



If you want to go far

Eaquals 30th Anniversary Publication

If you want to go far

If you want to go fast, go alone;
If you want to go far, go in a group.

African proverb



Eaquals is an international not-for profit association of organisations and people involved in language education, especially the teaching and learning of foreign, second or additional languages. It is established as a limited company and charitable trust in London, United Kingdom. Eaquals is an acronym for ‘Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality in Language Services’ has been granted formal participatory status by the Council of Europe.

Objectives

The aim of Eaquals is to “foster excellence in language education across the world by providing practical support for language centres and teachers”. Its key objective is to raise the quality of all aspects of language education for the benefit of language learners as well as other stakeholders.

Eaquals does not limit these objectives to its members: it seeks ways to pursue them more widely, for example, by promoting its values and sharing its expertise with any entity or individual involved in language education. Eaquals also runs annual international conferences, which attract wide participation, and its experts also provide outreach consultancy and training for other organisations.

This 30th anniversary publication was drawn up by (in alphabetical order) Peter Brown, Frank Heyworth, and Richard Rossner.

The work carried out during the COVID-19 emergency and its aftermath, listed in Part I, rested mainly on the shoulders of the staff of Eaquals in our Budapest office (Anna Andor and Vivi Koszegi) and in particular those of Lou McLaughlin (the Executive Director of Eaquals) and Ludka Kotarska (former Chair, and Director of Accreditation) together with members of the Accreditation Panel, and the Board of Trustees of Eaquals.

The Trustees formulated the policy of Rapid Response and looking towards the future. They met frequently during the Emergency and gave significant amounts of their free time to help and guide Eaquals during that period of surprises and growing uncertainty: Justin Quinn – outgoing Chair (CES Group), Thom Kiddle – incoming Chair (NILE), Mila Angelova – outgoing Vice Chair (AVO, Sofia), Adam Donohue – Treasurer, and, in alphabetical order, Peter Brown (British School, Trieste), Susanna Dammann (Inspector), Chris Farrell – incoming (CES Group), Chris Moore (Specialist Language Courses), Beata Schmid (EF Foundation, Boston), Nergis Uyan (Ozyegin University), Julie Wallis – incoming (London School, Thiene), Jo Watson - outgoing (Inspector).

Editor's Introduction

On the 23rd February 2020, we had to go both fast and far at the same time.

We had to move quickly because at 8pm on that Sunday evening our autonomous regional government issued an emergency decree which closed all schools and universities from one minute past midnight. COVID-19 had arrived.

We realised that this would likely be an existential crisis, one that would prove both tricky and challenging to handle, but we also knew that we would have to force ourselves to reach beyond the immediate and urgent to look forward to the important. Far, far forward.

And for an independent school in north eastern Italy, who could be our international network and 'brains trust' that could help us do that? One that could provide immediate support for our shared concerns? Provide experts? We knew we could rely on Eaquals.

Eaquals has the vision, and the capability and resources to enact that vision. It also has the network of experts, from widely differing fields, that it can call on. And Eaquals had been our professional home for 30 years.

This brief publication started life as an intended celebration for our 30th anniversary in 2021 of our achievements and consequent growth into the world's leading quality assurance and accreditation scheme for providers of language services. COVID-19 changed those plans as it probably changed yours.

Rather like Caesar's Gaul, the publication is divided into three parts: the first covers Eaquals' rapid response to COVID-19 and the activities it launched and maintained as we moved from pandemic towards endemic and all that it entails, the second surveys our background and historical time-line, whilst the third looks forward into the mid-term.

So we retained our original title "If you want to go far", for we believe it is more apt than ever.

Peter Brown

Founder Chair

British School Trieste

Foreword by the former Chair of Eaquals

Dear Colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to write the foreword for this Eaquals publication.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Eaquals Foundation, making it a very important year for our association. Milestones like this provide an opportunity to look back at what we have achieved so far while also looking forward to future opportunities.

