

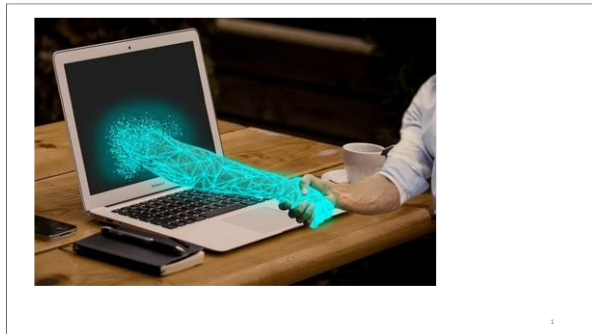
## 2nd Information and Discussion Session about the Sectoral Qualification Framework for Coast Guard Functions (SQFCGF) in 2025

Date: 18 November 2025

Trainer: Heinz Schneider

### Session 2 – Topic 1: Building Institutional Support for SQFCGF

#### Slide 1: Warmhearted Welcome to the Second SQFCGF Information Session and its 4 Topics



#### Welcome to Topic 1: Building Institutional Support for SQFCGF

This topic introduces the strategic dimension of SQFCGF implementation within training institutions and Coast Guard authorities. The focus is on understanding how organisations can move from *awareness* of the framework to *institutionalisation*—ensuring that SQFCGF becomes a stable and sustainable part of training quality, curriculum planning, and capability development.

#### Slide 2: Trainer introduction

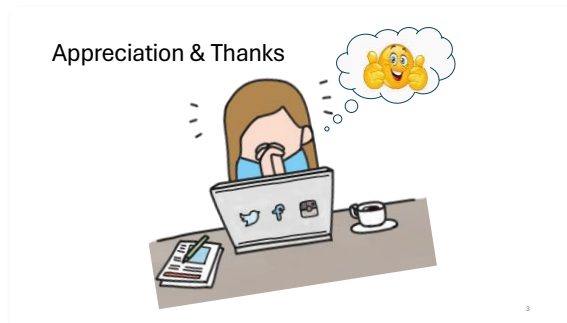


**I am an** Austrian Police officer, currently commissioned in the Austrian Ministry of the Interior, the Austrian federal Police Academy. I studied Security and Safety Management, Police Leadership and Pedagogy. **My personal mission is** to support with capacity building and optimization of individuals, organizations, nations, the EU and 3<sup>rd</sup> countries.

This session is facilitated by an Austrian officer with extensive experience in international policing missions (Bosnia, Kosovo, Georgia) and over a decade of work at the Austrian Federal Police

Academy. The speaker currently serves as a Frontex Partnership Academy Representative and works as an external expert for EFCA and Frontex on sectoral qualification frameworks and Training-of-Trainers approaches. This background provides practical insight into how European-level frameworks can be translated into national and institutional training environments.

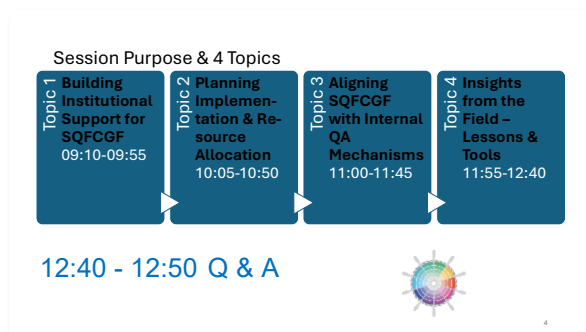
### Slide 3: Appreciation & Cooperation



This slide acknowledges the collaborative nature of SQFCGF work. Effective implementation is always multi-institutional. EFCA, EMSA, Frontex, and national Coast Guard academies contribute expertise, tools, and feedback.

Participants' contributions—particularly through pre-session questionnaires—play a crucial role in ensuring the relevance and quality of shared knowledge.

### Slide 4: Purpose and Flow of the Session



The purpose of this session is to strengthen our understanding of how the SQFCGF can be strategically implemented within training systems. We'll look at the leadership & institutional factors that make this possible, the practical steps for planning and resourcing, how the framework supports internal quality assurance and aligns with European standards, and finally, we'll reflect on lessons and tools from agencies and Member States already applying it. The structure of today's session is as follows:

Our agenda has 4 key topics, each building logically on the previous one — moving from *strategy* to *practice*, and finally to *reflection and tools*.

Topic 1, *Building Institutional Support*, sets the foundation — it's about leadership, ownership, and how we create the right environment for SQFCGF implementation.

Topic 2 moves us into *Planning Implementation and Resource Allocation* — that's where strategic decisions turn into concrete timelines, capacity building, and budget considerations.

Topic 3 then connects the framework to *Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms* — here we explore how the SQFCGF strengthens institutional QA systems and aligns with European standards such as ESG 2015.

So, let's begin with our first topic: *Building Institutional Support for SQFCGF*.

This session focuses on the *strategic implementation* of the SQFCGF.

Topic 1 sets the foundation by addressing:

- why institutional support is essential
- how leadership buy-in can be secured
- and how SQFCGF links to European QA mechanisms, especially ESG 2015.

Topics 2–4 will build on this by examining planning, QA alignment, and lessons from the field.

### Slide 5: Recap of Session 1 (September 2025)

Session 1 (Sept. 2025) recap

- Focused on course-level application
- Introduced course descriptors, LO, constructive alignment
- Shared understanding of SQFCGF purpose & benefits achieved
- **Now: from awareness to institutionalisation**

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Before entering new content, and for those people who were not present during Session 1 in September, I wish to summarize quickly Session 1. Session 1 created a common vocabulary — we spoke about LOs, constructive alignment, course descriptors and other important elements of the SQFCGF. Today we will climb one level higher: we will elaborate on how institutions translate that awareness into policy, management, and culture. The institutional anchoring is needed, otherwise the best course alignment attempts remain temporary and stay away from sustainable.

Session 1 addressed course-level application of the framework:

- Learning Outcomes (LO)
- constructive alignment
- course descriptors
- assessment logic

Topic 1 now shifts from the course level to the system level.

While course design is important, it becomes sustainable only when embedded in institutional policies, leadership priorities, and internal QA processes.

### Slide 6: Orientation for Topic 1



Orientation slide that allows the signposting, that we will have 45 minutes with this topic. The participants are invited to contribute and there will be a Q&A in the end of the topic and also a longer one in the end of the sessions. You are welcome to make urgent remarks in the life chat.

Topic 1 spans approx. 45 minutes and concludes with a Q&A opportunity.

Participants are encouraged to contribute via the chat, enabling EFCA staff to raise questions during the session.

### Slide 7: Strategic Foundation for SQFCGF Implementation



In this first topic we focus on the **strategic layer** — we hope to explain what must happen at institutional level for the SQFCGF to be established. In Session 1, which we have held in September, we explored

course design, learning outcomes, and assessment alignment. Now we move from **designing courses** to **designing systems** that sustain quality and consistency across an organization.

