Report of External Review of the Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System

(ACSUG)

31 July 2009

1. Executive Summary

This report analyses the compliance of the Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System (ACSUG) with the European Standards and Guidelines for external quality assurance agencies and thus with the membership criteria of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

Context

The national quality assurance agency responsible for the external quality assurance in the Spanish university system is ANECA. However, the Governments of the 17 Spanish autonomous regions are competent authorities for education and science in their territory. Therefore, eleven autonomous regions (among which Galicia) have created their own regional agency.

The Galician agency, ACSUG was established in 2001 by the General Directorate of universities in its Resolution of 12 March 2001, which conceived ACSUG as an administrative consortium. In 2002, an additional clause to the 3/2002 Law of 29 April gave ACSUG the responsibilities to perform, within the Galician Region, the assessment, certification and accreditation functions in order to promote and assure quality in Galician universities.

Review process

ACSUG asked ENQA to undertake the review, and ENQA nominated the following international experts to carry out the external review:
   – Christian Thune (chairman);
   – Maria Helena Nazaré;
   – Lluis Jofre;
   – Antony Camillieri;
   – Anne Crausaz Esseiva (review secretary).

The site visit took place 18 - 19 May 2009 at the premises of ACSUG in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. The review was organised and conducted according to the ENQA Guidelines for National Type B Reviews.

The self-evaluation report and the interviews held during the site visit gave the review panel sufficient evidence to come to the conclusion that ACSUG is in substantial compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines and thereby with the ENQA Membership Criteria.

The review panel was impressed by the scope of activities launched by ACSUG during the relatively brief history of the agency and by the professionalism and the commitment demonstrated by the ACSUG staff. The review panel also concludes that ACSUG is visible and credible as an external quality assurance agency in the Galician higher education system and operates on a regular basis.

Along with these positive aspects, the panel has stated a number of reservations. Among these reservations two deserve special attention.

Firstly, the sequence of ACSUG activities has been the result of many changes in

regional and national legislations. The consequence of this development on ACSUG activities is that the different processes have not had sufficient time to develop into proper regular and cyclical activities. One exception may turn out to be the VERIFICA programme (programme assessment), but as indicated in the report this is a very recent activity. The review panel acknowledges that the regular revisions of legislation are mostly responsible for this "stop and go" context and that ACSUG is excusable in the sense that it has had to face the legal situation as have the other Spanish agencies.

Secondly, the review panel has had important concerns about ACSUG's formal independence of which there was not sufficient evidence at the time of the evaluation process. The major reason for this situation was that it was unclear from the submitted documentation and the site visit interviews, whether the decision-making body (CGIACA) was formally guaranteed sufficient independence of operation. After the site visit, a new CGIACA was established, only ten days before the review panel on 31st July 2009 presents its report to the ENQA Board. From a formal point of view the review panel must consider new information submitted after the hearing process to be after the event and thus not to be considered relevant for a revision of the report. However, the review panel hopes that the new legal developments will finally ensure ACUSG's independency.

The review panel therefore recommends to the Board of ENQA that ACSUG should be awarded full membership for a period of five years. At the same time, the ENQA Board is invited to consider making the grant of full membership dependent on a progress report for instance in three years time with respect to the various weak points identified in this report and especially the demonstration that the new regulations and the reorganisation of CGIACA ensure ACSUG's formal independence.

2. Introduction

This is the report of the review of the Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System (ACSUG) undertaken in Santiago de Compostela on 18-19 May 2009 for the purpose of determining whether the agency meets the criteria for full membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The criteria are listed in Annex 1 to the report.

3. Background and outline of the review process

ENQA's regulations require all full member agencies to undergo an external cyclical review, at least once every five years, in order to verify that they fulfil the membership criteria.

In November 2004, the General Assembly of ENQA agreed that the third part of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) should be incorporated into the membership provisions of its regulations. Substantial compliance with the ESG thus became the principal criterion for full membership of ENQA. The ESG were subsequently adopted at the Bergen ministerial meeting of the Bologna Process in 2005.

The third part of the ESG covers the cyclical external review of quality assurance and accreditation agencies. In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, external cyclical reviews for ENQA membership purposes are normally conducted on a national level and initiated by national authorities in an EHEA State, but carried out independently from them. However, external reviews can also be coordinated by ENQA if they cannot be nationally organised, as this is the case for this ACSUG's external review. In that event, ENQA plays an active role in the organisation of the review, being directly involved as coordinator, whereas, in the case of national reviews, it is only kept informed of progress throughout the whole process.

The ENQA-coordinated review of ACSUG was conducted in line with the process described in the *Briefing pack for national and ENQA-coordinated reviews of ENQA member agencies* and in accordance with the timeline set out in the Terms of Reference. In addition to fulfilling the periodic external review requirement of ENQA membership, the review of ACUSG had the following purposes: The review panel aims to comment on the effectiveness of the ACSUG management of the teaching staff assessment programmes. This review has therefore been conducted as a Type B review. Also, the review panel was asked to pay special attention on the way in which the recommendations, formulated by the ENQA Board on February 2007, have been addressed by ACSUG (cf. Annex 2).

The external review process has been the following: ACSUG produced a self-evaluation report with additional documentation, and then the panel conducted a site visit to validate fully the self-evaluation and clarify any points at issue. Finally, the review panel produced the present final report on the basis of the self-evaluation report, site visit and its further findings. In doing so it provided an opportunity for ACSUG to comment on the factual accuracy of the draft report.

3.1 Review panel

The review panel for the external review of ACSUG was composed of the following members:

- Christian Thune (chairman), former president of ENQA, former executive director of the Danish evaluation institute (EVA), current vice chair of the Danish Accreditation Council, Denmark;

- Maria Helena Nazaré, rector of the university of Aveiro in Portugal, team chair in EUA's institutional evaluation programme, Portugal;

- Lluis Jofre, vice-president of AQU, specific committee for the quality assessment of university centres and activities, professor in telecommunications engineering (Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya), Spain;

- Antony Camillieri, LLD student in Law, university of Malta, former project officer at ESU, Malta;

- Anne Crausaz Esseiva (review secretary), scientific collaborator, OAQ, Switzerland.

3.2 Self-evaluation report

ACSUG produced a self-evaluation report (91 pages), which was sent to the review panel two months prior the site visit. The self-evaluation report was drafted by the technical staff of ACSUG under the supervision of ACSUG Executive Director. The Technical Committee and the Board of Directors analysed and reviewed the self-evaluation report.

The review panel found the self-evaluation report to be well laid out, including illustrative graphics. At the same time the panel was disappointed that the self-evaluation report was essentially descriptive and lacking in self-analysis. At least a brief summary of strong points and the weak points, which needed further improvement, would have been very helpful for the panel.

More than 100 evidences completed the report, the overwhelming majority available in Spanish only. The panel succeeded in agreeing with ACSUG that 17 key documents where eventually translated into English. Most of these documents were made available by ACSUG shortly before the visit. The panel was of course able to benefit from the services of its two Spanish reading members, but still the difficulties of penetrating the documentary evidence were felt strongly by non-Spanish reading panel members.

The major reason for this is the complicated progress of ACSUG activities. Over a relatively brief period several quality assurance activities have been launched. In order to fully understand the implications of all these activities (methodologies, criteria, process) for this review many more documents were relevant than would be covered by an expectation that basically 10-11 documents should constitute a satisfactory scope of documentation.

One further problem is the so-called VERIFICA programme, which is now a key activity and based on a cooperation agreement with ANECA signed in February this year. The panel must accept that the timing of the formal agreement provides an argument that this programme is neither mentioned in the self-evaluation report nor identified in the documentation presented to the panel. However, the VERIFICA programme was a reference for the majority of participants in the interview sessions during the site visit and ACSUG leadership identified the programme as the major step forward in external quality assurance.

The panel did succeed, though, to piece together its understanding of the VERIFICA programme, but as indicated above under rather unsatisfactory circumstances.

3.3 Site visit

The review panel visited the offices of ACSUG in Santiago de Compostela on 18-19 May 2009. The panel met for a preparatory meeting the day before to discuss the self-evaluation report and share first impressions regarding the fulfilment of the ESG. The experts also discussed the programme of the visit, and initial lines of questioning were distributed among panel members.

During the two-day visit the panel met with different groups of ACSUG representatives and stakeholders[1]. The panel felt convinced that scope and level of the programme provided relevant information for the review.

One potentially problematic issue came up a little more than two weeks before the site visit, when ACSUG indicated that ACSUG and stakeholder representatives were not sufficiently proficient in English, so that an external translator would be necessary to facilitate the discussions. Panel members with previous experience of site visit interviews with running translations did not have good memories of this kind of process, but as it turned out the translator, a local law professor, did a masterful job of professionalism and precision.

The review team was impressed by the excellent organisation of the visit. All interviews were held according to the schedule and ACSUG staff was all times available and provided if possible the panel with access to necessary information. Furthermore, ACSUG support regarding the logistical organisation, transport, accommodation, meals, was of a very high order.

---

[1] Programme of the site visit, Annex 3.

3.4 Hearing process

The review panel sent 30 June 2009 the draft report to ACSUG for comments on factual inaccuracies. ACSUG responded 13 June 2009 with a note identifying six spelling errors and 14 July 2009 with a 29 page Statement arguing against the conclusions of the review panel.

The Statement contained a substantial amount of new information which was relevant and would have strengthened the self-evaluation report and the review panel's preparations for the site visit. The review panel acknowledges the considerable effort in compiling this massive statement within the fourteen day's hearing period, but at the same time the panel wonders why most of the information and documentation in the Statement was not already included in the self-evaluation report.