From the very beginning, Eaquals has striven to be the global leader in language accreditation. Our inspection model is without rival across the globe and our Eaquals Accreditation scheme is a brand that education institutions aspire to. As a membership association we have all worked together to raise standards in our industry, motivate our teams and forge new paths to excellence. Our International conferences are now a must of the global educational calendar, providing opportunities to share insights and learn from one another. This spirit of collegiality and endeavour are at the heart of everything we do and has helped Eaquals to thrive over the last three decades.

Without the support of our members, Eaquals could not have reached this milestone. Today we have 117 accredited members and 29 associate members. I want to extend a sincere thank you to each and every one of you. Your enthusiasm and passion for education is what sustains us as we continue to develop as an organisation. We are also indebted to our sponsors who have allowed us to host so many events over the last thirty years.

Our thirtieth anniversary coincides with a time of crisis for our industry. None of us have been spared the effect of Covid-19 and sadly, many have been brought to the brink. As such, it is difficult to offer consolation to our many colleagues who are facing an uncertain future. At every level of society, whether it be through lockdowns, quarantines or limits on travel, this pandemic has seemed to make islands of us all, dividing us, cutting us off from one another. Our industry, our organisation, depends on the very opposite: we exist to bring people together. It is my hope that on this principle we can rebuild what we have lost and emerge from this crisis stronger.

Justin Quinn
Eaquals Chair
CES Dublin



Foreword by the current Chair of Eaquals

It is a pleasure to contribute a foreword to this 30th anniversary publication, and I am also proud that it not only looks back at the inspirational history of the organisation, and the people who made Eaquals what it is today, but looks forward to the future.

For many of us involved with Eaquals, its people, resources, and activities - its very essence and presence – have been a constant in our professional lives. A source of both principled guidance, and encouragement to innovate. The spirit of the founding members is one of dedication to excellence shared with collegiality, and a commitment to quality in language education. This has never been more valuable than in these turbulent times, and the resilience our members have shown is testament to what membership of Eaquals really means.

The educational landscape our members work within has never experienced such rapid and profound change, and I am sure that our adaptability and innovation to that change is what will define us as an organisation, and as a community of peers, in the coming years. What we have discovered about ourselves, and our resourcefulness and creativity in these times of crisis stands Eaquals and its members in good stead for the journey ahead. However, as Proust says, “the real voyage of every new discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes”, and the insight and foresight which we gain from being part of Eaquals, sharing and learning from others’ perceptions is one of our greatest strengths.

The outstanding achievements and contributions from Eaquals to the international education community also come through these pages, and I hope they are a source of pride for you, a demonstration of what can be accomplished by putting principles into practice, and inspiration for your own work in the coming years, and the next chapter of your engagement with Eaquals. My sincere thanks to those who have made Eaquals such a welcoming, supportive and constructive organisation, and those who will continue to do so, as we move forward, together, to create the fourth decade of Eaquals’ story.

Thom Kiddle

Eaquals Chair
NILE Norwich

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Thom Kiddle', with a stylized, cursive script.

Part I

Language is the light of reason
Dr Johnson (Lexicographer)

Initial rapid response to the COVID Emergency in 2020

The Board of Equals met frequently (on-line, of course) in the early stages of the Emergency in order to try to assess the scale and depth of the crisis and draw up useful, achievable and sustainable responses to it. The focus was always on supporting our members and helping them upskill to manage the crisis whilst never losing sight of the post-pandemic world.

In the six months between March and August 2020 we enacted a series of complementary measures drawing on our internal expertise and competences as well as the skills of our international networks and partnerships.

As a result we delivered the following services (this is not an exhaustive list – please consult our Annual Report for greater detail).