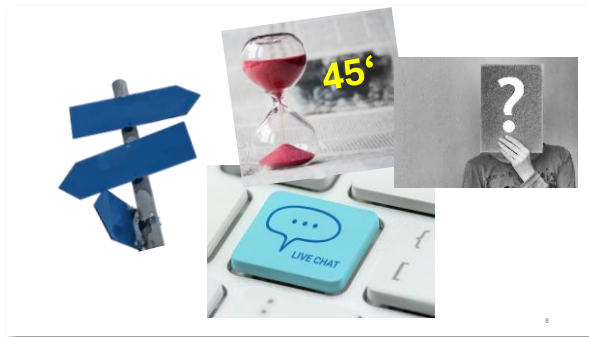
### Strategic Foundation for SQFCGF Implementation

This slide highlights that SQFCGF is not only a pedagogical tool but also a strategic mechanism. Institutions must create the right environment for the framework to “take root,” combining:

- leadership support
- clear policies
- stabilised quality mechanisms
- staff awareness and engagement

This ensures consistency across the entire organisation, not only in isolated courses.

### Slide 8: Objectives of Topic 1



Three goals guide us:

- understanding why leadership backing matters,
- how to secure it, and
- where it connects to European QA standards.

The European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) quotation you’ll see in a moment gives us an official anchor.

The three core aims of this topic:

1. **Understanding why leadership support is indispensable**  
Without institutional backing, alignment efforts remain fragmented and vulnerable to staff turnover.
2. **Identifying how leadership and stakeholder commitment can be activated**  
Engagement requires communication, evidence, and clear benefits.
3. **Connecting SQFCGF to European QA standards (ESG 2015)**  
This provides credibility, comparability, and an external rationale for institutional support.

## Slide 9: ESG Standard 1.1 – Policy for Quality Assurance



The ESG 2015 expresses exactly what SQFCGF implementation delivers in practice — a visible, structured policy for quality assurance. By embedding the framework, an institution, your organization, can demonstrate that quality management isn’t abstract — it’s measurable, transparent, and aligned with EU expectations.

### Source: ESG 2015 – Standard 1.1: Policy for Quality Assurance

“Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management.”

This standard aligns directly with SQFCGF implementation because the framework introduces:

- transparency through explicit learning outcomes
- structural coherence across training programmes
- European comparability of qualifications
- evidence-based quality assurance

By embedding SQFCGF, institutions strengthen compliance with ESG expectations.

## Slide 10: Why Institutional Support Matters



When institutional support is weak, projects depend on individuals and vanish when staff change. This means your institutions should have a strong support for the alignment process. When institutional support is strong, it secures continuity, resources, and credibility. Great institutional support turns the SQFCGF from an idea into a sustainable element of quality.

Strong institutional support ensures:

- **continuity beyond individual staff members**
- **legitimacy and allocation of resources**
- **alignment between training, HR, and QA systems**
- **increased trust among trainers, staff, and management**

Weak institutional support often leads to temporary or inconsistent alignment efforts.  
With strong support, SQFCGF becomes a long-term quality asset.

### Slide 11: Drivers for Change

From Awareness to Action – Drivers for Change

- New EU & QA standards → need for alignment
- Staff turnover → consistency through qualifications
- External expectations (EQF, ESG, audits)
- Opportunity to showcase excellence



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If you are planning to benefit from the SQFCGF, several drivers push this change: new EU standards, rotating staff, and the need for comparable qualification logic.

Implementing SQFCGF answers these pressures and strengthens institutional reputation.

It also demonstrates accountability and European readiness.

Institutions face pressure from several directions:

- **New European and QA standards** (ESG, EQF) require structured outcomes.
- **Staff rotation and turnover** demand consistent qualification logic.
- **External audits and international cooperation** require transparent and comparable training systems.

Implementing SQFCGF addresses all of these, strengthening both national and cross-border credibility.

### Slide 12: Understanding Change Dynamics – Kotter's Principles

Understanding Change Dynamics

- Change = process not event
- Create urgency & guiding coalition
- Develop & communicate vision
- Generate quick wins
- Anchor new practice in culture



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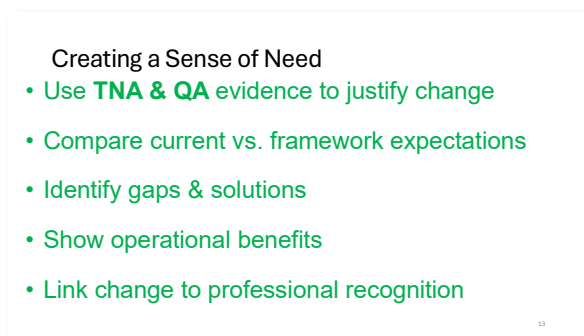
Implementing a framework is pure change management. Kotter's classic sequence helps: it is required to create urgency, to build coalitions, have an upright communication and moreover celebrate quick wins to anchor the small steps. I recommend to follow these steps of change, should you decide to benefit from the SQFCGF. Every successful agency I've seen applies these stages — consciously or not.

SQFCGF implementation is a change process. Kotter's model provides an evidence-based approach:

- create urgency
- build a guiding coalition
- communicate a clear vision
- generate quick wins
- anchor changes in organisational culture

Institutions that follow these steps increase their chances of sustainable framework integration.

### Slide 13: Creating a Sense of Need – Using Evidence



Creating a Sense of Need

- Use **TNA & QA** evidence to justify change
- Compare current vs. framework expectations
- Identify gaps & solutions
- Show operational benefits
- Link change to professional recognition

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Leaders act when data speak. This means that training-needs analyses and QA reports can reveal skill or assessment gaps. When you succeed to link those findings to the framework's promises, you turn evidence into motivation.

Leadership responds strongly to data.

Training Needs Analyses (TNA) and internal QA reports often reveal:

- skill gaps
- incoherent LOs
- inconsistent assessment methods
- outdated course structures

Linking these findings to SQFCGF makes the rationale for alignment compelling and measurable.

## Slide 14: Engaging Institutional Leadership

Engaging Institutional Leadership

- Explain strategic relevance (QA, compliance, reputation)
- Present concrete examples of SQFCGF alignment
- Demonstrate simplification of course validation
- Highlight European comparability benefits



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Leadership listens to what affects reputation, compliance, and efficiency. If you succeed in showing how SQFCGF simplifies validation and makes training recognisable across Europe, you most likely will turn an abstract framework (the SQFCGF) into a strategic advantage. If you make use of success stories from agencies like EFCA or Frontex you will have powerful support by role models.

To secure leadership support, highlight:

- improved institutional reputation and compliance
- simplified course validation and approval
- harmonisation with European partners
- success stories from EFCA, Frontex, and Member States

Real examples demonstrate feasibility and build trust.

## Slide 15: Stakeholder Mapping & Social Systems



Every implementation activity is a social system. This means, tools from Project Management will help you to map the influence and the interest of those who decide, who implement, who support and who might resist. If this becomes clear, you will succeed with your alignment project. The earlier you consult the social system, the better because it prevents later resistance. I hope it is clear that honest transparency and recognition of champions, those who contribute successfully, build ownership and support for the alignment/review project.

Implementation is rarely only technical — it is social.

Stakeholder mapping helps identify:

- supporters

- influencers
- decision-makers
- potential resistors

Early consultation reduces opposition and accelerates ownership.

Transparency and recognition of contributors foster a positive implementation culture.

