

DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR EAACI QUALITY CENTRES

These instructions provide information about the process of EAACI Centre of Excellence (ECE) and other certification programmes.

Article 1. Aim

EAACI aims to improve the quality of health care, research and education in the area of allergy and clinical immunology. Targeting this aim, as one of its activities, EAACI aims to organise “EAACI Quality Centers”. These centres are categorised under the terms of “Centre of Excellence” (ECE), EAACI Advanced Research Centre; and EAACI Certified Clinic (plus Research) in certain fields of allergy and immunology. The primary aim is to increase the quality standards of patient care, research and education and collaborations of centres in the field of allergy and immunology in Europe.

Article 2. Terms and Definitions

The centres working on allergy and immunology fields may have distinguished and outstanding studies in certain areas and fields. So, to reflect this multifunctional profile of the centres, EAACI established different types of centres.

- **Centre:** The centre defines the departments/divisions/clinics of allergy and immunology in a hospital (public, university, state; private) or research institution or multidisciplinary units which includes allergy immunology specialists and other relevant specialists (like pulmonologists, ENT physicians, dermatologists).
- **EAACI Quality Centre** defines all the centres of EAACI working in quality standards.
- **EAACI Centre of Excellence (ECE)** defines only the centres with high output in research, patient care and education in the field of allergy and immunology.
- **EAACI Advanced Research Centre** defines the centres which fulfill the standards for research in the field of allergy and immunology. These centres are organised for improving research in Europe and research collaborations between centres.
- **EAACI Certified Clinical Centre** defines the centres that fulfill the essential standards for delivering high-quality patient care in a specific area of allergy and immunology, for example “EAACI Certified Clinical Centre on Asthma”. These centres are organised for providing standardised patient care on that certain topic. The initial topics for ECCC are Asthma, Severe Asthma, Drug Allergy, Food Allergy, Immunotherapy and Rhinology. Other topics will be covered in the years ahead.
- **EAACI Certified Clinical and Research Centre** defines the centres meeting both clinical and research requirements on a certain area of allergy and immunology, for example “*EAACI Certified Clinic and Research Centre on Asthma*”. These centres provide outstanding patient care as well as conducting impactful research and education in a specific area.

Article 3. Standards

EAACI CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (ECE)

A) EAACI Involvement:

At least two of the physicians/staff should be current EAACI members **AND fulfilling at least 2 of the following criteria:**

- Participation in EAACI guidelines and position papers in the last five years.

- Active involvement in EAACI ExCom, Committees, Interest Groups (IGs), Working Groups (WGs), or Sections.
- Organisation of EAACI-endorsed scientific events, workshops, or training programs.
- Hosting of EAACI mentorship programs for early-career researchers and fellows.
- Recognition through EAACI or other scientific awards.
- Existence of Junior Members (JMs).

B) Multi-disciplinary Centre

1. The centre should be a multi-disciplinary facility, with faculty members from allergy & immunology and at least two other relevant specialties or PhD programs. These could include, but are not limited to, immunology, pulmonology, dermatology, ENT, pediatrics, or clinical nutrition, ensuring a collaborative environment that facilitates comprehensive patient care, research, and education across disciplines.
2. The centre should employ staff with MsD or PhD degrees in relevant fields.

C) High Research Performance

1. At least one member of the unit should have a H-index ≥ 30 (Web of Science)
2. Having at least 10 research articles published in peer reviewed journals in the last 5 years, at least 4 of them being translational studies. **AND fulfilling at least 3 of the following criteria:**
 - Having a budget for research exceeding 200.000 € (grants from university, national institutes, European foundations etc) in the last 5 years.
 - Currently having at least 2 active research projects funded by national or international grants, excluding regional or private foundations.
 - Participation in clinical trials or registries (at least 3 in the last 5 years).
 - Having a patent in the last 10 years.
 - Presenting at least 15 abstracts in allergy and immunology congresses in the last 5 years: 10 of them in national congresses and 5 in EAACI or other international congresses.
 - Offering or being affiliated with MsD or PhD programs in allergy and immunology or associated fields.

D) High Clinical Performance*:

1. The centre should be recognised as a reference centre for at least one specific area (e.g., asthma, severe asthma, drug allergy, food allergy, eosinophilic esophagitis, rhinology, allergen immunotherapy, etc.), providing specialised care and research in that field.
2. The centre should have dedicated outpatient and in-patient facilities for the diagnosis, treatment, and long-term management of allergic and immunologic diseases.
3. The centre should be equipped with state-of-the-art diagnostic and therapeutic facilities.