Further and from a formal point of view the review panel must consider new information and documentation submitted after the hearing process to be "after the event" and thus not to be considered relevant for a revision of the report. This could in the view of the review panel only be the case if the panel had overlooked or misinterpreted information received before and during the site visit.

However, the review panel decided after careful reading of the statement that on a limited number of minor points the text of the report could be revised in order to take into account the new information. The conclusions of the report in relation to compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines have not been changed.

A special issue, though, concerns the independence of ACSUG, cf. ESG 3.6, ACSUG stresses in the Statement that after the review panel's site visit in May 2009 new legislation (decree 326/2009) was passed that changed ACSUG statutes especially regarding the functions and composition of the body (CGIACA) that should be formally and operationally responsible for accreditation processes. In the review panel's analysis of ACSUG compliance with ESG 3.6 a note has therefore been inserted that presents the review panel's views on this further formal development in regard to independence.

4. Context of the Review

4.1 Higher Education System in Galicia (SUG)

The first university in Galicia was the University of Santiago de Compostela (USC) founded in 1495. USC is the second oldest university in Spain. More recently, with the 11/1989 Law of 20 July for the organisation of the Galician University System (SUG), the present Galician University system was set up. It consists of three universities:

– University of Santiago de Compostela,

– University of A Coruna,

– University of Vigo.

The universities of A Coruna and Vigo were created from the division of the USC's material and human resources.

Following the EHEA development, both the Organic Law 4/2007 of 12 April amending the Spanish University Act 6/2001 of December and the Royal Decree 1393/2007 of 29 October were issued, establishing the three-cycle structure (Graduate / Master / PhD) in the higher education area. The Galician universities are therefore adapting their degrees to conform to the Bologna recommendations. The process is not yet completed, but should be implemented gradually until 2010. Therefore, at the moment two educational structures are coexisting in the Galician universities: the Bologna structure and the "old" university education structure, which consists of four university programmes:

– First cycle programmes (short cycle), which are professionally oriented programmes with generally a duration of three years leading to a Higher Diploma, Technical Engineer or Technical Architect award;

– First and second cycle programmes (long cycle), which lead to a Bachelor or Engineering or Architecture Degree and last for four to five years;

– Second cycle only programmes, which lead also to a Bachelor or Engineering or Architecture Degree with a duration of two years, access is gained through the prior completion of certain qualifications;

– Third cycle programmes, which lead to a certificate/diploma, which allows the graduate to present a doctorate thesis and to obtain a PhD level. The programmes can be accessed by graduates, engineers and architects.

In a near future, this university education structure will be replaced by the Bologna structure. In the 2008-09 academic year five university programmes were adapted to the Bologna structure.

Each Galician university offers degree courses in a wide range of fields: Health Sciences, Legal and Social Sciences, Art and Humanities, Sciences and Engineering & Architecture.

In the 2005-06 academic year, more than 75.000 students were enrolled on the 1st and 2nd cycle in Galician universities. In the same academic year, there were more than 5.500 third cycle students in the SUG. The graphs in the self-

evaluation report illustrating the development in number of student enrolments shows a gradual fall in student enrolment on the 1ˢᵗ and 2ⁿᵈ cycle from 2001 to 2006, while the number of third-cycle students enrolled increased significantly. During the same period of time, the financial resources of the Galician universities increased as well as the number of lecturers and administrative and service staff.

In other words the SUG developed substantially and in a constant manner from 2001 and seems to be well prepared for the future challenges especially the implementation of the Bologna structure, as indicated during the site visit.

4.2 ACSUG and Quality Assurance in Galicia

4.2.1 Brief history of Galician Quality Assurance

According to the documentation and the information gathered during the site visit, the first important external quality assurance process in Galician took place in 1996. And from this date to 2005, the Galician universities had the opportunity to participate in three successive national external quality plans carried out in the whole of Spain:

- (1996 – 2000): Through the Royal Decree 1947/95, the National Evaluation Plan for Quality in Universities (PNECU) was developed and managed by the Coordinating Council of Spanish Universities (CCU) with the aim to promote institutional assessment.

- (2001 – 2003): II University Quality Assurance Plan (II PCU) was implemented by the CCU through the Royal Decree 408/2001. This plan continued to promote and develop institutional assessment. It also promoted a greater participation of the Autonomous Communities. In 2001, the Galician Agency (ACSUG) was created to coordinate the II PCU plan for the Galician universities, which decided to take part in the programme.

- (2003 – 2005): Institutional Evaluation Programme (PEI) was developed by ANECA (the Spanish National Agency) with a purpose close to those mentioned above, in order to promote institutional assessment. In Galicia, the PEI was coordinated by the Galician Agency.

The Spanish universities took part in these three evaluation plans on a voluntary basis, but despite of this 85% of the Galician degrees were assessed.

4.2.2 The Galician Agency

The Spanish national quality assurance agency, with the responsibilities in external quality assurance in the Spanish university system, is ANECA, which was set up in 2002. ANECA has a nationwide scope of action, while the Governments of the 17 autonomous regions (Spanish Constitution of 1978) are competent authorities for education and science in their territory. Therefore, eleven autonomous regions (among which Galicia) created their own regional agency.

ACSUG (Axencia para a Calidade do Sistema Universitario de Galicia) was, as mentioned above, established in 2001 to coordinate the II PCU programme in Galicia and to provide the universities with technical and methodological support.

In its Resolution of 12 March 2001, the General Directorate of Universities conceived ACSUG as an administrative consortium. This resolution contains the co-operation agreement signed between the Galician Regional Government and the Galician universities as well as the ACSUG statutes, which set out the ACSUG structure, governing bodies, aims and activities.

Then, an additional clause to the 3/2002 Law of 29 April, following the coming into force of the 6/2001 Spanish Universities Act of 21 December 2001 (LOU), gave ACSUG the responsibilities, within the Galician Region, "*to perform the assessment, certification and accreditation functions included in (…) the LOU in order to promote and assure quality in Galician universities. (…) The agency was conceived as a source of accountability to society (…)*[2]".

The coming into force of the 4/2007 Organic Law of 12 April along with the creation of the EHEA led to a new context regarding the external quality assurance bodies, bringing them new responsibilities, and making reforms necessary within ACUSG in terms of rules and processes. Through the 1393/2007 Royal Decree, the Spanish university system underwent an important period of change. In particular, the assessment processes of university degrees, formerly voluntary, became mandatory with a clear link to the authorisation or non-authorisation of the degrees.

Since 2003, the Quality Assurance System in Galicia evolved in response to the new EHEA challenges. Following the substantial changes undergone by the universities in accordance to the EHEA qualifications framework, and due to regular changing legal situation, the activities of ACSUG had gradually stopped, developed and / or expanded.

Former activities

- II PCU Plan, institutional assessment (2001-2003);
- Assessment of degree programmes (PEI) – (2003 to 2005);
- Assessment of officially recognised post-graduate programmes (2005-2007).

Present activities (at the time of the review)[3]

- Labour market insertion analysis and surveys (start in 2002);
- Evaluation of services (start in 2003);
- Activities in relation to the EHEA, to support the Galician universities in their adaptation (start in 2003)
- Teaching staff assessment programmes (start in 2004);
- FIDES-AUDIT programme: Setting up and assessment of the internal quality assurance system of the universities (start in 2007);
- DOCENTIA programme: support programme for the evaluation of teaching procedures and staff performance (start in 2007);
- Evaluation of research units (start in 2007);
- VERIFICA programme, ex-ante assessment of the new degree programmes (Bachelor / Master / PhD) (start 2009).

---

[2] Self-evaluation report, p.23
[3] For more information about ACSUG activities cf. ESG 3.3, section 5.3.

Planned activities
 – Accreditation procedures of new degree programmes, previously assessed by the VERIFICA programme (planned to start in 2012).

The ACSUG structure is set out in the statutes and consists of the following bodies:

Organisational structure

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors heads ACSUG in cooperation with the Executive Director and operates as permanent committee. Its functions are described in ACSUG statutes and cover, in particular, the approbation of the yearly programme of activities, the annual report, the budget and the necessary agreements with any institutions, as well as the adoption of appropriate measures for the correct organisation and functioning of ACSUG.

The Board of Directors is composed of:
 – A chairman (university representative) appointed by the President of the Galician Regional Government;
 – Sixteen voting members (university and government representatives as well as two students);
 – Five non-voting members (the Executive Director, a secretary and three representatives designated by the Consortium Universities).

The Executive Director of ACSUG is appointed by the Government on the proposal of the Board of Directors. He organizes and manages the activities of ACSUG in accordance with the directives of the Board of Directors.

CGIACA

With the 270/2003 Decree of 22 May, the Galician Commission for reports, evaluation, certification and accreditation (GGIACA) was created as the "*body responsible for issuing the relevant evaluations required by ACSUG, with the guidance of expert panel[4]*". Following the coming into force of the Organic Law 4/2007 of 12 April which amended the Spanish Universities Act 6/2001 of 21 December, the Board of Directors adopted, in July 2008, an agreement approving the modification of the Agency's statutes. The organisational structure of ACSUG was then modified, which led to an adaptation of the role of CGIACA.

From then on, CGIACA has been in operational terms the higher evaluation body of ACSUG and performs the function of decision-making body for the assessments carried out by ACSUG. CGIACA also approves the procedures and protocols for assessment, appoints the expert panel and issues the final reports.

