review of training material such as other centres/units/sectors within the EUAA, other EU agencies, and in particular the Fundamental Rights Officer, the Consultative Forum, and members of the Reference Group.

The TDDS, in performing the above tasks, is supported by the TLMS, which advises during the design of the content and assessment methods, as well as by the TLTS, which implements all

related requests for development and delivery through online tools and applications (synchronous and asynchronous).

This sector designs and develops certified modules for learners as well as distinct courses for trainers. These will be complemented by updates for continuing professional development (CPD).

2.3.2. Training and Learning Methods Sector

The TLMS develops, maintains and applies effective and streamlined instructional design models to the production of training material, informed by qualitative and quantitative analysis of user behaviour and feedback. It also authors and manages instructional content delivered on the EUAA Learning Management System.

The sector evaluates, tests, and pilots eLearning design solutions based on innovative instructional approaches in collaboration with the TLTS. It is responsible for strengthening the capacity of staff members and Member States' content experts and trainers in the application of the Agency's instructional design models and training delivery methodologies by designing and delivering dedicated cross-cutting training modules and other training activities.

The TLMS advises on the continuous improvement of appropriate, effective, and efficient assessment strategies and manages the content of the European asylum curriculum with regards to versioning and production of translated training content, as well as other publications directly related to the Agency's training offer, such as the EUAA's training catalogue.

2.4. Training and Learning Management Unit

The unit is responsible for liaising with EU Member States to manage flexible learning pathways targeted to their specific training needs. Its main role is to ensure that the training delivered is relevant and consistent. The unit consists of two sectors.

2.4.1. Training Planning and Programming Sector

The TPPS, composed primarily of in-house trainers, is responsible for supporting Member States in planning and programming of training, including as part of operational and regional initiatives, with an aim to mainstream the incorporation of core parts of the European asylum curriculum into their training and further harmonisation of the implementation of the CEAS. It also manages the delivery of train-the-trainer sessions, regional and national sessions of modules and courses in the European asylum curriculum, operational and *ad hoc* training, including training sessions for experts in asylum support teams or in the asylum reserve pool, as well as training in third countries.

The sector facilitates and promotes collaboration and exchange with other relevant stakeholders, including EU agencies, for the planning, programming, and delivery of training in different contexts.

This sector works closely with Training National Contact Points (NCPs) through its Country Desk Coordinators, to define and tailor learning activities when requested. The sector also implements procedures related to exemption, progression and certification and coordinates training activities implemented as part of the Agency's operational plans or agreements with third countries. Given that operational plans are often delivered within countries whose asylum and reception systems are subject to disproportionate pressure, there may be a need for adaptation of training to the specific national context or development of new training to meet urgent operational needs. This sector, therefore, flags such needs as they arise to the TDDS, as well as the TLRAS if a needs analysis is required.

Training Delivery Focal Points in this sector are trainers with subject matter expertise in the area of asylum and reception who coordinate and monitor the implementation of training, where necessary, through the selection of EU+ co-trainers, coaches, assessors and verifiers, and implementation of recognition of prior learning procedures and admission requirements. With expertise in the subject area of the training within their remit, the Training Delivery Focal Points provide feedback on assessments developed by the TDDS and moderate discussions in relation to assessment and any other quality issues that emerge during training delivery. They also ensure consistency in delivery standards wherever training is delivered, in liaison with other sectors, as necessary. They may also coach national trainers in Member State administrations. Finally, the Training Delivery Focal Points may participate in the handling of assessment appeals, as appropriate.

2.4.2. Training and Learning Technologies Sector

The TLTS provides support for the delivery of training through the provision of technology-based services for user registration, module and course configuration, and online assessment. It maintains, upgrades, and extends the EUAA's Learning Technologies Ecosystem by identifying and progressively integrating additional components to ensure end-user experience consistency across platforms and tools.

This team is also responsible for evaluating, testing, and piloting e-Learning solutions based on state-of-the-art educational technologies in collaboration with the TLMS.

Finally, the sector provides effective and efficient client relationship management throughout the training cycle by offering helpdesk support to the end-users of the EUAA's training and learning technologies.

2.5. Sectors reporting to the Head of Centre

2.5.1. Quality Assurance and Accreditation Sector

The QAAS ensures the implementation and operationalisation of strategic policies and procedures in line with quality standards in the area of education and vocational training through the use of appropriate systems, methods and tools. In so doing, it achieves and maintains full compliance of the EUAA's training activities with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, thereby ensuring that training is

delivered to consistently high-level standards through coordinated activities across the training cycle and the identification of areas for quality enhancement. It also reports on the quality of EUAA training by verifying the compliance with internal and external quality assurance and accreditation[12] requirements for programmes and qualifications.

The sector coordinates responses to training complaints and assessment appeals, ensures liaison and coordination of training governance-related issues, and organises meetings and work with external groups and panels involved in training standards activities. Finally, the sector ensures the accuracy and periodic review of the European Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Asylum and Reception Officials (ESQF).

2.5.2.   Training and Learning Research and Analysis Sector

The TLRAS analyses all training-related qualitative and quantitative data, with a view to conducting ongoing monitoring, periodic review and evaluation of the EUAA's training activities to provide evidence on the impact of training.

The sector also develops methodologies for and conducts overarching needs analysis and evaluations. In particular, it assesses training needs and gaps through the implementation of the Agency's training needs analysis methodology, which incorporates the use of the ESQF to identify training needs and potential gaps.

The TLRAS produces in-depth reports for the above purposes.

2.6.   Cooperation with EU Member States and associated countries (Training NCPs)

In order to comply with the requirements of the Agency's mandate, which specifies that the EUAA's training activities must be developed in close cooperation with, amongst others, Member States, the EUAA has established a network of national contact points, called "Training National Contact Points" (Training NCPs). Training NCPs are nominated by Member States to act as liaisons with their respective administrations and centralise communication between other national entities and the EUAA on training-related matters. EU+ countries also participate in EUAA training activities and are also represented by their Training NCPs. Training NCPs have two core functions:

- Support the EUAA in the management and development of the European asylum curriculum and other training activities;
- Support the EUAA in the continued implementation of the European asylum curriculum and other training activities in the EU Member States and associated countries

The terms of reference of Training NCPs, established by the TPDC, specify in more detail their role and responsibilities.

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[12] Accreditation means to be officially recognised or approved of, or the act of officially recognising or approving of something.

Training NCPs meet on a regular basis to discuss training matters and contribute to the identification of training needs.