### Slide 16: Anchoring Change – Formal, Cultural, Motivational Levels

Anchoring Change – Levers & Support Structures

- **Formal anchors:** policies, QA-procedures, HR rules
- **Cultural anchors:** communication & capacity building
- **Motivational anchors:** recognition & incentives

*“Combine them for long-term embedding”*



The amendment of your curricula is actually a change. It only lasts when it is anchored on three levels: they should be formal with standardized templates. In session 1 we have provided you with course design and session templates. You are welcome to pick them from the EFCA platform. The changes should also be cultural, which is probably the biggest challenge beside of the motivational challenge.

Policies provide structure, culture gives meaning, and incentives keep people engaged.

Together, these form the DNA of institutional support.

Institutional anchoring must occur on three complementary levels:

1. **Formal:** policies, templates, QA procedures
2. **Cultural:** shared understanding, communication, routines
3. **Motivational:** incentives, recognition, professional benefits

These layers form the “institutional DNA” needed for lasting SQFCGF integration.

### Slide 17: Key Message

Key Messages

- Institutional support transforms awareness into practice
- Leadership & engagement drive sustainability
- QA & TNA provide the evidence base for decisions
- ESG 2015 gives a recognised external reference...



If there's one message to take away: *Institutional support is not bureaucracy — it is the enabler of continuity and credibility.* Once leaders understand this, alignment becomes natural rather than imposed.

Institutional support is *not* bureaucracy.

It is the foundation that ensures continuity, credibility, and long-term quality development.

Once leaders understand how SQFCGF strengthens QA, the alignment process becomes natural and sustainable.

## Slide 18: Transition to Topic 2

Transition to Topic 2  
Next:  
Planning Implementation &  
Resource Allocation

“From leadership and  
structure to practical timelines,  
resourcing, and capacity  
building.”



In the **next topic**, we move from the **why** to the **how**: planning implementation; allocating resources, and training staff. We will look at how strategy becomes action.

This slide prepares participants for the next stage of the session: moving from “why” institutional support is necessary to “how” the implementation can be planned, resourced, and sequenced.

## Session 2 – Topic 2: Planning, Implementation & Resource Allocation; Turning Commitment into Action

### Slide 1: Introduction



**Topic 2:**

Planning  
Implementation &  
Resource Allocation

Turning Commitment  
into Action

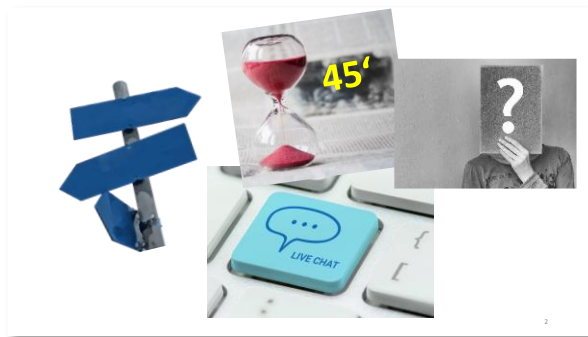
We now move from why to how. After exploring leadership and institutional support in Topic 1, we shift to the practical side — planning, sequencing, and resourcing the actual alignment of own materials to the SQFCGF. This is where strategy becomes operational reality.

Topic 2 shifts the focus from *institutional commitment* (Topic 1) to *operational implementation*. This section explains how organisations can develop a realistic, structured and sustainable roadmap for aligning their training systems with the SQFCGF.

Key guiding questions include:

- How do we translate leadership decisions into actionable steps?
- What resources are required, and how can they be organised?
- How does SQFCGF integration fit within European QA expectations (ESG 2015)?

## Slide 2: Session Orientation



Orientation slide that allows the signposting, that we will have 45 minutes with this topic. The participants are invited to contribute and there will be a Q&A in the end of the topic and also a longer one in the end of the sessions. Participants are welcome to make urgent remarks in the life chat.

This topic is designed for approx. 45 minutes.

Participants are encouraged to share questions and experiences via chat during the session. EFCA staff will raise important remarks or clarifications as needed.

## Slide 3: Objectives of Topic 2

**Topic 2 Objectives**



- Introduce key planning steps for SQFCGF integration
- Present options for resource mobilisation & sequencing
- Show how ESG 2015 Standard 1.2 supports structured program development

Our focus here is threefold: first, the main steps that any institution can follow; second, how to secure and allocate resources; and third, how all of this links to ESG 2015 Standard 1.2, which underlines the need for systematic program design & approval.

This slide summarises the three main aims of Topic 2:

1. **Introduce key planning steps for SQFCGF integration**  
Institutions need a clear and evidence-based sequence for implementing the framework.
2. **Present approaches for resource mobilisation & allocation**  
SQFCGF implementation requires people, time, tools, and coordination — not necessarily large budgets.
3. **Show the link to ESG 2015 Standard 1.2**  
which reinforces the importance of structured programme design and approval processes.

#### Slide 4: ESG 2015 – Standard 1.2: Programme Design & Approval

ESG 2015 – Standard 1.2 (Design and Approval of Programs)

*“Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programs... including intended LO”*

- SQFCGF supports structured design with validated LO
- Enables repeatable & transparent approval processes
- Promotes alignment with strategic QA goals

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This standard complements the previous one we discussed — it moves from QA policy to actual design & approval.

The SQFCGF provides exactly that structure:

validated learning outcomes (a validated LO is a LO that has been formally confirmed as achieved and credible through an assessment or recognition process that meets agreed quality standards), consistent program design, and a transparent approval trail that meets both internal and European expectations.

Source: ESG 2015 Standard 1.2

*“Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes... including intended learning outcomes.”*

This standard directly supports SQFCGF implementation, as the framework provides:

- a structured LO system based on EQF level descriptors,
- harmonised expectations for knowledge, skills, responsibility & autonomy,
- transparency for internal approval bodies,
- comparability across Europe.

By implementing SQFCGF, institutions strengthen their compliance with Standard 1.2 and create a repeatable approach for reviewing and approving programmes.

## Slide 5: Translating Commitment into a Roadmap



Once leadership is on board, the next step is to translate strategic commitment into a roadmap. Planning clarifies who does what, by when, and with which resources—making the framework manageable and measurable.

After leadership agrees on the relevance of SQFCGF (Topic 1), the key task is to operationalise this commitment.

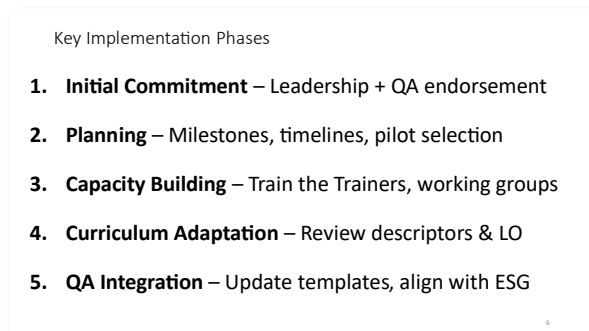
A roadmap should clarify:

- *who* is responsible,
- *what* needs to be done,
- *by when*, and
- *with which competences and tools*.

A roadmap transforms the framework from a conceptual model into a step-by-step change process.

This reduces uncertainty, avoids duplication, and increases accountability.

## Slide 6: Five Key Implementation Phases



These five phases represent a practical sequence that can be adapted to any organization. They create a logical path from initial assistance to sustainable QA integration. Most institutions follow a similar sequence. It begins with leadership approval and ends with QA integration. The process can take anywhere from six months to two years, depending on scope and national context. The important part is that each phase builds a bridge to the next.

