

UK Agent Quality Framework

evaluation checklist

As a UKVI Sponsor Licence Holder (hereinafter referred to as ‘education providers’), you are required to embed the UK Agent Quality Framework (AQF). This is a self-monitoring evaluation checklist to support you in implementing all the actions you need to take.

The AQF evaluation checklist is an important tool for international recruitment, admissions, and compliance teams to ensure they adhere to the key requirements of the AQF and can demonstrate their compliance with the AQF to the Home Office (UKVI).

The checklist was developed with the understanding that agent management processes and systems differ and to help define a minimum benchmark with which all education providers should comply to operate within the AQF. This checklist has been endorsed by the Department for Education and the Home Office (UKVI).

Empowering student choice and enabling informed decision making

AQF pledge commitment	Example actions and how they can be evidenced	✓
<i>Proactively promote the student and parent guide to choosing an education agent to our prospective international students, both directly and through our networks, to aid them in selecting a reliable agent.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host the guide on your website. • Promote the guide to agent and partner networks through relevant channels. 	
<i>Clearly display our list of contracted agents on our website to aid international students and their parents or guardians in their choice.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List all contracted agents on your website. • Display agent information so that it is externally verifiable for prospective students/applicants. 	
<i>Provide students with a clear channel for lodging a complaint if they are dissatisfied with their experience of using a specific education agent.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish or adapt complaint procedures for students and/or applicants, ensuring the complaints process includes the ability to raise complaints against contracted agents. • Ensure that the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE), Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), and Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) can access information from the complaints process. 	

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Ensuring good agent governance and professionalism

AQF pledge commitment	Example actions and how they can be evidenced	✓
<i>Build the National code of ethical practice for UK education agents into our agent contracts to highlight their commitment to a quality experience for the student.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate the National code of ethical practice for UK education agents into all agent contracts. 	
<i>Embed governance processes throughout our agent contractual cycle to check the highest quality service is being delivered, including during selection, due diligence, contracting, training, planning and ongoing reviews and contract renewals.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and document a policy on agent governance, including details of the quality checks that will be made across all key stages of the contractual cycle. 	
<i>Make all Agent Quality Framework collateral available to your agent network in your onboarding and training materials, and by hosting these on your agent portal or webpage/s.</i>	<p>Host and make available key AQF collateral to your contracted agent network. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK agent and counsellor training and engagement hub • UK certified counsellor training • Database of certified counsellors • The National code of ethical practice for education agents • The Good practice guide for providers using education agents • The Good practice guide for UK education agents partnering for quality • The student and parent guide to choosing an education agent • Agent Quality Framework pledge 	

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Promoting ethical agent practices, professional knowledge and competency

AQF pledge commitment	Example actions and how they can be evidenced	✓
<i>Promote the adoption of the principles and standards set out in the 'National Code of Ethical Practice' right across our agent network.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporate the need for agents to sign up to the principles and standards set out in the 'National code of ethical practice' within their contract.	
<i>Build the requirement for contracted agents to ensure their student-facing counsellors have completed an appropriate UK Credited training programme, such as the British Council UK Agent and Counsellor Certified Training, so that they are well equipped to give students up-to-date information about studying in the UK.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporate the requirement for agents' student-facing counsellors to complete the British Council UK agent and counsellor certified training into their contracts.• Monitor compliance with counsellor training at contract renewal/sign-off, requesting evidence and cross-checking database as required.	

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Increasing transparency and accountability

AQF pledge commitment	Example actions and how they can be evidenced	✓
<i>Work with our contracted agents to ensure transparency around the use of sub-agents, clarifying their commitment and processes for ensuring quality throughout their sub-agents' network.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the contracted agent works with sub-agents, request that they provide a list of all appropriate sub-agent partners.• Mandate in the contract that the lead agent is responsible for the quality performance of their sub-agents.	
<i>Ensure clarity for students regarding the commercial relationships' education providers have with education agents.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a statement on your website clarifying the commercial relationship your institution has with contracted education agents.	

If you want further information about the Agent Quality Framework, you can visit the [BUILA website](#).