2.7.   Advisory and Working Groups

A key strength of the EUAA's approach to training is the inclusion of the expertise of the EU Member States and associated countries, which are the main beneficiaries of the training, across all processes relating to the design, development, delivery and evaluation of the EUAA's training. As an organisation, the Agency fosters an open dialogue with civil society stakeholders through the Consultative Forum. In addition, there are further groups or panels of experts who work directly with the TPDC, as detailed in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Advisory and working groups

2.7.1.   EUAA Training Reference Group

The Agency collaborates with relevant stakeholders in training through the establishment and maintenance of an EUAA Training Reference Group. Among others, the Reference Group is composed of representatives from the European Commission, the UNHCR, members of civil society, academia and, where relevant, members of courts and tribunals. The Reference Group supports the EUAA in the design, development, upgrade and update of its training material and acts as reviewer of content. Through the cooperation with the Reference Group, the EUAA also promotes mutual understanding and collaboration among relevant EU actors to further enhance

consistency and compliance of the training material with the standards set in international and European law and jurisprudence.

The terms of reference of the EUAA Training Reference Group, established by the TPDC, specify in more detail its role and responsibilities.

2.7.2. Training Quality Assurance Advisory Group

The Training Quality Assurance Advisory Group (TQAAG) is the highest-level structure in place for the strategic monitoring of the EUAA's training activities and for ensuring training quality in each of the EU Member States and associated countries. In fulfilling this task, they work in close liaison with their respective Training NCPs.

The TQAAG is composed of one senior official from each national administration nominated by each Member State and empowered to represent and take decisions on behalf of their national administration.

The TQAAG meets a minimum of once a year to review training standards reports. The group considers all indicators of training quality and any emerging issues and makes recommendations to the TPDC. The TQAAG considers statistics and qualitative information on:

- Learner and trainer feedback and monitoring and evaluation reports;
- Registrations and withdrawals;
- Training complaints and assessment appeals;
- Assessments (including those taken for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) purposes), grades, certifications and qualifications.

The TQAAG produces an annual report that is published on the EUAA website.

Ad-hoc panels may be formed by the group to provide support for specific actions such as periodic review (see section 12).

The terms of reference of the TQAAG, laid down by the TPDC, specify in more detail the composition, role and responsibilities of its members.

2.7.3. The EUAA's Training Pool

n order to implement consistent quality standards in its decentralised training system, the EUAA maintains a pool of EU Member States' and associated countries' experts drawn from the asylum and reception field who contribute to the design, development, delivery and assessment of the EUAA's training.

EU Member States' and associated countries' experts who contribute to the development of training material are chosen following requests for nominations sent to Training NCPs. The selection process is managed by the Head of the TDDS. Following their selection, these experts are included in the Training Pool and may also be involved in the delivery of some parts of the EUAA's training in subject areas specific to their expertise.

EU Member States' and associated countries' experts who participate in the delivery of the EUAA's training may be deployed to support training delivery as part of operational plans and direct training interventions that form part of the Agency's activities.

Inclusion and participation in the Training Pool is subject to the policies and procedures set out in section 8. The terms of reference for the Training Pool, laid down by the TPDC in consultation with Training NCPs, specify in more detail the role and responsibilities of experts included in the Pool.

The EUAA holds a Trainers' and Experts' Conference, at least once a year, that provides a forum for the discussion of training issues and planned updates of the European asylum curriculum.

2.7.4. Remunerated External Experts

Where expertise is required to support specific functions within the TPDC, remunerated external experts are appointed on a contractual basis for specific tasks. The selection of remunerated external experts is subject to the EUAA's procurement processes as detailed on the EUAA's website.

3. Training Design and Approval

3.1. Training Needs

The decision to develop training modules is based on the needs of EU Member States and associated countries, requirements of operational planning and EUAA initiatives to fulfil its mandate. The TLRAS conducts the training needs analysis process on the basis of a standard methodology.

Following annual consultations with Training NCPs, and with the involvement of learners, the EUAA proposes possible topics for the development of training. The analysis of training needs is considered in the context of the current scope of the European asylum curriculum as well as training gaps.

In exceptional circumstances, such as urgent operational needs, alternative methods may be used to establish training needs.

3.2. Design and development of EUAA Training Modules and Courses

A structured process is in place for the design, development and approval of the EUAA's training that is inclusive of a broad range of internal and external expertise, and which takes into account learner feedback and the outcome of training evaluations.

The design and development of a new training module or course is a process during which content experts cooperate with training design experts to deliver interactive training materials with the aim of providing learners in the asylum and reception field from different EU Member States and associated countries with high levels of knowledge, skills and expertise. The process is outlined in Figure 3.

3.2.1. Training Design

On a decision to develop a new module or course being taken, the Head of the TDDS, in liaison with the other heads of sector, will draw together an initial group from persons with relevant expertise to complete the Module Design Syllabus for the module. A Module Design Coordinator with expertise in the content of the module will be appointed by the Head of the TDDS to coordinate the design and development process.

Training is designed to be authentic to the occupational tasks, stimulating for learners, make the best use of training resources and utilise blended learning methods.

The development group will complete an initial design syllabus for the module following the template developed for that purpose by the TDDS and using the occupational and educational standards from the ESQF.

The initial module design syllabus is reviewed by the relevant sectors and approved by the Head of the ARTU.

Figure 3: Design and development of EUAA training modules and courses

3.2.2. Training Design

On a decision to develop a new module or course being taken, the Head of the TDDS, in liaison with the other heads of sector, will draw together an initial group from persons with relevant expertise to complete the Module Design Syllabus for the module. A Module Design Coordinator with expertise in the content of the module will be appointed by the Head of the TDDS to coordinate the design and development process.

Training is designed to be authentic to the occupational tasks, stimulating for learners, make the best use of training resources and utilise blended learning methods.

The development group will complete an initial design syllabus for the module following the template developed for that purpose by the TDDS and using the occupational and educational standards from the ESQF.

The initial module design syllabus is reviewed by the relevant sectors and approved by the Head of the ARTU.
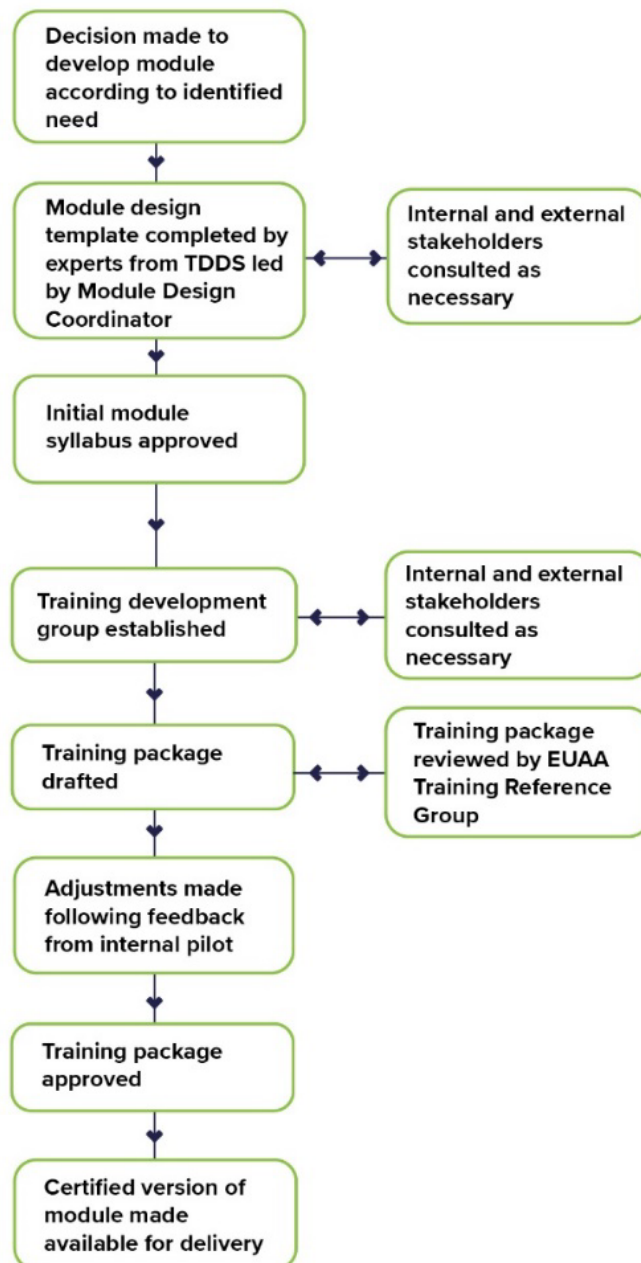
3.2.3. Alignment to Qualifications Frameworks

