

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2023

# Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia (ACCUA)

For the renewal of the registration to the  
*European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)*  
and the membership to the  
*European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)*



Junta  
de Andalucía

Consejería de Universidad,  
Investigación e Innovación

Agencia para la Calidad Científica  
y Universitaria de Andalucía





# Table of contents

Index of tables .....	5
Index of figures .....	7
Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms* .....	8
1. Introduction .....	10
2. Development of the SAR 2023 .....	13
3. Higher Education and Quality Assurance in Andalusia .....	14
3.1. The Andalusian University System (SUA) .....	17
3.1.1. Degree Programs Offered .....	18
3.1.2. Admission to the Andalusian University System (SUA) .....	20
3.1.3. Student body .....	21
3.1.4. Employment rates .....	23
3.1.5. Faculty .....	24
3.1.6. Technical, Administrative, and Services Staff (PTGAS) .....	26
3.2. Other Bodies and Institutions .....	27
4. History, profile and activities of the Agency .....	29
4.1. History .....	29
4.2. Profile .....	30
4.2.1. Organisational structure .....	30
4.2.2. Strategic Planning .....	35
4.2.3. Purpose and objectives .....	36
4.2.4. Functions and competencies: Agency activities .....	37
4.2.5. Principles .....	39
4.3. Quality assurance activities .....	40
4.3.1. Quality of Official University Degrees .....	42
4.3.2. Quality of Institutions .....	47
4.4. International activities .....	50
5. Profile, functioning and (EQA) activities of the Agency (compliance with Part 3 of the ESG) .....	52
5.1. ESG Standard 3.1: Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance .....	52
5.2. Standard 3.2 Official status .....	55
5.3. Standard 3.3 Independence .....	57
5.3.1. Organizational independence .....	57
5.3.2. Operational independence .....	58
5.3.3. Independence of formal outcomes .....	58
5.4. Standard 3.4 Thematic analysis .....	60
5.4.1. Reports on the results of verification, modification, monitoring, and re-accreditation processes .....	60
5.4.2. Annual activity reports .....	61
5.4.3. Virtual seminars cycle .....	61
5.4.4. Reports on faculty satisfaction with the evaluation program .....	62
5.4.5. Information on activities .....	62
5.5. Standard 3.5 Resources .....	63
5.5.1. Human resources .....	63
5.5.2. Material and financial resources .....	63



5.6. Standard 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct.....	66
5.7. Standard 3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies .....	69
6. Design and implementation of the Agency's EQA activities (compliance with Part 2 of the ESG).....	70
6.1. Standard 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance .....	70
6.2. Standard 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose .....	74
6.3. Standard 2.3 Implementing processes .....	76
6.4. Standard 2.4 Peer-review experts.....	78
6.5. Standard 2.5 Criteria for outcomes.....	82
6.6. Standard 2.6 Reporting.....	83
6.7. Standard 2.7 Complaints and appeals.....	84
7. Opinions of stakeholders.....	86
8. Recommendations and main findings from previous reviews and agency's follow-up .....	91
9. SWOT analysis.....	96
10. Key challenges and areas for future development.....	97
Annexes.....	98
Annex I. Ex-ante verification of study programmes .....	98
Annex II. Follow-up/monitoring of study programmes.....	99
Annex III. Modification of study programmes.....	100
Annex IV. Re-accreditation verification of study programmes .....	102
Annex V. IQAS Certification of University Centers. IMPLANTA programme.....	103
Annex VI. Evaluation criteria by review activity.....	104



## Index of tables

Table 1. Activities for the preparation of the SAR.....	13
Table 2. Distribution of official Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate programs in Andalusian universities, academic year 2022/2023.....	18
Table 3. Percentage of official programs in the Andalusian University System by branch of knowledge, academic year 2022/2023 .....	19
Table 4. Evolution of university student enrolment since the implementation of Bachelor's and Master's levels.....	21
Table 5. Origin of international students in Andalusian universities by level of study and gender, academic year 2022/2023.....	22
Table 6. Distribution of university faculty in the SUA according to their employment status, academic year 2021/2022.....	24
Table 7. Distribution of teaching staff in the own centers of public universities by field of knowledge in the academic year 2021-22.....	25
Table 8. Distribution of PTGAS in Andalusian universities according to contractual relationship and gender in the academic year 2021-22 .....	26
Table 9. Historical Milestones in the Evolution of Institutions Responsible for quality assurance in higher education and scientific research in Andalusia .....	29
Table 10. Quality Assurance Activities of ACCUA.....	40
Table 11. Overview of international activities in which ACCUA has participated since 2019 .....	50
Table 12. Number of procedures per QA activity implemented per year for the last five years.....	52
Table 13. Yearly expenditure on quality assurance activities for the past five years.....	64
Table 14. Technological resources available at ACCUA .....	65
Table 15. Description of the standards of ACCUA's external quality assurance activities that assess the standards included in Part 1 of the ESG2015 .....	72
Table 16. Elements used in quality assurance activities.....	77
Table 17. Criteria for the selection of evaluators .....	78
Table 18. Distribution of individuals registered in the Evaluators Database for evaluation activities related to the ESG2015.....	79
Table 19. Number of evaluators, committees and members of appeal committees by activity in 2023 .....	81
Table 20. Summary of the participation and opinion gathering mechanisms .....	87
Table 21. Assessment of the ex-ante verification of study programmes activity for Bachelor, Master and Doctorate programmes by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5).....	88
Table 22. Assessment of the follow-up / monitoring of study programmes activity for Bachelor, Master and Doctorate programmes by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5).....	88
Table 23. Assessment of the re-accreditation verification of study programmes activity for Bachelor, Master and Doctorate programmes by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5).....	89