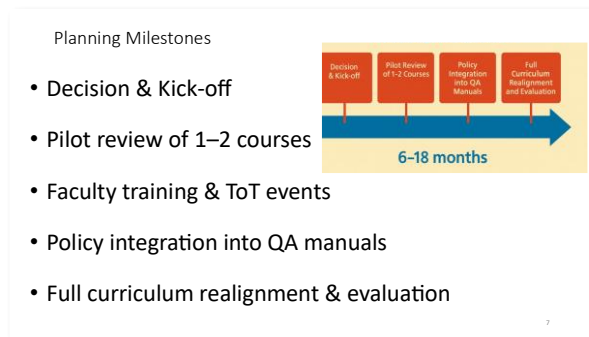
Most institutions, regardless of their size or national context, follow a similar sequence:

1. **Decision & Kick-off**  
Leadership formally endorses SQFCGF use and appoints project leads.
2. **Pilot Review of 1–2 Courses**  
A small, manageable pilot helps identify challenges and success factors.
3. **Faculty Training & ToT (Train-the-Trainers)**  
Staff must develop competence in LO drafting, constructive alignment, and framework use.
4. **Policy & Template Integration**  
QA manuals, course descriptor templates, and approval forms are updated with SQFCGF references.
5. **Full Curriculum Realignment & Review**  
Larger-scale alignment becomes possible only after pilots and template adjustments.

#### Time frame:

Depending on the institution, these steps may take 6–24 months, depending on resources, national frameworks, and organisational complexity.

#### Slide 7: Planning Milestones



A clear visual timeline of achievable milestones helps everyone understand expectations. Start with a pilot, train your staff, update policy documents, and only then move to full realignment. This sequence keeps progress visible and motivating.

Milestones make the implementation timeline visible and measurable.

A typical milestone sequence includes:

- **Month 1–2:** Leadership decision, nomination of lead persons, roadmap drafting.
- **Month 3–4:** Pilot course selection, LO mapping, initial revision.
- **Month 5–6:** Faculty and QA staff training; coordination meetings.
- **Month 7–9:** Integration of SQFCGF terminology into policy documents, templates, QA forms.
- **Month 10–12:** Review of additional courses, adjustments after pilot results, evaluation.

Milestones help maintain momentum and ensure transparency of progress.

## Slide 8: Resource Areas – What Must Be Organised

Resource Areas

- Human Resources**
  - Trainers, QA staff, curriculum experts
- Tools**
  - Templates, SQFCGF tables, review checklists
- Time**
  - Release time for planning and reflection
- Budget**
  - Training events, platform updates, consultancy

Successful implementation depends on realistic resource planning. Identify people, tools, and time first — the budget then follows logically. It's also crucial to protect time for reflection and peer learning; without it, quality suffers. If one is missing, the process becomes fragile. Plan for people first, equip them with tools, allocate time, and finally secure budget.

This slide identifies four central resource dimensions:

- 1. People**  
Trainers, curriculum developers, QA officers, administrators.
- 2. Tools**  
Templates, LO maps, assessment matrices, QA checklists.
- 3. Time**  
Planning meetings, workshops, revision periods, peer reviews.
- 4. Budget**  
Primarily for training and technical support; SQFCGF implementation itself is cost-efficient.

Effective implementation begins with people and tools — budget comes last. Institutions often underestimate the need for protected time for coordination and reflection.

## Slide 9: Capacity Building Needs

Capacity Building Needs

- Train-the-Trainers on LOs & SQFCGF structure
- QA staff development for review & evaluation
- Leadership orientation on policy integration & ESG standards



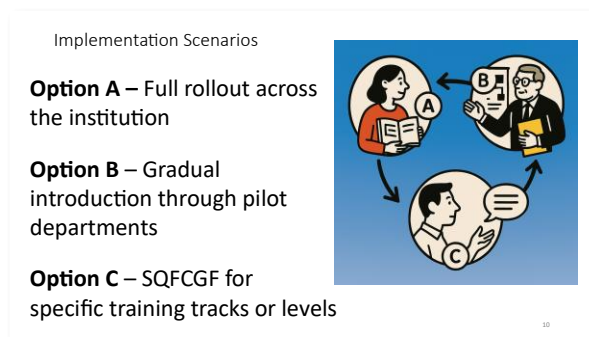
Capacity building is not an extra — it is the fuel that powers implementation. Training everyone involved: the trainers and QA staff ensures a shared language and understanding of the framework. When leadership also participates in orientation, institutional alignment becomes much easier and the system works toward common goals.

Capacity building is the driving force of implementation.  
Three target groups require tailored training:

- 1. Trainers**  
To understand LO structures, assessment alignment, and how to apply SQFCGF descriptors.
- 2. QA Staff**  
To integrate SQFCGF terminology in audits, templates, reports, and monitoring cycles.
- 3. Leadership**  
To understand how alignment strengthens compliance, recognition, and efficiency.

When all three groups are trained, organisations develop a common language and shared quality culture.

### Slide 10: Implementation Scenarios (A–C)



Different institutions will choose different speeds. Some go for an institution-wide rollout; others begin with one or two academies or functions. For example, one Coast Guard authority starts with a six-month pilot focusing only on entry-level training, then expanded after success was proven. The best scenario is the one that fits your capacity and national context. Example: 20-second case: One Coast Guard academy began with a six-month pilot focused only on entry-level training. They used that period to revise LO, run a small ToT program, and test their QA templates. Once successful, the academy extended the approach to advanced courses the following year. This method built confidence and ensured quality before full roll-out.

Institutions may choose different approaches:

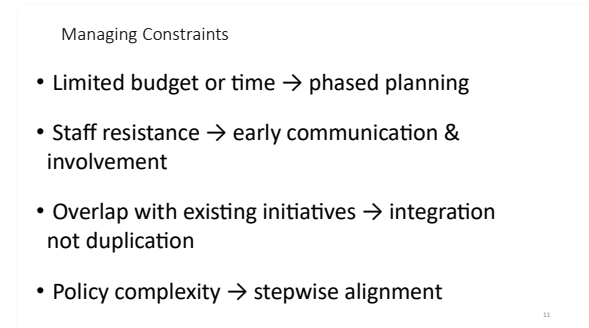
- **Scenario A – Full Roll-out:**  
Immediate, institution-wide alignment (suitable for smaller academies with centralised control).
- **Scenario B – Gradual Roll-out:**  
Begin with selected departments or functions; expand after successful pilots.
- **Scenario C – Targeted Roll-out:**  
Limit implementation to specific training tracks, e.g., entry-level or specialised courses.

**Example Case (fictionalised but realistic):**

A national Coast Guard academy piloted SQFCGF only in entry-level training for six months. They revised their LO, ran a ToT cycle, and tested a new QA review template. After positive results, they expanded to advanced courses the following year.

Pilot-based learning reduces risks and builds internal confidence.

### Slide 11: Managing Constraints

A presentation slide titled "Managing Constraints" with a list of four bullet points. The slide has a light blue background and a thin blue border. The text is in a dark blue font. The slide number "11" is in the bottom right corner.

Managing Constraints

- Limited budget or time → phased planning
- Staff resistance → early communication & involvement
- Overlap with existing initiatives → integration not duplication
- Policy complexity → stepwise alignment

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Every implementation faces constraints. The solution is rarely more money — it's better coordination and communication. A phased approach allows progress while building confidence. Anticipate challenges, talk about them early, and treat them as part of the plan, not as obstacles.