The learning outcomes of modules are aligned to the ESQF at levels 4, 5, 6, or 7 as described by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Training is specifically designed to meet vocational requirements as defined by the occupational standards for asylum and reception officials as part of the ESQF.

In the event that the EUAA's training is accredited (see section 7.6.4), modules may be credit-carrying.

3.2.4. Assessments

Assessments of learning are designed to be fair, robust, transparent and consistent and measure achievement of intended learning outcomes. Assessments are designed for each module of learning and undergo an internal testing exercise prior to use in the certification of learners' achievement of learning outcomes.

3.2.5. Learning Methodology

The EUAA adopts a blended-learning approach to training design. Each module will utilise a selection of methodologies that facilitate achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Such methods include e-Learning, scenario-based learning, face-to-face learning and work-based learning. The learning methods should embed a degree of flexibility in delivery methods to enable delivery as part of an operational plan (see section 4.3).

3.2.6. Training Development

On approval of the module design syllabus, the Head of the TDDS launches a call to EU Member States and associated countries through the Training NCPs for the nomination of experts to develop the training material. Following the selection and appointment of the experts, they are included in the EUAA's Training Pool (see section 2.7.3). The Module Design Coordinator then convenes the development group, which may also include other staff from the TDDS or other internal or external experts as necessary.

At any point in the development process, members of the group may, through the Module Design Coordinator, seek the advice of the EUAA Training Reference Group.

The training development group produces a training package which may include:

- The training material;
- A trainer's manual;
- A bank of assessment tasks, marking criteria and grading feedback templates;
- A training handbook for learners.

On completion of the training package, the material is submitted to the EUAA Training Reference Group for review. The training material is then finalised to incorporate any feedback from the Group.

3.2.7. Conflict resolution

In case of disagreement between the members of the training development group or between the training development group and the EUAA Training Reference Group and, where no solution can be reached between the experts or groups, the Module Design Coordinator reports the issue to the Head of the ARTU who, in consultation with Centre Management, decides how to resolve the issue.

3.2.8. Operational Training

EUAA training is also delivered in the context of operational support. As far as possible, the same design and development process outlined in the preceding sections is adhered to. However, where training material is adapted to the specific national context of a country with which the EUAA has concluded an operational plan, the title and aim of the relevant modules will clearly identify the specific country of application.

3.3. Design of Programmes

Programmes focus on a set of job tasks and responsibilities as defined by the occupational standards linked to the ESQF through a coherent combination of modules. A programme leads to the award of a full qualification and is built through the identification of:

- Programme learning outcomes;
- A programme assessment strategy which combines the assessment of the modules in a meaningful way for the learner;
- A programme learning strategy which defines the learner journey through the programme, and includes compulsory and elective modules;
- Qualification related to the programme.

Programmes may incorporate work-based learning.

3.4. Final Approval of New Training Modules and Programmes

On completion of a new module, the Module Design Coordinator draws up a report which is submitted to the heads of unit and centre for approval. The training module is then added to the European asylum curriculum and is available to be included in the EUAA's programmes.

A defined training programme is submitted for approval to the heads of unit and centre. On approval, it is added to the European asylum curriculum as an approved programme. The Head of the QAAS submits the programme to the accreditation process in accordance with the procedures agreed with the relevant external accreditation authority.

Approved modules and programmes are published in the EUAA's Training Catalogue.

3.5. Translation of Training Materials

Training materials in the European asylum curriculum are developed in English and may be translated by the Agency into the national languages of the EU Member States or associated countries and into other languages in view of the EUAA's cooperation with third countries, in accordance with established needs.

3.6. Urgent Training Needs

In order to respond to urgent training needs, the afore-mentioned processes may be expedited. The Head of the TDDS may subject the training to the full design process at a later stage and add it to the European asylum curriculum.

4. Training Delivery

Training plays a crucial role in the fulfilment of the EUAA's mandate (see section 1.1). The EUAA's training is delivered, amongst others, as part of its activities aimed at supporting practical cooperation between Member States. In this context, the EUAA utilises a 'train-the-trainers' approach. The EUAA's Trainers drawn from the Training Pool train national trainers who then deliver, under the guidance of the EUAA's Training Delivery Focal Point, national training sessions targeted at other asylum and reception officials in their home organisations. In this manner, the Agency creates a multiplier effect and maximises the impact of EUAA training at national level.

The EUAA's training is also delivered as part of operational activities to support Member States whose asylum and reception systems are subject to disproportionate pressure. In this context, training is delivered by the EUAA's in-house trainers as well as by deployed Member State experts drawn from the EUAA's Training Pool. In this context, the EUAA verifies and ensures that all experts who participate in asylum support teams have received training relevant to their duties and functions and may also, in advance of or upon their deployment, provide them with training which is specific to the technical and operational assistance being provided in the host Member State.

The EUAA's Training is moreover provided to third country officials as part of capacity building in the context of support for the external dimension of the CEAS, in accordance with the EUAA Regulation and working arrangements concluded with the authorities of those countries, as included in the roadmaps agreed with those countries.

Finally, trainers from the EUAA's Training Pool may be involved in the delivery of other training delivered as part of the Agency's mandate, for example in cooperation with other stakeholders such as Frontex or the UNHCR. Where such training sessions are not drawn from the European asylum curriculum, they are not subject to all quality assurance processes.

4.1. Organisation of Trainer Courses

Trainer Courses are organised by the EUAA on specific modules or themes of modules. The Agency consults with the Training NCPs to develop its annual Trainers' Training Plan, which is adopted at the end of each year and published on the EUAA's website.