***(please see the standards for ECE for details)**

EAACI ADVANCED RESEARCH CENTRE (E-ARC)

A) EAACI involvement:

At least two of the physicians/staff should be current EAACI members **AND fulfilling at least 2 of the following criteria:**

- Participation in EAACI guidelines and position papers within the last five years.
- Active involvement in EAACI ExCom, Committees, Interest Groups (IGs), Working Groups (WGs), or Sections.
- Organisation of EAACI-endorsed scientific events, workshops, or training programmes.
- Hosting of EAACI mentorship programmes for early-career researchers and fellows.
- Recognition through EAACI or other scientific awards.
- Existence of Junior Members (JMs).

B) High Research Performance

1. At least one member of the unit should have a H-index ≥ 30 (Web of Science)
2. Having at least 10 research articles published in peer reviewed journals in the last 5 years.
3. Having a budget for research exceeding 200.000 € (grants from university, national institutes, european foundations etc) in the last 5 years.

AND fulfilling at least 2 of the following criteria:

- Currently having at least 2 active research projects funded by national or international grants, excluding regional or private foundations.
- Having a patent in the last 10 years.
- Presenting at least 10 abstracts in allergy and immunology congresses in the last 5 years: 5 of them in national congresses and 5 in EAACI or other international congresses
- Offering or being affiliated with MsD or PhD programs in allergy and immunology or associated fields.
- Having a multi-disciplinary facility, with faculty members from allergy & immunology and at least two other relevant areas which could include, but are not limited to, biologists, biochemists, bioinformaticians, biotechnology, pharmacy, immunology, pulmonology, dermatology, ENT, pediatrics, or clinical nutrition, ensuring a collaborative environment that facilitates comprehensive research, and education across disciplines or PhD programmes.

EAACI CERTIFIED CLINICAL CENTRE (E-CCC)

1. The application should be based on existing/announced certification programmes of EAACI (In 2025, the programmes are asthma, severe asthma, drug allergy, food allergy, immunotherapy and rhinology).
2. At least two members of the centre should hold EAACI memberships, and demonstrate additional involvement (participation to guidelines, position papers, participation in ExCom, Committees, IGs, WGs, sections, organisations of EAACI events, hosting mentorship programmes, awards, existence of Junior Members).
3. The centre should operate a working outpatient clinic on that topic approved by their hospital administration.
4. The centre should have dedicated infrastructure and settings necessary for patient diagnosis and treatment.
5. The centre should have dedicated experts as well as working staff in the clinic.
6. The centre should follow standardised patient care practices based on national or international guidelines.
7. Diagnostic tests and treatments should be performed using standardised procedures.

8. A patient-centred approach should be prioritised.
9. The centre should have regular educational activities on the relevant topic.
10. The centre must archive patients' data (electronically or physically).
11. The centre should follow the outcomes of the outpatient clinic.
12. The centre should evaluate and revise the programme annually.

**PLEASE SEE INDIVIDUAL STANDARDS FOR FURTHER DETAILS.*

EAACI CERTIFIED CLINICAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE (E-CCRC)

The centre should fulfill all the criteria necessary for E-CCC on that topic (see above).

In addition to the basic standards for being a EAACI Certified Clinic Centre, the centres with advanced research and educational activity in a certain area are candidates for the EAACI Clinic and Research Center.

**PLEASE SEE INDIVIDUAL STANDARDS FOR FURTHER DETAILS.*

ECE ACCREDITATION SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR FELLOW TRAINING

This programme aims to support the accreditation process of the centres. This activity goes in parallel with the UEMS accreditation.

Article 4. Benefits

Standardising and qualifying centres will enhance healthcare, allergy research, and training across the board. These centres will support the implementation of guidelines, practice parameters, and task forces, leading to improved healthcare quality and economic benefits for countries. Standardised care and recording will enable multi-centre studies and registries, providing better epidemiological and disease data in allergy and immunology. Additionally, standardised care and follow-up will enhance training for fellows, medical students, and other stakeholders. Ultimately, patients will receive more consistent, effective care, leading to better health outcomes and satisfaction.