Table 24. Assessment of the European Approach for quality assurance of joint programmes activity by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5) .....	89
Table 25. Assessment of the academic programmes with successive pathways (PARS) activity by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5) .....	90
Table 26. Assessment of the certification and monitoring of quality assurance systems implemented by HEI activity by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5) .....	90
Table 27. Summary of recommendations made by ENQA in 2019 .....	92
Table 28. Summary of recommendations made by ENQA in 2019, EQAR in 2020, and the Agency's response.....	93
Table 29. Strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats analysis .....	96
Table 30. Ex-ante verification of study programmes. Number of reviews, positive and negative, by year and HEI.....	98
Table 31. Follow-up/monitoring of study programmes. Number of reviews for Graduate, Master and Doctorate programmes, by year and HEI .....	99
Table 32. Non substantial modifications. Number of reviews, favourable, unfavourable and withdrawn, by year and HEI .....	100
Table 33. Substantial modifications. Number of reviews, favourable, unfavourable and withdrawn, by year and HEI .....	101
Table 34. Re-accreditation verification of study programmes. Number of reviews for Graduate, Master and Doctorate programmes, by year and HEI .....	102
Table 35. IMPLANTA programme. Number of review reports by year and HEI .....	103
Table 36. Evaluation criteria by review activity.....	104



## Index of figures

Figure 1. Distribution of universities in the SUA, academic year 2022/2023 .....	17
Figure 2. Number of official programmes by type and region, academic year 2022-23 .....	19
Figure 3. Distribution of students in Andalusian universities, academic year 2022/2023 .....	22
Figure 4. Evolution of employment outcomes for university graduates in Andalusia.....	23
Figure 5. Organisational structure of ACCUA.....	30
Figure 6. Relationship between the assessment programs of official degrees taught in centers with institutional accreditation .....	41
Figure 7. General procedure for the design and implementation of quality assurance programmes .....	74



## Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms\*

AAC	<i>Agencia Andaluza del Conocimiento</i> – Andalusian Knowledge Agency, former Andalusia QA Agency
ACCUA	<i>Agencia para la Calidad Científica y Universitaria de Andalucía</i> – Andalusia QA Agency
ACCUEE	<i>Agencia Canaria de Calidad Universitaria y Evaluación Educativa</i> – Canary Islands QA Agency
ACPUA	<i>Agencia de Calidad y Prospectiva Universitaria de Aragón</i> – Aragon QA Agency
ACSUCYL	<i>Agencia para la Calidad del Sistema Universitario de Castilla y León</i> – Castilla & Leon QA Agency
AGAE	<i>Agencia Andaluza de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación Universitaria</i> – Former Andalusia QA Agency
AKKORK	Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Career Development – Russia QA Agency
ANECA	<i>Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación</i> – Spain QA Agency
AQU	<i>Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya</i> – Catalonia QA Agency
AQUIB	<i>Agència de Qualitat Universitària de les Illes Balears</i> – Balearic Islands QA Agency
ASCUG	<i>Axencia para a Calidade do Sistema Universitario de Galicia</i> – Galicia QA Agency
AUPA	Asociación de Universidades Públicas de Andalucía – Association of Public Universities of Andalusia
AVAP	<i>Agencia Valenciana d'Avaluació i Prospectiva</i> – Valencian Community QA Agency
CASEUA	Advisory Council of University Students of Andalusia
CAU	Andalusian University Board
CCAA	Autonomous Communities
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CoARA	Coalition for the Advancement of Research Evaluation
CTEyA	Technical Committee for the Evaluation and Accreditation at DEVA
CU	<i>Catedrático/a de Universidad</i> – Full Professor
CUII	<i>Consejería de Universidad, Investigación e Innovación</i> – Regional Ministry of University, Research and Innovation
DAFO	SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
DEQAR	Database of External Quality Assurance Results
DEVA	Directorate of Evaluation and Accreditation
DGCU	General Directorate of University Coordination
DUA	<i>Distrito Único Andaluz - Platform for University Admissions in Andalusia</i>
ECA	European Consortium for Accreditation
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EDLab	European Degree Label Institutional Laboratory
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register
ESG	European Standards and Guidelines
ESU	European Students' Union
GAIN	Global Academic Integrity Network
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
IQAS	Internal Quality Assurance System