CGIACA is composed of a chairman (university system representative) appointed by the Galician Government on proposal of the Board of Directors and of six voting members (scientific and academic representative) elected by the Board of

---

[4] Self-evaluation report, p.23

Directors. The Executive Director of ACSUG acts as Secretary (without the right to vote)[5].

Technical board / Advisory board

The technical board of ACSUG (operative 2004-2008) was composed of university representatives and chaired by the Executive Director of ACSUG. The board worked for four years as a consultative body. Its mission was to share the university experiences with the agency and to provide support to implement ACSUG activities. The technical board assumed an important part of the communication between the Galician universities and ACSUG, by informing the universities about, for example, the activities of ACSUG, the European development and advising ACSUG about the university internal quality system, institutional politic, etc. Its role was very essential at the beginning. However, gradually, as new developments occurred, ACSUG was assigned new assessment related competences and therefore, the role and the composition of this consultative body had to be adapted. So, in July 2008, as mentioned above, the organisational structure of ACSUG was modified. The technical board was dissolved and replaced by an advisory board.

The Advisory Board of ACSUG is not yet in place due to the recent change in the Galician government, which involved re-appointments of the members representing the government in the Board of Directors. As the Board of Directors is responsible for the appointment of the advisory board members, it was considered appropriate to await its new composition.

The composition of the advisory board is defined in the ACSUG statutes. It will be chaired by the Executive Director of ACSUG and will consist of six to ten members selected among:
– Representatives of academic and professional field (national and international);
– Student representatives;
– Representatives of business groups.

The advisory board functions are also defined in the ACSUG statutes and will mainly pertain to the evaluation and development of the ACSUG activities.

Operational ACSUG staff

The activities of ACSUG are distributed among four units:
– The Cabinet of Direction supports the Executive Director and manages the internal quality assurance of the agency. It consists of two people;
– The Teaching Staff Unit is in charge of the teaching staff assessment programmes and consists of four people;
– The Programmes Unit is responsible for all activities of ACSUG (cf. chap. 4) with the exception of the teaching staff assessment programmes. It consists of four people;

---

[5] In July 2009, the Board of Directors appointed a new CGICA: cf. section 3.4 and 5.6

- The Management Unit consists of six people and functions as an umbrella management and administrative support.

The Operational staff is managed by the Executive Director of ACSUG and approved by the Board of Directors.

5. Compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines

5.1 ESG 3.1 - Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education

Standard
The external quality assurance agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance procedures described in Part 2 of the European Standard and Guidelines.

Guidelines
The standards for external quality assurance contained in Part 2 provide a valuable basis for the external quality assessment process. The standards reflect best practices and experiences gained through the development of external quality assurance in Europe since the early 1990s. It is therefore important that these standards are integrated into the processes applied by external quality assurance agencies towards the higher education institutions.
The standards for external quality assurance should together with the standards for external quality assurance agencies constitute the basis for professional and credible external quality assurance of higher education institutions.

Compliance with the standards of Part 2 of the ESG is analyzed in the following chapters. Compliance with these standards is only relevant with regard to the overall compliance with Standard 3.1.

5.1.1   ESG 2.1 - Use of internal quality assurance procedures

Standard
External quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines

Guidelines
The standards for internal quality assurance contained in Part1 provide a valuable basis for the external quality assessment process. It is important that the institution's own internal policies and procedures are carefully evaluated in the course of external procedures, to determine the extent to which the standards are being met.
If higher education institutions are to be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their own internal quality assurance processes, and if those processes properly assure quality and standards, then external processes might be less intensive than otherwise.

According to the self-evaluation report and other documentation ACSUG has in place various programmes that focus on the internal quality assurance of the universities:

- In the VERIFICA programme (Bachelor / Master) internal quality assurance is one of the ten criteria that the degrees have to fulfil in order to pass the evaluation;
- The FIDES-AUDIT programme consists of two steps: i. ACSUG provides assistance to the universities to set up their internal quality assurance system, ii. which then will be assessed by an external review panel.

Some other ACSUG activities, such as the DOCENTIA programme and services evaluation, assess only part of the internal system, teaching assessment procedures and university facilities respectively.

The panel recognizes the ambitions of these programmes, especially the FIDES-AUDIT, but has on the other hand the following reservations:

The FIDES-AUDIT provides the universities with a de facto package of internal quality assurance mechanisms to a very high degree of specificity. This leads to the problem that ACSUG could more or less be delivering to the universities the internal quality assurance framework later to be assessed by ACSUG itself.

However, when the panel raised this issue with representatives of the universities, it was assured that the universities do not feel guided by ACSUG and that they have developed their own internal quality system, completely independently. Moreover, the FIDES-AUDIT programme is not mandatory and the universities have in principle the possibility to construct their internal quality system by themselves, without any ACSUG support.

Still the panel considers the FIDES-AUDIT guidelines to be very specific and directive in contrast with the generic approach in the ESG. The risk is that implementation of the guidelines could lead to a homogenization of the quality system within the universities, and difficulties in later adopting new and innovative systems.

Standard fulfilment: Substantially compliant

5.1.2 ESG 2.2 - Development of external quality assurance processes

Standard
The aims and objective of quality assurance processes should be determined before the processes themselves are developed, by all those responsible (including higher education institutions) and should be published with a description of the procedures to be used.

Guidelines
In order to ensure clarity of purpose and transparency of procedures, external quality assurance methods should be designed and developed through a process involving key stakeholders, including higher education institutions. The procedures that are finally agreed should be published and should contain explicit statements of the aims and objectives of the processes as well as a description of the procedures to be used.
As external quality assurance makes demands on the institutions involved, a preliminary impact assessment should be undertaken to ensure that the procedures to be adopted are appropriate and do not interfere more than necessary with the normal work of higher education institutions.

The Board of Directors approves the annual activities of ACSUG which are then published on the website. The strong representation of the universities and of local government in the Board of Directors should ensure that these institutions consider themselves to be co-owners of the process.

Further the aims and objectives of ACSUG activities are explained and published on the ACSUG website as well as the processes instruments (notifications, guides, guidelines, evaluation criteria, etc). During the interviews, the panel took note that the university representatives and the experts in review panels declared themselves to be well informed before the processes of the different procedures and the different instruments.

The panel considers it also evident from interviews with university representatives that ACSUG procedures are appropriate and do not interfere more than necessary with the normal work of the three universities.

Standard fulfilment: Fully compliant

5.1.3 ESG 2.3 - Criteria for decisions

Standard
Any formal decisions made as a result of an external quality assurance activity should be based on explicit published criteria that are applied consistently.

Guidelines
Formal decisions made by quality assurance agencies have a significant impact on the institutions and programmes that are judged. In the interests of equity and reliability, decisions should be based on published criteria and interpreted in a consistent manner. Conclusions should be based on recorded evidence and agencies should have in place ways of moderating conclusions, if necessary.

The criteria and guides are published on the ACSUG website prior to the implementation of the processes.

ACSUG pays particular attention to the training of experts in order to assure their objectivity and knowledge in relation to their tasks and not least consistency in the conclusions of their reports. The experts are in the VERIFICA trained either by ANECA in Madrid or by ACSUG in Santiago de Compostela.

In order to further guarantee the consistence of the expert reports in the VERIFICA reviews, and in the assessment of teachers, ACSUG has in place an interesting measure. Before drafting the final report the chairs of the different expert panels meet in order to discuss possible difficulties encountered and reach consensus if necessary. The Executive Director of ACSUG chairs the meeting and signs the final report.

Standard fulfilment: Fully compliant

5.1.4 ESG 2.4 - Process fit for purpose

Standard

All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

Guidelines

Quality assurance agencies within the EHEA undertake different external processes for different purposes and in different ways. It is of the first importance that agencies should operate procedures which are fit for their own defined and published purposes. Experience has shown, however, that there are some widely-used elements of external review processes which not only help to ensure their validity, reliability and usefulness, but also provide a basis for the European dimension to quality assurance.

Amongst these elements the following are particularly noteworthy:

- insistence that the experts undertaking the external quality assurance activity have appropriate skills and are competent to perform their task;
- the exercise of care in the selection of experts;
- the provision of appropriate briefing or training for experts;
- the use of international experts;
- participation of students;
- ensuring that the review procedures used are sufficient to provide adequate evidence to support the findings and conclusions reached;
- the use of the self-evaluation/site visit/draft report/published report/follow-up model of review;
- recognition of the importance of institutional improvement and enhancement policies as a fundamental element in the assurance of quality.

ACSUG has developed and carries out different procedures to achieve different aims and objectives (cf. section 5.3, ESG 3.3). Even if the processes are sometimes quite distinct, they always share the following common features:

– Expert panels are carefully selected, including a student (published selection criteria), and all experts are trained during a one–day workshop;

– Processes are always based on the model: self-evaluation report, external review, expert report, published report, and to a varying degree follow-up;

– A final report provides recommendations for quality improvement;

– Evaluation criteria are developed specifically for the process and consistently applied.

The review panel notes that ACSUG does not include international experts in their review panels. One of the advantages of integrating international experts is that they bring a new point of view and could help the universities to make enlightened choices in a context that goes past the national context. In that sense, the presence of international experts should be encouraged, provided that the expert panel consists also of experts well informed about the Spanish and Galician situations. As Spanish is one of the most commonly spoken languages

around the world, it should be possible to find international Spanish-speaking experts.