Benefits for the Centres

EAACI CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE (ECE) and Advanced Research Center (E-ARC):

1. Priority in the mentorship programme
2. Priority in the EAACI fellowship programmes
3. Priority in Task Force applications
4. 2 complimentary registrations to the EAACI Congress or Focused Meeting
5. Travel Grants

Certified Clinical Centres & Certified Clinical and Research Centres

1. Priority in the involvement to multi-centred studies
2. 1 complimentary registrations to the EAACI Congress or Focused Meeting
3. Priority in the mentorship programme

Article 5. Administration of EAACI Quality Centres

1. The EAACI President and Secretary General oversee these programmes which are managed by the Quality Committee (QC).
2. The co-chairs of the QC in collaboration with QC members process the management on the behalf of EAACI President and Secretary General.
3. QC will also collaborate with EAACI BoO, Chairs of Sections, Interest groups and representatives of Sections, Interest Groups and Working Groups, Chairs of Committees, National Allergy and Immunology Society representatives, and Patients' Organisation representatives.
4. EAACI strongly relies on collaborations with National Allergy and Immunology Societies for the establishment of ECE and Certification programmes. The chair and representatives of the NAIS will collaborate closely with the Quality Committee.

Article 6. Job Descriptions

1. **Quality Committee:** Plans, organises, commits and evaluates the process and reports to the EAACI ExCom.
2. **Executive Manager:** Organises all the relevant correspondences between centres and EAACI, manages a web page, tracks application procedures and finalisation, in collaboration with relevant members of QC.
3. **Online Reviewer:** Reviews the application, checks the eligibility of the centre according to the requirements, prepares a report on each application.
4. **On site Auditor:** Visits the centre, reviews the centre's report on site and meets with staff, visits the outpatient clinic, laboratories and prepares an audit report.

Article 7. Application

1. With the exception of 2025, each year the applications will open in **September**.
2. All the relevant information on Quality Centres (ECE and certifications), including the application procedure; regulations, requirements, application form and contact information are available on the EAACI web page.
3. Once the centre is confident they fulfill the criteria, the application form available on the web page should be downloaded and filled out.
4. The candidate centre then prepares a ZIP file with all the required documents based on the checklist, which are available on the EAACI webpage. The form must be completed in English but the supporting documents may be submitted in native language. The documents should be scanned and electronically recorded and clearly labeled for easy reference.

Article 8. Standards

1. **Essential (Basic) Standards:** All programmes ask for the existence of specific standards. The centers should fulfill all essential standards (Please see specific standards in related documents).
2. **Areas of Improvement:** Standards include both basic standards but also those related to areas of improvement. These standards are not necessarily required in the first application,

but if the centres apply for recertification after 5 years, they are required to fulfill both basic requirements and areas for improvement.

Article 9. Evaluation Process

1. **Online review of the application:** After receiving the applications, the Quality Committee will assign at least two reviewers to review whether the submission meets the necessary requirements. Due to multi-lingual characteristics of EAACI member societies, one of the reviewers will be a representative from the applicant's national society to assist in the review of documents in native language.
2. **On site Audit:** If all the requirements are met by the centre, then an on-site audit will be conducted to verify compliance and evaluate the operations of the centre. At least one auditor will visit the centre. Before the visit, the auditor will send an audit programme including interviews with chair, faculty, fellows, nurses, visit to the outpatient clinic related to the application and other relevant places, e.g. laboratories. During this visit, the auditor will follow this programme. Following the on-site visit, the auditor(s) will prepare a report on the candidate centre.
3. **Decision on Application:** Following this report, the Quality Committee will meet and make a decision about this application and proposes their decision to the EAACI Excom.

Article 10. Notification

1. The EAACI President will notify the centre of the approval or rejection by email. In case of approval, an accreditation certificate will be issued to the centre.
2. Every year **in June**, the EAACI president will announce the certified centres at the Congress.

Article 11. Monitoring the Quality Centres

1. In terms of quality management, the centres are requested to prepare a report on their activities after 2 years. The report form can be found on the web page.
2. The centres are also asked to provide feedback to EAACI.
3. The reports will be sent to the Quality Committee in June every two years.
4. At the beginning of September, all reports and feedback will be discussed in the Quality Committee and relevant partners. The Quality Committee prepares an annual report about the process.
5. The reports prepared by QC are presented and discussed in the EAACI ExCom meeting.
6. Following feedback and suggestions, this process may be revised.

Article 12. Re-Certification

1. The certified centres are subject to re-certification at the end of 5 years.
2. The application and evaluation process are the same with initial admissions as indicated in the web page.
3. The re-applications will be evaluated on the updated requirements.
4. The centres are required to fulfill all the requirements which are defined as "Area for improvement" in their previous applications.