



AVEPRO

FOLLOW UP REPORT
ON ENQA 2020 RECOMMENDATIONS

JUNE 2022



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Introduction

The panel appointed by ENQA visited AVEPRO in December 2019. The report was published in June 2020. After two years the world is changed. The Pandemic and the war in Europe represent the “black swan” that shows how limited are our lives, our choices, our activities. These shocks give us the opportunity to analyze two particular elements and to put them in relationship with the landscape of Higher Education and Quality assurance. First: we, Europeans, have given too many things for granted. Second: if quality is based mainly on processes and procedures forgetting the central role of values, it becomes simply a bureaucratic exercise.

Nevertheless, this report will try to offer answers to the precious recommendations made by the panel, trying to connect the observations made after the site visit of the Agency with the renewed context in which we are living.

Another element, not connected with these tragedies, but with a significant impact on AVEPRO is the process of reform of the Roman Curia. The Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate evangelium* had been published on March 19th and it has come into force on June 5th, 2022. Some changes of the new architecture of the administrative organization that serves the Pope in his mission and the Church, will determine consequences not only for the Roman Curia but also for the Higher Education System of the Holy See. In this framework, the new “Dicastery for Culture and Education”, which will be in charge for the competencies attributed up to June the 4th to the Congregation for Catholic Education, will represent the most relevant stakeholder inside the Roman Curia for the Agency.

In *Praedicate evangelium* 4 articles of the norms refer to the section “Education” of this new Dicastery. It is worth mentioning that in these four articles the verb “to promote” appears five times. This could be considered as a driving element of substantial reform of the Curia and it could be possible to read it in parallel with the mission, the goals and the activities of AVEPRO, which are aimed both at evaluating and promoting Quality among and within the Ecclesiastical Higher Education Institutions in the whole world.



Definition of the renewed Context in which the Agency operates

The ENQA visit in 2020 marks the second major phase in the evolution of the AVEPRO. The Agency can now reaffirm and reinterpret its Mission in the light of the changing context, in which now it finds itself. Many of the factors influencing the environment in which the Agency operates belong to exogenous elements, while other ones could be considered as a mix of “internal and external” factors, whereas a third part of them could be considered as a direct consequence of AVEPRO’s capacity to act.

It is possible to insert in the first category of the above mentioned factors the effects and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of the European Higher Education Area with regard to the Ecclesiastical Academic community. In a time of few weeks, like many other Academic Institutions, the Agency had to adopt new approaches and methodologies. Virtual instead of face to face visits foster different dynamics, thus reducing interactions and developing new forms of relationships.

A second effect derived by the pandemic affected the services for students, including pedagogies. In this framework the crisis provided both an opportunity and possibility to reflect and evaluate quality implications related to virtual and distance learning.

In concrete terms, the Agency, supported by its Scientific Council, has intensified the processes aimed at fostering its activity of promotion of quality in the light of this renewed context with its various stakeholders (e.g. setting up of Working Groups in the frame of the Scientific Council, or updating the Guidelines). As mentioned above, there is an interaction of various factors (the pandemic, the war in Europe, the reform of the Roman Curia, the goals established in the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis gaudium*), which call for an action aimed at redefining the methodologies and the guidelines used by Academic Institutions in their processes of evaluation.

The challenges indicated in the Foreword of *Veritatis Gaudium* (and it is worth remembering that this Apostolic Constitution has the value of law in the legal framework of the Holy See), affect the concept of quality that the Agency is supposed to promote and evaluate. In particular, to sustain dialogue and institutional networking and to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, could be considered as examples of the second category of factors (both endogenous and exogenous) that will influence AVEPRO’s activity.

To the third category of factors belong mainly the elements included in the Agency’s strategic planning and the implementation of the recommendations set out in the report drawn up by the ENQA panel in 2020.

The synthesis of these different factors makes visible the vitality of the Agency and the growing need for forms of collaboration with all the stakeholders acting in AVEPRO’s system of relations (e.g. the improvement of the relationship with Local Bishops’ Conferences and positioning of AVEPRO in the renewed context by the reform of the Roman Curia). The impacts of the pandemic on the global higher education system and societies, the programmatic thrust coming from *Veritatis gaudium*, and the capacity to respond to the requests of the academic community (and the needs of students in particular), have contributed to strengthen forms of flexibility in the field of quality assurance.

