

## **EAQUALS CODES OF PRACTICE**

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*EAQUALS, the European Association for Quality Language Services, for example, bases its accreditation scheme on:*

- A public declaration of the promises its member schools make to clients in the form of a Code of Practice and three “Charters”, for learners, for staff and for information, the last of these to cover the needs of indirect clients, who may be employers, sponsors or agents.
- An inspection system in which an international team of two inspectors visit a school and observe the teaching and look into processes and procedures, both academic and for other student services of the school. Part of the inspection involves a verification of a process approach to delivering language education. Institutions must have a curriculum on which their syllabi are based. They must have procedures for assessing the level of learners’ language competence at the outset of a course and valid, reliable assessment instruments for evaluating progress during the course and certifying attainment at the end of the learning cycle. They are required to have academic management systems which include principled observation of the teaching activity and provide appropriate training and development for staff. Client satisfaction must be tracked with suitable questionnaires and focus groups. Accreditation is only granted if all the promises made in the code of practice and charters are shown to be fulfilled.
- A support system of self-assessment guidelines and staff development seminars designed to help institutions achieve the requirements.

The requirements are demanding and the inspection rigorous; it works well and schools consider that the effort of fulfilling the requirements enables them to make significant improvements. The two basic principles that apply are transparency – the fact that the overall accreditation is founded on a code and charters and the need for explicit descriptions of curriculum, syllabus and assessment procedures – and coherence - the different systems need to work in an integrated way to provide a set of services which provide verifiable ways of promoting client satisfaction. The inspections are also comprehensive, with checklists indicating how the different aspects are to be verified.

# 1. CODES OF PRACTICE EAQUALS



## THE EAQUALS STUDENT CHARTER

EAQUALS Members uphold the following EAQUALS student charter:

### **All EAQUALS schools guarantee:**

high teaching and educational standards

professional conduct and integrity

regular independent inspections to maintain standards

total accuracy and veracity of all information and publicity, including:

- a stipulated number of taught hours per course
- a stipulated maximum number of students per group
- a specified age-range for courses
- a clear description of the cost of tuition and of other services and materials

efficient administration and auxiliary services

suitable premises and facilities for language learning.

accurate placement-testing to determine language competence

a structured course of studies that is divided into levels and appropriate to students' needs

appropriate and effective teaching methods

appropriate, regular assessments, reports and end-of-course assessment procedures leading to a certificate of attainment

experienced and competent teachers working under the supervision of an appropriately qualified academic manager

regular observation of the teaching activity

opportunities for obtaining information and advice about his/her course of studies.



## THE EAQUALS STAFF CHARTER

All members of EAQUALS uphold the EAQUALS Staff Charter:

The contracts of all staff working for EAQUALS members are governed by local labour laws, and by national contracts where these apply.

Members provide fair terms and conditions of employment in the context of the relevant local or national standard, in the following areas:

- salary;
- length of contract;
- working hours and teaching hours per week
- paid holiday entitlement;
- sickness, maternity, family and compassionate leave;
- pension and severance pay arrangements, where relevant;
- unpaid leave of absence.

Members have clearly specified procedures for dealing with staff grievances and disciplinary problems

Members employ administrative staff and academic staff who have appropriate training, qualifications and experience according to national norms for the work in question.

Members provide all staff with appropriate workspace and the facilities for them to carry out their duties effectively, as well as relevant opportunities for training and development within and outside working hours.

All staff in member schools/institutions, whether full or part time, are issued with written contracts or letters of agreement specifying the terms of employment, the main responsibilities of the post, the procedures available for dealing with grievances, and the procedures to be followed in the event of disciplinary action.

Members undertake to keep their staff informed about the status and ownership of the school, and of the organisations and associations it belongs to.



## INFORMATION CHARTER

Members' advertising, promotional materials and course information follow national advertising standards, are factual and give a clear and truthful account of their courses and other activities.

Before enrolment, members provide students or their representatives with clear information on the nature of and rationale behind the course. In addition, clear information is provided on:

- exact minimum course length and dates;
- number of hours taught, and of hours for other activities;
- dates of closure and holidays;
- placement procedures;
- size and makeup of groups, including age restrictions and any quotas of students sharing the same mother tongue that may apply;
- any use of real classes for teaching practice purposes;
- assessment procedures, reporting, and certification.

Before enrolment, members undertake to provide students or their representatives with full and clear details concerning the contract between the member school/institution and the student, including exact course fees, and the rights of each party, according to the contract, in the event of withdrawal or exclusion.

All prices mentioned in advertising and other information specify clearly which services and goods are included in the price and which are available at additional cost. The cost of fees for public examinations where courses aim to prepare students for these should be specified. Any additional taxes that may be payable are also specified.

Diplomas and certificates of any kind signed or issued for any purpose by members contain accurate statements of fact. If such certification is based on examinations or tests, members undertake to ensure that these are valid and soundly administered.

In the case of students or pupils under the age of 18 on full-time or residential courses, clear information will be provided about supervision arrangements and the qualifications of supervisory staff.