MADRIMASD	<i>Fundación para el Conocimiento madri+d</i> – Madrid QA Agency
PA	<i>Profesor/a Asociado/a</i> – Part time instructor
PAD	<i>Profesor/a Ayudante Doctor</i> – Assistant Professor
PARS	Academic Programs with Succesive Pathways
PCEO	Joint Programme
PD	<i>Profesor/a Distinguido/a</i> – Distinguished Professor
PDI	Personal Docente e Investigador
PE	<i>Profesor/a Emérito/a</i> – Emeritus Professor
PEvAU	Spanish University Admission Tests
PIA	Initial Action Plan
PPL	<i>Profesor/a Permanente Laboral</i> – Permanent Labor Professors
PS	<i>Profesor/a Sustituto/a</i> – Non-tenured Substitute Professor
PTGAS	Technical, administrative, and service personnel
PTU	<i>Profesor/a Titular de Universidad</i> – Associate Professor
PV	<i>Profesor/a Visitante</i> – Visiting Professor
QAS	Quality Assurance System
REACU	<i>Red Española de Agencias de Calidad Universitaria</i> – Spanish Network of QA Agencies
RIACES	<i>Red Iberoamericana para el Aseguramiento de la Calidad en la Educación Superior</i> – Ibero-American Network for the Quality Assurance of Higher Education
RUCT	Register of Universities, Centers, and Degrees
SAR	Self-assesment report
SGU	General Secretariat for Universities
STUPS	Student participation without borders
SUA	Andalusian University System
SUE	Spanish University System
SUPA	Andalusian Public University System
SUPE	Spanish Public University System
ToR	Terms of Reference
TRADE	Business Agency for Transformation and Economic Development
UAL	<i>Universidad de Almería</i>
UCA	<i>Universidad de Cádiz</i>
UCO	<i>Universidad de Córdoba</i>
UCUA	<i>Unidad para la Calidad de las Universidades Andalusas</i> – Unit for the Quality of the Andalusian Universities, former Andalusia QA Agency
UGR	<i>Universidad de Granada</i>
UHU	<i>Universidad de Huelva</i>
UJA	<i>Universidad de Jaén</i>
ULA	<i>Universidad Loyola Andalucía</i>
UMA	<i>Universidad de Málaga</i>
UNIA	<i>Universidad Internacional de Andalucía</i>
UNIBASQ	<i>Euskal Unibertsitate Sistemaren Kalitate Agentzia</i> – Basque QA Agency
UPO	<i>Universidad Pablo de Olavide</i>
US	<i>Universidad de Sevilla</i>
UTAMED	<i>Universidad Tecnológica Atlántico-Mediterráneo</i>

\* The abbreviations and acronyms correspond to the terms in their original language. Text in *italic* remains in the original language (Spanish and other languages spoken in Spain).



# 1. Introduction

This self-evaluation report (SAR) is prepared for the fourth assessment of the Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia (ACCUA) to be carried out by ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education). It outlines how ACCUA's activities align with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG2015). The completion of this self-evaluation report has implied a profound self-critical reflection on ACCUA's activities with the involvement of its stakeholders. This, coupled with the improvements suggested by ENQA's expert panel in their last evaluation in 2019, reviewed in 2021, and those expected after 2024 visit, will significantly contribute to the continuous improvement of ACCUA activities.

The most noteworthy milestones in ACCUA's evaluation activities, in accordance with the ESG2015, since ENQA's positive assessment in 2019, are as follows:

## 2020

- Adaptation to the health emergency situation caused by COVID-19: remote work, regulatory development, virtual visits. All planned evaluation activities were maintained.
- Preparation of the Report on the adaptation of Andalusian university degrees to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Renewal of registration in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) in compliance with the ESG2015.
- Participation in DEQAR, the European database of external quality assurance reports launched by EQAR.
- Initiation of a series of Online seminars on professional occupations organized in collaboration with *AQU-Catalunya*, *ACSUCYL*, *ACPUA*, *ACCUE*, and *UNIBASQ*, and another series of online seminars organized in collaboration with Andalusian universities. 2020-2021.
- Start of the collaboration with Andalusian universities that coordinate or take part in consortiums of European Universities.
- Participation in the international project "STUPS-Student participation without borders" funded by the ERASMUS+ program and coordinated by the University of Huelva. The project also involves the European Students' Union (ESU), the *Universidade de Evora*, and the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria. 2020-2022.
- Review and approval of the Guide for the Certification of Quality Assurance Systems implemented in the HEI of Andalusia. IMPLANTA.
- Launch of the mailbox for managing messages related to service quality, as well as information on the Suggestions and Complaints procedure.
- Approval of the Procedure for the Selection and Appointment of Evaluators.
- Review and approval of the Guide for the Verification of official university degrees (Bachelor's and Master's).



## 2021

- Delivery of the course "Design, Implementation, and Certification of Quality Assurance Systems in University Centers," organized in collaboration with the International University of Andalusia (UNIA).
- Approval of the Service Charter for the Agency.
- Approval of Law 9/2021, of December 23, establishing the Business Agency for Transformation and Economic Development (TRADE) and the Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia (ACCUA).
- Design and approval of the Guide for the Evaluation of International Joint Programmes within the framework of the European Approach.
- Start of the adaptation of action protocols, design of new evaluation programs, modification of procedures, and reference guides as a result of the approval of Royal Decree 822/2021, of September 28, establishing the organization of university education and the quality assurance procedure.
- Update of the Guide for the Certification of Quality Assurance Systems implemented in Andalusian HEI (IMPLANTA) as a consequence of the approval of Royal Decree 640/2021, of July 27, on the creation, recognition, and authorization of universities and university centers, and institutional accreditation of university centers.

## 2022

- Modification and approval by the Technical Committee for Evaluation and Accreditation (CTEyA) of the Guide for the Evaluation of International Joint Programmes within the framework of the European Approach.
- Participation in international networks GAIN and COARA, focused on combating academic fraud and reviewing research evaluation criteria, respectively.
- Adaptation of the agency's evaluation procedures and guides to Royal Decree 822/2021, of September 28, establishing the organization of university education and the quality assurance procedure, and to Royal Decree 640/2021, of July 27, on the creation, recognition, and authorization of universities and university centers, and institutional accreditation of university centers.
  - Approval of a revision of the Guide for the verification of official university degrees (Doctorate).
  - Approval of the Protocol for Monitoring Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate university degrees.
  - Design and approval of the Evaluation protocol for non-substantial modifications to official university degrees offered in non-institutionally accredited university centers.
  - Design and approval of the Procedure for the request of successive academic programmes in the field of Engineering and Architecture.
  - Approval of the revision of the Guide for the renewal of accreditation for Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate degrees in Andalusia.