Moreover, AVEPRO, by definition, operates in an international context being responsible for the evaluation of Faculties and Universities located outside ENQA’s borders, allocated in all continents. Therefore, the recommendations received from ENQA have a twofold value: they strengthen the basis on which AVEPRO’s QA system has been founded, and they indicate some



lines of development, especially taking into account that one of the central themes of the Agency’s activity in the coming years will be the launch of evaluation pathways in Higher Education Institutions located outside Europe. This could be an interesting space for experimentation both of the role of ESG in extra-European contexts, but also for facilitating an increasing openness of ENQA towards institutions active in other parts of the world.

The ENQA Review Report: Recommendations, Compliance and Areas of development

Taken these elements as part of the landscape in which the Agency is requested to operate, and keeping in mind that – due to the above mentioned exogenous factors – the characteristics of “traditional” QA have changed, the report of the ENQA-appointed external evaluation commission that visited AVEPRO in 2019 continues to have a deep importance and meaning for the Agency. In detail, the panel came to the following conclusions regarding AVEPRO’s compliance with the ESG:

STANDARD	COMPLIANCE
- ESG Part 2: Standard for External quality assurance	
• ESG 2.1: Consideration of Internal Quality Assurance	Fully compliant
• ESG 2.2: Design methodologies fit for purpose	Fully compliant
• ESG 2.3: Implementation processes	Substantially compliant
• ESG 2.4: Peer-review experts	Substantially compliant
• ESG 2.5: Criteria for outcomes	Substantially compliant
• ESG 2.6: Reporting	Partially compliant
• ESG 2.7: Complaints and appeals	Substantially compliant
- ESG Part 3: Standards for Quality Assurance Agencies	
• ESG 3.1: Activities, policy and processes for Quality Assurance	Fully compliant
• ESG 3.2: Official Status:	Fully compliant
- ESG 3.3: Independence	Fully compliant
- ESG 3.4: Thematic Analysis	Fully compliant
- ESG 3.5: Resources	Partially compliant
- ESG 3.6: Internal Quality assurance and professional conduct	Substantially compliant
- ESG 3.7: Cyclical External review of agencies	Fully compliant

The report also provides Commendations (ESG 2.1, 2.4, 3.1, 3.6) and in the “Conclusions” suggests areas for further developments. In particular:



ESG 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose

The panel suggests that AVEPRO soon revises its current methodology (including selection and composition of review panels as well as criteria and guidelines) in order to support the transformative agenda of *Veritatis Gaudium* even better.

ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis

The panel encourages AVEPRO to share in a wider and more easily accessible manner the lessons that can be drawn from operating on a truly international level also to the international QA community.

ESG 3.5 Resources

The panel advises AVEPRO to assess its current governance and organizational structure (e.g. two boards with potentially overlapping duties) in order to make even better use of the expert knowledge the agency can draw upon.

The letter sent by the Board of ENQA in June 2020, informing AVEPRO about the reconfirmation of the *full membership*, underlines some issues raised by the panel and it identifies as developmental path the following areas:

ESG 2.3 Implementing processes

AVEPRO should implement a consistent follow-up procedure.

ESG 2.4 Peer-review experts

AVEPRO should define its expert nomination criteria and improve the nomination process of the external evaluation procedures. AVEPRO should increase and ensure a consistent and comprehensive programme of training for experts.

ESG 2.5 Criteria for outcomes

AVEPRO should implement a technical committee assuring consistency and evidence-based recommendations in the reports.

ESG 2.6 Reporting

AVEPRO should take steps to further improve comprehensibility of its reports that clearly follow the template it provides. AVEPRO should take steps to assure a stronger visibility of the reflection of ESG part one in its evaluation reports.

ESG 2.7 Complaints and appeals

AVEPRO should formalise their complaints procedures.

ESG 3.5 Resources

AVEPRO should define a work plan and connect required resources to it in order to balance and plan activities and required resources. This will help to specify the realistic need of additionally required resources. AVEPRO should better use the potential of the Scientific Council, define a meeting interval and adhere to it.

ESG 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct

AVEPRO should take a more systematic and formalised approach in its IQA efforts.