Typical constraints faced by institutions include:

- limited staff availability,
- competing priorities,
- limited understanding of SQFCGF terminology,
- overlapping reform initiatives,
- communication gaps between QA and training.

Rather than imposing more regulation, successful institutions:

- communicate early,
- involve staff in planning,
- sequence implementation realistically,
- use pilots to reduce pressure.

## Slide 12: Monitoring & Review (ESG Standard 1.9 Link)

Monitoring & Review

- Define indicators for progress & impact
- Use QA cycles for feedback & adjustment
- Link to **ESG Standard 1.9** (Ongoing Monitoring & Periodic Review)



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Implementation isn't complete until it's evaluated. Monitoring shows what works and what doesn't. It closes the loop. The framework must evolve with feedback from users. Linking progress indicators to the existing QA cycle ensures sustainability and continuous improvement. SQFCGF alignment is a living process.

Monitoring ensures that implementation remains meaningful and efficient. It should include:

- indicators for progress (e.g., % of aligned courses),
- periodic reviews (linked to QA cycles),
- adjustments based on trainer and QA feedback.

This corresponds directly to **ESG Standard 1.9**, which requires institutions to monitor and periodically review programmes to maintain relevance, coherence, and quality.

SQFCGF supplies the measurable outcomes that make monitoring possible.

## Slide 13: Key Message – Planning Is Not Paperwork

Key Messages

- Implementation requires deliberate planning & phased execution
- ESG 2015 Standard 1.2 reinforces structured programme design
- Resource clarity & staff training drive success
- Planning is not paperwork — it's building the runway for take-off



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Planning is not about producing endless documents — it's about preparing for a smooth and safe take-off; in other words: about enabling action. When resources, people, and QA systems are aligned, implementation becomes both credible and efficient. With clear planning, trained staff, and well-used resources, the SQFCGF becomes a permanent pillar of quality training.

Planning is not an administrative burden but the *runway for take-off*.  
When institutions:

- train staff,
- protect time,
- coordinate across departments,
- update templates,
- and integrate QA mechanisms,

SQFCGF becomes a sustainable part of the institutional quality ecosystem.

### Slide 14: Transition to Topic 3

Transition to Topic 3

**Next:**

*Aligning SQFCGF with Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms*

**“From planning and resourcing to embedding the framework into QA logic.”**



In the next Topic 3, we’ll see how these plans connect directly with internal QA systems. This is where the framework stops being a project and starts becoming part of everyday institutional quality practice.

This slide signals the move from practical resource planning to the next topic: **how the SQFCGF links directly to internal Quality Assurance mechanisms** and European standards.

## Session 2 – Topic 3: Aligning SQFCGF with Internal QA Mechanisms; Leveraging the Framework for Quality & Accountability

### Slide 1: Introduction to Topic 3



Topic 3:

**Aligning SQFCGF with Internal QA Mechanisms**

Leveraging the Framework for Quality & Accountability

Topic 3 builds directly on Topics 1 and 2.

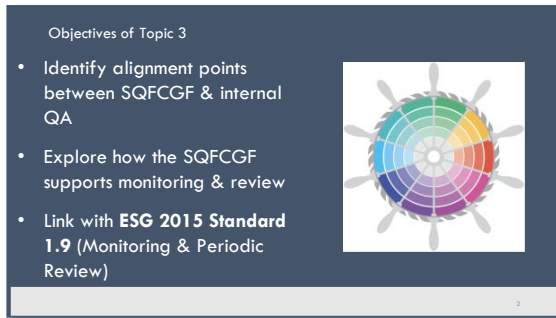
After discussing leadership commitment (Topic 1) and implementation planning (Topic 2), we now shift to the *quality perspective*.

The Sectoral Qualification Framework for Coast Guard Functions (SQFCGF) is not only a curriculum tool — it is also a **quality assurance (QA) enabler**.

It strengthens how institutions design, monitor, review, and document their training programmes. It assists with the creation of structure, evidence, and comparability to the benefit of institutional QA systems.

This topic explores how SQFCGF and institutional QA systems complement each other.

### Slide 2: Objectives of Topic 3



Objectives of Topic 3

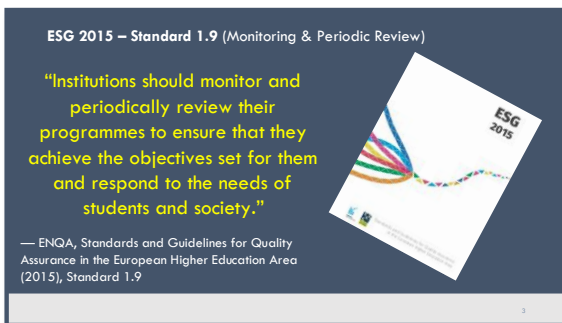
- Identify alignment points between SQFCGF & internal QA
- Explore how the SQFCGF supports monitoring & review
- Link with **ESG 2015 Standard 1.9** (Monitoring & Periodic Review)

This topic has three aims:

1. **Identify alignment points** between the SQFCGF and internal QA processes (policy, design, monitoring, auditing).
2. **Explain how the framework supports systematic monitoring and periodic review** throughout the programme lifecycle.
3. **Connect SQFCGF application to ESG 2015 Standard 1.9**, which forms the European benchmark for programme-level quality assurance.

These objectives position the SQFCGF within the broader European QA architecture.

### Slide 3: • Collected content • Combined everything • Lectured the course



ESG 2015 – Standard 1.9 (Monitoring & Periodic Review)

**"Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society."**

— ENQA, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015), Standard 1.9

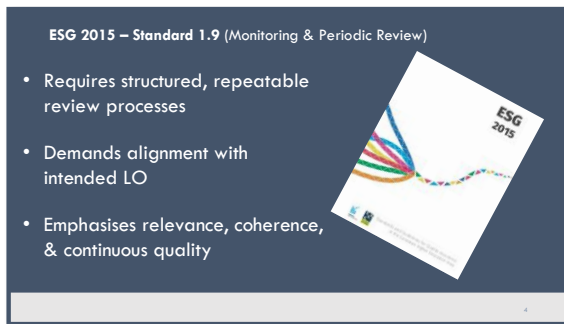
Collected, Combined, Delivered (orientation slide)

This slide summarises how Topic 3 pulls together content from previous elements of the session:

- course design logic (from Session 1),
- institutional commitment and planning (Topic 1 and 2),
- quality checkpoints and evidence generation (Topic 3).

The intention is to show participants that QA alignment is not additional work — it is a natural continuation of earlier steps.

## Slide 4: ESG 2015 Standard 1.9 – Monitoring & Periodic Review



This ESG standard shifts the focus from individual courses to whole-program quality.

### Source: ESG 2015 Standard 1.9

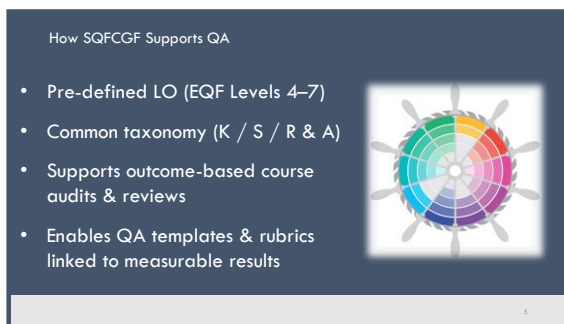
“Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society.”

