A JOINT (bi-national) ANALYSIS

NOKUT’s and UKÄ’s holistic quality assurance systems

and how they relate to the proposed ESG 2027

Preliminary plans and questions

Comparative thematic analysis

Holistic external QA

Practical implication ESG2027

UKÄ NOKUT

In focus: NOKUT's and UKÄ's response to the proposed additions in 2.3

The processes should include the following specific activities
• a self-assessment or equivalent;
• an external assessment normally including **an in-person** site visit by peer reviewers, including stakeholder interviews, to ensure input from various perspectives;
• a report resulting from the external assessment by peer reviewers;
• a consistent follow-up.

The use of digital tools, including artificial intelligence, in external quality assurance processes should be responsible, human-centred and subject to human verification.

NOKUT | UKÄ

Why is this an important issue to address for Nokut and UKÄ?

- Norge (NOKUT) 48 lärosäten
- Sverige (UKÄ) 50 lärosäten
- Övriga länder

A.

NOKUT’s and UKÄ’s current situations

Holistic systems where institutional reviews are the base.
In-person site visits in all institutional reviews.

Digital interviews/site-visits, or no site visits at all, in different kinds of programme evaluations/reviews and accreditions/degree awarding procedures

UKÄ today

- **Institutional reviews:** always physical on-site visits.
- **Appraisal of applications for degree-awarding powers:** All meetings and interviews are digital but an in-person visit is possible if deemed necessary (new)
- **Programme evaluations:** nationwide thematic evaluations that use virtual site visits/interviews only. One in-person meeting for the expert group (new).

UKÄ renewed membership in ENQA 2026, fully compliant with ESG 2015.
In EQAR review three partially compliant, ESG 2.1, 2.3 and 3.3. For 2.3:
Online interviews remain the main approach without adequate procedural documents; evidence-gathering deficiencies persisted.

- *UKÄ is expected to address the identified issues at the earliest opportunity.*

NOKUT today

- **Last ENQA review:** Targeted review in 2022-23, last full review 2017-18
- **NOKUT will undergo a full ENQA review against the revised ESG in 2027-28**, likely making us one of the first QA agencies in Europe to do so.
- **Institutional reviews:** NOKUT has always conducted physical site visits.
- **Programme accreditation (BA/MA):** No site visits have been included, and this has not been raised as an issue in previous ENQA reviews.
- **Programme evaluations:** NOKUT conducts nationwide thematic evaluations (e.g. all nursing programmes in Norway, all history programmes in Norway) using **virtual site visits only**.
- The use of **virtual site visits** received **no critical comments** in the most recent ENQA targeted review.

Strategic framing

Proposed positioning

"A comparative thematic analysis of two mature, holistic external QA systems in light of the anticipated ESG revision."

Key premise

The Norwegian and Swedish QA systems share enough features to make regular benchmarking meaningful — while their differences create analytical value.

Why now?

Both systems rely heavily on institutional review, complemented by programme/educational reviews and degree-awarding processes.

Strategic opportunity

Move beyond "do we comply?" and ask what two mature Nordic systems reveal about the practical implications of the proposed ESG changes.

Core value

Mutual learning for NOKUT and UKÄ — and potentially useful evidence for the wider European QA community.

Simplified map of national systems

UKÄ · Sweden

- **Cyclical institutional reviews**
  Foundation of EQA
- **Educational / programme reviews**
  Complementary assurance
- **Degree-awarding / accreditation processes**
  Complementary assurance
- **Site visits**
  How evidence and dialogue are organised

NOKUT · Norway

- **Cyclical Institutional reviews**
  Foundation of EQA
- **Educational evaluations / programme reviews**
  Complementary assurance
- **Degree-awarding / accreditation processes**
  Complementary assurance
- **Site visits**
  How evidence and dialogue are organised

Proposed guiding questions

1. **How are our external QA systems designed?**

   Map the architecture, purposes and interdependencies of the different EQA activities.

2. **How do the different EQA activities relate to each other?**

   Especially the relationship between institutional review and complementary reviews / degree-awarding processes.

