



MLA GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

CLASSIFICATION

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AVAILABILITY

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1. Objective

- a) The objective of the MLA Group is to decide on and manage membership in the IAAC Multilateral Recognition Arrangements (MLA).
- b) This document specifies the functions, composition and responsibilities of the MLA Group.

2. Functions of the MLA Group (MLAG)

- a) To make decisions on the acceptance of applications to the IAAC MLA.
- b) To make decisions on the need for a preliminary visit
- c) To make decisions regarding the status of membership to the IAAC MLA, including granting, maintenance, suspension, extension and withdrawal from the MLA.
- d) To review evaluation report findings to confirm that they are correctly classified and that the report contains the necessary information to have full confidence that the Accreditation Body complies with MLA requirements.
- e) To oversee implementation of IAAC, ILAC and IAF resolutions relevant to the MLA.
- f) To review changes notified by signatories that affect the MLA and to decide on subsequent actions.
- g) If the recognition of IAAC is suspended by IAF and/or ILAC, to inform recognized signatories and applicants that their signatory status will remain unchanged during the suspension period. Any new signatory and applicant to the Arrangement during the suspension period is not covered by the Arrangement and not recognized by IAF and/or ILAC.
- h) If the recognition of IAAC is withdrawn by IAF and/or ILAC, to inform all IAAC applicants and signatories that IAAC and its signatories are no longer accepted



under the IAF and/or ILAC Arrangement and shall no longer make reference to the IAF and/or ILAC Arrangement.

- i) To plan and monitor IAAC peer evaluation processes.

3. Composition of the MLA Group

- a) The Chair and the Vice Chair of the MLA Group are the Chair and Vice Chair of the MLA Committee, who shall belong to an MLA signatory accreditation body.
- b) The MLA Group shall have a Secretary who may be the Executive Secretary.
- c) The MLA Group will be integrated by one representative of each signatory to the IAAC MLA. Each representative may be accompanied by a deputy.

Note: All full members that are not signatories to the IAAC MLA and all associate members may participate in the meetings of the MLA Group as observers.

- d) Each signatory has a voice and vote.
- e) A single vote is considered for each signatory, not for each country.
- f) The quorum of the MLA Group shall be achieved in a meeting when at least three quarters of the MLA signatories are present in person or by proxy, and for electronic ballots when three quarters of the MLA signatories issue a vote.
- g) Decisions of the MLA Group will be made preferably by consensus. If consensus is not achieved decisions shall be made by an affirmative vote of two thirds of the quorum (abstentions will not be considered). Decisions may be made either in meetings or by electronic ballot.
- h) Invitations to other organizations to participate as observers can be made by the Chair of the MLA Group.
- i) Observers from IAAC full and associate members that attend an MLA Group meeting may request permission from the MLA Group to receive minutes of the MLA Group meeting that they have observed.
- j) The evaluation team leader and evaluation team members may be invited to participate as observers in MLA Group meetings where the report of a peer



evaluation they have performed is discussed. During the meetings they may observe the MLA Group's discussion and decision making and will respond to MLA Group members' questions, provide clarifications and any information that may help the MLA Group members in the decision-making process. If a representative of an MLA signatory has participated in a peer evaluation, he / she shall abstain from voting in the relevant decision and his/her substitute may issue the vote; when a substitute is not nominated or not present, the representative of the MLA signatory that has participated in a peer evaluation shall cast an abstention vote.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 MLA Group Chair's responsibilities are:

- a) Carry out these Terms of Reference present them in the meetings and propose the needed changes;
- b) Chair meetings of the MLA Group;
- c) Appoint team leader and team members for peer evaluations, for re-evaluations the appointment should be done two years before the evaluation deadline.

Note: Except in the case when the MLA Group decides on a re-evaluation date that is shorter than the normal 4-year period, in such case the appointment of the evaluation team shall be done at the earliest opportunity;

- d) Maintain regular communication with the Executive Secretary, the IAAC Team, and evaluated Accreditation Body regarding the peer evaluation process in order to ensure that the required deadlines are met.
- e) Submit to the MLA Group peer evaluation reports and all other matters that requires their decision;
- f) Inform the IAAC General Assembly, APAC, IAF and/or ILAC as applicable, of new signatories and their scopes of recognition and other decisions related to maintenance, suspension or withdrawal of existing signatories from the MLA;
- g) Inform IAF and/or ILAC without delay of any significant changes that have occurred or will occur in IAAC's status and/or its operating practices per IAF-ILAC A1, Annex 8, clause 1.1.



- h) Inform IAF and/or ILAC about the decisions on IAAC peer evaluations and re-evaluations including providing access to the peer evaluation reports as requested, as well as the plan for future peer evaluations.
- i) Appoint an IAAC representative at the IAF MLAC MC and ILAC AMC;
- j) Draft an IAAC MLA activities' report to be submitted at least one month in advance of the IAF/ILAC JMC meetings; and
- k) Maintain the MLA Committee and MLA Group Vice-Chair informed on all of the current and planned activities.

4.2 The MLA Group Vice-Chair's responsibilities are:

- a) Assist the MLA Group Chair in the fulfillment of his/her duties;
- b) Replace the MLA Group Chair in his/her absence or impediment; and
- c) Maintain permanent contact with the MLA Group Chair in order to be aware of the current and planned activities and assist the MLA Group Chair in carrying them out.

4.3 The MLA Group Secretaries responsibilities are described in the AD 011 IAAC Secretariat responsibilities.

4.4 The MLA Group members' responsibilities are:

- a) To ensure that it appoints a representative and deputy to the MLA Group that are familiar with the peer evaluation process;
- b) Vote in MLA Group decisions.

4.5 The representative of the MLA Group member shall

- a) Attend the MLA Group meetings and participate in the MLA Group discussions;
- b) Review evaluation report findings to confirm that they are correctly classified and that the report contains the necessary information to have full confidence that the Accreditation Body complies with MLA requirements.
- c) Review and participate in decisions on peer evaluation reports, applications for recognitions, recommendations for preliminary visits, and other decisions related to signatory status.



5. Meetings

- 5.1 The MLA Group shall meet when considered necessary by the MLA Group Chair, by the IAAC General Assembly, or by at least one third of its members.
- 5.2 The MLA Group shall meet at least once a year.
- 5.3 Draft agendas shall be distributed at least four weeks before each meeting.
- 5.4 MLA Group minutes and resolutions shall be distributed within one month of the meeting.
- 5.5 MLA Group meeting documents shall be distributed at least two weeks prior to each meeting.
- 5.6 Evaluation reports which require MLA Group decisions shall be distributed to MLA Group members at least 15 days before the meetings.
- 5.7 MLA Group documents are confidential. MLA Group members' representatives to the MLA Group and their deputies shall sign the IAAC Declaration of Confidentiality and Impartiality, FM 011, just once before they are given access to the first evaluation report. The declaration remains valid throughout the entire MLA Group process. Observers in the meetings of the MLA Group shall sign the IAAC Declaration of Confidentiality and Impartiality FM 011 at the beginning of each meeting. Observers in the meeting of the MLA Group may be given access to evaluations reports before the meeting, provided that they sign FM 011 before being given access.