



EQUIS
European Quality Improvement System

The EFMD accreditation for international business schools



www.efmd.org

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Introduction

EQUIS is the leading international system of Quality Assessment, Quality Improvement and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in management and business administration. The EQUIS Scheme has been designed with special focus on all the activities of business schools that aim to meet international standards of quality. The fundamental objective of EQUIS is to raise the quality of management education worldwide.

EQUIS is European in its inspiration and global in its scope. Its approach to the assessment of quality is rooted in respect for the diversity of institutional and cultural contexts. EQUIS promotes no "one best model" for a business school and it does not look for standardisation of degree programmes, course content or delivery modes.

EQUIS facilitates standard setting, benchmarking, mutual learning and the dissemination of good practice across borders. The principle of continuous improvement is at least as important as the high level of quality.

General description

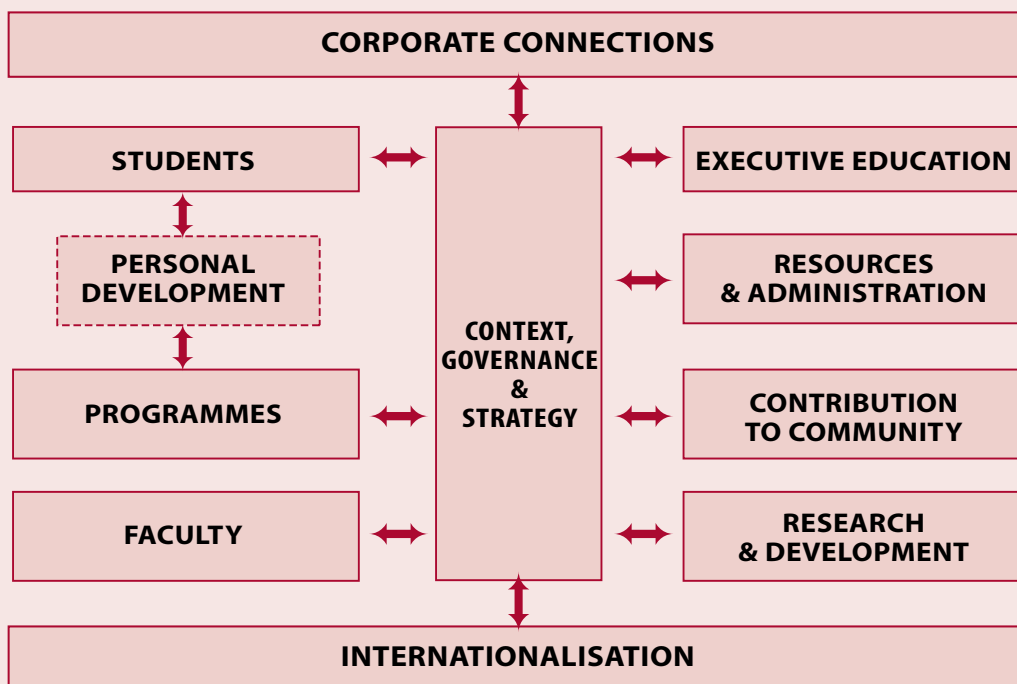
EQUIS evaluates whole institutions such as business schools and university faculties of business and management. It assesses not just degree programmes but all the activities and sub-units of the institution, including research, e-learning units, executive education provision and community outreach.

EQUIS looks for a balance between high academic quality and the professional relevance provided by close interaction with the corporate world. A strong interface with the world of business is, therefore, as much a requirement as a strong research potential.

Institutions must demonstrate not only high general quality in all dimensions of their activities, but also a high degree of internationalisation. As an international accrediting body, EQUIS seeks to identify institutions that are distinguished by an added international dimension. With companies recruiting worldwide, with students choosing to get their education outside their home countries, and with schools building alliances across borders and continents, it is important to be able to identify those institutions in other countries that deliver high quality education in international management.

EQUIS Framework & Standards

The EQUIS standards relate to the framework below and are more fully explained with associated criteria in the document "EQUIS Standards and Criteria".



Chapter 1: Context, Governance and Strategy

Mission:

The School should have a clearly articulated mission that is understood and shared throughout the institution

Governance:

The School should have an effective and integrated organisation for the management of its activities based on appropriate processes, with a significant degree of control over its own destiny.

Strategy:

The School should have a defined, credible and coherent strategy, realistically reflecting its market positioning, resources and constraints

Chapter 2: Programmes

Programmes should be well designed with clear learning outcomes and an appropriate balance between knowledge acquisition and skills acquisition. Delivery methods should be diverse and reflect up-to-date educational practice. The curriculum should emphasise student learning and allow for practical work. There should be rigorous assessment processes for monitoring the quality of students' work. Programmes should be regularly evaluated through feedback from students and other stakeholders. Programmes should be adequately staffed, managed and administered.

Chapter 3: Students

Student Quality:

The School should ensure the quality of its students through appropriate selection processes, through the management of student progression in its programmes, and through the provision of appropriate student services. In particular, it should ensure the quality of the placement of its graduates through a well-resourced career service. It should strive to bring together in its programmes a well-balanced student body representing a diversity of backgrounds and nationalities.