The review panel wishes to stress its appreciation of the inclusion of students in the expert panels. ACSUG operates an interesting selection procedure, where the students may apply for the position with CV and cover letter. During the interviews, the review panel learnt further that student experts do feel very well integrated in the panels. Their opinions and remarks were taken into account and their participation was considered important and useful by other panel members and by ACSUG staff.

Standard fulfilment: Fully compliant

Recommendation: ACSUG should initiate a process leading to inclusion of international expert in the review panels.

5.1.5   ESG 2.5 - Reporting

Standard
Reports should be written in a style, which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

Guidelines
In order to ensure maximum benefit from external quality assurance processes, it is important that reports should meet the identified needs of the intended readership.
Reports are sometimes intended for different readership groups and this will require careful attention to structure, content, style and tone.
In general, reports should be structured to cover description, analysis (including relevant evidence), conclusions, commendations, and recommendations. There should be sufficient preliminary explanation to enable a lay reader to understand the purposes of the review, its form, and criteria used in making decisions. Key findings, conclusions and recommendations should be easily locatable by readers.
Reports should be published in a readily accessible form and there should be opportunities for readers and users of the reports (both within the relevant institution and outside it) to comment on their usefulness.

ACSUG states in the self-evaluation report that "*The report published by ACSUG usually follows a structure set out by the guidelines, protocols and criteria established in advance for each processes*". No reports were available in English versions, but the review panel's two Spanish-reading members verified a number of reports and on the background of their findings, the review panel feels confident that the reports are published in a suitable and accessible format.

The extent to which there are opportunities for readers and users of the reports to comment on their usefulness, however, is not evident to the panel.

In addition to the evaluation results, ACSUG publishes the results of others

studies. For example, every year, the results of the labour market survey are published. The experts were impressed about this study and its impact. A summary of the results is sent to the media and they are sometimes discussed on the regional television. The fact that ACSUG publishes these data and that the universities accept it, shows that the system is based on mutual trust and respect.

Standard fulfilment: Fully compliant

5.1.6 ESG 2.6 - Follow-up procedures

Standard
Quality Assurance Processes which contain recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, should have predetermined follow-up procedure, which is implemented consistently.

Guidelines
Quality assurance is not principally about individual external scrutiny events: It should be about continuously trying to do a better job. External quality assurance does not end with the publication of the report and should include a structured follow-up procedure to ensure that recommendations are dealt with appropriately and any required action plans drawn up and implemented. This may involve further meetings with institutions or programme representatives. The objective is to ensure that areas identified for improvement are dealt with speedily and that further enhancement is encouraged.

In the self-evaluation report ACSUG mentions that the recommendations formulated in the report are monitored by ACSUG to ensure that they are implemented. The follow-up of sixty university degrees was carried out by ACSUG between 2006 and 2008. These processes were the follow-up of the three "old" programmes (cf. chap. 4) PNECU (2000), II PCU (2002) and PEI (2003).

The follow-up process does not involve external experts. The universities have to draft a report, describing the improvement plan and the implementation of the measures, which is sent to ACSUG for analysis.

As the activities of ACSUG changed in form and focus, a systematic follow-up process seemed to be difficult to establish. Even if follow-up was performed for some programmes between 2006 and 2007, the review panel saw no evidence that such a follow-up was (or will be) applied for the officially recognised post-graduate programme. Moreover the period of time between the assessment procedures and the follow-up varied from one programme to another. The consistency of the follow-up is therefore seen as problematic by the review panel.

However, follow-up procedures are pre-defined (same process as described above) and planned to occur on a yearly basis for the VERIFICA programme. So in the future, the consistency of the follow-up procedure carried out by ACSUG will hopefully be improved.

Standard fulfilment: Partially compliant

Recommendation: ACSUG should consider the possibilities and the advantages for the follow-up process of the involvement of external experts. They could bring relevant issues regarding the universities improvement plans and the development of the subsequent measures.

5.1.7   ESG 2.7 - Periodic reviews

Standard
External quality assurance of institutions and/or programmes should be undertaken on a cyclical basis. The length of the cycle and the review procedures to be used should be clearly defined and published in advanced.

Guidelines
Quality assurance is not a static but a dynamic process. It should be continuous and not "once in a lifetime". It does not end with the first review or with the completion of the formal follow-up procedure. It has to be periodically renewed. Subsequent external reviews should take into account progress that has been made since the previous event. The process to be used in all external reviews should be clearly defined by the external quality assurance agency and its demands on institutions should not be greater than are necessary for the achievement of its objectives.

The external quality assurance activities of ACSUG have developed under the influence of the regular revisions of Spanish and Galician legislation. Under these circumstances, it has been difficult for ACSUG till now to carry out activities on a defined cyclical basis, cf. the panel's analysis on section 5.3 concerning ESG 3.3.

However, even if the VERIFICA programme has been introduced within recent months, its cycle has been defined in principle. Each university programme (Bachelor / Master) has to be evaluated prior its implementation. Following this the programme is submitted to a yearly follow-up and after six years, it must be accredited. The validity of the accreditation is six years.

But even if the cyclical basis of the VERIFICA programme is clearly defined, the review panel has not been able to identify the length of the cycle for other current activities (FIDES-AUDIT programme, services evaluation) and therefore finds that in an objective sense ACSUG does not sufficiently comply with this standard. However, it is important to notice that the review panel acknowledges that the regular revisions of legislation are mostly responsible for this "stop and go" context and that ACSUG is excusable for the conclusion below in the sense that it has had to face this legal situation as have the other Spanish agencies.

Standard fulfilment: Partially compliant

5.1.8 ESG 2.8 - System-wide analysis

Standard
Quality Assurance should produce from time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of their reviews, evaluations, assessments, etc.

Guidelines
All external quality assurance agencies collect a wealth of information about individual programmes and/or institutions and this provides material for structured analyses across whole higher education systems. Such analyses can provide very useful information about developments, trends, emerging good practice and areas of persistent difficulty or weakness and can become useful tools for policy development and quality enhancement. Agencies should consider including a research and development function within their activities, to help them extract maximum benefit from their work.

The ACSUG mission statement presents the agency as the "*permanent instrument for collecting and channelling information among the Galician universities, other institutions and stakeholders, contributing towards the ability of the SUG[6] to keep constantly up to date and in touch with the changing social demands*".

To fulfil this mission, ACSUG provides annual reports with detailed information about its activities and publishes surveys and publications on important issues in higher education. ACSUG also organizes conferences and meetings on various topics related to higher education.

Furthermore, ACSUG has created an "elaboration of reports" working group. This group produces reports analyzing the important activities of the agency. Since 2001, six books were published in relation to external quality assurance activities of ACSUG: for example the II PCU and the PEI programmes. At the time of the review, the group was working on an analysis of the degree evaluation processes, and was already able to detect that some transversal problems were common to all degrees.

The panel considers a good example to be the English language report "Evaluation of the proposals for recognized postgraduate degree courses 2005-2008". This report of 68 pages presents the assessment process, expert panels, methodologies and overall results of the assessment. Also included are satisfaction surveys of the participating experts.

Standard fulfilment: Fully compliant

Conclusion on ESG 3.1 - Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education.

The above sections on the relation between ESG 3.1 and ESG 2.1 – 2.8 include a number of recommendations and reflections, and some findings of substantial rather than full compliance regarding the standards of section 2.

---

[6] Galician University System

The overall conclusion of the review panel is that ACSUG complies substantially with ESG 3.1

5.2 ESG 3.2 - Official status

Standard
Agencies should be formally recognised by competent public authorities in the European Higher Education Area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdiction within they operate.

ACSUG was founded as a legal administrative consortium in 2001, through a collaboration agreement between the Galician Regional Government and the Galician universities.

Then in 2002, the 27th provision of the Galician Parliament Law 3/2002 of 29 April gave ACSUG the responsibility for co-ordinating the evaluation, certification and accreditation functions. And the 270/2003 Decree of 22 May recognised ACSUG as the external quality assurance body for the Galician university system with the competence to perform assessment procedures.

Currently, the Decree regulating ACSUG and the Galician university law are in progress, with the aim for ACSUG to achieve the legal status of Autonomous Agency, equivalent to other agencies such ANECA.

The review panel considers it evident that ACSUG operates on a clear and established legal basis and is recognised by competent Galician authorities. It is further evident from the documentation that ACSUG complies with the requirements inherent in its legal basis.

Standard fulfilment: Fully compliant

5.3 ESG 3.3 - Activities

Standard
Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institutional or programme level) on a regular basis.

Guidelines
These may involve evaluation, review, audit, assessment, accreditation or other similar activities and should be part of the core functions of the agency.

An additional clause to the 3/2002 Law of 29 April, states ACSUG's functions which are "*to perform the assessment, certification and accreditation (…) in order to promote and assure quality in Galician universities*".

The panel is basically impressed by the scope of activities launched by ACSUG during the relatively brief history of the agency. In the following paragraphs the panel will present its understanding of these activities in the light of the self-evaluation report, the documentation and the site visit.

Following this presentation the panel will comment on the regularity of activities and their placement as external quality assurance activities.

Former activities

From 2003 to 2007, ACUSG carried out three successive assessment activities.

Two different Plans assessed the university degree programmes (pre-Bologna): II PCU Plan (2001-2003) and PEI (2003 to 2005)[7]. The processes consisted of three stages: self-assessment, external assessment (including a site visit), drafting of final report. On a voluntary basis, 89 degree programmes have been assessed by ACSUG.