ESG	EVALUATION REPORT	BOARD'S LETTER
- ESG 2.2: Design methodologies fit for purpose	Area of Development <i>To revise the methodology</i>	
- ESG 2.3: Implementation processes	Implement follow-up procedure	
- ESG 2.4: Peer-review experts	To improve the nomination of experts' procedures Training programme for experts	
- ESG 2.5: Criteria for outcomes	To implement a Technical Committee assuring consistency in both SER and EERs	
- ESG 2.6: Reporting	To improve the comprehensibility of the reports. To assure stronger visibility of the reflection of ESG Part One in its evaluation reports	
- ESG 2.7: Complaints and appeals	To formalize the complaints procedure	
- ESG 3.4: Thematic Analysis	Area of Development <i>To share the lessons that can be drawn from operating on a truly international level</i>	
- ESG 3.5: Resources	Area of Development <i>To assess current governance (eg two Boards with potentially overlapping duties)</i>	To define a work plan To use better the potential of the Scientific council
- ESG 3.6: Internal Quality assurance and professional conduct	To take a more systematic and formalized approach in its IQA efforts	

Detailed analysis of single Recommendations: standards evaluated as “Partially compliant”

RECOMMENDATION 1: Standard 3.5 - Resources

AVEPRO recognises the importance of such recommendation and has concentrated its activities mainly in three directions:

- a) definition of a yearly work plan based on the strategic plan of the Agency;
- b) reinforcement of its networking policy;
- c) expansion of the capacity of the Scientific Council and therefore AVEPRO by setting up new working groups with specific tasks and expected outputs.

The Agency has continued its practice of using a rolling 5 years strategic planning process which it commenced in its first phase of development, and proved successful. It is based on a number of themes which are continuous throughout the planning period, and contain a series of actions which give effect to the particular priority defined. These actions are spread and sequenced over the planning period, taking the essential building blocks first, and following them in subsequent years by activities which build on these foundations (see AVEPRO Strategic Plan 2021-2025).

This has incorporated, by definition, Annual Operating Plans, which indicate precisely what the actions will be undertaken in a given year, and subsequently these have been allocated to appropriate persons. This meets the ENQA recommendation of producing clear Work Plans, which are realistic, time bounded and lend themselves to monitoring and accountability. During the COVID-19 period, some activities inevitably were affected, but they have been rolled on from the 2021 Operating Plan for attention in the following 2022 Operating Plan.

Many of the actions fall directly on the members of the bureau, but it is recognised that the secretariat is too small for the demands placed on it. This has been addressed in a number of ways:

- discussions are underway with the competent authorities in the Holy See re additional staff and the process will last for a reasonable long time since the whole Roman Curia is facing a deep reform (see Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate evangelium* in force from June 5th, 2022);
- the Scientific Council members have assumed responsibility within the agreed framework of advancing the work of the Agency by picking up numerous actions contained in the Operating Plan. Three standing Working Groups, comprising international authorities in their field, have been set up and their respective priorities for 2022 are as follows:
 - WG 1 is undertaking the revision of existing Guidelines and the drafting of position statements for HEI addressing QA in Research and Research Degrees, Third Mission, QA Promotion and Culture;
 - WG 2 is addressing the selection and composition and training of Review Panels, and related training questions including the structure and quality of both the SERs and the EERs, and the scrutiny of these draft reports before they are more widely considered;
 - WG 3 is distilling aspects of the evolving Magisterium of the Church and its implications in the definition of Quality for Ecclesiastical Academic Institutions;
 - A fourth WG will be set up (WG 4) to produce regulations for Complaints, Appeals and related questions in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Agency.

As indicated in the Strategic plan, further priorities for each WG are identified for the remaining years of the planning period.

This activity has not only made best use of the expertise of the Scientific Council, but also significantly expanded AVEPRO's capacity to do its business and develop its profile of assistance to HEI in aspects of QA such as:

- discussions are underway with a foundation active in the field of HE to fund a development project for a comprehensive training programme, involving the appointment of a leader for this function;
- cooperation with IFCU (International Federation of Catholic Universities) for the joint provision of training in QA.



Nonetheless, the case for additional staff is overwhelming, given the global role expected of the Agency and other policy imperatives.

As is apparent from the above, the role of the Scientific Council has been revolutionised along the lines envisaged in the ENQA Report 2020.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Standard 2.6 - Reporting

AVEPRO is aware that – due to the differences in terms of location, dimension and activities delivered – it is essential to assume a high level of flexibility in the process of evaluation. This has an impact on the output of the process that affects in particular the external evaluation reports. In order to face this recommendation, the Agency has activated two actions:

- a) to set up of a Working Group (WG 2) of the Scientific Council, focussing its activities on “Reports and Training of experts”;
- b) to devote part of the resources of a specific project founded by a donor to the training of experts and the definition of tools aimed at improve the comprehensibility (and therefore the quality) of the reports.