Personal Development of Students:

The School should explicitly and effectively support the personal and professional development of its students beyond the acquisition of knowledge in such areas as managerial skills, values, ethics, leadership, etc. It should actively help students to define their future professional orientation.

Chapter 4: Faculty

The School should recruit, develop and manage its faculty in accordance with its strategic objectives and have sufficient core faculty to cover the major disciplines and constitute a viable body of distinctive expertise (i.e. a minimum of 25).

Chapter 5: Research and Development

The School should regularly produce original contributions to knowledge that are effectively disseminated. These should demonstrably make an impact on one or more constituencies that are strategically important for the successful development of the School: academic peers, management professionals, students, etc.

Chapter 6: Executive Education

The School's programme offering in the field of Executive Education, if it exists, should be appropriately integrated into its overall strategy and into its central management systems. Whatever its organisational or legal structure, Executive Education should be seen as central to the strengthening of the School's connections with companies and organisations within the markets that it is serving. It should contribute to the development of the faculty in maintaining relevance in their teaching and research. It should contribute to the improvement of business practice by putting the School's distinctive expertise at the disposal of practising managers.

Chapter 7: Contribution to the Community

The School should have a clear understanding of its role as a "good citizen" within the local, national and international communities in which it operates. There should be evidence that the School's contribution to society is supported by a range of activities outside of normal academic activity. Furthermore, the School should proactively promote ethical behaviour and corporate responsibility as fundamental values underpinning its educational objectives and its own internal and external operations

Chapter 8: Resources and Administration

The School should be able to demonstrate financial viability and institutional continuity, with physical resources and facilities to provide a high quality learning environment and with sufficient high quality administrative staff and processes to support the School's range of activities.

Chapter 9: Internationalisation

The School should have a clearly articulated strategy and policies for internationalisation. It should demonstrate its commitment to educating and preparing students and participants for management in an international environment. This should be underpinned by active collaboration with international partner institutions in fields such as student exchanges, joint programmes, research activity and corporate connections. The School should be able to attract students and faculty from other countries. It should carry out research of international relevance and scope.

Chapter 10: Corporate Connections

The School should have a clearly articulated strategy and policy with regard to its corporate connections. It should demonstrate that it develops students and participants with a practical understanding of business and management through interaction with the corporate world. Faculty should be involved with current management practice through research and consultancy undertaken in collaboration with corporate partners and through executive education. Corporate input should be a key feature of the School's activities.

EQUIS Fee Schedule

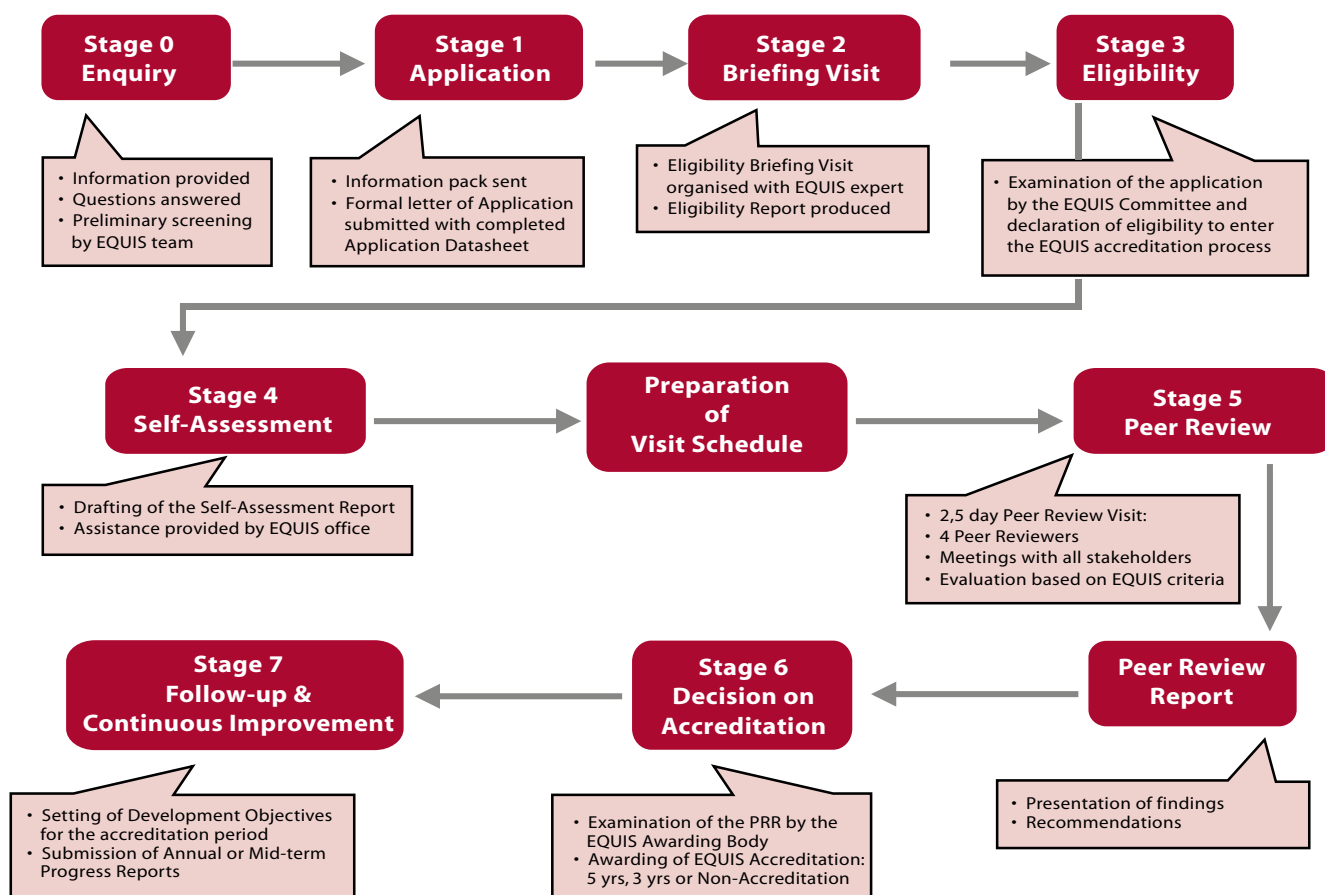
For details of the EQUIS Fee Schedule, please consult the EQUIS section of the EFMD website.