Trainer needs are determined through an interactive process with EU Member States' and associated countries' Training NCPs. The TLRAS consults the Training NCPs bi-annually in order to establish their need for trainers. The EUAA organises Trainers' Courses as required on the basis of the outcome of those consultations. (Section 8 details processes related to EUAA trainers).

Exceptionally, the EUAA may approve the organisation of a regional or national Trainers' Course by an EU Member State or associated country following a request by that Member State or

country, on the basis of an established need. Such sessions should be open to all EU Member States and associated countries.

The EUAA maintains flexibility in organising more Trainers' Courses if, in the course of the year, needs emerge and there are sufficient resources to enable delivery.

4.2.   Organisation of National Training

The Country Desk Coordinator establishes the training to be delivered in each national and regional context, in liaison with respective Training NCPs.

The Training NCP organises the national delivery of training through the Learning Management System (LMS) in accordance with a standard process established by the TPPS.

4.3.   Organisation of Operational Training

The Country Desk Coordinator develops a training plan or series of training plans to meet learning needs relating to the duties and tasks to be carried out under the operational plan.

Given the diverse operational contexts, delivery methods may be adapted as required, such as by varying the use of e-Learning, webinars, face-to-face sessions, practical exercises and coaching. However, certified operational training must comply with the quality standards applicable to any other certified training included in the European asylum curriculum. Provision is made for operational delivery in the design of modules (see section 3.2.4 and 3.2.8).

On occasion, the needs identified in the context of operational plans may trigger the urgent design of new modules as provided for in section 3.6.

Given the specificities of operational training, training is delivered by the EUAA's in-house trainers and trainers deployed from the EU Member States and associated countries, supported by external experts with extensive expertise on the specific topics. Representatives of national authorities as well as of international and other EU bodies that are involved in the operation often participate in operational training as speakers.

The above applies also to training provided to third country officials as part of capacity building in the context of support for the external dimension of the CEAS, as well as *ad hoc* training plans.

5. EUAA Learning Pathways through a Learner-Centred Approach

The EUAA promotes a learner-centred approach in which learners take an active role in their learning. This approach is implemented throughout the training cycle, from the identification of training needs to the design and development of training and its delivery and evaluation. It is also recognised that the specific duties and tasks of officials vary between organisations and states, depending on the size and mandate of the organisation and a range of other factors.

Moreover, the EUAA promotes and provides opportunities for continuing professional development and takes into account prior learning and experience.

These principles underpin the Agency's approach to learning by creating flexible training pathways so that learners can follow training which is directly related to their individual learning needs.

5.1. European Asylum Curriculum

The European asylum curriculum is one of the EUAA's practical tools contributing to the effective implementation of the CEAS and covers the entire field of international protection. The European asylum curriculum comprises of task or topic-oriented modules. Each module is designed to meet specific occupational standards for asylum and reception officials derived from the ESQF. The European asylum curriculum reflects the learning needs of officials working in EU Member States and associated countries, officials deployed as part of EUAA operational plans or officials participating in other EUAA training initiatives.

European asylum curriculum modules are designed in such a way to ensure that learners do not have to participate in training that is irrelevant to them, that training is not repeated, and that prior learning (see section 7.5) can be taken into account. The design of modules is based on a blended learning methodology that utilises a range of learning methods including:

- E-Learning, which allows learners a degree of flexibility as to when to engage in the learning process. Learners are typically asylum and reception officials who need to reconcile their learning activities with their job responsibilities;
- Face-to-face training that encourages peer learning; and
- Coach-supported work-based learning which provides rich learning environments to promote learner engagement.

Modules are organised in the European asylum curriculum around themes. This method of organisation enables modules related to similar tasks or topics to be managed together in terms of training of trainers, evaluation, updating and upgrading.

5.2.   Flexible Learning Pathways

The EUAA's training modules are distinct, assessed units of learning to achieve a set of minimum intended learning outcomes that directly relate to occupational standards. Modules may vary in size as determined by learning hours and may combine to create programmes that are credit carrying in terms of EUAA learning credits. Modules may also be grouped in thematic areas.

Learning pathways are established with Training NCPs. A Country Desk Coordinator from the TPPS will liaise with Training NCPs to establish the specific duties and tasks, and resulting occupational standards required in the national context. Alternatively, the Country Desk Coordinator will evaluate an operational plan and determine the learning pathway from the duties and tasks detailed in the plan.

The Country Desk Coordinator, with the support of the TDDS, will propose a learning pathway to the respective Training NCP and Head of the TPPS for verification against national learning needs or requirements of the operational plan. On verification, the learning pathway is submitted for approval to the Heads of the QAAS and of the ARTU and TLMU.

5.3.   Learner-Centred Approach

Learners have a central role in their learning and development experience and the Agency aims to provide a safe, inclusive learning environment where adult learners can engage in learning, explore issues and discuss practical challenges under the guidance of a qualified facilitator. Central to the active learning approach is a learning environment that provides a stimulating opportunity for learners to discuss challenges and exchange views with other practitioners in the field. It is also necessary that learners have a fair and equal opportunity to engage in the learning experience, and an opportunity to contribute to the on-going development and enhancement of the quality of the EUAA's training.

5.3.1.   Participation

Learners are expected to participate in all mandatory learning activities prior to taking assessments. This policy is in place to safeguard the learner from potential poor performance in the assessment. However, attention is drawn to the procedures for the recognition of prior learning detailed in section 7.5, which enable a learner to claim recognition for existing learning.

5.3.2.   Learner Feedback of Training

Learners are requested to provide feedback on their learning experience on completion of each learning module. More comprehensive feedback is sought on completion of programmes. Feedback is provided directly on the LMS, and learners are encouraged to provide honest and detailed views on a range of issues including the training material, learning resources, training delivery and support services available to them, in order to contribute to continuous improvement of training. Feedback is considered confidential, and the responses are compiled

in order to evaluate the alignment of individual modules and programmes with quality assurance standards, without identifying individual learners.

Anonymised learner feedback is accessible to those involved in the design, development and delivery of the training.

5.3.3. Learner Participation in Training Review Activities

Learners' views are critical to broader systematic reviews of training such as the periodic reviews which measure the impact of training in the context of its purpose in terms of implementing the mandate of the Agency.

5.3.4. Learners with Specific Needs

The EUAA aims to provide an inclusive learning and assessment environment. The Agency therefore endeavours to provide reasonable accommodations to enable the participation of learners with specific needs in all learning and assessment activities.

The specific needs of learners should be notified to the EUAA on registration, or as soon as possible in cases where the need has arisen during the learning session.

5.3.5. Training Complaints

The EUAA endeavours to deliver training that consistently meets its quality assurance standards but recognises that on occasion issues may arise. Therefore, learners may make complaints to express significant or sustained dissatisfaction related to all aspects relating to the quality of the EUAA's training activities and to seek specific action to address the issue.