## 2023

- Approval of the Statutes of the Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia (ACCUA).
- Implementation of the pilot program for the Evaluation of International Joint Programmes within the framework of the European Approach.
- Development of a proposal for the Initial Action Plan (PIA) for ACCUA and its submission to the Regional Ministry of University, Research, and Innovation for approval.
- Appointment of members of the Governing Council of ACCUA.
- Constitution of the Governing Council of ACCUA.
- Public competition for the selection of the Director of ACCUA, appointed on November 25, 2023.
- Approval of the functional areas of ACCUA by the Board of Directors.
- Appointment of coordinators of functional areas.
- Selection and appointment of ACCUA's Technical Committee.
- Approval of the Initial Action Plan of ACCUA 2023-2026.
- Approval of the Annual Action Plan for 2024.

## 2024

- Selection of experts as members of the Technical Committee.
- Appointment of members of ACCUA's Quality Assurance Commission.



## 2. Development of the SAR 2023

The activities undertaken with the purpose of engaging our stakeholders into the reflection about ACCUA's activities within the scope of the ESG, and the elaboration of the self-assessment report, are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Activities for the preparation of the SAR**

PHASES	ACTIVITIES	DATES 2023-24
Initiation of the Process	Presentation of the ENQA evaluation process and the action calendar	September
	Letter requesting evaluation coordinated by ENQA, indicating that it will apply to the renewal of registration at EQAR	September
Drafting of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR)	Appointment of the working group in charge of the SAR	September
	Compilation of necessary information	September - October
	Creation of the first draft	November
	Presentation of the draft to the Board of Directors, Technical Committee, agency staff, universities, evaluation personnel, students, etc.	December
Terms of Reference (ToR)	Preparation and submission of the Terms of Reference (ToR) to ENQA and EQAR	December
Contract with ENQA for the evaluation	Preparation and submission of the contract to ENQA	December
Request to EQAR for registration renewal	Submission of the online application form on the EQAR website	December
Review and Improvement of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR)	Development of the final document	December
	Presentation of the final document to the Board of Directors	December
Submission of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) to ENQA		12 January 2024

In an effort to make this self-assessment report self-explanatory, the document includes links to documents and evidence ([words underlined in blue](#)).



### 3. Higher Education and Quality Assurance in Andalusia

The Spanish University System (SUE) is decentralized, with responsibilities distributed among the State, the Autonomous Communities and the Universities. To ensure the uniformity and coherence of the SUE, it is regulated nationwide by the [Organic Law 2/2023](#), of March 22, on the University System.

At the Andalusian level, the Statute of Autonomy for Andalusia of 1981, amended in 2007 by the [Organic Law 2/2007](#), of March 19, establishes in its Article 53 that:

*"1. In matters of university education, the Autonomous Community, without prejudice to university autonomy, has exclusive competence over:*

- a) Programming and coordinating the Andalusian university system within the framework of general coordination.*
- b) Establishing public universities and authorizing private ones.*
- c) Approving the statutes of public universities and the regulations governing the organization and functioning of private universities.*
- d) Coordinating procedures for university admissions.*
- e) Establishing the legal framework for universities' own degree programs.*
- f) Financing public universities and, if applicable, managing state funds related to university education.*
- g) Regulating and managing the autonomous system of scholarships and grants for university education and, if applicable, regulating and managing state funds in this area.*
- h) Establishing the remuneration system for contracted teaching and research staff at public universities and determining additional remuneration for tenured teaching staff.*

*2. In matters of university education, without prejudice to university autonomy, the Autonomous Community shares competence over everything not referred to in section 1, including in any case:*

- a) Regulating requirements for the creation and recognition of universities and university centers, and the affiliation of these centers to universities.*
- b) The legal framework for the organization and functioning of public universities, including governance and representation bodies.*
- c) Affiliating public or private educational centers to offer official university degrees, creating, modifying, and abolishing university centers in public universities, as well as recognizing these centers in private universities and implementing or abolishing courses.*
- d) Regulating the admissions system to universities.*
- e) Regulating the status of contracted and tenured teaching and research staff.*
- f) Evaluating and ensuring the quality and excellence of university education, as well as the teaching and research staff.*

*3. The Autonomous Community is responsible for the implementation of the issuance of degrees in university education."*



Specifically, the Andalusian University System (SUA) is regulated by:

- [Legislative Decree 1/2013](#), of January 8, approving the consolidated text of the Andalusian University Law, which regulates the full integration of the Andalusian university system into the European Higher Education Area and addresses university quality in its Title V.
- [Law 9/2021](#), of December 23, creating the Business Agency for Transformation and Economic Development (TRADE) and the Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia (ACCUA). This law establishes the creation of ACCUA and outlines its purpose and objectives.
- [Decree-Law 8/2023](#), of October 24, amending Article 40 of the Consolidated Text of the Andalusian University Law, approved by Legislative Decree 1/2013, of January 8, adapting the Andalusian University Law to the new categories of teaching staff established in the state organic law.
- [Decree 154/2023](#), of June 27, on the organization of official university education in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia.

In matters of quality assurance in higher education in the Andalusian university system, the following decree approves the Statutes of the Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia, the body entrusted with competencies in this area:

- [Decree 17/2023](#), of February 14, approving the Statutes of the Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia (ACCUA). This decree assigns ACCUA its functions related to the **evaluation, accreditation and quality assurance of HEI, their programmes and activities, as well as their teaching staff**, mandated by the State legislation, within the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, among other responsibilities.

## Quality Assurance Framework

The quality assurance system for higher education in Spain has been recently modified with the entry into force of three regulations: the Royal Decree 640/2021, of July 27, on the creation, recognition, and authorization of universities and university centers, and institutional accreditation of university centers; the Royal Decree 822/2021, of September 28, which establishes the organization of university education and the quality assurance process; and the Organic Law 2/2023, of March 22, on the University System.