Assessments of officially recognised post-graduate programmes (2005-2007) were undertaken by ACSUG through the Royal Decree 56/2005 and Royal Decree 1509/2005. The purpose of this assessment process was to give external support to the universities in the adaptation and development of their Bologna degrees. The process consisted of an ex-ante assessment prior to the implementation of the post-graduate programmes. Between 2005 and 2007, ACSUG carried out the compulsory assessment of 84 Master degrees and 33 PhD degrees. Then, the Royal Decree 1393/2007 gave ANECA the responsibilities of the assessment of officially recognised degrees.

Present activities

Labour market insertion analysis and surveys

The labour market insertion analysis and surveys were some of the first activities carried out by ACSUG. It started in 2002 with the aim of analysing the graduates' placement in the labour market in order to assist the Galician universities in designing and improving their degree programmes according to the needs of the labour market.

ACSUG entrusts external partners to develop the methodological tools and the analyses, and an external partner co-ordinates and manages the study by collecting the data as well as discussing and presenting the results.

As already mentioned (cf. section 5.1.5, ESG 2.5), the panel was impressed with this study, which can be considered important and interesting for the development and improvement of university degrees.

Activities related to services evaluation

The first programme related to services evaluation was initiated in 2003 and called "services assessment". That process, which assessed the quality of university facilities including library facilities, consists of three steps: self-assessment, external assessment and final report. Between 2003 and 2006, ACSUG performed 30 assessments of facilities for the Galician universities.

---

[7] Cf. chapter 4 of this report

ACSUG developed a second programme related to the university services, the "administrative department's certification support", which provides "*technical and economic support to the previously reviewed services[8]*" that would like to apply for an international recognised certification such as ISO or EFQM. So far, ten university facilities received the corresponding certification.

Furthermore, ACSUG also contributes to the services development support programme, "*which consists of providing technical and financial support for each service charter that follows the Guide to implementing services charters in Galician universities[9]*". Between 2006 and 2008, ten services charters have participated.

The development of these services assessment programmes is a response to the need of the Galician universities to assess their services and to improve them to reach an international, comparable level. To support this objective, ACSUG signed in 2007 a co-operation agreement with the Club of Excellence for Management (CEG), the Spanish partner of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). Thus, in collaboration with the CEG, ACSUG provides training for the university administrative and service personnel.

Activities in relation to the EHEA

In order to assist the Galician universities' convergence with the Bologna recommendations, the Council for University Education Organisation and ACSUG signed a series of agreements (2003 and 2004). Accordingly, ACSUG in cooperation with the three universities has adopted measures supporting the adaptation process including diverse publications and training workshops with the aim to inform the universities about, for example, European declarations, adaptation of degree programmes, ECTS implementation.

Teaching staff assessment programmes

One of the objectives of the Spanish Universities Act 6/2001 of 21 December (LOU) was to improve the quality of teaching and research. External evaluation mechanisms were therefore designed to provide independent evaluations of the teaching staff activities and to guarantee that minimum standard of skills are fulfilled.

In Galicia, the starting point for the teaching staff assessments was the entering into force of the additional provision 27 of Galician Parliament Law 3/2002 29 April, which has led to two programmes currently carried out by ACSUG:

1. Teaching staff accreditation

In Galicia, a positive assessment is required for candidates who want to be eligible for a number of positions: hired PhD lecturer, assistant PhD lecturer, private university lecturer and associate lecturer. The procedure is based on an evaluation of the applicant's curriculum and consists of an external assessment of the applicant's teaching and research experiences, academic education, professional and management experiences.

---

[8] Self-evaluation report p. 47
[9] Self-evaluation report p.47

Between 2004 and 2008, ACSUG carried out 4767 reviews.

2. Teaching staff complementary compensation

The aim of this process is to acknowledge the academic excellence in teaching and research by granting salary bonuses to lecturers who have attained a stable academic position, and thus, encouraging lecturers to stay at the forefront of progress.

This procedure assesses the merits of the lecturer by evaluating his or hers teaching and research activities through two evaluation procedures (basic and additional evaluation). These are then weighed with the curriculum of the applicant in order to obtain the final result. The validity of the process is five years.

Between 2006 and 2008, ACSUG carried out 1822 reviews, of which 99% were positive.

FIDES-AUDIT programme

In 2007, ACSUG established in Galicia the FIDES programme with the aim "*to assist the Galician university departments design and implement internal quality assurance procedures*[10]". Six months later, a new programme was presented to the universities, the AUDIT programme. This presentation was made by ACSUG in co-operation with ANECA and AQU (Catalan Agency). The objectives of the AUDIT programme were to guarantee the quality of the university degrees and promote a quality culture within the universities. Both programmes therefore had globally the same objectives, to provide:

– the university guidance and support in design of internal quality assurance system;

– the evaluation procedure to assess the design of the system, which consists of the three "classical" stages: self-assessment, external review (without a site visit) and a final report.

Therefore, due to their complementary nature, ACSUG has merged them into one single programme, the so-called FIDES-AUDIT programme.

The FIDES-AUDIT programme is voluntary. The universities can either follow the FIDES-AUDIT guidelines to build their internal quality system or create their own system. However, one advantage to enter the FIDES-AUDIT programme is that a positive evaluation gives the universities a simplified VERIFICA programme (see below): the VERIFICA standard in relation with the internal quality system will be considered as fulfilled.

DOCENTIA programme

DOCENTIA (support programme for the evaluation of teaching staff performance*)* was developed by ANECA and the regional agencies and launched in March 2007 in a national level. The programme is a response to the Royal Decree 1393/2007, which states: "*The Quality Assurance System must have teaching staff*

---

[10] Self-evaluation report, p.52

assessment and improvement procedures in place". The purpose of the programme is therefore to provide support for the universities to design and implement their own processes for the evaluation of the teaching staff.

The three Galician universities have participated in this programme on a voluntary basis. In a first stage, ACSUG has evaluated whether the model designed by the Galician universities for the evaluation of their teaching staff fulfilled the standards of the DOCENTIA model. All reviews showed positive results. In a second stage, the implementation of the validated models will be assessed.

Evaluation of research units

The evaluation of research units is coordinated by the Regional Government of Galicia, who established the procedures and guidelines. ACSUG is responsible for selecting the external expert panels and providing the expert necessary support during the evaluation procedure. Between 2007 and 2008, 253 research units were assessed, of which 81 were approved (according to the additional document provided by ACSUG during the site visit).

It is not clear for the panel, whether these assessments have continued after 2008, nor is the evaluation of research units included in the ACSUG self-evaluation report and neither is this project represented in the documentation. Accordingly the panel had no opportunity to ask that representatives for the project were interviewed during the site visit, though it should be mentioned that the panel met with several external experts, who indicated that they had participated in such activities.

Still the panel's decision is not to include any evaluation of research units in its review.

VERIFICA programme

The VERIFICA programme was launched in 2008 at the national level through the Royal Decree 1393/2007 of 29 October pursuant to the Organic Law 4/2007 on universities. In accordance with the legal framework, the responsibility for establishing and carrying out the procedures lies with ANECA. The aim of this programme is to assess the conformity of the new degrees with the Bologna recommendations. The procedure is a compulsory ex-ante assessment (prior to the university degree implementation) and consists of three stages: self-assessment, external evaluation (without site visit) and final report. As mentioned above (ESG 2.6, section 5.1.6), the validated degrees are submitted to a yearly follow-up and then, after six years, to a proper accreditation procedure (including a site visit).

Only during the site visit did the panel learn that in February 2009 an agreement was signed between ANECA and ACSUG with the objective of delegating to ACSUG the responsibility of the VERIFICA programme in Galicia. At the time of the visit, ACSUG had only just initiated the assessment processes of 68 degree programmes (Bachelor and Master). The panel comments in chapter 3 on this situation.

Conclusion on the nature and regularity of ACSUG activities

The scope of ACSUG activities has over time been quite wide, bringing together what is:

- essentially external quality assurance activities, such as the II PCU, PEI, assessment of officially recognized programmes, DOCIENTIA and VERIFICA programme;
- informative and support activities, such as activities in relation to the EHEA;
- activities that combine both, external quality assurance and support, such as FIDES-AUDIT;
- activities such as Labour market insertion analysis and surveys that have a purely informative focus.

The panel finds on the one hand that ACSUG activities do have sufficient scope to confirm ACSUG as an external quality assurance agency. On the other hand the panel finds that regularity has suffered by the many successive changes in the focus and nature of activities. These changes mainly reflect decisions taken outside ACSUG at the local and/or national political level. As a result ACSUG external assessment activities have tended to be launched and then terminated before it was possible to implement periodic reviews or complete follow-up procedures (cf. the panel's analysis and conclusions above section 5.1.6, ESG 2.6 and section 5.1.7, ESG 2.7).

However, the panel must conclude that in the Galician higher education system ACSUG is visible and credible as an external quality assurance agency that operates on a regular basis.

Standard fulfilment: Fully compliant

5.4 ESG 3.4 - Resources

Standard
Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective manner with appropriate provision for the development of their processes and procedures.

Financial Resources

ACSUG's financial resources proceed mainly from contributions of the bodies in the consortium, Education council, Industry council and Galician universities, with the first as the major contributor. A proportion of the financing is reflected in the budget of the Autonomous Community of Galicia whereas the rest corresponds to co-operation agreements for the exercise of the various activities assigned to the ACSUG.

The Board of Directors approves the revenue and expenditure budget, and the accounts of ACSUG are subject to an annual financial audit. In 2008 ACSUG's total income was 1'291'143 Euros.