This standard demands:

- structured, documented review processes,
- alignment between *intended* and *achieved* learning outcomes,
- mechanisms for stakeholders to provide feedback,
- regular adjustments based on evidence.

SQFCGF directly supports these requirements by providing the intended LO structure, descriptors and outcome categories (Knowledge, Skills, Responsibility & Autonomy).

## Slide 5: How SQFCGF Supports QA



SQFCGF gives QA teams a shared yardstick. It defines what “good” looks like for knowledge, skills, and responsibility at every level. That allows course reviews to become evidence-based rather than opinion-based — an essential step in professionalising institutional QA.

The SQFCGF strengthens QA systems in several ways:

### 1. Pre-defined LO structure

It provides a consistent, EQF-based reference for training programmes.

### 2. Shared taxonomy

With its Knowledge, Skills, Responsibility & Autonomy structure, the framework:

- supports curriculum audits,
- enables objective comparisons across courses, and
- harmonises expectations for trainers and QA officers.

### 3. Basis for measurable quality criteria

Course-level reviews can now examine whether training content and assessment methods reflect the required LO level.

### 4. Common language across Europe

This is essential for audits, accreditation, and cross-border cooperation.

### Slide 6: Internal QA Cycle – Where SQFCGF Fits



Most institutions follow a standard QA cycle based on the **PDCA model** (Plan–Do–Check–Act; also known as the DEMING Circle; PDCA Circle).

SQFCGF enhances every phase:

- **Plan:** Course design becomes more structured through SQFCGF-linked LO and descriptors.
- **Do:** Trainers deliver content aligned with shared outcome categories.
- **Check:** QA reviews become more objective because SQFCGF makes expectations explicit.
- **Act:** Improvement plans can reference gaps in LO coverage or misaligned assessments.

SQFCGF strengthens each phase: it gives clarity to design, alignment to delivery, and benchmarks for review. It turns abstract quality goals into measurable progress.

In this way, SQFCGF acts as a *bridge* between curriculum development and institutional quality control.

## Slide 7: Where QA & SQFCGF Meet (Shared Logic – Different Instruments)

Where QA & SQFCGF meet: **Shared Logic - Different Instruments**

| Internal QA Standard / Process | How SQFCGF Contributes | Resulting Benefit |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
|                                |                        |                   |
|                                |                        |                   |
|                                |                        |                   |
|                                |                        |                   |
|                                |                        |                   |

This slide illustrates a central concept:

- **QA defines “how” quality should be managed**  
(policies, monitoring cycles, templates, review procedures).
- **SQFCGF defines “what” quality looks like**  
(learning outcomes, levels, knowledge/skills/RA structure).

Together they create a transparent and traceable system that:

- aligns course design with institutional expectations,
- ensures compliance with external audit requirements,
- and strengthens both accountability and consistency.

A useful metaphor:

**QA is the frame — SQFCGF is the picture.**

## Slide 8: Example QA Checklist Items

Example QA Checklist Items

- Are Course-LOs clearly aligned with SQFCGF Function & Level?
- Is the LO type (K/S/RA) evident & appropriate?
- Are assessment methods aligned with the LO verbs?
- Are course constraints acknowledged & managed?

An illustration showing three people in a meeting. A man in a white shirt and tie is standing and pointing at a document. Two women are seated at a table, looking at the document. There are icons of a magnifying glass and a building in the background.

Practical QA questions that institutions can use include:

- Are the course LO clearly aligned with the SQFCGF Function and Level?
- Is the LO type (Knowledge / Skills / Responsibility & Autonomy) explicit and appropriate?
- Are learning and assessment strategies aligned with the LO verbs?
- Are national constraints or operational specifics reflected in course design?
- Is evidence provided that the course contributes to the intended qualification level?

These questions transform SQFCGF from a conceptual tool into practical audit criteria. A QA officer can trace alignment from function and level to assessment, ensuring internal coherence and external comparability.

### Slide 9: Documentation & Evidence



Documentation & Evidence

- Course descriptor templates with SQFCGF references
- QA reports showing ESG alignment fields
- Improvement plans based on framework analysis
- Training audit logs recording framework use

The slide includes an image of a document titled 'CURRICULUM' with a pencil and gears, symbolizing the process of documentation and evidence.

Quality must be visible in documentation. Using SQFCGF terminology in templates, audit reports, and improvement plans makes the link between curriculum and QA explicit — and auditable.

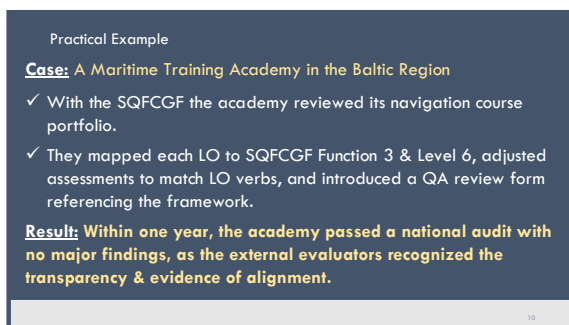
Institutions must make quality *visible* and *auditable*.

SQFCGF supports this through:

- **course descriptor templates** referencing SQFCGF LO,
- **QA review templates** including ESG-alignment fields,
- **mapping grids** linking programme LO to SQFCGF outcomes,
- **audit logs** showing how the framework informed improvements.

This documentation is essential for national or European-level accreditation processes.

### Slide 10: Practical Example – Maritime Academy in the Baltic Region



Practical Example

**Case:** A Maritime Training Academy in the Baltic Region

- ✓ With the SQFCGF the academy reviewed its navigation course portfolio.
- ✓ They mapped each LO to SQFCGF Function 3 & Level 6, adjusted assessments to match LO verbs, and introduced a QA review form referencing the framework.

**Result:** Within one year, the academy passed a national audit with no major findings, as the external evaluators recognized the transparency & evidence of alignment.

This example shows how the SQFCGF becomes a tool for success. By using it in course reviews and QA forms, the academy moved from compliance to excellence— a story the Member States can replicate.

A fictionalised (but typical) example illustrates the benefits:

A Maritime Training Academy mapped its navigation courses to SQFCGF Function 3, Level 6. They adjusted assessments to match LO verbs and introduced a QA review template referencing the SQFCGF.

## Result:

During a subsequent national audit, evaluators commended the academy for:

- transparency,
- coherence of course design,
- clear LO–assessment alignment  
— resulting in an audit with *no major findings*.

This example demonstrates how SQFCGF can elevate training systems from compliance to excellence.

## Slide 11: Key Benefits of Alignment

Key Benefits of Alignment

- Stronger consistency across courses and levels
- Transparent evidence for external audits
- Continuous improvement loop based on data
- Shared language between trainers and QA units

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Alignment creates trust — internally and externally. When QA and training speak the same language, quality stops being a box-ticking exercise and becomes a shared value.

Aligning SQFCGF with QA mechanisms generates four institutional benefits:

- **Consistency**  
Unified LO logic ensures coherence across all courses and levels.
- **Auditability**  
External evaluators can easily trace the logic of the programme.
- **Continuous Improvement**  
SQFCGF supports data-driven adjustments.
- **Shared Language**  
QA staff, trainers, and leadership use the same terminology.