The Agency takes training complaints seriously and learners may complain about any issue related to the EUAA's training activities, including:

- the quality or standard of any service provided by the EUAA or on behalf of the EUAA;
- the quality of learning facilities or resources;
- the failure of the EUAA to implement or follow up on an administrative process detailed herein;
- violations of the Code of Conduct for participants in the EUAA's training activities.

Learners should, in the first instance, raise issues and concerns with the trainer/coach to expedite an early resolution.

Where the learner is not satisfied with the outcome, or where, for any reason, the learner does not wish to raise the issue with the trainer or coach, the learner may lodge a formal training complaint with the TPDC, detailing the nature of the complaint and the action requested to address the issue.

The Agency handles complaints under the training complaints procedure established by the TDPC and endeavours to resolve them in a timely manner to the satisfaction of all persons involved.

5.3.6. Behavioural Standards

The EUAA is committed to ensuring that in all its training activities, the highest behavioural standards are observed by all persons involved, whether they are staff members, content experts, members of advisory groups, national trainers or learners participating in the EUAA's training. In particular, the learning environment needs to be a safe, inclusive and respectful space free from any harassment or discrimination, and training material needs to reflect fundamental rights principles and be gender sensitive.

For this reason, all persons participating in the EUAA's training activities must abide by a Code of Conduct for participants to be developed by the TPDC.

Given the EUAA's training delivery methodology of training trainers, who deliver EUAA training within their respective organisations, trainers and learners may also be subject to the behavioural standards of their organisation throughout the training process.

6.   Assessment of Learning

Assessment forms an important part of the training and learning process. Well-designed assessment activities enable learners to demonstrate that they have achieved the intended learning outcomes. The EUAA implements accurate and reliable assessment as an essential element of a credible certification and accreditation system. The assessment of learners undertaking the EUAA's training and learning activities is designed to be fair, rigorous, transparent and ethical.

6.1.   Decision to Conduct Assessments

All training modules are designed with assessment activities. The decision to conduct assessments in the national context remains with the respective Member State. Learners may be allowed to make the decision for themselves as to whether they participate in assessment activities but will be made aware at the time of registration that they cannot receive a certificate of achievement unless they take the assessment. In such cases the decision to participate in the assessment needs to be stated at the start, so that assessment resources are in place.

6.2.   Assessment Procedures

Procedures for conducting each individual assessment are detailed in the assessment instructions for each module. Where learners are registered for a programme of learning, the schedule of assessment details when the assessments take place. This information is available to all learners on registration to a programme or module. Learners are provided with information on the type of assessment, length and timing of assessments and assessment schedule, including opportunities for formative assessment. Learners are also provided with assessment marking criteria such that they are fully aware of what is expected in order to successfully pass the module. Where there are changes to the assessment schedule, learners are informed as early as possible.

All written assessments shall always be submitted or conducted electronically. Practical assessments are convened at a suitable venue or assessment centre. Practical assessments may also be conducted using electronic conferencing technology, where this does not disadvantage the learner.

The assessment regulations laid down by the Training and Professional Development Centre specify in more detail the manner in which assessments are conducted and in particular the safeguards to be put in place in order to ensure the integrity of the assessment procedure, including measures to maintain the security of banks of assessment tasks.

6.3. Assessors and Assessment Standards

Assessors have expertise in the subject area and have successfully completed the EUAA's training for assessors.

The Agency implements a range of measures to ensure assessment standards:

- Performance in assessments is graded against clear marking criteria which are available in advance of each module delivery. All assessors are fully familiar with the content, assessment tasks and marking rubrics;
- Assessment tasks are designed to enable learners to demonstrate achievement of the minimum learning outcomes and, where possible, the opportunity to demonstrate that the minimum standards of the learning outcomes have been exceeded;
- Critical learning, which is learning that is deemed critical to professional tasks, may be graded as pass/fail or be required to be passed in order to pass the whole assessment. Where this is the case, learners will be informed at the commencement of the training;
- All grades are provisional until the verification process has been completed.

6.4. Verification of Grades

The EUAA puts in place internal controls to verify awarded grades. This involves reviewing the allocation of grades of all learners awarded a distinction or a fail grade and a proportion of the assessments awarded a pass grade. The verifier also assesses the distribution of learner grades against the statistical norms for the module and identifies any potential bias or issues. Verification of grades is conducted on an anonymised basis.

Where the assessor and verifier disagree with regard to the grade of a single learner, they discuss the issue with a view to reaching agreement on the grade. In case of lack of agreement, the learner is awarded the higher grade.

Where the issue relates to the grades of more than one learner, this is discussed between the original assessor(s), verifier(s), trainer(s) and the Training Delivery Focal Point, who may also invite a representative of the QAAS, the Training NCP or other persons to attend the meeting. The meeting will establish the nature of the issue, its impact and any interventions required in the short or long term to prevent the issue from arising again.

All conclusions reached as a result of the verification process are compiled into a report for consideration by the TQAAG.

6.5. Assessment Results

The results of the grading done by the assessor(s)/verifier(s) are available to the learner. Upon request, and in full compliance with applicable data protection rules, grades may also be shared with the trainer(s) and the Training NCP.

6.6.   Re-assessment

Where a learner fails an assessment, they are entitled to one re-assessment opportunity. The learner is provided with feedback in relation to the failed assessment by the assessor. The re-assessment takes place as early as practicable whilst ensuring that the learner has a reasonable period of time to address their learning development needs.

A 'fail' grade is awarded to learners who do not attend or submit an assessment in accordance with the submission schedule, unless they have been granted an extension or have had mitigating circumstances accepted.

Re-assessment is only available to learners who have failed an assessment. Re-assessment to improve on the awarded grade is not permitted.

Where a learner fails the re-assessment, during the first year following the failed assessment the learner is required to re-register for the module and repeat the learning prior to any further assessment attempts.

6.7.   Withdrawal from Assessment

Where the learner has indicated during registration that they intend to participate in the assessment (see section 6.1) and subsequently decides not to participate in assessments, this decision (with reasons for quality assurance purposes) should be communicated within a specified time in advance. Where a learner does not formally withdraw from the assessments and subsequently does not participate, the learner is awarded a 'fail' grade, unless the learner notifies mitigating or extenuating circumstances in accordance with section 6.9 of this document which are duly accepted by the EUAA.

6.8.   Training Assessment Appeals

The Agency puts in place a process whereby learners may appeal the outcome of an assessment, in cases where:

- there has been a substantive irregularity in the assessment procedure which disadvantaged the learner;
- there has been a substantive irregularity in the assessment task or.

It should be noted that a disagreement with the grade awarded is not considered grounds for appeal.

Appeals are handled in accordance with the procedures established by the TPDC. When an appeal is upheld, the decision specifies any remedial action to be taken. Where applicable, learner records are updated.

A record of all appeal procedures is kept for quality assurance and monitoring purposes.