In particular, the activity of the WG 2 will be focussed firstly on the External Evaluation reports which are the most visible activity of the Agency, and the quality of the SERs (which condition the quality of the EERs). The drafting of the EERs is a task of the Evaluation Commission. The WG 2 will offer documents, suggestions and observations in relation to the reports with a two faceted approach. On the one hand, it will point out elements related to single reports in order to improve their quality. This process, on the other hand, will contribute in highlighting a possible lack of competences of AVEPRO’s experts that could require specific training programs.

The WG 2 started its activities in 2021 and has analyzed a number of reports (both SERs of the Academic Institutions and External evaluation reports) covering different languages (another specific feature of AVEPRO). In 2022 the WG 2 met several times in remote mode and the main findings have been:

- it is necessary to improve the training of the experts but, at the same time,
- it seems to be urgent a training action for the Academic Institutions;
- the quality of the External evaluation reports is strongly conditioned by the quality of the SERs.

WG 2 is currently active in designing a detailed AVEPRO Training Strategy and Framework, which will include statement of the competencies to be developed in team members, in terms of attitudes, knowledge, skills and behaviour necessary to fulfil their role and produce penetrating, systematic, helpful and analytical EERs that can bring added-value to the intended user-groups.

This statement will be converted into a proposed multiyear schedule of training activities. Attention is also being given to the training of Senior staff within Institutions, to enhance their understanding of the improved processes, to bring up-to-date with international good practices in the various domains of Institutional life, and to strengthen the quality culture within Institutions, and to improve the quality of SERs.

The second element stressed in the recommendation made by the panel refers to the necessity that “AVEPRO should take steps to assure a stronger visibility of the reflection of ESG part one in its evaluation reports”.

The Agency underlines that – given the fact that many Academic Ecclesiastical Institutions are located outside Europe – it is necessary to balance the “relevance” of the ESG with the risks of being felt as a mean of cultural neo-colonialism. If we consider the schemes and the contents that AVEPRO suggests in its guidelines, they are fully coherent with the standard indicated in the first part of the ESG. In addition, AVEPRO analyses part of the academic activity not covered by the ESG (namely research and governance, third mission, sustainability and research degrees).

Nevertheless, the Agency, in order to follow the recommendation, is going to revise and produce an updated version of its Guidelines. The mandate that the Holy See has given to the Agency is to keep the whole HE system under a single and coherent methodological framework. Working Group 1 (WG 1) of the Scientific Council will address its efforts in delivering this new version of the Guidelines in the coming year. It can be anticipated that there probably will be a first element which will be applied to all Institutions and a second element that will recognise the differences in geographical and cultural settings, adopting a fitness for purpose principle.

It is worth mentioning that the Agency has signed agreements with five European QA Agencies and has organised joint evaluations with two of them (AQ Austria and AAQ Switzerland). The definition of the elements to be evaluated has come from a mapping exercise of the guidelines of both Agencies compared with AVEPRO’s. In both cases it has been demonstrated that there was a strong common and shared basis, since all Agencies have been acting under the ESG umbrella.

Analysis of standards evaluated as “Substantially compliant” and areas of development

RECOMMENDATION 3: Standard 2.3 - Implementation processes

AVEPRO shares the suggestion made by the panel and the Agency has started a process aimed at reinforcing its processes and procedures. It is worth mentioning that the methodology proposed by AVEPRO foresees a linkage between different evaluation cycles.

In line with the best practices in use around the world (ENQA, EUA, INQAAHE), the model of evaluation suggested by AVEPRO requires that the external evaluation phase be followed by a follow-up process with three main aims:

1. to evaluate the feasibility and appropriateness of the recommendations made by the AVEPRO-appointed Team and contained in the External Evaluation Report;
2. to launch common reflection leading to the definition of a Strategic Plan, in accordance with the Agency’s guidelines;
3. to monitor the implementation of strategic planning and update the Institution’s SWOT analysis in order to launch a new cycle of evaluation, leading to the production of a new SER (thus triggering the start of the new cycle).

The instruments with which these aims are to be achieved are the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and the Institution’s Strategic Plan (to be drawn up within 12 months from the conclusion of the External Evaluation Report).