The review panel understood that ACSUG leadership finds the financial resources to be adequate for purpose and that the budget allotments to the various operating units are appropriate. Considering the scope and level of present ACSUG activities the panel agree that this is the case.

Human Resources

Since 2001 the number of ACSUG staff has increased yearly. After a 50 percent increase in 2007-08 ACSUG now has 16 staff members. Apart from the increase in quantitative terms, the qualitative change is also significant, because the ratio between permanent and non-permanent staff members have gone from one to seven in 2006 to 11 to 4 in 2008.

ACSUG staff is managed by the Executive Director and approved by the Board of Directors. It is structured in four different areas, Cabinet of Direction, Teaching Unit, Programme Unit and Management Unit, with specific responsibilities (cf. chap. 4).

Considering the considerable workload of the ACSUG staff, the review panel was impressed by the professionalism and the commitment demonstrated by the staff. Morale among staff seemed good as is also reflected in the low turnover.

Apart from one staff member with a PhD the remaining 15 have university degrees at bachelor or diploma level. It is therefore important that ACSUG staff has access to continuing education. At the beginning of the year, an "education planning" is made, approved by the Director, and the review panel was pleased to hear during the interviews that all staff members have already followed courses.

The review panel must, however, emphasise that the command of spoken English is generally much too low among staff members and should be improved considerably. By applying for ENQA membership, ACSUG demonstrates its ambition to play an active role in the European community of accreditation agencies. This would imply that participations in ENQA conferences and workshops would be difficult for staff members without the necessary command of English. Many staff members would further not be able to learn from the number of ENQA publications in English that disseminate good practices of external quality assurance. In other words this panel wishes to state that it sees a clear link between an agency's international aspirations and the proficiency in English among staff.

Material Resources

The review panel had the occasion of a tour of ACSUG offices, and found these to be well accommodated and with up to date technical equipment.

Standard fulfilment: Fully compliant

5.5 ESG 3.5 - Mission Statement

Standard

Agencies should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, set down in a publicly available statement.

Guidelines

These statements should describe the goals and objectives of agencies' quality assurance processes, the division of labour with relevant stakeholders in higher education, especially the higher education institutions, and the cultural and historical context of their work. The statement should make clear that the external quality assurance process is a major activity of the agency and that there exists a systematic approach to achieving its goals and objectives. There should also be documentation to demonstrate how the statements are translated into a clear policy and management plan.

ACSUG's mission statement is publicly available on the website and reads as follows:

"*The key mission of ACSUG is to contribute towards the improvement of the Galician university system for which it undertakes the activities of reporting, assessment, certification and accreditation of Galician university activities, particularly those related to teaching, research, the transfer of knowledge and management.*

ACSUG also acts as a permanent instrument for collecting and channelling information between the Galician universities, other institutions and stakeholders, enabling Galician university system to keep constantly up to date and in touch with the changing social demands."

The panel finds it commendable that the mission combines external quality assurance activities with a focus on ACSUG's role as disseminator of knowledge and experience among universities and stakeholders.

On the other hand the panel misses in the mission statement the incorporation of the expectation of the guidelines for ESG 3.5 that the division of labour with relevant stakeholders in higher education, especially the higher education institutions, is made clear.

The panel further misses documentation as to how the statements of the mission are translated into a clear policy and management plan (cf. again the Guidelines).

More importantly the interview process did not identify any outspoken co-ownership or identification with the mission statement, neither from governing bodies, nor staff members or stakeholders.

Standard fulfilment: Substantially compliant

5.6 ESG 3.6 - Independence

Standard

Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders.

Guidelines

An agency will need to demonstrate its independence through measures, such as:

- its operational independence from higher education institutions and governments is guaranteed in official documentation (e.g. instruments of governance or legislative acts);

- the definition and operation of its procedures and methods, the nomination and appointment of external experts and the determination of the outcomes of its quality assurance processes are undertaken autonomously and independently from governments, higher education institutions, and organs of political influence;

- while relevant stakeholders in higher education, particularly students/learners, are consulted in the course of quality assurance processes, the final outcomes of the quality assurance processes remain the responsibility of the agency.

Since its foundation, the independence of ACSUG has been formally recognised through the co-operation agreement of 30 January 2001 between the Galician Government and the three Galician universities as well as in the Decree 270/2003 of 22 May. In the latter, CGIACA was created with the aim to clearly differentiate between the governing body (Board of Directors) and CGIACA as the operational body responsible for the assessment itself.

However, the governing structure of ACSUG and the CGIACA are characterized by a heavy participation of high level representatives of the local government and of the three universities (cf. chap. 4). When the ENQA Board decided in 2007 to grant ACSUG candidate membership of ENQA the Board recommended that, in order to fulfil the criteria for full membership ACSUG should take into account that its constitution and structure and especially the actual membership of the Board of Directors do not allow for a sufficient degree of independence. The Board based this observation on its view that if an agency is comprised of those it whom reviews, it cannot be seen to be independent of them.

Subsequently, "*the ACSUG Board adopted the agreement [2008] approving the amendments to the Agency's statutes with the primary aim of reinforcing and guaranteeing the absolute independence of ACSUG in the exercise of the functions it has been assigned*[11]". This agreement introduced two major changes:

– the organisational structure of ACSUG was modified by the creation of a new consultative body, the advisory board (cf. chap. 4);

---

[11] Self-evaluation report, p.68

- the responsibilities of CGIACA were expanded. In addition to the appointment of expert panels, CGIACA should have the "*ultimate responsibility*" for the decisions regarding reporting, assessment, accreditation and certification.

The panel lacks a precise and operational definition of "ultimate responsibility" and notes that it was stated by at the site visit that CGIACA would only overrule an expert panel if quite "extraordinary circumstances" arose. The exact nature of such circumstances was not made clear.

However, the review panel considers it positive that ACSUG feels concerned by the independence problem and notices the evidence such as the successive legal changes implemented in order to enhance and guarantee the independence of the agency, which is also pointed up in the Code of Ethics. At the time of the review, the new Galician University Act was in the final drafting process and with the aim to provide ACSUG with the legal status of Autonomous Agency.

However, the review panel is not totally convinced about the independence of this system. It is true that the distinction introduced between the governing and the assessment body is surely a very important step. However, the review panel is concerned as to whether the actual membership of the CGIACA does sufficiently guarantee ACSUG independency.

Thus, all CGIACA members are government or Galician university representatives, and the panel could not identify evidence that members are appointed in their personal capacity. Moreover, the CGIACA chairman and vice-chairman are also voting members in the Board of Directors and the chair has since the start CGIACA been Mr. José Ramón Leis Fidalgo, who is now acting regional director for University Development and Quality of the Galician University System. Mr Leis Fidalgo is presumed to leave this position as a result of the change in local government and a successor as chair of CGIACA has seemingly been identified.

The review panel was told during the interview with representatives of CGIACA that the composition of CGIACA may soon be modified by the future Galician regulations and will no longer be composed of government and Galician university representatives. The panel has no actual documentation of this and must conclude that the present composition of CGIACA clouds the intended separation of the governing body and CGIACA as the operational body.

It is therefore difficult to conclude with any certainty that "*the conclusions and recommendations made in their* [agencies] *reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders* (ESG 3.6)".

Apart from these formal points, the review panel noted, however, that all interview partners, Board of Director, university representatives, CGIACA members and external experts, consider ACSUG as a fully independent agency. And, during the site visit, the panel was told that CGIACA never overturned a recommendation by the external assessors and that the Galician universities do

not exercise influence on the outcomes of the procedures.

Considering and weighing this evidence on formal relative to de facto independence, the panel on the one side considers it likely that ACSUG is for the time being allowed by the key stakeholders to operate independently. However, this situation could very well reflect that the activities hitherto conducted by ACSUG have a strong improvement focus and a much less prominent focus on accountability. In this context mutual trust is a natural and positive result.

ACSUG will during the coming years modify its activities from being mostly supportive and informative to actual accountability activities at least when VERIFICA accreditation procedures begin in 2012. It is a hypothetical, but not impossible, situation that ACSUG's conduction of accreditation processes may create conflicts with universities or even regional government.

In the view of the panel the present governing structure does not in such a scenario sufficiently protect ACSUG's operational independence,

The panel might add in this context the observation that in a small, closely knit higher education environment such as the Galician, special care must be taken that formal procedures supersede informal understandings.

Therefore, in the light of these formal and operational arguments, the panel finds that the structure of ACSUG, especially the CGIACA composition, does not guarantee ACSUG full independency.

The panel recommends, therefore, modifying and expanding the CGIACA by involving academic representatives, professionals and students and all of these to be appointed in their personal capacity. Further some members should come from outside Galicia, and the inclusion of international academic representatives should be considered.

Standard fulfilment: Partially compliant

Note:
The Statement presented 14th July 2009 by ACSUG to the review panel (cf. section 3.4) introduces the new government regulations for ACSUG and argues extensively that independence is accordingly now formally assured.

21st July, 2009 ACSUG further briefed the panel chair that ACSUG's Board of Directors had now appointed a new CGIACA and a new Advisory Board.

The review panel, however, is in agreement that our report must be based on the documentation in place during the preparation process and the site visit and that the panel cannot at the time of the finalisation of the report speculate on future developments in the organisation following from legislation only formally in place after the site visit in May and the details of which were not available to the panel before that.

The panel hopes sincerely that the new legal developments will finally ensure

independence primarily through the reorganization of CGIACA and acknowledges further that a major reason that all this was not in place at the time of the site visit, is the recent political changes in Galicia.