These are some of our tactical responses reacting to and dealing with the immediate as well as trying to think forward strategically to meet the challenges of the question 'what can we do that is **both of immediate practical help and sustainable** in the foreseeable future?':

- A webinar-based Training Series in response to the move to online delivery (15 training webinars) <https://www.eaquals.org/2020/07/16/resources-and-webinars-for-online-teaching-and-learning/>
- Webinar Case Studies with Equals Members – a further response to the move to online delivery
- Completion and publication of the Equals Guidelines for Online Provision – now available for members
- Individual Meetings: Executive Director & Director of Accreditation held online 1:1 meetings with Equals Accredited Members and Associate Members to ensure that relevant support and resources were being provided
- Country level meetings: Executive Director held meetings for Equals members in a number of different countries providing the opportunity for members within the same country to come together to discuss challenges and how to address these
- Equals 2020 AGM moved online and was held in July 2020
- Equals Online 2020 – two-day online event taking place on 23rd and 24th October for both members and non-members <https://www.eaquals.org/eaquals-events/event/eaquals-online-event-2020/>

That all of these projects and services were delivered during the first six months of the pandemic lockdown pays tribute to the determination and cohesion of Equals, its members and partners.

Longer-term response to the COVID Emergency 2020 - 2022

In the same period, the Board decided to deliver a series of strategic responses (proactive and looking beyond the immediate crisis - answering the question 'to what extent can we **help shape our professional future?**')

- Equals carried out the major task of completing and delivering the **Equals Inspection Scheme 7.2** <https://www.eaquals.org/accreditation/advisory-guide-to-accreditation/>
- The **Equals Inspection Scheme for Higher Education Institutions (HEI)** was completed and delivered during the pandemic <https://www.eaquals.org/accreditation/the-eaquals-inspection-scheme/the-scope-of-the-inspection-the-inspection-scheme-for-higher-education-institutions/>
- The **Equals Inspection Scheme for Online Providers** was also completed and delivered during the pandemic <https://www.eaquals.org/accreditation/the-eaquals-inspection-scheme/the-scope-of-the-inspection-the-scheme-for-online-providers/>
- The **Equals-NILE Certificate in Management in Language Education** was created and delivered online to members in April 2020
- The completion of the **Equals Language for Academic Purposes Teacher Development Framework** <https://www.eaquals.org/our-expertise/teacher-development/the-eaquals-framework-for-language-for-academic-purposes-teacher-training-development/>
- The completion of the **Equals Academic Management Competences Framework** which is available to all <https://www.eaquals.org/resources/the-eaquals-academic-management-competency-framework/>

- The renewal of **Eaquals-ALTE Memorandum of Understanding** together with the launching of a new joint project (see Section III)
- Eaquals Online 2021

From pandemic towards endemic?

Looking further ahead Eaquals recognises the need for its members and partner organisations to plan ahead for a possible endemic scenario – or, to be more precise, a set of scenarios.

For our planning purposes 'endemic' has two principal and interlocked meanings:

- **place** or restricted locality (lit: 'in the people' from the Greek)
- **persistency** – the longer-term nature of the disease if or when it becomes endemic

Both meanings lead us to reflect on 'coping strategies' – how will we deal with the potential disruptions caused ongoing COVID outbreaks?

Some of the points we are currently working on are to consider how the language classroom (and all classrooms are language classrooms) might be affected in terms of impact. This is by no means an exhaustive list:

- **Physical: Masks, social distancing, localised lockdowns / bubbles**
- **Didactic: Impact on syllabus, content, 'hybrid' teaching, and timing of lessons**
- **Reaching objectives: Assessment, stress & fatigue of teachers & learners, recovery programmes**
- **Mitigating the difficulties for: disadvantaged students, part- or whole class operations**

Eaquals initiated a special COVID-impact project in mid-2020 which we deemed of sufficient interest to seek the active involvement and partnership with the Council of Europe's European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz through its Professional Network Forum (PNF) of which Eaquals is a co-founder.

(See section III of this booklet for further details)

Part II

We are what we are
Because we were what we were

Background and early history

Inspired by their knowledge of national quality assurance schemes for language education providers such as those run by AISLi in Italy and the British Council in Britain (with what was then ARELS and is now English UK) and by a shared desire to improve international and intercultural understanding through language learning, ten individuals from five countries in Europe who were directors of language teaching organisations in the independent sector met informally in 1990 and 1991 to discuss the feasibility of establishing a Europe-wide quality assurance scheme for language education centres (LCs).