EQUIS Process

The main stages of the EQUIS process are the following:

EQUIS Process Flowchart



The time frame for Schools going through the process from stage 1 to stage 6 is expected to be between one and five years.

1. Formal Application

Schools wishing to enter the scheme are requested to address a formal letter of application to the EQUIS Director and to complete a Data Sheet setting out basic factual information about the School. The Data Sheet will typically be 15 pages and will be reviewed by the Quality Services office to ensure that it is complete and factually correct. The template of the Data Sheet is provided on the EFMD website.

2. On-site Eligibility briefing

Upon receipt of the completed application, the School will go through a preliminary eligibility screening to determine whether there are major obstacles to eventual accreditation.

An on-site briefing visit of half a day is part of this eligibility screening and will be carried out by the EQUIS Director or an EQUIS expert. It has the following objectives:

- To provide information and to answer questions about EQUIS
- To give advice to the School, particularly in relation to possible difficulties that may be encountered
- To draft a report to the EQUIS Committee formulating a recommendation on eligibility

In order to achieve these aims, the visiting expert will meet with members of the management team and will make a general presentation to a wider audience of interested stakeholders. The purpose of this open forum, in addition to providing information and answering questions, is to help the management team launch the process internally by explaining the expected benefits.

This screening process is also designed to ensure that a School falls within the institutional scope of the EQUIS Scheme, is recognised as a School of good standing in its home market and has a reasonable prospect of satisfying the EQUIS criteria within 2 years.

3. Eligibility

The EQUIS Committee examines the application and declares the School eligible to enter the EQUIS accreditation process.

4. Self-Assessment

The School is invited to carry out an extensive Self-Assessment and to write a Self-Assessment Report (SAR) covering the quality criteria set out in the "EQUIS Standards & Criteria" document. The SAR is expected to range from 100-150 pages in length and should be submitted to the EQUIS Office six weeks before the international Peer Review Visit.

This Self-Assessment process is designed to help the School gain a clearer understanding of its strategic position by assessing its strengths and weaknesses and judge its overall effectiveness of its own processes and structures. The thoroughness with which the Self-Assessment is carried out and the breadth of involvement will determine a large part of the added-value of the quality improvement tool.

Ongoing assistance by the EQUIS Team is provided during this period of Self-Assessment.

5. International Peer Review

The International Peer Review lasts for two and a half days. The Peer Review Team is composed of four members, usually from different countries, three from the academic community and one corporate representative. One member of the team will be familiar with the institutional environment of the School to be assessed.

The objectives of the Peer Review are as follows:

- To confirm and/or challenge the main findings of the School's Self-Assessment Report
- To engage in a constructive dialogue with the School
- To seek additional information as necessary in order to establish a comprehensive understanding of the School
- To make an overall assessment of the School against the EQUIS Standards and Criteria
- To provide recommendations for future development and quality improvement
- To write a report formally setting out the findings, assessment and recommendations of the Peer Review Team (towards the Awarding Body) for the use of the School.

6. Awarding Body Decision

The decision on accreditation will be taken by the EQUIS Awarding Body and will be based on the findings presented within the Peer Review Team Report. The Awarding Body can reach three decisions. It can grant Accreditation for 5 years when it is satisfied that all the EQUIS standards are met. It can grant Accreditation for 3 years when it believes that there are significant areas where the standards are not fully met, but that, overall, the School deserves immediate accreditation. Or it can reject the accreditation.

7. Follow up & Continuous Improvement

Schools accredited for 5 years are required to submit a Mid-Term Progress Report and those accredited for 3 years are required to submit Annual Progress Reports.

Contact Details

If you are interested in finding out more about EQUIS, or would like to receive copies of the EQUIS documentation, please contact the EFMD Quality Services Office:

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Further information is also available from the EFMD website: <http://www.efmd.org>



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