In terms of quality assurance, the [Royal Decree 640/2021](#), of 28 July, refers to the procedures for verification, monitoring, modification, and accreditation of official degrees. The new system particularly streamlines these procedures for institutionally accredited centers. For instance, a verification request will be deemed accepted once the maximum period established in the Royal Decree has elapsed without an express resolution (four months if the center is accredited; six months if not). Under the previous regulation, it would be considered denied. This also applies to other procedures. However, when it comes to a university's claim for non-renewal of accreditation for a degree, negative administrative silence applies.

This new Royal Decree also introduces that review panels for study programmes must include students and may also include representatives of society. It is also established that favourable reports may incorporate any relevant aspect that administrations, universities, and agencies must monitor. The new regulation also establishes that if a programme is not implemented and its teaching does not begin within two years, the initial accreditation will be considered revoked, and the extinction of the degree will be processed.



On the other hand, the [Royal Decree 822/2021](#), introduced more flexibility related to quality assurance procedures; the changes in the legislation allow for the recognition of a review report issued by another agency registered in EQAR, provided that it has followed the European Approach to Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, which is a significant progress in the Spanish and European higher education system, as related to the provision of joint degrees and their quality assurance.

In Spain, the external Quality Assurance in higher education is currently provided through eleven quality assurance agencies, the National Agency for the Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA) and ten regional ones:

- ACCUA - Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia
- ACCUEE - The Canarian Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation
- ACPUA - Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education
- ACSUCYL - The Quality Assurance Agency for the University System in Castilla y León
- ACSUG - Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System
- AQU - Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency
- AQUIB - Balearic Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
- AVAP - Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting
- madri+d - Fundación para el Conocimiento Madrimasd
- Unibasq - Agency for Quality of the Basque University System

All of them apart from AQUIB are registered in EQAR. AQUIB is currently undergoing an external review coordinated by ENQA in order to be included in the register. These bodies are all part of the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU), which facilitates collaboration and contribute to the establishment of common references.

Finally, from the point of view of the quality assurance, the [Organic Law 2/2023](#), of March 22, on the University System, establishes the legal framework for the above mentioned activities to be developed, as it fosters institutional accreditation, the establishment of European Alliances and joint international programmes in order to promote the international mobility of students, the simplification of administrative procedures and further decentralisation and cooperation with regional agencies.

As a final remark, a clarification over the difference between official and non-official study programmes. Official university study programmes in Spain are those that have undergone an ex-ante verification accreditation process coordinated by an agency listed in EQAR. These programmes are listed on the national Register of Universities, Centers and Degrees (RUCT) and lead to a qualification that has administrative value all over the Spanish territory. In addition to these official programmes, HEI in Spain can offer programmes which lead to a certificate or diploma awarded by the university itself, not by the State. These programmes are known in Spanish as “Títulos propios” and do not have to undergo a compulsory external review.





### 3.1. The Andalusian University System (SUA)

The SUA consists of **thirteen universities (14.3% of the total in Spain)**, ten of them public institutions forming the Andalusian Public University System (SUPA), which represents 20.0% of universities in the Spanish Public University System (SUPE). Additionally, there are three private universities (7.3% of all private universities in the country). Each province has one public university, except for Seville, where there are three: Seville (US), Pablo de Olavide (UPO), and International University of Andalusia (UNIA). UNIA also has campuses in Jaén, Málaga, and Huelva. Alongside these, there are the private universities Loyola Andalucía, which also has campuses in Córdoba, and CEU Fernando III. In Málaga, the public University of Málaga (UMA) is joined by the private Atlantic-Mediterranean Technological University (UTAMED). The University of Granada (UGR) has campuses in Ceuta and Melilla (Figure 1). Additionally, four Andalusian universities (Almería, Cádiz, Granada, and Seville) coordinate four European consortia known as European Universities.