The Quality Improvement Plan of the HE Institutions should analyse the External Evaluation Report and it should indicate how to implement (or to refuse with clear motivations) the recommendations made by the Commission appointed by AVEPRO. The Strategic Plan of the Institution (and the evaluation of its implementation), should be the basis for delivering the SER for the following evaluation cycle.

This scheme, clearly indicated in the guidelines, has been suggested mainly for two reasons:

- a) the relationship between Institutional evaluation and Strategic planning demonstrates the formative, enhancing and incremental approach of the model proposed by AVEPRO;
- b) the effects of such linkages maximise the possibilities for quality cooperation in reinforcing and share a culture of quality in the Academic Institutions.

In order to better define the whole process of evaluation AVEPRO is setting up a “Technical Committee” composed by members of the Scientific Council aimed at scrutinizing draft reports (both SER and EER). In addition, discussions are open on possible improvement of the follow up procedure from a methodological point of view, such as asking Institutions to provide a “follow up” report (inspired by ENQA methodology) after 2 years from the site visit.

The Agency is aware of risks such as “review fatigue” and the diminishing return that “mature” Academic Institutions are experiencing. This implies that the follow up procedure should be flexible, and not too demanding. The Agency will be supported in these tasks by local contact groups that should support AVEPRO.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Standard 2.4 – Peer review experts

Thanks to the collaboration with colleagues of other European QA Agencies, AVEPRO is testing alternative methods for selection and appointment of the experts. One procedure starts with a careful selection of names from the Agency’s expert database. It foresees the definition of a “long list” of potential experts that is sent to the Institution. The University/ Faculty has to declare the presence/absence of potential conflicts of interest or grounded motivations that could represent an obstacle to the process of evaluation. Once the list is defined, the President of the Agency chooses the panel composition according to the following criteria:

- the composition of the panel varies according to the size of the Institution to be evaluated;
- in general, it comprises a President, one student and one or more “thematic” experts (whose aim is to provide specific comments/recommendations regarding the manner in which specific subjects are taught/studied at the Institution);
- the composition has to ensure the presence of experts with “technical” competence, i.e. experts in the subject or subjects that characterise the Institution’s teaching and research;
- at least one expert should have competences in management and leadership practices in HE Institutions;
- experts should have knowledge of the main processes and procedures of Quality Assurance;
- lastly, considering the international vocation of the Holy See’s Higher Education system, efforts are made to appoint a President of a different nationality from the country in which the Institution is situated, who also possesses the necessary linguistic competence to read and comprehend the SER, as well as interact easily with the academic community during the visit.



It is worth mentioning that members of both Councils as well as authorities of HE Institutions and QA Agencies are recommended to submit candidatures aimed at improving AVEPRO's expert database. Unsolicited candidatures are also welcome.

The Agency is also evaluating the possibility of a greater engagement of the Board of Directors in the process of appointment of experts and panels. One possible model to follow could be the one adopted by ENQA with regard to the causes of concern regarding experts or the composition of the panel. In detail, the Secretariat shall send an e-mail to members of the BoD asking them whether there are any causes of concern regarding the proposal (appointment of single experts or evaluation commission). Members are given ten working days to react.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Standard 2.5 - Criteria for outcomes

The Reform of the Roman Curia opens the possibility of a deeper and more integrated relationships with local Bishops' Conferences. In many cases local Bishops are chancellors of an Ecclesiastical HE Institutions located in the Dioceses they govern.

One of the tasks of the Agency, especially in terms of Quality promotion, will be to activate or strengthen these relationships in order to contribute to a shared and informed process of development of the Ecclesiastical HE Institutions. In this logic, the importance of the external evaluation reports and the recommended actions listed in them, assumes a strategical dimension. It's worth remembering that, according to AVEPRO procedures, external evaluation reports are published on the Agency's web site, but are also sent to Chancellors and Authorities of the Institution, including Religious Orders which may be the founders of the Institution.

In this light, the consistency of the reports becomes more and more a crucial figure in showing the accountability of the process of evaluation. The Agency is working on the quality of the report thanks to the engagement of a working group of the Scientific Council. During the year 2022 the WG 2 analyzed a sample of 11 external evaluation reports from six different countries, written in four different languages. Some members analysed also the corresponding Self-Evaluation report. The advantage of doing so was to be able to make a qualitative appraisal of both. One of the most relevant findings of this study has been the empirical evidence of the relationship between the "quality" of SERs and the quality of the EERs. In other words, the better the SER is, potentially the better the EER will be.

