

Prof. José Ángel Domínguez Pérez  
Director  
Quality Assurance Agency for the University System in Castilla y León (ACSUCYL)  
Avda. Reyes Católicos nº 2  
47006 Valladolid  
Spain

Bern, 3 December 2019

**Subject: Reconfirmation of membership of ACSUCYL in ENQA**

Dear José Ángel Domínguez Pérez,

I am pleased to inform you that, at its meeting of 28 November 2019, the Board of ENQA agreed to reconfirm the ACSUCYL membership of ENQA for five years from that date. The Board concluded that the agency is in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) and thus fulfils the membership criteria according to article 6, paragraph 1 of ENQA's rules of procedure.

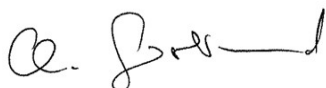
The Board would like to use this opportunity to provide an articulation regarding standard 3.3 Independence, where their judgement differs from that of the panel. The Board seconds the critical remark of the panel on the dependence of the agency on the regional government for the appointment of its Governing Board, which then affects the agency's management in strategic terms, including the resources. Following this, in the opinion of the Board, the standard can be considered only as substantially compliant.

The Board would like to receive a follow-up report within two years of its decision, i.e. by November 2021.

The Board also encourages ACSUCYL to take advantage of the voluntary progress visit – a new enhancement-led feature in the review process. The visit would take place in about two years' time from this decision. The ENQA Secretariat will be in touch with you in about a year's time to discuss this possibility. The costs of this visit have already been included as part of the review fee and are non-refundable except for the travel costs of the experts. More information about the progress visit can be found in the [Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews](#). If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the ENQA Secretariat.

Please accept my congratulations to ACSUCYL for the positive review outcome and I look forward to continued fruitful cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Christoph Grolimund  
President

Annex: Areas for development

### **Annex: Areas for development**

As outlined by the review panel, ACSUCYL is recommended to take appropriate action, so far as it is empowered to do so, on the following issues:

#### **ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance**

ACSUCYL is recommended to further increase the involvement of students in its Governing and Advisory Board.

#### **ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis**

ACSUCYL is recommended to structurally develop reports that describe and analyse the general findings of the agency's individual review processes (i.e. the agency's quality assurance activities) in order to inform (potential) students, the regional Government and society at large.

#### **ESG 3.5 Resources**

ACSUCYL is recommended to seek an agreement with the Regional Government which provides security on budgets through multi-annual funding and to discuss whether more diversified income streams may be useful to increase the independence of the agency.

Moreover, the agency is recommended to secure sufficient resources to extend its work on thematic analysis to enable it to implement the panel's recommendations mentioned under ESG 3.4.

#### **ESG 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct**

ACSUCYL is recommended to complement the process-oriented approach of internal quality assurance with a more self-critical attitude and further strengthen the focus on the impact of its work on the quality of higher education in Castilla y León.

#### **ESG 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance**

ACSUCYL is recommended to further integrate the concept of student-centred learning, teaching and assessment as a core element in all its procedures (ESG 1.3).

#### **ESG 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose**

ACSUCYL is recommended to search for a better balance between qualitative and quantitative approaches in its quality assurance procedures in order to further increase the fitness for purpose of the external quality assurance system as a whole.

Next, the agency is recommended to involve students and international experts more in the development of its quality assurance processes.

Finally, the agency is recommended, together with the Regional Government, to reflect on whether the combination of those processes at centre/institute level continues to be the optimal framework, and whether further streamlining of the different processes might be useful.

#### **ESG 2.4 Peer-review experts**

ACSUCYL is recommended to continue to focus on the values and concepts underpinning the ESG 2015 in the training provided to new and existing peer review experts.

#### **ESG 2.6 Reporting**

ACSUCYL is recommended to add in the reports (where those elements are lacking) a specific justification per standard and the decisive elements leading to the overall evaluation, including the analysis, findings, conclusions, recommendations for improvement and feature of good practice.

Moreover, ACSUCYL is recommended to continue to search for ways to disclose the results of the agency's quality assurance processes better to all stakeholders, including students and employers.