6.9.   Mitigating and Extenuating Circumstances

Mitigating or extenuating circumstances[13] that affect a learner's attendance or performance in assessment tasks should be notified as soon as practicable, and in advance of formal assessments or submission dates. Independent supporting documentary evidence should be submitted where necessary.

If the nature of the circumstances prevent notification prior to an assessment, it should be provided as soon as possible afterwards, with justification supporting the late notification.

Adjustment of submission deadlines, deferral of assessment or additional support are accepted where possible, provided that such support does not provide the learner with any undue advantage.

6.10.   Late Submission and Extension

When, owing to mitigating circumstances, a learner is unable to submit written assessments by the specified deadline, the learner should request an extension and provide supporting documentation. If the request is accepted, an extension is granted.

Where a substantiated application for late submission or extension cannot be accommodated within the assessment and verification schedule, the assessment is deferred to the next available assessment opportunity, without penalty.

6.11.   Academic Conduct and Plagiarism

The Agency views academic misconduct as a serious breach of ethics and professional standards. Learners may be required to electronically sign a declaration on submission of all written assessments certifying that the work submitted is their own.

Cases of suspected academic misconduct are handled in accordance with the Academic Misconduct Procedures adopted by the TPDC.

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[13] Mitigating or extenuating circumstances are defined as events or situations that are beyond the control of the learner and which adversely affect attendance or performance in assessments. Examples include, but are not limited to, medical conditions, personal circumstances, accidents or incidents.

7. Learner Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

7.1. Access to EUAA Training

The EUAA develops and supports the delivery of training in accordance with its training mandate as specified in the EUAA Regulation. The main target group for the EUAA's training is therefore asylum and reception officials in the EU Member States and associated countries. Individual members of the general public may not register for the EUAA's training.

The TPDC may extend access to the EUAA's training to other stakeholders as provided for in the EUAA Regulation and working agreements adopted on the basis of that Regulation.

7.2. Registration

Registration to the EUAA's training is managed electronically.

On initial access to the EUAA's LMS, learners are required to complete their learner profile.

An individual learner record is created in order to manage the learning pathway for each learner. All learner records are managed in accordance with applicable legislation in the field of protection of personal data and as outlined in the respective privacy notices.

On registration to a programme, learners are automatically exempted from undertaking training modules which they have previously passed and which form part of the relevant programme. However, learners will have access to learning materials for those modules in order to refresh their learning should they wish to.

Once registered on a programme, learners may apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for any relevant modules in accordance with section 7.5.

On registration to each programme, learners must indicate their intention to participate, or not, in the formal assessment of learning[14].

7.3. Entry Requirements and Admission

Minimum entry requirements are established in the design of each module and programme and are published in the programme descriptions.

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[14] As outlined in section 6.1, participation in assessments is not compulsory for all learners. The decision to participate or not may be taken by the Training NCP on behalf of all learners, or in some cases the decision may be offered by the Training NCP to individual learners.

Where the delivery of a flexible learning pathway is requested by a Training NCP, in accordance with procedures outlined in section 4.2, the Training NCP will verify that each participant meets the minimum entry requirements for admission. Where the programme or flexible learning pathway is organised directly by the Agency, the TPPS will verify that all learners meet the entry requirements.

Where the learner has an existing learner record, entry requirements for programmes, flexible learning pathways and modules will be verified automatically against the learner record which will include the training history.

7.4.   Learner Orientation

On initial engagement with the EUAA's training, learners may participate in a short orientation which will provide all the information and contact points necessary to fully engage with the learning pathways, including information on support services available to learners.

7.5.   Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The EUAA recognises that learning occurs in a variety of ways and implements mechanisms to formally recognise learning that has not been validated through the issue of a qualification that is recognised by a national quality assurance authority.

Where a learner claims that they have met the intended learning outcomes of an EUAA module through informal[15] or non-formal learning[16], they may apply to have that learning recognised.

Applications for RPL are made online following the registration process detailed in section 7.2, and outlining the basis of the claim.

7.5.1.   Exemption from parts of a Programme

Where a learner can demonstrate that they have achieved or surpassed the minimum stated learning outcomes of a module or modules that form part of an EUAA programme, the learner will be exempted from participating in those modules. In order to claim exemption, the learner must submit evidence, in the form of an academic transcript and diploma supplement, or other documentary evidence specifying the learning outcomes achieved, as well as the accrediting/validating authority. This documentary evidence is considered by the TPPS, which may consult the QAAS in order to establish equivalence. A learner may claim a maximum of 20 per cent of the credits of an EUAA qualification through exemption.

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[15] Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure (or experiential learning) – learning is unintentional.

[16] Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning but which contain an important learning element – learning is intentional.

7.6. Recognition and Certification

7.6.1. Participation in Training without Assessment

Where a learner has participated in training without assessment, their learner record will specify that the training was non-assessed learning and will specify the percentage of completion.

7.6.2. Certification of Learning

Where a learner demonstrates the achievement of a module's or programme's learning outcomes through the successful completion of the respective assessments, the learner is issued with a certificate.

Upon successful completion of a programme, learners are provided with a certificate supplement that details the programme learning outcomes, ESQF level of learning, occupational standards, the individual modules that the programme was comprised of, the grade awarded for each module and, where applicable, the number of EUAA learning credits.

7.6.3. Replacement Certificates

In the event that a learner no longer has access to the EUAA's LMS, they may contact the Training NCP or the TPDC who will provide the learner with replacement certificates.

7.6.4. Award of Qualifications

The Agency is working towards partnering with an accreditation authority in order to award qualifications. On agreement with an appropriate authority, this policy document will be updated to reflect certification requirements.

8.   Training Staff

The EUAA's Trainers play a crucial role in building Member States' capacity to implement the CEAS by training national asylum and reception officials. The Agency is therefore committed to supporting trainers by all appropriate means to deliver on their mission.

The EUAA maintains a Training Pool which includes experts tasked with delivering training sessions, facilitating online learning, assessing and verifying assessments of learning and on occasion, contributing to the development and review of training materials. As experts in their field, trainers are added to the Training Pool on completion of the required training for trainers.

8.1.   Selection from the EUAA's Training Pool

Trainers are selected from the Training Pool to deliver training on behalf of the EUAA on a rotational basis, subject to availability, their field of expertise and previous satisfactory performance, to ensure transparency and fairness to all trainers in the Pool.

8.2.   Terms of Reference for Trainers in the Training Pool

Trainers are subject to the relevant parts of the terms of reference for the Training Pool, which set out trainers' specific tasks and responsibilities and criteria for inclusion in the pool.

8.3.   Feedback and Support for all Trainers

All trainers delivering EUAA modules have the on-going support of the Training Delivery Focal Point, who has expertise in the specific area of training.

All trainers and coaches are required to complete feedback forms for the training they have delivered.