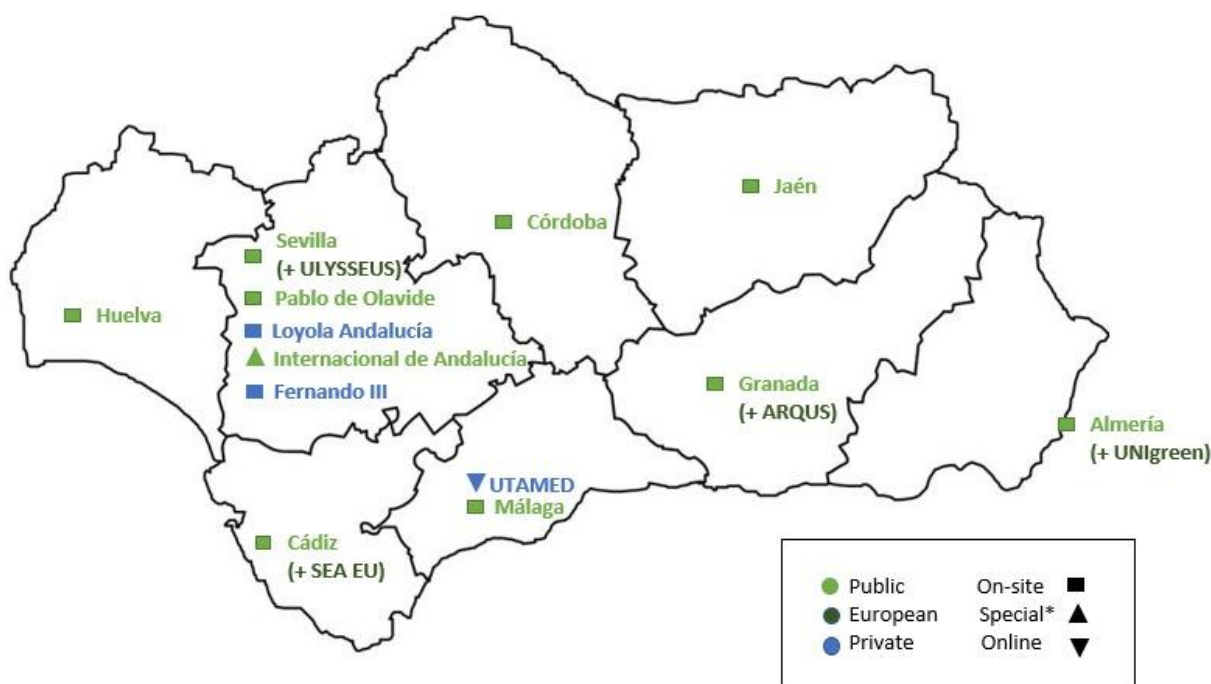


Figure 1. Distribution of universities in the SUA, academic year 2022/2023

In addition to the HEI indicated on the map, the Andalusian University System has two campuses outside the autonomous community of Andalusia, in the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla, in northern Africa. These campuses are attached to the University of Granada.

During the 2022/2023 academic year, the Andalusian Public University System comprised over **240.000 students**, approximately **18.500 teaching staff**, and 10.700 individuals employed as technical, administrative, and service personnel (PTGAS). It is a heterogeneous system, yet the universities collaborate and operate cohesively, as evidenced by the presence of the [Association of Public Universities of Andalusia](#) (AUPA) and the [Andalusian Single District](#) (DUA). The DUA is responsible for managing access to the Andalusian University System. In [Section 3.2](#) of this report, other bodies and institutions within the SUA are listed.



### 3.1.1. Degree Programs Offered

For the academic year 2022/2023, the ten public universities in Andalusia and the private university Loyola Andalucía (the private institutions CEU Fernando III and UTAMED have not yet began their activities) offered a total of **1.291 degree programs (13,7% of the total in Spain**, ranking as the third community with the highest number). These included 549 Bachelor's and double Bachelor's programs (PCEO Bachelor's), 591 Master's and double Master's programs (PCEO Master's), and 151 Doctorate programs (Table 2). The oldest public universities (Granada and Seville) concentrate the highest number of degree programs.

**Table 2. Distribution of official Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate programs in Andalusian universities, academic year 2022/2023**

UNIVERSITY	BACHELOR & PCEO BACHELOR	MASTER & PCEO MASTER	DOCTORATE	TOTAL
Almería (UAL)	42	46	14	105
Cádiz (UCA)	67	59	23	149
Córdoba (UCO)	47	69	11	127
Granada (UGR)	79	126	28	233
Huelva (UHU)	38	38	11	87
Internacional de Andalucía (UNIA)	-	23	2	25
Jaén (UJA)	47	59	20	120
Málaga (UMA)	72	76	22	170
Pablo de Olavide (UPO)	39	47	9	95
Sevilla (US)	90	115	33	238
Loyola Andalucía (ULA)	38	15	3	56
<b>TOTAL(*)</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>1.291</b>

Source: Integrated University Information System (SIIU) - General Secretariat of Universities - Ministry of Universities.

(\*) The total number of programs does not match the sum per university (it is lower) because interuniversity programs are attributed to each of the universities offering them.

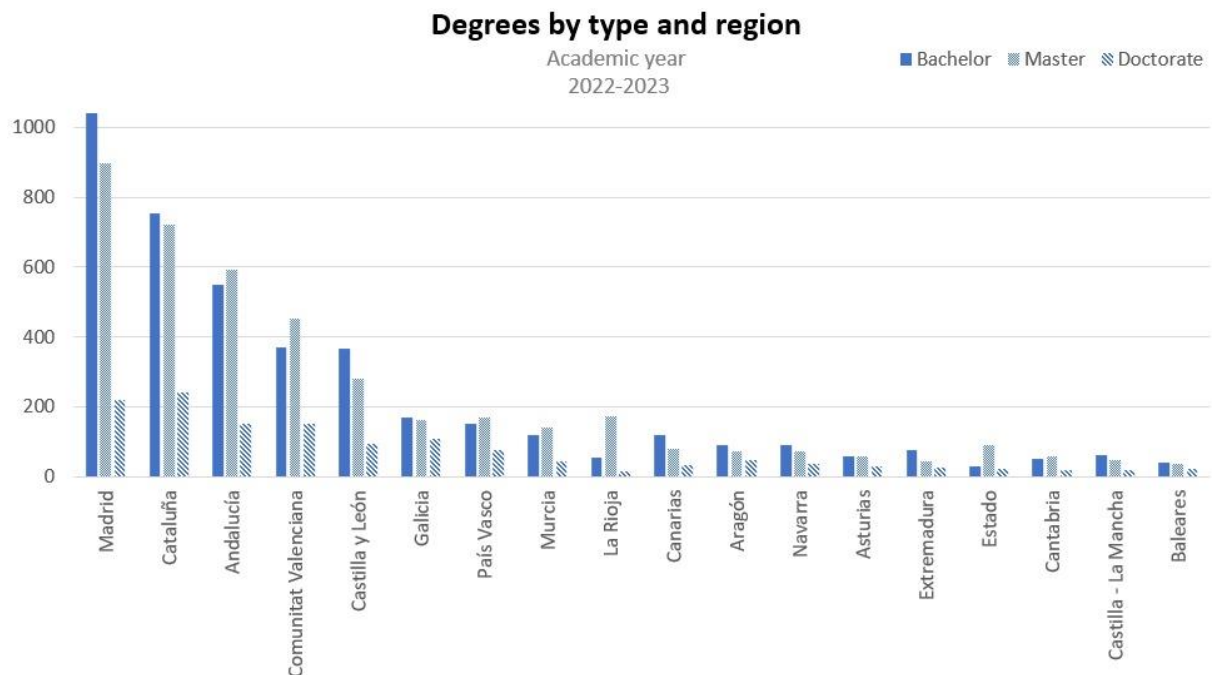


Figure 2. Number of official programmes by type and region, academic year 2022-23

Source: Integrated University Information System (SIU) - General Secretariat of Universities - Ministry of Universities.