These benefits increase the credibility of training institutions at national and EU level.

## Slide 12: Summary of Topic 3

Summary

- SQFCGF is a **QA enabler**, not just a curriculum tool
- **ESG 2015 Standard 1.9** underpins periodic review using LO
- Alignment **increases** credibility, transparency, and accountability

*"If quality isn't measured against LO, what is it measured against?"*

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The SQFCGF connects learning design with institutional quality control. It creates a traceable path from intent to impact. Ultimately, it answers the question every auditor asks: “How do you know your training achieves its purpose?”

Key insights:

- SQFCGF is a **quality enabler**, not merely a pedagogical tool.
- ESG Standard 1.9 provides the European benchmark for monitoring and review; SQFCGF supplies the outcome structure needed for this.
- Alignment increases transparency, traceability, and institutional accountability.
- A strong alignment between QA and SQFCGF supports strategic development and long-term sustainability.

### Slide 13: Transition to Topic 4



Topic 4 will allow us to move from framework logic to real-world practice on the field level. It is meant to show us how implementation looks like in reality and what lessons we can take home for our own systems.

The next topic widens the perspective by exploring insights from MS and EU agencies already implementing SQFCGF. Participants will see what practices are emerging, what challenges occur most frequently, and what tools help in real-world implementation.

## Session 2 – Topic 4: Insights from the Field, Lessons & Tools; Practices & Perspectives from SQFCGF Implementation

### Slide 1: Introduction to Topic 4



This final topic brings together *practical experiences* from EU Member States, EFTA countries, Schengen-associated countries, and EU agencies such as EFCA, Frontex, and EMSA.

While previous topics addressed strategy, planning, and quality assurance, Topic 4 looks outward: **How is SQFCGF being used in real training systems across Europe?**

The insights are based on:

- feedback from previous awareness sessions (2024–2025),
- agency-level pilots,
- curriculum workshops,
- trainer consultations,
- and QA-driven course reviews.

This topic explores recurring patterns: What helps implementation? What hinders it? What practical tools are emerging?

## Slide 2: Objectives of Topic 4

Objectives of Topic 4

- Possible practical experiences from MS & EU Agencies
- Highlight common enablers & obstacles
- Share concrete tools or formats that support implementation



2

Our goal is to identify patterns: to find out what helps implementation, what hinders it, and what practical tools others use.

This topic has three specific aims:

1. **Show practical experiences and approaches used by MS and EU agencies**  
These examples demonstrate the diversity of systems and commonalities across Europe.
2. **Highlight enablers and obstacles**  
Implementation challenges tend to repeat in different countries — learning from others can prevent mistakes.
3. **Share concrete tools and formats**  
Such as checklists, mapping grids, and QA templates that make alignment more operational and user-friendly.

These insights help participants recognise that their institution is not alone in the process.

### Slide 3: Where the Lessons Come From

Where the Lessons Come From

- Feedback from 2024 Awareness Sessions
- Agency-level pilots (EFCA, Frontex, EMSA)
- Curriculum workshops with Member States
- Internal trainer consultations and QA reviews



3

Lessons were collected from multiple sources:

- **Feedback from 2024 Awareness Sessions**  
Participants reported challenges with LO drafting, policy integration, and understanding framework logic.
- **Agency-level pilot projects (EFCA, Frontex, EMSA)**  
These pilots tested alignment of training catalogues, course descriptors, and assessment standards.
- **Member State curriculum workshops**  
In these workshops, national training authorities mapped their programmes against SQFCGF structures.
- **Internal trainer and QA consultations**  
Trainers and QA officers provided insight into practical feasibility, time requirements, and staff capacities.

Across all these contexts, patterns show remarkable consistency, which shows that the SQFCGF is adaptable but requires structured guidance.

### Slide 4: Common Success Factors

Common Success Factors

- Leadership commitment & visible support
- Alignment with existing QA or HR policies
- Dedicated working group or lead person
- Pilots before full-scale adoption
- Shared language (SQFCGF terminology)

4

Institutions that successfully integrate SQFCGF typically share the following characteristics:

#### 1. Strong Leadership Commitment

Leadership actively communicates the importance of SQFCGF and provides visible support.

#### 2. Integration with Existing QA or HR Policies

The framework is not treated as an additional layer but as a complement to existing processes.

### **3. A Dedicated Working Group or Lead Person**

Successful academies designate an SQF focal point responsible for coordination and consistency.

### **4. Pilot Projects Before Full Roll-out**

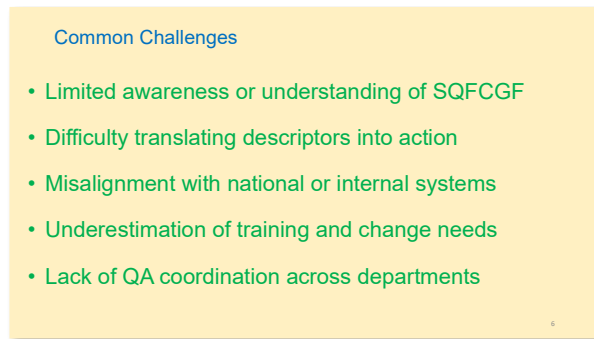
Small-scale pilots help identify critical issues and reduce risks.

### **5. Shared Language and Terminology**

Using SQFCGF categories across departments simplifies communication and collaboration.

These factors consistently appear across institutions regardless of size or national context.

## **Slide 5: Common Challenges**



Implementation challenges tend to recur as well:

### **1. Limited Awareness or Understanding of SQFCGF**

Staff may know the framework exists but struggle to apply it.

### **2. Difficulty Translating Descriptors into Course Design**

LO categories (Knowledge, Skills, Responsibility & Autonomy) are often misunderstood.

### **3. Misalignment Between Internal and National Systems**

Existing templates or approval procedures may not yet include SQFCGF references.

### **4. Underestimation of Change Needs**

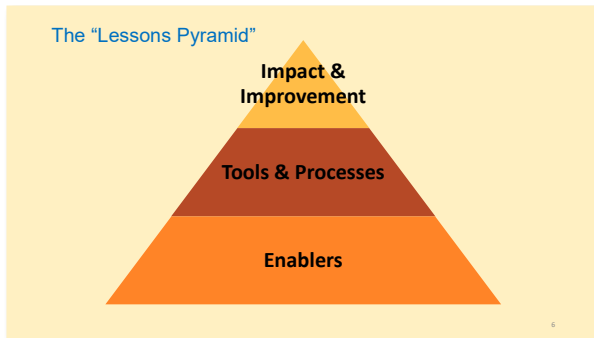
Institutions may underestimate the time and capacity needed for alignment.

### **5. Insufficient Coordination Between QA and Training Teams**

This remains the most common obstacle. When QA and training work separately, alignment stalls.

Understanding these challenges helps institutions anticipate and manage them proactively.

## Slide 6: The “Lessons Pyramid”



Implementation is not random — it follows a pattern.

This conceptual model illustrates three layers necessary for successful implementation:

### Base Layer – Enablers

Leadership support, alignment with QA, clear policies.

### Middle Layer – Tools & Processes

Templates, mapping grids, curriculum review cycles, ToT events.

