

Rafael van Grieken  
Director  
National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA)

Vienna, 29 January 2013

**Subject: ENQA Full membership of ANECA**

Dear Dr van Grieken,

I am pleased to inform you that, at its meeting of 19 December 2012, the Board of ENQA agreed to reconfirm ANECA's Full membership of ENQA for five years from 19 December 2012.

On the basis of its scrutiny of the final review report, the ENQA Board agreed that ANECA met the necessary requirements for the reconfirmation of ENQA Full Membership.

The ENQA Board concluded that ANECA is in substantial compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines. Regarding ESG 2.4, the ENQA Board had a different judgement than that of the panel and concluded that ANECA is in substantial compliance with this criterion. In addition, the ENQA Board found that there were some areas for development, included in the Annex to this letter. ANECA should submit a progress report on these areas in one year's time (December 2013). This report will be considered in conjunction with the next external review.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me or the ENQA Secretariat.

Please accept my congratulations to ANECA for being reconfirmed Full Membership in ENQA.

Kind regards,



Achim Hopbach  
President of ENQA

## Annex: Areas for development

The Board strongly recommends ANECA to implement a number of changes in its procedures and structures. The Board also advise the Agency to ensure that more progress is made on those issues mentioned in 2008 where little progress has been observed.

The governance of ANECA should be more clearly independent of the Ministry. The panel and the Board are aware that legal constrictions might limit the possibilities for change in this area but would encourage the Agency to tackle this issue actively with the relevant stakeholders, most importantly with the Ministry for Education, Culture and Sport.

In particular, the Board suggests ANECA to pay particular attention to the following issues:

### ESG 2.5 Reporting

- Reports provide accessible information relating to the conclusions and recommendations of its evaluations, but are of only limited value to stakeholders.
  - **Recommendation:** to amend the procedures so that reports are more specific, more informative and that the information contained within them is easier to locate.

### ESG 2.8 System-wide analysis

- Annual activities reports, reports on the current state of external quality assurance in Spanish universities and technical reports do not correspond to the expectations of system-wide analysis as described in the guideline to standard 2.8. Most importantly none of these reports provide information or evaluation relating to the findings and the impact of ANECA's work.
  - **Recommendation:** ANECA needs to utilise the significant amount of information that it has available to produce reports that are analytical rather than descriptive.

### ENQA Criterion 3 – Resources (ESG 3.4)

- The financial and human resources for the activities of ANECA at the present time are adequate to fulfil the purposes and functions set out in its founding law. However, ANECA needs to address the current budgetary constraints strategically and establish priorities also with regard to the development of new processes and procedures.
  - **Recommendation:** ANECA's resources could be used more strategically and the many processes the agency operates need to be more streamlined for efficiency purposes.

### ENQA Criterion 5 – Independence (ESG 3.6)

- Despite the passage of time since the independence issue was raised in the previous review, this still appears to be a substantial issue. The structure of the governance of ANECA remains an area of possible concern.
  - **Recommendation:** further reflection and discussion about the membership structure of the Board of Trustees is needed. Despite the legal restrictions, it would seem possible to implement some of the recommendations of the panel so that the governance of ANECA is more clearly independent of the Ministry. In the progress report, the Board would like to know how the current composition of the ANECA Board of Trustees is contributing to

the achievement of the goals and objectives of ANECA and why that composition is assuring the independence of the agency.

**ENQA Criterion 6 – External QA criteria and processes used by the members (ESG 3.7)**

- ANECA's quality assurance programmes do not fit easily into the model expected by the ESG standard;
  - **Recommendation:** In developing the procedure for ACREDITA, ANECA's institutional processes should include a self-evaluation process and a site visit.

**ENQA Criterion 7 – Accountability procedures (ESG 3.8)**

- There is lack of any approach to quality management which extends across the Agency as a whole and serves to inform strategic direction.
  - **Recommendation:** There needs to be more sharing of information across the Agency and a broader, more structured and integrative approach to its internal quality management. The size of the Agency makes this both possible and essential.