The distribution of these official programs according to areas of knowledge highlights that the majority belong to the area of Social and Legal Sciences (Table 3).

**Table 3. Percentage of official programs in the Andalusian University System by branch of knowledge, academic year 2022/2023**

AREA OF KNOWLEDGE	BACHELOR & PCEO BACHELOR	MASTER & PCEO MASTER	DOCTORATE	TOTAL
Social and Legal Sciences	38,1%	40,9%	28,5%	38,3%
Engineering and Architecture	23,9%	23,0%	17,9%	22,8%
Arts and Humanities	16,4%	11,8%	12,6%	13,9%
Health Sciences	9,7%	12,9%	16,6%	11,9%
Sciences	12,0%	11,3%	24,5%	13,2%

Source: Integrated University Information System (SIU) - General Secretariat of Universities - Ministry of Universities.

The programmes offered for the academic year 2023-2024 can be seen on the website of the [Andalusian Single District](#).



### 3.1.2. Admission to the Andalusian University System (SUA)

Students entering the SUA for the first time primarily enrol in Bachelor's programs after successfully completing the University Admission Assessment Test (Prueba de Evaluación de Bachillerato para el Acceso a la Universidad or PEvAU). This test, aimed at assessing the academic maturity, acquired knowledge, and ability of students to successfully pursue university studies, is regulated by [Organic Law 3/2020](#), of December 29, which amends Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, on Education. The PEvAU is common for all public universities in Andalusia. The exam is structured into two phases: a mandatory access phase, which can earn up to 10 points, and an optional admission phase for students, granting an additional 4 points. The maximum score for university admission is set at 14 points.

Since June 2011, students in Professional Training can undertake the admission phase of the PEvAU, obtain an additional 4 points, and add them to the average of their academic record (from 0 to 10) to improve their access score.

Additionally, there are other access routes outlined in the [Resolution of March 15](#), 2023, from the General Directorate of University Coordination, which publishes the Agreement of March 1, 2023, of the Commission of the Andalusian Unique University District. This agreement establishes the admission procedure for the academic year 2023-2024 in university Bachelor's programs.

Private universities establish their own admission criteria.



### 3.1.3. Student body

In the academic year 2022/2023, the student body of the Andalusian University System consisted of over **245.000 individuals (14,3% of the total in Spain)**, showing a slight decrease in the last two academic years compared to the upward trend that began in the 2016/2017 academic year (Table 4). Of this student body, public universities contributed 241.365 students (98.3% of the total student body) and the private university contributed 4.209 students (1.7% of the total student body).

**Table 4. Evolution of university student enrolment since the implementation of Bachelor's and Master's levels**

ACADEMIC YEAR	STUDENTS	YEAR-ON-YEAR VARIATION
2009/2010	237.322	4,1%
2010/2011	246.530	3,9%
2011/2012	254.704	3,3%
2012/2013	251.393	-1,3%
2013/2014	247.126	-1,7%
2014/2015	246.634	-0,2%
2015/2016	243.629	-1,2%
2016/2017	243.785	0,1%
2017/2018	245.532	0,7%
2018/2019	245.965	0,2%
2019/2020	246.118	0,1%
2020/2021	248.266	0,9%
2021/2022	246.879	-0,6%
2022/2023	245.574	-0,5%

Source: Integrated University Information System (SIU) - General Secretariat of Universities - Ministry of Universities.

The student body from Table 4 is distributed among Andalusian universities according to Figure 3, with the universities of Seville and Granada collectively representing 45.9% of it. This student body consisted of 56.5% female and 43.5% male. The positive bias towards female is maintained, with varying intensities, in all Andalusian universities.

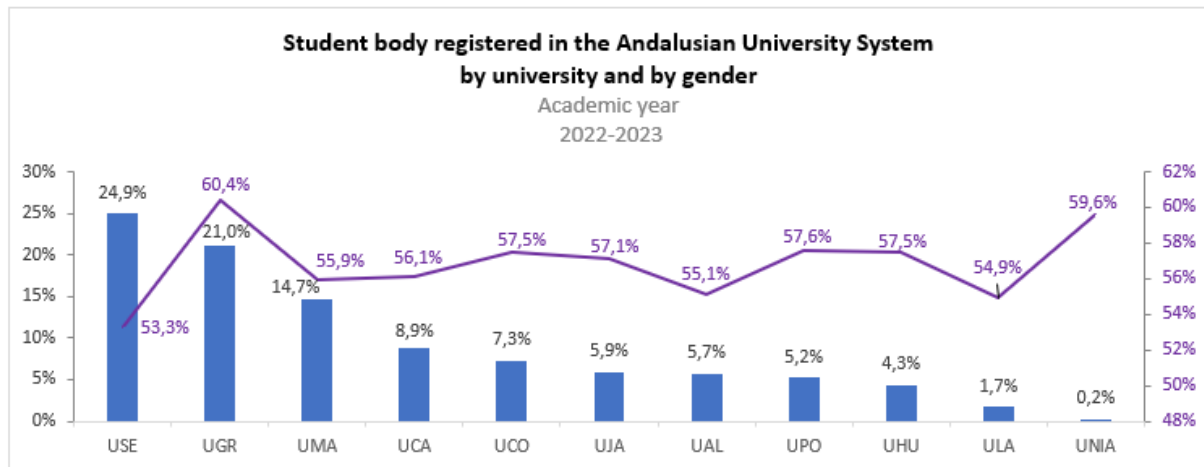


Figure 3. Distribution of students in Andalusian universities, academic year 2022/2023

Source: Integrated University Information System (SIU) - General Secretariat of Universities - Ministry of Universities.