The key features they wished the proposed scheme to have were that the criteria for membership should be based on a simple set of charters concerning students, employees and the institution itself, and should be internationally applicable irrespective of the languages being taught and the size of the organisation or the type of students they catered to. In addition, the indicators related to these criteria should be objectively verifiable through an audit system, and equally applicable to institutions in the charge of the founders as to any other institutions.

The idea behind the proposed association and its scheme was that, instead of there simply being national accreditation schemes that enabled students and their agents and parents to identify LCs which had been audited in that country, there should also be one international accreditation scheme based on transnational quality criteria that facilitated the movement of students from country to country and the sharing of expertise. This was felt to be especially important for countries which at the time had no fully operational national quality scheme for language education, such as Spain, France, Germany and Ireland.

Following intensive discussions and initial work on the draft charters and the proposed organisational structure, Eaquals was legally founded as an association at an inaugural general meeting held on 2nd December 1991 in Trieste Italy. The ten founders in alphabetical order were: Peter Brown (representing the British School of Trieste), who was elected Chair of the Association, Patrick Clare (British Institute of Rome), elected as Information Officer, Virginia Cowley (British Institute of Seville), Tony Duff (International House London), Frank Heyworth (Eurocentres Switzerland), who was elected Inspections Officer, Arne Kasten (Briam Instituto, Madrid), Javier Lacunza (Academia Lacunza, San Sebastian), Eoin O'Brien represented by Karen O'Brien (English Language Institute, Dublin), Richard Rossner (Bell Educational Trust, UK), and Mary Towers (Language Centre of Ireland, Dublin). Jenny Pugsley, then Head of the British Council's Accreditation Unit, attended the initial meetings as observer and advisor. The first annual general meeting, at which the draft articles of association and charters were formally approved and the election of officers was confirmed, took place in Cambridge in June 1992. The Inspections Officer and another founder member were asked to draft an initial version of the Eaquals inspection scheme for consideration at the next meeting.

The initial version of the inspection scheme was piloted in 1993-1994 with language education centres (LCs) that were managed and, in some cases, owned by the 10 founders of Eaquals. The inspectors were drawn from this group of LCs and trained in the scheme. An interesting historical fact is that not all of the LCs involved in the first pilot passed the inspection: several 'requirements' for improvement that involved follow-up checks were specified. One of the LCs never became accredited.

Membership

The Eaquals Articles of Association specify two main groups of voting institutional members: LCs, which need to undergo inspection in order to obtain accreditation and become members; and Associate Members, such as international institutions for language and culture, national associations of providers, publishers and examination boards, which need to abide by a separate code of practice. Applications from would-be Associate Members are vetted against the criteria for Associate Membership by a panel chaired by a trustee. Their acceptance as members is subject to a vote at a general meeting of members.

For LCs wishing to be accredited by Eaquals, the normal procedure is for them to carry out an internal institutional self-assessment using the Eaquals standards as a benchmark and then to request consultancy advice, and if they wish a pre-inspection advisory visit, before making their application for first inspection.

Two non-voting categories of members also exist: 'project partners', which are institutions which have worked with Eaquals on one or more projects but do not qualify for accredited or associate membership; and 'individual members', many of whom are active inspectors who are not employees of any institutional member. This category has evolved to an open membership category that now includes some 80 individual members.

In September 2021, there were 117 Accredited Member Institutions located in 37 countries, including several countries outside Europe, 29 Associate Member Institutions in 15 countries, 2 Project Partners, and 80 individual members.

The Equals inspection and accreditation scheme

The Equals inspection scheme for accredited members, now in its seventh version¹ (v7.2), focuses on numerous quality standards applicable to 12 main operational areas grouped in 5 sections.

The 12 macro operational areas for LC accreditation are:

Section A Institutional Management and Governance

1. Management and Administration
2. Quality Assurance
3. Communication with Staff
4. Communication with Students and Clients

Section B Academic Management

5. Course Design and Supporting Systems
6. Teaching and Learning
7. Assessment and Certification
8. Academic Resources

Section C Student Services

9. Students Services

Section D Staff

10. Staff Profile and Development
11. Staff Employment Terms

Section E Learning Environment and Facilities

12. Learning Environment

Each of these areas is cross-referenced to clauses in one or more of the Equals Code of Practice which comprises four charters: the General Charter, the Charter for Students, the Staff Charter, and the Information Charter. In addition, the inspection scheme manual lists indicators for each standard and details what evidence inspectors need to collect and consider during their audit visit.