The panel takes also note of the composition of the new CGIACA. The chair and six ordinary members are all from Galician universities and appointed in their personal capacities. There are no representatives from outside the Galician region, no professionals and no student members.

Further, it is the panel's opinion that any interpretation of the new CGIACA's independence must in principle also be based on an interview with members on their interpretation of their roles and functions – and independence. In other words exactly the kind of interview, which makes site visits essential elements in the documentation of an ENQA review.

The review panel considers it therefore the responsibility of the ENQA Board to weigh the implications and potential consequences of this new formal development for ACSUG's status in relation to the ESGs, cf. the conclusion of this report.

5.7 ESG 3.7 - External quality assurance criteria and processes used by agencies

Standard
The process, criteria and procedures used by agencies should be pre-defined and publicly available. These processes will normally be expected to include:
- a self-assessment or equivalent procedure by the subject of the quality assurance processes;
- an external assessment by group of experts, including, as appropriate, (a) student member(s) and site visit as decided by the agency;
- publication of a report, including any decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes;
- a follow-up procedure to review actions taken by the subject of the quality assurance process in the light of any recommendations contained in the report.

Guidelines
Agencies may develop and use other processes and procedures for particular purposes.
Agencies should pay careful attention to their declared principles at all times, and ensure both that their requirements and processes are managed professionally and that their conclusions and decisions are reached in a consistent manner, even though the decisions are formed by groups of different people.
Agencies that make formal quality assurance decisions or conclusions which have formal consequences should have an appeal procedure. The nature and form of the appeals procedure should be determined in the light of the constitution of each agency.

Processes, criteria and procedures used by ACSUG are predefined and publicly available, cf. the analysis of ESG 2.3 (cf. section 5.1.3) of this report.

ACSUG evaluation processes involve the self-assessment phase and an external assessment by a group of experts including a student member (cf. section 5.1.4, ESG 2.4). ACSUG prepares a summary report on every assessment process undertaken. The reports are then published on the ACSUG website.

Follow-up procedures are not yet systematically in place. But for the VERIFICA programme notably, a follow-up is expected on a yearly basis. Comments and conclusions of the review panel on this subject can be found in the analysis of ESG 2.6 (cf. section 5.1.6) of this report.

A site visit is not in place during this initial phase of the VERIFICA project, but is planned for the accreditations to take place in a few years. This situation is in accordance with the current legislation in Spanish territory, specifically with the Royal Decree 1397/2007, followed by all Spanish agencies.

ACSUG has an appeal procedure in place for assessment processes that lead to formal resolution, decision or outcome. According to the 30/1998 Law on Administrative Procedure, an appeal can be lodged with "*ACSUG's decision making body by means of an administrative procedure*[12]". In addition, in accordance with the 29/1998 Law on Contentious-Administrative Jurisdiction, it is possible to appeal before the Administrative Courts.

Standard fulfilment: Substantially compliant

---

[12] Self-evaluation report, p. 71

5.8 ESG 3.8 - Accountability

Standard
Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.

Guideline
These procedures are expected to include the following:
1. A published policy for the assurance of the quality of the agency itself, made available on its website;
2. Documentation which demonstrates that:
    the agency's processes and results reflect its mission and goals of quality assurance
    - the agency has in place, and enforces, a no-conflict-of-interest mechanism in the work of its external experts;
    - the agency has reliable mechanisms that ensure the quality of any activities and material produced by subcontractors, if some or all of the elements in its quality assurance procedure are subcontracted to other parties;
    - the agency has in place internal quality assurance procedures which include an internal feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback form its own staff and council/board); an internal reflection mechanism (i.e. means to react to internal and external recommendations for improvement); and an external feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from experts and reviewed institutions for future development) in order to inform and underpin its own development and improvement.
3. A mandatory cyclical external review of the agency's activities at least once every five years.

A published policy for the internal assurance of the quality of the agency is published on ACSUG website. This quality policy formulates the responsibilities in the field of quality assurance as well as the general guidelines of the internal quality system.

ACSUG has in place some internal quality assurance procedures, which function as internal reflection mechanisms. These include an internal feedback mechanism (Board of Directors and staff meetings, suggestion box, etc).

Concerning the external feedback mechanism, extensive surveys are made of views of participating experts. However, the panel is very concerned about its failure to find evidence that truly systematic mechanisms are in place for the collection of feedback from the universities, programmes and teaching staff that have been reviewed.

Each year the quality manager produces a summary report, which presents the results of the internal and external feedbacks as well as a series of measures and actions to improve the quality of ACSUG activities. Based on these results, the Board of Directors proposes improvement measures and approves the annual objectives for quality assurance.

During the site visit the review panel learnt that the ACSUG staff as well as the

external stakeholders feel implicated in the quality assurance processes. They are pleased to give their opinions and remarks, which are taken into account.

Art. 24 of the ACSUG statutes mentions that the Advisory Board is responsible for resolving any possible controversies in relation to the good practices and ethical code. ACSUG considers therefore the Advisory Board to be an integral part of its internal measures of the quality system. The review panel shares this view that the advisory board has an important potential role in improving the agency.

ACSUG pays special care in selecting the external experts. The selection criteria are published for each process. The independence of the expert panel is guaranteed by the non-disclosure agreement signed by all assessors. The key principles of the agreement are the objectivity, confidentiality and the absence of conflicts of interest during the processes.

The no conflict of interest principle is formalised in ACSUG's Code of Ethics. However, the panel is concerned that there is no mechanism for enforcing this Code of Ethics, such as an ethics board. And the panel has not been able to identify a procedure to make a complaint related to the Code of Ethics.

The meeting with the external partners convinced the review panel that ACSUG has reliable mechanisms for assuring the quality of its sub-contracted activities. ACSUG supports and follows the work performed by its external partners closely and on a regular basis.

In 2006, ACSUG obtained the ISO 9001:2000 certification in order to improve the management of its internal quality assurance and activities. Recently ACSUG was certified with ISO 9001:2008. And in 2008, ACSUG introduced a quality assurance and environmental policy with the primary objective of improving the management of resources, energy and waste and of fostering continuous improvement in the management system.

Standard fulfilment: Substantially compliant

The review panel recommends implementing formal and systematic mechanisms for feedback from universities submitted to assessment processes.

The panel recommends also that an ethics board is appointed to oversee the adherence with the no conflict of interest principle.

6. Sections relating to additional Terms of Reference of the review or additional reflections

6.1 Assessment of teaching staff

According to the Terms of Reference of the review (3 December 2008), the review panel was asked to comment on ACSUG's role and tasks in the contexts of the Galician and Spanish higher education systems, especially the teaching staff assessment programmes.

The teaching staff assessment programmes assess teaching and researching performance as a compulsory requirement for hiring by universities or for granted salary bonuses. The methodology consists of an evaluation of the applicant's curriculum by external experts (cf. section 5.3, ESG 3.3).

Between 2004 and 2008, ACSUG carried out 6'589 assessments, to which obviously a substantial part of ACSUG resources was devoted. The teaching staff unit (cf. chap. 4), supported by the management unit, is responsible for performing these evaluation programmes. It consists of two technicians with legal training and two administrative assistants.

The processes are supported by an electronic platform, which enables applicants and assessors to complete the applications and assessments on line. The administrative assistants are responsible for the management of this on-line documentation, while the technicians control that the final documents have been prepared according to the legal requirements, study the potential appeals and give legal advises. The final documents are then sent to CGIACA that makes the decisions.

The teacher assessments constitute in a sense a category of their own. The European Standards and Guidelines did not take this kind of activities into account apart from the indication in standard 1.4 that higher education institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students is qualified and competent. In Galicia and other parts of Spain there is instead a focus on quality assurance of staff as an element in an external accreditation process. The panel has looked carefully through the documentation on teacher assessments and finds that methodology and processes are satisfactory from a professional quality assurance perspective.

The panel also finds that the cost of these assessments equals almost 20 percent of ACSUG's annual budget, which is not surprising considering the elaborate and rather bureaucratic procedures involved.

However, the panel learnt during the site visit that these programmes are seen positively by a majority of the lecturers as well as by the university governance. These also perceived the involved processes as transparent and objective.

The panel recognises accordingly that teaching staff assessment programmes are an established and recognised part of Spanish and thereby Galician quality culture, that the processes are positively perceived at the universities and that the

procedures are managed efficiently by ACSUG and meet their set aims.

6.2 ACSUG's website

In 2007, the ENQA board formulated the following recommendation: "*The Agency's website is in Galician and Spanish only and contains no English translations (the English pages are actually in Spanish)*". Since then and not least in preparation for this review ACSUG has made strong progress and substantial parts of the ACSUG website are now translated into English, such as the mission statement, the aims and objectives of the various activities and presentation of the organisation. The review panel acknowledges the efforts made, but strongly encourages ACSUG to continue its website development by translating also such documents, such as the guides, final reports, etc, that illustrate processes and methodologies.

7. Conclusion

The review panel has in ACSUG's self-evaluation report, the many supplied documents and in the context of the site visit found much to commend in ACSUG's organisation and operations. At the same time the panel has stated a number of reservations with the result that compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines is in respect to most standards termed substantial or partial rather than full.

Among these reservations two deserve special attention. Firstly, the sequence of ACSUG activities has been the result of many changes in regional and national regulations and demands on the agency. The consequence of this development on ACSUG activities is that the different elements have not had sufficient time to develop into more regular and cyclical activities. The exception may turn out to be the VERIFICA programme, but as indicated in the report this is a very recent activity.