8.4.   Trainer Performance

Learner feedback, assessment procedures and the complaints procedure feed into the ongoing monitoring of trainer performance. Where there are consistent indicators of unsatisfactory trainer performance, they are addressed in the first instance by the Country Desk Coordinator and the Training NCP who discuss the issue with the trainer and plan action to resolve it. Support may be offered to the trainer in the form of additional training or a Trainer Coach to advise the trainer on how to improve their performance. Trainers will not be selected for EUAA training

delivery until the issue is satisfactorily resolved, unless such delivery is part of the resolution plan.

Where issues cannot be resolved and are negatively affecting compliance with quality standards, the trainer may be removed from the pool and/or the delivery of training. The decision to remove a trainer from the EUAA's Training Pool is taken by a panel comprising three suitably qualified persons appointed by the Head of the TPDC, including the Head of the TLMU. During this process, the trainer concerned is given the opportunity to submit any observations. The trainer is also given the opportunity to appeal the decision to remove them from the Training Pool to an independent appeal panel.

8.5.   Trainer Professional Development

The Agency encourages all trainers and experts to participate in the EUAA's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities, which may take the form of an ongoing series of webinars, podcasts, lectures and videos that target professionals in asylum and reception-related fields. CPD sessions may also cover issues relating to consistency in assessment grading and providing feedback to learners.

All trainers are notified of updates and upgrades to the EUAA's modules and programmes. Where significant upgrades occur as a result of changes to law or procedure, the trainers of the module will be invited to review the new material and may be invited to a Trainers' Network meeting to discuss the topics of the upgraded materials.

The EUAA organises a Trainer and Expert conference at least once a year to provide a forum to share experience and good practice and discuss latest trends and issues in the EUAA's training activities. A report is drawn up at the end of the conference which is submitted to the Training and Professional Development Centre's management and the TQAAG.

9. Learning Resources and Student Support

As an EU body, the Agency's budget derives primarily from public funds allocated from the EU budget in order to enable it to deliver on its mission. A critical component of that mission is the delivery of training on asylum and reception matters. Significant human and financial resources are therefore allocated in the EUAA's budget to enable it to carry out its training activities in accordance with its mandate. As part of the Agency's efforts to ensure that its training is of the required quality, a substantial part of those resources is expended on the provision of learning resources and student support services.

The EUAA's internal organisation comprises a centre entirely dedicated to training activities (see section 2). The centre plans, allocates and utilises training resources in a manner which takes into account the needs of national administrations and learners while at the same time making optimal use of those resources.

9.1. Learning Resources

The EUAA's LMS provides a central hub for learning resources and the teaching and learning infrastructure. Each module is supported with materials that are available for learners both during and on completion of their training. As the LMS is administered centrally by the Agency, all learners have the same access to support, information and learning materials.

The EUAA may organise the translation of its training material into the languages of the EU+ countries as well as the languages of third countries to whose administrations the Agency provides training as part of technical assistance, in order to take into account the diverse linguistic profiles of EUAA learners (see section 3.5)[17].

Face-to-face training is conducted in suitable environments to enable the learning process. In the case of operational training, where the learning environment may be challenging in some cases, the learning methods are adapted to compensate and maintain quality standards.

Feedback on learning resources, the learning environment and learning support is collected from learners and trainers (see sections 5.3.2 and 8.3) and analysed for necessary actions as part of the review process.

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[17] The decision to translate training material is taken on the basis of the EUAA's terms of reference for translation and the centre's working arrangements on translation.

9.2.   Learner Support

Learners have the consistent support of a trainer or coach throughout the learning process. Modules and assessment tasks are designed to provide opportunities for learners to receive formative feedback from trainers and coaches.

The EUAA invests resources to ensure that training material and infrastructure are accessible to learners who have specific needs and makes reasonable accommodation for such learners during its assessment procedures and tasks (see section 5.3.4).

Given the important role of the LMS in the provision of training and the management of all training activities, the Agency also provides an LMS Helpdesk to assist learners and trainers should they encounter any difficulties while using the platform.

10. Information Management

10.1. Information Collection

Information and data, both qualitative and quantitative, are collected in relation to:

- Training implementation: programmes, modules, learner numbers, learner progression, withdrawals, training complaints, support services;
- Learner profiles: organisation, qualifications and prior learning, experience, role, job tasks and responsibilities;
- Assessment activities: grade distributions, re-assessments, appeals;
- Feedback: from learners and trainers.

Information is collected primarily using the appropriate electronic means and is analysed by the TLRAS. Trends are consistently monitored by the Head of the TPDC and the heads of the units and sectors, and action is taken to address any emerging issues. Feedback given and suggestions made by learners and trainers are taken into account in the continuous enhancement of training.

The information collated is used for purposes such as the drafting of reports on the design and development of new training modules, reports on the updating and upgrading of existing training, reports from trainer network meetings and trainer and expert conferences, TQAAG reports and the Annual Training Report.

10.2. Confidentiality

Information relating to individuals, including trainers and learners, such as profiles, assessment information, training complaints and assessment appeals, is strictly confidential and access to such information is restricted to those who need access in order to carry out their tasks.

The above provision is without prejudice to the security principles contained in Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 31 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information[18], as well as any other applicable security-related rules[19].

10.2.1. Protection of personal data

The EUAA is fully committed to the protection of the right to privacy. Personal data is processed in compliance with all applicable data protection regulations, and in particular Regulation (EU) 2018/1725[20] on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal

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[18] OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53; applicable to the EUAA pursuant to Article 65(1) of the EUAA Regulation.
[19] *Inter alia* (but not limited to) Annex 1 to Management Board Decision No 6 of 20 September 2011 laying down the practical arrangements regarding public access to the documents of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).
[20] Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies

data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data.

The EUAA maintains a central register of data processing records which contains general information on its data processing activities, including in the training domain. Privacy notices are provided for each data processing operation and in particular for each IT tool processing personal data which is used by the centre (see the EUAA's website). Personal data processing records and privacy notices provide information on the purposes of the processing, the categories of data collected, the categories of recipients to whom personal data is disclosed, any transfers of personal data to a third country or international organisation and suitable safeguards, retention periods and technical and organisational data protection security measures.

Data subjects may address any queries or complaints about the processing of their personal data to the EUAA's Data Protection Officer and may also have recourse to the European Data Protection Supervisor.

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and on the free movement of such data and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC, (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

11. Public Information

As an EU public body, the EUAA is committed to upholding the principles of transparency and accountability. Accurate, reliable and up-to-date information which is communicated in a consistent manner enables all relevant stakeholders to make informed choices about their engagement with the EUAA's training activities. For this reason, the Agency regularly publishes and makes accessible to the general public information about its whole range of activities in the training domain. That information relates to its Training Catalogue, the policies and procedures governing its training activities, the support services available to learners and trainers and key data relating to performance indicators.

The intended target audience (such as prospective, current or past trainees, trainers, stakeholders or the general public), is taken into account in determining the nature and timing of the information, as well as the medium used for its provision. These include, but are not limited to, the EUAA's website, newsletters and other publications, as well as social media.