Inspection visits, which take place every four years after initial accreditation, involve two trained Equals inspectors, ideally from two different countries, one of whom is nominated as the lead inspector who organises the inspection timetable and prepares a written report afterwards in consultation with the other inspector. Depending on the size of the institution being inspected, inspections last two or three full days. The inspection ends with oral feedback from the inspectors to the management team.

The written report contains recommended grades for each of the 12 areas audited, recommendations and in some cases requirements that need to be complied with in order that the Equals standard is met. The inspectors also recommend an inspection outcome. The draft report is sent to the Equals Director of Accreditation and is then read by at least two members of the Accreditation Panel of experienced inspectors. It is only sent to the LC concerned for factual checks once the Accreditation Panel have clarified any doubts with the inspectors and necessary amendments have been made.

Thus, the outcome of the inspection is decided by the Accreditation Panel in consultation with the Director of Accreditation, not by the inspectors themselves. If the inspection is successful, and once any factual errors have been corrected, the final report and a certificate of accreditation or reaccreditation is sent to the LC.

¹ It is actually the seventh *public* version but the eighth version overall – version 0, which was never released to our professional community or to the general public, was our internal prototype which we developed and tested as a ‘proof of concept’. The scheme was then refined over the years, piloted by the founder members, reviewed and rewritten as a result, and the first public version, made freely available, was version 3.5).

Inspectors are freelance individuals working in the field of language education or are employees of Eqauals-accredited LCs who meet the criteria for selection as an inspector and have undergone initial training. Their first experience of inspection with an experienced inspector forms part of the training. Appointed inspectors are then required to participate in face-to-face or online training annually.

A key feature of the Eqauals inspection scheme is that it is designed not only to be an exercise in quality control but as an opportunity for LCs to consult with and obtain advice and recommendations from inspectors about specific aspects of their work. Most accredited members are not only concerned to maintain their accreditation but wish to engage in continuous enhancement of their services and systems, and the regular visits by inspectors are seen by accredited institutions as a means of supporting this process.

Governance and administration

Although there have been several amendments to the articles of association over the years, the structure of Eqauals remains similar. The Association, now a public benefit entity established as a charitable trust in the UK, is overseen by a Board of up to 11 elected trustees, including a Chair, two Vice-chairs and a Treasurer, as well as other elected trustees with flexible roles. In addition, up to four further trustees can be co-opted if and when the need arises. Trustees, who receive no remuneration, meet at least three times a year and often more frequently.

Apart from being responsible for the development and implementation of Eqauals strategy in line with its declared mission and values, the trustees also oversee the appointment of the full-time Executive Director and the Director of Accreditation, who are responsible for the day-to-day running of the association. They in turn are supported by a small administrative team, and in the case of the Director of Accreditation, by the Accreditation Panel of senior inspectors who oversee the inspection scheme.

As part of its internal complaints system, Eqauals appoints an independent ombudsperson, whose nomination and appointment are approved at a general meeting. If complaints from students taking courses offered by accredited members, or from their staff, or complaints against Eqauals cannot be resolved satisfactory through internal procedures, the complaint is referred to the ombudsperson, whose decision on the matter is final.

Eqauals' Annual General Meetings (AGMs) are normally held in April at the time of the annual international conference, although, if necessary, an Extraordinary General Meeting can be organised to coincide with the autumn meeting of members. AGMs are often preceded by a discussion forum at which key strategic initiatives or decisions can be debated prior to any vote relating to them. The main business of the AGM is to approve the Trustees' report on the previous year, to discuss and approve the budget for the year, including fee increases when necessary, and to elect or re-elect trustees. For most votes, a quorum of over 50% of representatives of voting members (including those represented by proxy) plus one is required.

