

## Decision on the Substantive Change Report by Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education (ACPUA)

**Register Committee**

**Ref.** RC/C130

**Ver.** 1.0

**Date** 2025-03-06

**Page** 1 / 2

<b>Decision of:</b>	2025-03-04
<b>Result:</b>	Take note
<b>Report received on:</b>	2024-12-12
<b>Agency registered since:</b>	2016-08-01
<b>Last external review report:</b>	2022-06-10
<b>Registration until:</b>	2026-06-30
<b>Absented themselves from decision-making:</b>	n/a
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Substantive Change Report, 2024-12-12</a></li> <li>2. <a href="#">Minutes of Online Clarification call, 2025-30-01</a></li> </ol>

1. The Register Committee considered the Substantive Change Report of 2024-12-12.
2. The Register Committee learned from the report that ACPUA has introduced the following changes within the scope of the ESG:
  - A) New protocol for external quality assurance activity – Institutional Follow-up Accreditation
  - B) Changes to existing quality assurance activity - IQAS Certification (PACE SGIC)
3. ACPUA has further introduced one new activity outside the scope of the ESG:
  - C) Accreditation of the position of Associate Professor with Clinical Link

### A) New protocol for external quality assurance activity

4. The Register Committee took note of the agency's new protocol for, *Institutional Follow-up Accreditation* - a methodology for renewal of the institutional accreditation of the university centres.
5. The Register Committee learned from the substantive change report and the agency's clarification that the new protocol of the activity was adopted in July 2024. After analysing the first accreditations conducted

based on this new protocol, the Evaluation, Certification, and Accreditation Commission (CECA) of the agency approved an updated protocol on January 31, 2025. The protocol of the activity derives from methodologies of the *IQAS Certification (PACE SGIC)* and *Study programme accreditation*.

## Register Committee

**Ref.** RC/C130

**Ver.** 1.0

**Date** 2025-03-06

**Page** 2 / 2

6. Based on the documentation provided by ACPUA, the Register Committee had no prima facie concerns that the ESG Part 2 are complied with.
- 7. The Register Committee expects that the activity will be analysed in full against ESG 2.1 – 2.7 as part of the next external review of ACPUA.**

### B) Changes to existing quality assurance activity

8. The Register Committee noted that ACPUA expanded the methodology of *IQAS Certification (PACE SGIC)*, and now it also covers university centres offering doctoral education.
9. The Committee expects that this activity will be analysed in full as part of ACPUA's next renewal of registration. The questions to be included are whether the standards are (a) fit for the evaluation of the new objectives and how the agency has consulted all relevant stakeholders when updating the methodology (ESG 2.2), (b) whether the updated standards are consistently implemented (ESG 2.5) and (c) if reports resulting from the ACPUA's updated methodology for Internal Quality Assurance Certification are published (ESG 2.6).

### C) Activity outside the scope of ESG

10. The Register Committee also learned from the substantive change report that the agency has started implementing a new activity outside the scope of ESG, *Accreditation of the position of Associate Professor with Clinical Link*. The activity accredits personnel affiliated with the public health system of Aragon who meet the requirements for the positions of Professor or Associate Professor.
- 11. The Register Committee took note of the activity and underlined that ACPUA should have submitted a change report after the methodology of the activity was approved.**

## EQAR Substantive Change Report

<b>Agency #1</b>	ARAGON AGENCY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STRATEGIC FORESIGHT IN HIGHER EDUCATION
<b>Agency acronym</b>	ACPUA
<b>Expiry date #1</b>	30/06/2006
<b>Contact #1</b>	MARÍA BELÉN SERRANO
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<b>Email #1</b>	<a href="mailto:bserranov@aragon.es">bserranov@aragon.es</a>
<b>Other organisations?</b>	No
<b>A. Has the organisational identity of the registered agency changed?</b>	No
<b>B. Has the organisational structure changed?</b>	No
<b>C. Changes in EQA activities</b>	2. Substantive changes carried out to one or several existing external QA activities (e.g. changes to their methodology, criteria or procedures)
<b>Description new/changed</b>	EXISTING ACTIVITIES:  1.- Substantive changes to one external quality assurance activity within the scope of the ESG: Institutional_PACE SIGC (IQAS certification).  2.- Substantive changes to one external quality assurance activity within the scope of the ESG: Institutional follow-up accreditation.
<b>2. Changed EQA activity</b>	
<b>1</b>	Institutional_PACE SGIC (IQAS certification).
<b>2</b>	Institutional follow-up accreditation.
<b>ESG 2.1</b>	This activities focus expressly on the

effectiveness of the universities' Internal Quality Assurance Systems and their proper correlation with the quality criteria for degrees set out in Part 1 of the ESG.