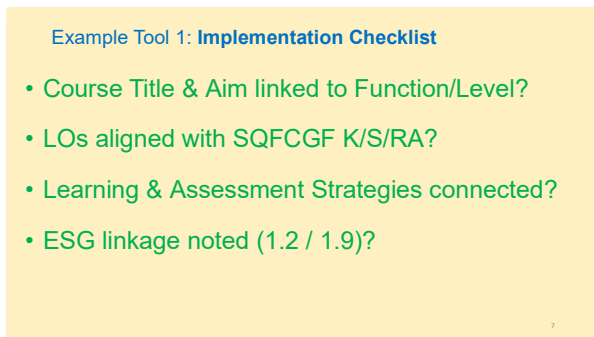
### Top Layer – Visible Impact

Improved transparency, comparable LO across courses, professionalised QA.

Without the foundational layers, the top outcomes cannot materialise.

The pyramid emphasises that SQFCGF implementation is cumulative and systemic.

## Slide 7: Example Tool 1 – Implementation Checklist



This checklist helps trainers and QA officers quickly test alignment. It’s not about control — it’s about clarity.

A simple checklist can help trainers, curriculum developers, and QA staff quickly assess whether a course is aligned with SQFCGF.

Common items include:

- Is the **course aim** linked to an SQFCGF Function and Level?
- Are the **Learning Outcomes** aligned with SQFCGF descriptors (Knowledge / Skills / Responsibility & Autonomy)?

- Is the **assessment strategy** aligned with LO verbs?
- Are relevant **ESG references** noted (e.g., Standard 1.2 for programme design, 1.9 for monitoring)?
- Is the course documented using templates that include SQFCGF fields?

This tool reduces ambiguity and helps identify issues early.

### Slide 8: Example Tool 2 – Mapping Grid (Cross-Referencing)

Example Tool 2: **Mapping Grid (Cross Referencing)**

Columns: SQFCGF LOs;  
Rows: Course LOs  
Identify coverage gaps & verb levels

|            | Your Course LOs |      |      |
|------------|-----------------|------|------|
| SQFCGF LOs | LO 1            | LO 2 | LO 4 |
| LO 1       |                 | ✓    |      |
| LO 2       | ✓               |      | ✓    |
| LO 3       |                 | ✓    |      |
| LO 4       |                 |      |      |

The mapping grid or cross referencing visualises alignment and helps to keep the overview.

The mapping grid is one of the most effective tools for curriculum development:

- Columns represent **SQFCGF Learning Outcomes** at the chosen level.
- Rows represent **course-specific LO**.

By cross-referencing each element, trainers can:

- identify coverage gaps,
- detect mismatches in verb levels,
- clarify whether assessments address the correct LO,
- visualise the entire logic of a course or programme.

The mapping grid is particularly useful during audits or revision workshops.

### Slide 9: Good Practice – National Example (Fictionalised)

Good Practice – National Example (Fictional)

**Coast Guard Academy X**

- Used SQFCGF to re-structure 3 core modules
- Piloted with 12 instructors over 6 months
- Embedded SQFCGF in internal QA handbook
- Reported improvements in assessment quality and transparency

A Coast Guard Academy (fictionalised but based on real cases) applied SQFCGF as follows:

- **Revised three core modules** using SQFCGF descriptors.
- **Trained twelve instructors** in LO drafting and assessment alignment.

- **Integrated SQFCGF references** into their internal QA handbook.
- **Evaluated learner assessments** against framework LO categories.

#### Outcome:

Assessment quality improved, documentation became more consistent, and the academy strengthened its position during national audits.

### Slide 10: Good Practice – Agency Patterns

Good Practice – Agency Patterns

- Frontex: Focused on course descriptor standardization
- EFCA: Integrated SQFCGF with online training catalogues



Even if not all agencies use identical approaches, their direction is converging: digitalisation, QA integration, and competence-based qualification systems.

Two recurring patterns appear within EU agencies:

#### Frontex

Focus on **course descriptor standardisation**, enabling large-scale consistency across diverse training providers.

#### EFCA

Integration of SQFCGF into **online training catalogues**, linking framework descriptors to digital course offers and inspector training pathways.

These agency examples show that SQFCGF is adaptable to different organisational structures and mandates.

### Slide 11: Summarising Key Messages

Summarizing Key Messages

- Implementation practices differ, but success factors repeat
- Tools like templates & mapping grids make alignment tangible
- Learning from others accelerates progress & reduces error
- Continuous dialogue keeps the SQFCGF alive

Every organisation walks its own path, but the footprints are similar. The message is simple: use the SQFCGF as a tool; learn from each other and keep sharing progress. This is how European cooperation truly adds value.

Key insights from field experiences include:

- Implementation approaches differ, but **success factors repeat** across countries.
- Tools such as **templates, checklists and mapping grids** make the framework practical and concrete.
- Learning from other institutions **accelerates progress and reduces avoidable mistakes**.
- Ongoing dialogue across Member States keeps the framework alive and evolving.

Implementation is a shared European endeavour — not an isolated task.

## Slide 12: Shared Takeaways from Agencies & Member States

Shared Takeaways from Agencies & Member States

- **Quality & Consistency** – SQFCGF is increasingly embedded in QA systems, linking learning design, delivery, & review.
- **Digitalisation & Accessibility** – Online learning platforms & repositories (EFCA, Frontex, EMSA) ensure shared tools & transparency.
- **Competence Orientation** – All agencies focus on measurable, outcome-based competence development aligned with EQF levels.
- **Collaboration & Peer Learning** – MS increasingly exchange course designs & QA templates under a shared European umbrella.
- **Sustainability of Implementation** – SQFCGF adoption is no longer a project phase, but part of continuous institutional development.

As we look across the agencies and MS, the direction is clear — the framework is not just spreading, it's maturing. Institutions are linking their training with QA systems, making LO the central quality reference. At the same time, digitalisation makes collaboration easier — tools, platforms, and templates are shared rather than reinvented. The focus everywhere is on competence, comparability, and continuous improvement. In short, we're not just aligning frameworks — we're aligning mindsets.

Across all agencies and national authorities, five common themes emerge:

### 1. Quality & Consistency

SQFCGF is increasingly embedded in QA cycles, linking design, delivery, and review.

### 2. Digitalisation & Accessibility

Online learning platforms enable shared tools and transparent programme structures.

### 3. Competence Orientation

Training systems move toward measurable competence development aligned with EQF levels.

### 4. Collaboration & Peer Learning

Countries increasingly exchange templates, course designs, and QA practices.

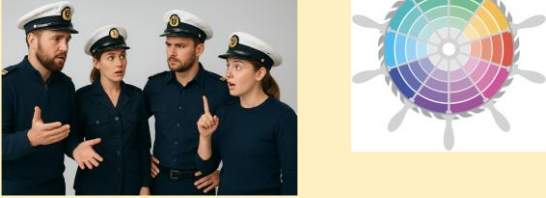
### 5. Sustainability

SQFCGF implementation is no longer a “project” — it becomes part of institutional development and organisational identity.

### Slide 13: Reflection & Closing

Transition to **Open Floor for Q&A**

Immediately Next:



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The final reflection prompts participants to consider:

**“Which one idea from today’s session could you implement immediately in your organisation?”**

This helps translate insights into individual and institutional next steps.

It also reinforces that implementation is a journey supported by shared European experience.

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