Services to Eqauals members and other stakeholders

Apart from consultancy before and between inspection visits, the main services for Eqauals member institutions are the two international meetings held annually, the international conference held in April, which is open to all, and the meeting of members held in November. At both meetings members have the opportunity to participate in training workshops focusing on general management topics and academic areas. Equally importantly, members have opportunities to network with one another and to share expertise and experience, which can lead to cooperative ventures and joint projects.

Over the years, internal Eqauals projects involving members have resulted in numerous resources, many of which are freely available on the Eqauals website. Examples include a project to revise Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) scales of descriptors⁷ (a comparison of these descriptors with the original CEFR and *European Language Portfolio* descriptors is available on the Council of Europe website⁸); a CEFR certification project, which led to a scheme that enables accredited members to award Eqauals certificates of achievement to students; projects to develop the *Eqauals Framework for Language Teacher Training and Development*⁹; the *Eqauals Framework for Language for Academic Purposes Teacher Training & Development*¹⁰ and the *Eqauals Academic Management Competences Framework*¹¹, and another project to prepare and pilot a scheme for recognising teachers' investment in their own continuing professional development which has since been implemented in 15 Eqauals accredited institutions. Several of these

projects have been developed further in various publications. These include the three books in the Oxford University Press-Eaquals series *Language Education Management* published in 2017 and 2018¹², and the *Core Inventory for General English*¹³ and the *Inventaire linguistique des contenus clés des niveaux du CECRL*¹⁴, which are themselves both products of collaboration among members and build on Eaquals' work to provide practical ways of applying CEFR principles and content in language education. Many of the Eaquals resources referred to above and several others are freely available to anyone via the Eaquals website¹⁵, as are the occasional Eaquals webinars.

Any institution involved in language education can apply to Eaquals for paid individual consultancy and training services in specific areas relevant to their needs¹⁶. In the case of Associate Members which are national associations of LCs, a main form of collaboration with Eaquals is participation by designated Eaquals representatives as main speakers at their national conferences and workshops. No charge is made for these visits, which serve to strengthen the national profiles of both the Associate Member concerned and of Eaquals.

Eaquals collaboration with international institutions

Over the years, Eaquals has collaborated with many different institutions in different ways. A few examples indicate the range of this collaboration.

In 2006 Eaquals was granted 'participatory status'¹⁷ as an INGO (International Non-Governmental Organisation) with the Council of Europe in recognition of Eaquals' work in language education, as exemplified by the validation in the year 2000 by the Council of Europe's Language Policy Division of the first electronic *European Language Portfolio* developed by Eaquals in cooperation with ALTE, the Association of Language Testers in Europe¹⁸. Since 2006 Eaquals has been involved in various Council of Europe programmes and publications, for example, in the series of Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM) conferences and surveys and the related resources and Toolkit websites¹⁹, and in the validation and piloting of the new scales of descriptors in the *CEFR Companion Volume* published in 2018²⁰.

From 2002-2013 Eaquals working with BSI, the British standards body, an Eaquals representative served as a member of European Committee for Standardization and ISO working groups enabling Eaquals' expertise in quality assurance to be drawn on in the development of three international standards, EN 14804:2005 'Language study tour providers – Requirements'²¹, ISO 20990: 2010: 'Learning services for non-formal education and training - Basic requirements for service providers'²², and ISO 29991:2014 'Language learning services outside formal education – Requirements'²³.

Individual representatives of Eaquals member organisations and its secretariat have cooperated over the years in the development of several European Centre of Modern Languages (ECML) projects. In 2013 Eaquals became a founder member of the ECML's Professional Network Forum²⁴. From 2016-2019 it participated as one of a four-member consortium in a project called 'Towards a common European framework for language teachers'²⁵. The work of the project group focused on developing a catalogue of existing frameworks and instruments describing the competences of language teachers and certain other teachers and determining the feasibility of an overarching common framework.