The activities of the WG 2 will be taken further and implemented by a standing "Technical Committee" (recommended by the ENQA panel) that will be set up in 2022. It is not determined yet whether it should be a free standing committee or part of the Scientific Council or a mix of the two options.

It is envisaged that its remit should be twofold:

- to receive the SERs submitted by HE Institutions and screen them to ensure they are sufficiently rigorous, self-critical, comprehensive and evidence based before sending them to the review panel for the visit. In the event they are found wanting in a serious way, they will be referred back for reconsideration or improvement;
- to receive the draft of the EERs from the panels before sending them to the reviewed HE Institutions for comment, and ensure they meet the expected standards as defined in the External Evaluation Guidelines. If not, they will be referred back for reconsideration.

All these elements will be indicated in the Guidelines that will be revised and updated and integrated with other contents such as quality promotion, evaluation of research and third mission etc.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Standard 2.7 - Complaints and appeals

This recommendation will be addressed in the Operating Plan for 2023. Given that there have been no complaints or appeals in the history of the AVEPRO review process, and the need to prioritise actions within the Strategic Plan cycle, this timing seems appropriate. However, a WG 4 will be constituted for this purpose, and will give initial thought to the mechanisms late 2022.

The Secretariat of the Agency has already defined a first proposal that will be submitted to the WG. The logic is that even if the External Evaluation Reports do not imply the adoption of formal decisions (such as institutional accreditation, which is the exclusive competence of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, former Congregation for Catholic Education), an Institution that finds serious and motivated reasons for the Report to be revised can appeal against its publication online by sending a written notice detailing its case to AVEPRO within two weeks of its receipt of the Report. AVEPRO will postpone publication and submit the Report and the appeal to the Agency's Scientific Council, which may suggest solutions (e.g. the appointment of a new Evaluation Team, the partial or complete rewriting of the Report) or declare the objections raised to be groundless.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Standard 3.6 – Internal Quality assurance and professional conduct

The Agency has been investing many energies and resources on its development. During the last two years, AVEPRO has designed a more structured mechanism of Internal quality assurance that needs to be fully implemented. The pandemic and the ongoing process of reorganisation of all Dicasteries due to the reform of the Roman Curia, have affected this process. The most relevant elements of the above mentioned “mechanism” are clearly stated in the Strategic plan of the Agency:

- internal staff development as enhancement;
- definition of training needs of single employee and development of specific training path;
- feedback loops from HE Institutions in their role as users of AVEPRO services;
- feedback loops from Chancellors, Bishop's conferences, Religious Orders, Dicastery for Culture and Education (former Congregation for Catholic Education) and other stakeholders;
- role of WGs of the Scientific Council in assessment of existing processes and benchmarking;
- adoption of solutions and best practices learned from other QA Agencies;
- monitoring of achievement in operating plan reviews and resets.

Moreover, the Strategic Plan has frequent references to training other parties also. These include:

- staff in the HE Institutions on the genesis and drafting of the SER and also on the management of quality in various domains;
- Chancellors and Bishops' Conferences as part of the Quality promotion priority, but also to ensure that they are aware of best practice in quality management and review.



The Agency is aware that even if the intentions are ambitious, it will be necessary to invest more intensively in this area of development. Starting from these considerations and assuming that AVEPRO will offer in the coming years its services at a global scale, it seems to be necessary to consider some reorganization of tasks and activities in the Agency. The ENQA follow up visit will hopefully offer precious insights.

Concluding remarks

AVEPRO wishes to conclude this second report by thanking the ENQA Secretariat and Board and the Panel that conducted the evaluation visit. Almost two years from the achievement of full membership, the Agency has embarked upon and is constantly reviewing strategic reflections regarding its own objectives.

ENQA membership has had an impact in terms of both internal organization and especially dialogue with the world of the Holy See's Institutions of Higher Education. While aware that this path is and will always be a long one, as well as in some ways complex, we are convinced that we are collaborating with all the stakeholders to achieve a change of paradigm regarding the idea of a "culture of Quality" in our Academic Institutions.

Considering the specific nature of the Agency (probably unique in the world with global competence and HE Institutions to be evaluated spread over 5 continents), we are convinced that the European HE Area also represents an opportunity to support a shared process of learning to be spread and disseminated, as far as realistically possible, also beyond the boundaries of Europe.