The EUAA's training is not accessible to individual members of the general public as it is targeted primarily at asylum and reception officials in national administrations. For this reason, the Agency relies on national administrations, and in particular Training NCPs, to further disseminate any relevant information relating to its training activities among asylum and reception officials through their respective communication channels. In this regard, the EUAA endeavours to support Training NCPs and national administrations in fulfilling this role by providing the relevant information in an appropriate format for distribution to relevant stakeholders in their EU Member State or associated country.

When publishing information on its training activities, the EUAA strives, as far as practicable, to provide information in a format which is accessible to persons with specific needs, such as those with visual or hearing impairments.

Any citizen of the Union, and any natural or legal person residing or having its registered office in a Member State, has a right to submit an application for public access to the EUAA's documents (including those related to the training domain), in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents[21], as well as Management Board Decision No 6 of 20 September 2011 laying down practical arrangements regarding public access to the documents of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

11.1. Information about the European Asylum Curriculum

The EUAA publishes and regularly updates its Training Catalogue and, for each module and programme, information about any entry requirements or languages available, the learning

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[21] OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43; applicable to the Agency pursuant to Article 63(1) of the EUAA Regulation.

outcomes, learning strategy and relevant assessment procedures, as well as possibilities for recognition of prior learning. Information is also provided as regards any qualification related to programmes and their ESQF level. This information enables prospective learners as well as other stakeholders such as Training NCPs to determine if the training matches their needs.

11.2.   Other information

All documents adopted by the EUAA's governing body or the management and which are of strategic importance for the governance of its training activities, including this document and relevant policies, guidelines or procedures adopted on its basis, are made public. This enables all stakeholders to understand the mission and vision of the TPDC, the values underpinning the EUAA's training, and the quality standards it abides by.

Reports on training are regularly drawn up and published by the TPDC and by its advisory bodies as part of the EUAA's programming or its ongoing monitoring and periodic review activities. These reports provide key information to all stakeholders and the general public on key performance indicators, trends and future training activities.

12. Ongoing Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes

12.1. Ongoing monitoring

Monitoring activities make it possible to gather evidence in a continuous and systematic manner on the impact and quality of training. When based on sound indicators, they support the evaluation of training and the formulation of recommendations with a view to the continuous enhancement of training quality.

The TLRAS engages in continuous analysis of non-personal or anonymised data collected across a number of key indicators and together with the QAAS, keeps the centre's management as well as advisory bodies and other stakeholders informed of the centre's performance and of any trends (see sections 2.5 and 10.1). The sector's monitoring activities provide the evidentiary basis for the annual report of the Training Standards Advisory Group (see section 2.7.2).

12.2. Periodic Review

Based on non-personal or anonymised data gathered as part of its on-going monitoring activities, the TLRAS conducts regular evaluations of training and produces in-depth reports for consideration by the centre's management, Training NCPs and other advisory bodies.

Evaluations are aimed at assessing whether the EUAA's training meets the required quality in accordance with ESG 2015 standards. The relevant analysis may include aspects such as whether the objectives of training interventions were achieved, whether they responded to the needs of learners and their organisations, whether learning resources were utilised in an optimal manner, whether they provided added value and whether they were coherent with other EUAA training activities, the mandate of the EUAA and the principles and requirements of the CEAS. Evaluations therefore support strategic decision-making, in particular with regard to the setting of priorities and the allocation of training resources.

Evaluations are embedded in the EUAA's training processes and constitute the last stage of the training programming cycle, whereby deficiencies and good practices are identified, and recommendations are made to be followed up in the design and development of new training interventions. Evaluations are conducted in line with a consistent and robust methodology which is applied to all of the EUAAs training activities, in order to ensure that findings are objective.

Evaluations take into account data on indicators such as registration, completion and withdrawal rates, grades and learner profiles, as well as learner and trainer feedback on various aspects of training such as the content of modules, workload, learning resources, the learning strategy, the assessment strategy, as well as the support available to learners and trainers. Any issues raised in the context of training complaints are also considered in evaluations. Learners, trainers,

advisory bodies and other stakeholders are given appropriate opportunities to contribute to evaluations.

The results of evaluations feed into the periodic review and update of modules and programmes, particularly as part of a module's or programme's lifecycle. Since the learning outcomes of modules are based on the educational standards identified in the ESQF, the latter is also reviewed every five years to ensure that all of the EUAA's training is fit-for-purpose.

13. Cyclical External Quality Assurance

The EUAA is committed to putting in place robust processes and procedures to ensure compliance with quality assurance standards in all its training activities. Nevertheless, it recognises that even robust internal quality control systems need to be subject to cyclical external quality assurance in order to ensure that they remain effective and fit-for-purpose over time.

The Agency is therefore committed to undergoing external quality assurance of its Training Quality Assurance Framework, covering its structures, processes, documentation, and other aspects as appropriate. The external quality assurance exercise is to be conducted by the selected body in accordance with the provisions of the applicable public contract. Any recommendations will be taken into account by the management of the TPDC and may result in amendments to this document or to any process implemented on its basis.

Annex

Decision of the Executive Director No 059/2022

on the Training Quality Assurance Framework

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,

HAVING REGARD to Regulation (EU)2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum[22] (hereinafter 'the EUAA Regulation'), and in particular Article 8 thereof,

WHEREAS:

1) The Management Board adopted Decision No 102 of 7 March 2022 on the EUAA Training and Learning Strategy (hereinafter 'the Strategy') laying down the general principles and strategic orientation for the Agency's activities in the field of training.
2) The Strategy outlines the manner in which the requirement laid down in Article 8(4) of the EUAA Regulation, which specifies that the training offered by the Agency shall be of high quality, is to be applied across all stages of the training cycle.
3) The afore-mentioned Management Board Decision tasked the Executive Director of the Agency with the implementation of the Strategy, and in particular with the adoption of a Training Quality Assurance Framework providing for the detailed policies and procedures necessary for the implementation of the Strategy.
4) In accordance with the afore-mentioned Management Board Decision, the Training Quality Assurance Framework should provide for alignment of the Agency's training with the European Qualifications Framework[23] and ensure compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area[24],

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Training Quality Assurance Framework

The Training Quality Assurance Framework, as annexed to this Decision, is hereby adopted.

Article 2

Implementation

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[22] Regulation (EU) 2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/2010, (OJ L 468, 30.12.2021, p. 1).
[23] Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, (OJ C 111, 6.5.2008, p. 1).
[24] Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). (2015). Brussels, Belgium (weblink: https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf).

1. Administrative circulars or other acts necessary for the implementation of the Training Quality Assurance Framework may be developed as related documents to this Decision.
2. The Head of the Training and Professional Development Centre responsible for training and learning activities is hereby tasked with managing the internal circulation of and approving the related documents referred to in paragraph 1.

Article 3

Entry into force

This Decision enters into force on the date of its signature.

Done at Valletta Harbour, on 1 April 2022

Signature on file

Nina Gregori

Executive Director