Eaquals has signed memoranda of cooperation with various other organisations, including CercleS, the European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education²⁶, Groupement FLE²⁷, the British Accreditation Council²⁸, and JAMOTE, the Japanese Association for Management of Training and Education²⁹, English UK, BALEAP (the global forum for English for Academic Purposes), Aqueduto (Association for Quality Education and Training Online), IFCES (The International Forum for the Certification of Educational Services) and IBE (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych – the Polish Educational Research Institute).

Eaquals participation in international projects

Over the years, Eaquals has participated directly or indirectly through its members in a variety of projects funded by the European Commission. These include the EuroIntegrELP, which developed a multilingual version of the Eaquals-ALTE European Language Portfolio³⁰; the European Profiling Grid (EPG) project, which developed the EPG and an online version of it, the e-Grid³¹; and the NELLIP project, which resulted in guidelines and recommendations on quality in language projects in relation to the European Language Label³².

Eaquals international partnerships

In the last ten years alone Eaquals has signed MoUs or entered into projects on a partnership basis with 14 organisations representing intergovernmental organisations, university LCs, language testers and language examination boards, fellow quality control and quality assurance schemes, educational forums, and – last but certainly not least – a bookshop and educational materials provider.

They are:

- ALTE: The Association of Language Testers in Europe
- Aqueduto: Association for Quality Education and Training Online
- BAC: British Accreditation Council
- BALEAP: the British Association of Lecturers of English for Academic Purposes
- BEBC: Bournemouth English Book Centre
- CercleS: European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education
- ECML: The Council of Europe's Centre for Modern Languages
- English UK
- ENQA: European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
- Groupement FLE
- IFCES: The Foundation of International Forum for the Certification of Educational Services
- IHWO: International House World Organisation
- Instytut Baden Edukacyjnych: the Polish Educational Research Institute
- ISO: The International Organisation for Standardisation
- JAMOTE: Japan Association for Management of Training and Education
- LanguageCert
- Macmillan
- PNF: The Professional Network Forum of the ECML – of which Eaquals is a co-founder

Eaquals owes a particular debt of gratitude to our long-standing historical partnerships and MoUs with:

- The School of Languages, Sabanci University, Istanbul
- Migros Club Schools
- CVCL (Universita per Stranieri de Perugia)

The next section (Part III) will highlight two further projects: one with ALTE and the other with the ECML and, in particular, the PNF.

Part III

2021 Vision

Looking towards the future

From the onset of the COVID-19 Emergency the Eaquals Board set out to try to achieve three key goals:

- Assess the likely impact of the crisis – using quantitative data as much as possible – whilst as far as possible maintaining current activities and projects
- Seek strategic responses (i.e. longer-term) to the situation
- Work towards post-COVID emergency realities – helping create a new normal for members and the wider language education community

To these ends in mid-2020 Eaquals initiated a “when and what if” project to try to envisage what a post immediate emergency might look like and to attempt to assess the likely impact, initial, medium and longer-term, of the COVID-19 Emergency on foreign language education across different countries, institutions and sectors. In particular, we wanted to reach out to foreign languages teachers, whatever their role, to listen to them and learn from their handling of their learners under such demanding and rapidly evolving situations.

We soon realised that the scope of such a project should ideally move beyond the confines of Eaquals, wide as they are, to encompass as much of our profession as possible. So the Eaquals co-ordinating team of Frank Heyworth, Richard Rossner, and Peter Brown decided to approach the ECML in Graz and, in particular, the members of the PNF to gauge their willingness to join us.

Thus the initiative became an ECML/PNF project, generously co-funded by the European Commission, entitled the [*Future of language education in the light of Covid - lessons learned and ways forward*](#). This link takes you to the project’s website. The resulting organising team fully reflects the multilateral nature and scope of the project.

Some outcomes have already been achieved; please see the activities tab for our survey, the webinar, and two think tanks. Next steps will be a Colloquium in Graz, a Guide, and a final publication scheduled for the first half of 2022.

Projects like this stand testimony to Eaquals’ determination to stand with the best and share our skills with the profession *pro bono publico*. As it always has since far-off 1991.

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www.eaquals.org

Eaquals Secretariat

PO Box 1202/95 H-1380 Budapest Hungary

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