3. **How do the systems align with the proposed ESG 2027 changes?**

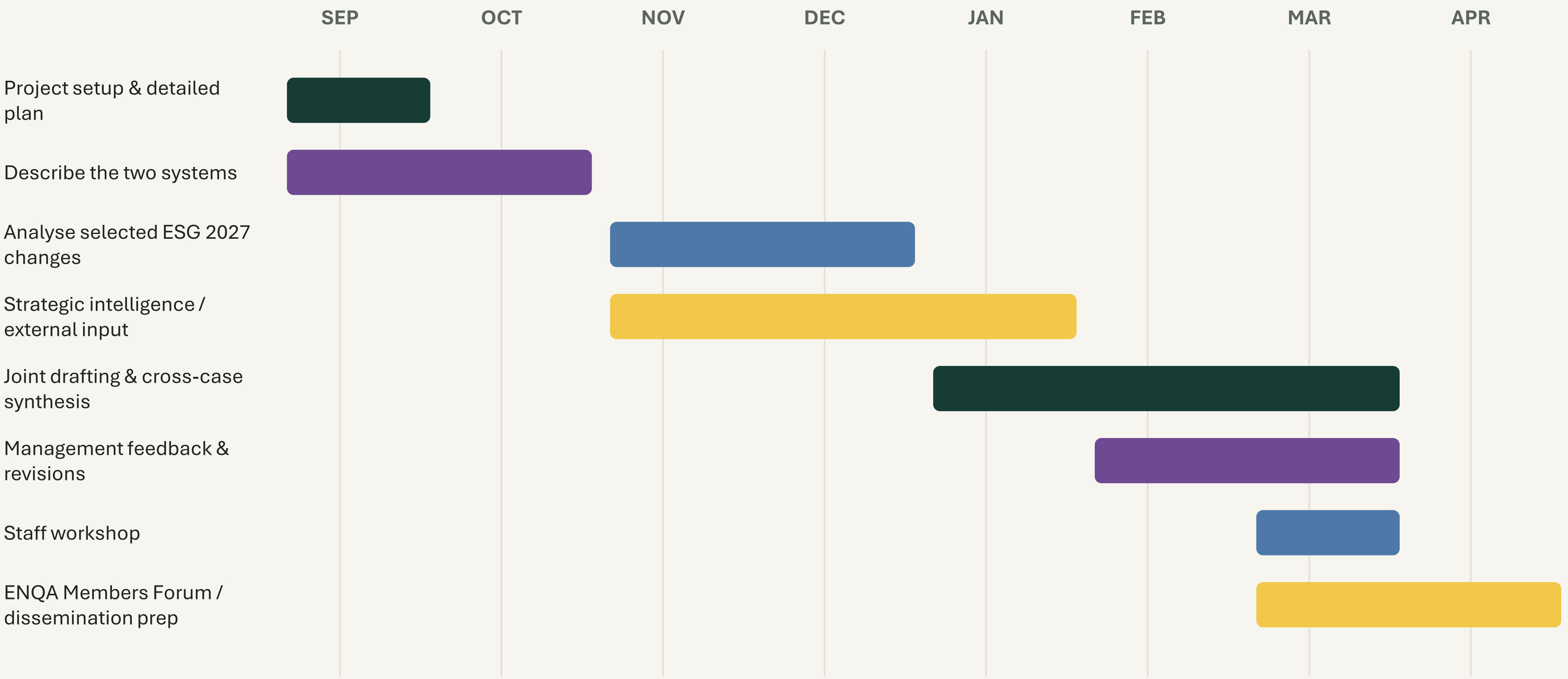
   Focus on selected standards and on how site visits are conducted — including the proposed **in-person** dimension of standard 2.3.

4. **How can we contribute a fit-for-purpose interpretation of ESG2027?**

   How the proposed ESG additions can work well in our holistic systems.

Preliminary timeline

September 2026 – April 2027



Proposed working period for project managers: September 2026 – April 2027

Possible outputs and dissemination

Core output

Joint thematic analysis / report

Cross-case matrix
Selected ESG 2027 implications
Mutual-learning insights
Practical considerations for EQA design

Audience-tailored dissemination

MAR 2027	**Joint staff workshop**	Internal learning, challenge findings, implications for practice
APR 2027	**ENQA Members Forum**	Share comparative findings and practical ESG implications
MAY 2027	**ENQA webinar**	Wider reach; focus on actionable lessons and discussion
MAR/APR	**ENQA / ECA newsletter**	Short, accessible teaser linked to the analysis

Input

Reflections

Questions

Advice?

Possible second project – focus on the additions to three standards in ESG 2027 bout digital tools and AI

Joint thematic analysis / report