Secondly, the issue of ACSUG independence in terms of ESG 3.6 was not during the evaluation process proper established with sufficient clarity. The major reason for this situation was that it was unclear from the submitted documentation and the site visit interviews, whether the CGIACA was formally guaranteed sufficient independence of operations in relation to the government- and university dominated Board of Directors.

A new CGIACA is now in place and only ten days before the review panel on 31st July 2009 presents its report to the ENQA Board. The review panel has argued above in sections 3.4 and 5.6 why it cannot at this late stage analyse this new development in relation to ESG 3.6.

The Panel therefore recommends to the Board of ENQA that ACSUG should be awarded full membership for a period of five years. At the same time, the ENQA Board is invited to consider making the grant of full membership dependent on a progress report for instance in three years time with respect to the various weak

points identified in this report and especially the demonstration that the new regulations and the reorganisation of CGIACA ensure ACSUG's formal independence in relation to government and universities.

Annex 1: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)

Part 2

2.1 - Use of internal quality assurance procedures
External quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines

2.2 - Development of external quality assurance processes
The aims and objective of quality assurance processes should be determined before the processes themselves are developed, by all those responsible (including higher education institutions) and should be published with a description of the procedures to be used.

2.3 - Criteria for decisions
Any formal decisions made as a result of an external quality assurance activity should be based on explicit published criteria that are applied consistently.

2.4 - Process fit for purpose
All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

2.5 - **Reporting**
Reports should be written in a style, which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations or recommendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

2.6 - Follow-up procedures
Quality Assurance Processes which contain recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, should have predetermined follow-up procedure, which is implemented consistently.

2.7 - Periodic reviews
External quality assurance of institutions and/or programmes should be undertaken on a cyclical basis. The length of the cycle and the review procedures to be used should be clearly defined and published in advanced.

2.8 - System-wide analysis
Quality Assurance should produce form time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of their reviews, evaluations, assessments, etc.

Part 3

3.1 - Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education
The external quality assurance agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance procedures described in Part 2 of the European Standard and Guidelines.

3.2 - Official status

Agencies should be formally recognised by competent public authorities in the European Higher Education Area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdiction within they operate.

3.3 - *Activities*
Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institutional or programme level) on a regular basis.

3.4 - *Resources*
Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective manner with appropriate provision for the development of their processes and procedures.

3.5 - *Mission Statement*
Agencies should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, set down in a publicly available statement

3.6 - *Independence*
Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders.

3.7 - *External quality assurance criteria and processes used by agencies*
The process, criteria and procedures used by agencies should be pre-defined and publicly available. These processes will normally be expected to include:
- a self-assessment or equivalent procedure by the subject of the quality assurance processes;
- an external assessment by group of experts, including, as appropriate, (a) student member(s) and site visit as decided by the agency;
- publication of a report, including any decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes;
- a follow-up procedure to review actions taken by the subject of the quality assurance process in the light of any recommendations contained in the report.

3.8 - *Accountability*
Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.

Annex 2: ENQA recommendations formulated in the TERMS OF REFERENCE, 3 December 2008

"*The ENQA Board decided on 27 February 2007 to grant ACSUG Candidate Membership of ENQA. On that occasion the Board recommended that, in order to fulfil the criteria for Full Membership, ACSUG should take into account the following recommendations:*

- *Independence: the constitution and structure of the Agency and, especially, the actual membership of the Board of Directors, do not allow for a sufficient degree of independence: if an agency is comprised of those it reviews, it cannot be seen to be independent of them:*

- *And, related to this:*

    o *It is not clear in what circumstances the decision-making body of ACSUG can overturn a recommendation by the Peer Review Team;*

    o *It also remains unclear how the Agency's decision-making process ensures that no institution can exercise influence on the outcome of an accreditation procedure;*

- *More detailed information is needed about the human and financial resources available to the Agency*

    o *It is not clear whether, or to what extent, students are involved in the external expert teams*

    o *It is not clear whether the final evaluation reports, or summaries of them, are publicly available;*

    o *Further information is required about the criteria for the composition of the expert panels as well as the selection procedures of experts;*

- *The mechanisms used for the collection of feedback from the bodies that have been reviewed should be improved, and a systematic internal quality assurance mechanism introduced for the assurance of the Agency's own quality;*

- *The Agency's website is in Galician and Spanish only and contains no English translations (the English pages are actually in Spanish)*

In the course of the review, therefore, the team members will pay special attention to the way in which these recommendations have been addressed."

Annex 3 - Programme of the site visit

Day 1: Monday 18 May 2009

Session	Time	Group
S1	09.00 - 09.30	**Director** • Julio Ernesto Abalde Alonso
S2	09.30 – 10.00	**Director and Quality Manager** • Julio Ernesto Abalde Alonso • Luis Carlos Velón Sixto
S3	10.00 - 11.00	**Board of Directors, Permanent Committee** ***President*** • Guillermo Rojo Sánchez ***University administration*** • Laura Sánchez Piñón, former representative ***Higher education and research department*** • José Alberto Díez de Castro, head • Rogelio Conde-Pumpido Tourón (former head) **Representatives from Galician Universities** ***Vice-chancellors*** • José María Barja Pérez, UDC • Alberto Gago Rodríguez, UVI • Senén Barro Ameneiro, USC ***President of the universities social councils*** • Antonio Abril Abadín, UDC • Emilio Atrio Abad, UVI • Manuel Puga Pereira, USC **Representative appointed by the head of the department of university administration** • María Isabel Doval Ruiz **Representatives appointed by the head of the department of research, development and innovation** • Carlos Paulo Martínez Pereiro • Xoán Carmona Badía **Student's representative** • Azucena Rodríguez Amoros **Director of ACSUG** • Julio Ernesto Abalde Alonso
Break		

S4	11.30 - 12.30	**CGIACA**
		• José Ramón Leis Fidalgo, President
		• Francisco Javier de Vicente Remesal
		• Enrique Martínez Ansemil
		• Eduardo Godoy Malvar
		• Margarita Estévez Toranzo
		• Pedro Faraldo Roca
S5	12.30 - 13.30	**Technical Board**
		Secretaries of the Universities Social Councils
		• Enrique Muñoz Lagarón, UDC
		• Ignacio Rodríguez Iglesias, UVI
		• José Benigno Carril Pérez, USC
		Members
		• José Sordo Rodríguez (USC)
		• Manuel Peralbo Uzquiano (UDC)
		• Ana Fernández Pulpeiro (UVI)
Lunch		
S6	15.00 - 16.00	**Cabinet of Direction**
		• Ana Isabel López Lorenzo
		• Luis Carlos Velón Sixto
S7	16.00 - 17.00	**Programs unit**
		• Isabel Belmonte Otero
		• María Dolores Castro Pais
		• María Carmen Fernández Montes
		• María Paula Ríos de Deus
Break		
S8	17.30 - 18.15	**Unit of teaching staff**
		• Francisco Rico Rey
		• Lucía Bouso Montero
		• Sandra Millán Buceta
		• Edurne Lesta Chapela
	18.15 - 19.45	Review Panel Meeting

Day 2: Tuesday 19 May 2009

Session	Time	Group
S9	09.00 - 10.00	**Management Unit – Administration staff** *Management Unit* • Aitor Martínez Lafuente • Santiago Domínguez Martínez • María Virtudes Couceiro Novais *Computer systems* • María Dolores Sierra Sánchez • Marta María Mallo Rey • José Manuel Baña Souto
S10	10.00 - 11.00	**Representatives of the Universities** **Vice-rectors for quality** • María Elena Sierra Palmeiro, UDC • María Dolores Álvarez Pérez, USC • Ángel Manuel Sánchez Bermúdez, UVI **Directors of the quality technical units of the universities** • Miguel Ángel González Valeiro, UDC • Fara Calvo Martínez, USC • Ángeles Cancela Carral, UVI **People representative of programmes accredited by ACSUG** • Juan Lema Rodicio, Chemistry Engineering, USC • José María Cancela Carral, INEF, UVI • María Teresa López Fernández, Philology, UDC
Break		
S11	11.30 - 12.30	**External Experts (national and international)** • Fernando Huelín Trillo, professional, Health Sciences • María Victoria Trianes Torres, Social and Legal Sciences • Juan José Cubero Marín, Engineering and Architecture • Xavier Batlle Gelabert, Science • Mercedes Brea López, Arts and Humanities • Rafael Suau Suárez, Science

S12	12.30 - 13.30	**Students in expert teams** • Amelia Fraga Mosquera, (FIDES-Audit, DOCENTIA) • Lucía Ordóñez Mayán (Degree evaluation) • Óscar Méndez Franco (Degree evaluation) • Jorge Varela Barrio (Degree evaluation) • Anxo Mena Rodríguez (Degree evaluation) • Fernando Miguel Galán Palomares (DOCENTIA)
Lunch		
S13	14.45 - 15.45	**External partners** • Rosa Crujeiras Casais, Labour insertion working group • Sara Fernández López, Non-quality costs working group • José Antonio Pérez Rodríguez, Elaboration of reports working group • Jaime Gómez Márquez, Monographs of EHEA working group
Break		
	16.15 - 17.00	Extra meeting (if necessary to clarify something with any person)
	17.00 - 18.30	Review panel meeting
S14	18.30 - 19.00	Final meeting with Director and Quality manager • Julio Ernesto Abalde Alonso • Luis Carlos Velón Sixto