PACE-SIGC: The seven dimensions are aligned with the ESG (Part 1) as in the previous protocol.

We have only added the eighth dimension for doctoral studies in order to comply with the new legislation.

#### INSTITUTIONAL FOLLOW UP

ACCREDITATION: The seven dimensions are aligned with the ESG (Part 1) as in the previous protocol. We have only added the eighth dimension for doctoral studies in order to comply with the new legislation.

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#### ESG 2.2

In the design of the evaluation protocol (as always), special interest has been taken in arranging feedback from the universities, including a first pilot evaluation.

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#### ESG 2.3

1

The Committee (SEC) that prepares the evaluation report has recently been reformed to increase the technical capacity and versatility of the experts. This Committee includes international experts.

2

<https://acpua.aragon.es/es/organizacion#ancla6>

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#### ESG 2.4

The evaluation process involves (as always) academic, students, international experts, external stakeholders, all of them outside the University System of Aragon. Besides, our evaluation panels are characterized by the incorporation of academics from the majority field of

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knowledge in the center to be evaluated.

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**ESG 2.5**

This is an exhaustive process (as it is specify in all our procedures):

- 1.- Selection of the reviewers
- 2.- Training
- 3.- Consensus session
- 4.- Selection of the questions before the visit
- 5.- Visit
- 6.- Consensus meeting after de visit

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**ESG 2.6**

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All reports resulting from this process are published without exception (even those with unfavourable results) in ACPUA web and in DEQAR

2

<https://acpua.aragon.es/es/consulta-de-informes>

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**D. Activity outside the scope of the ESG**

Yes

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**Context**

One external quality assurance activity that falls outside the scope of the ESG: Accreditation of the position of Associate Professor with Clinical Link

The aim of the programme is to accredit the position of Associate Professor with clinical links for staff linked to the Aragonese public health system who meet the requirements established in the programme. In accordance with point 3 of the third transitory provision of Organic Law 2/ 2023, of 22 March, on the University System, "the accreditation procedure for the post of Contracted Doctoral Professor will continue to be applicable until the provisions of article 85, as well as the provisions of the fourth transitory provision" of the aforementioned Organic Law come into effect.

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**File #1**

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(654 KB)

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# Substantive Change Report by Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education (ACPUA)

## Minutes of Online Conversation

Register Committee

**Ref.** C130  
**Date** 2025-02-25  
**Page** 1 / 1

<b>Date of the conversation:</b>	2025-01-30
<b>Representative of ACPUA:</b>	María Belén Serrano Valenzuela
<b>Representative of EQAR:</b>	Giorgi Munjishvili

1. ACPUA has made a Substantive Change Report on 2024-12-12. In order to prepare the deliberations of the Register Committee on the report, EQAR contacted ACPUA to clarify the matter(s) below.
2. ACPUA agreed to clarify the matter(s) by means of online conversation.
3. The EQAR Secretariat requested clarification regarding the *Institutional Follow-up Accreditation* listed in the ACPUA substantive change report. The agency has focused solely on recent adjustments to the activity's evaluation protocol; however, this protocol was only adopted in 2024 and was not included in the agency's last renewal of registration in 2021, when the activity was still in development. Consequently, the activity has only been reviewed to a limited extent, and it was expected that the activity would be reported in full after.
4. The ACPUA representative explained that the *Institutional Follow-up Accreditation* is a renewal of accreditation for university centres. The initial accreditations, conducted five years ago, were based on the *IQAS Certification* and programme reaccreditations. The new protocol adopted in 2024 has been specifically designed for these renewals.
5. The ACPUA representative further explained that the new protocol for the activity follows existing protocols for *IQAS Certification* and *Programme Accreditation*, which were evaluated as part of the agency's renewal in 2021. This is why the agency has focused only on certain areas, not included in these protocols, and is new in *Institutional Follow-up Accreditation*.
6. The ACPUA representative also added that there were ongoing meta-evaluations for this activity, but they were expecting minimal changes after it.