Of this student body, **6,8% were international students** in the academic year 2021/2022. The highest proportion of international students was concentrated at the doctoral level (29.2%) followed by master level (17.9%) and undergraduate level (3.6%). The majority come from Latin America and the Caribbean (43.1%), followed by the European Union (20.9%), and North Africa (16.3%). Regarding the **outgoing mobility** of Andalusian university students, during the 2021/2022 academic year **8.082 individuals** pursued part of their studies in a destination outside Spain, with 60,9% of them being women. The most preferred regions for these stays were the European Union (87,5% of students), followed at a considerable distance by the rest of Europe (6,0%) and Latin America and the Caribbean (3,3%) (Table 5).

**Table 5. Origin of international students in Andalusian universities by level of study and gender, academic year 2022/2023**

ORIGIN	GENDER	BACHELOR	MASTER	DOCTORATE	TOTAL
<b>European Union</b>	Origin	2037	545	887	3469
	Destination	6912	163	n.d.	7075
<b>Rest of Europe</b>	Origin	644	193	123	960
	Destination	467	14	n.d.	481
<b>USA and Canada</b>	Origin	54	77	45	176
	Destination	113	1	n.d.	114
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	Origin	1882	2776	2506	7164
	Destination	265	3	n.d.	268
<b>North Africa</b>	Origin	1689	759	255	2703
	Destination	9	1	n.d.	10
<b>Rest of Africa</b>	Origin	317	81	61	459
	Destination	3	0	n.d.	3
<b>Asia and Oceania</b>	Origin	628	411	660	1699
	Destination	131	0	n.d.	131

Source: Integrated University Information System (SIU) - General Secretariat of Universities - Ministry of Universities.



### 3.1.4. Employment rates

In Andalusia, the [Argos observatory](#) of the Andalusian Employment Service provides data on the employment status of university graduates in Andalusia. According to this observatory, the percentage of graduates employed one year after graduation has been increasing in recent years and is higher at the highest level of university education (Figure 6).

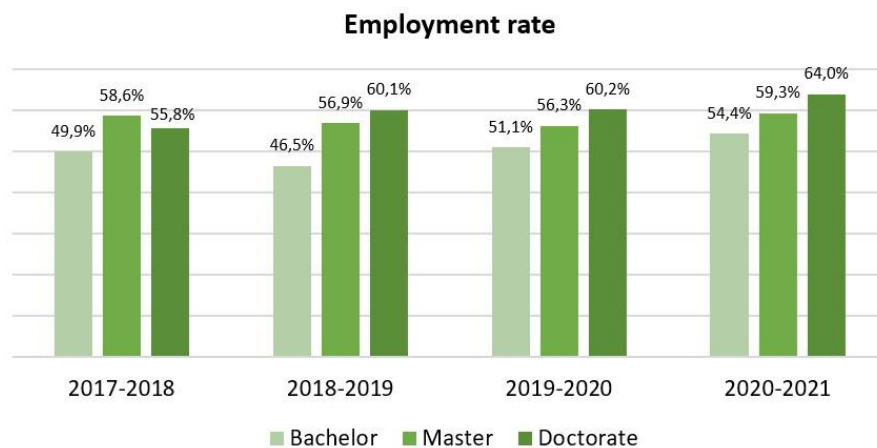


Figure 4. Evolution of employment outcomes for university graduates in Andalusia

Source: Data from the Argos Observatory.



### 3.1.5. Faculty

According to [Organic Law 2/2023](#), of March 22, the teaching staff at public universities in the SUA can have two types of relationships with the institution: (i) civil servants in the categories of University Lecturer (PTU) or University Professor (CU), or (ii) non civil servants, hired in the modalities of Assistant Doctoral Professor (PAD), Associate Professor (PA), Substitute Professor (PS), Emeritus Professor (PE), Permanent Labor Professor (PPL), Visiting Professor (PV), and Distinguished Professor (PD).

Likewise, Decree-Law 8/2023, of October 24, amending Article 40 of the Consolidated Text of the Andalusian University Law, approved by Legislative Decree 1/2013, of January 8, regulates these modalities in Andalusia. In addition to the existing ones, it allows the linking of Assistant Doctoral Professors to the Public Health System of Andalusia and, for Permanent Labor Professors, it allows two modalities: Contracted Doctoral Professor and Contracted Doctoral Professor linked to the Public Health System of Andalusia. It also regulates two modalities for Visiting Professors: regular Visiting Professor and extraordinary Visiting Professor.

Accreditation by a competent Agency is necessary to apply for positions as a public servant or for being hired as Permanent Labor Professor in any of its modalities. Similarly, it is necessary for at least 60% of the faculty in private universities to be accredited.

In the academic year 2021/2022, the teaching and research staff (PDI) of the SUA consisted of **18.744 people**. Of this staff, 47,9% are civil servants, and 52,1% are contract employees (Table 6).

**Table 6. Distribution of university faculty in the SUA according to their employment status, academic year 2021/2022**

		FEMALE		MALE		TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
		TOTAL	PORCENTAJE	TOTAL	PORCENTAJE		
Public	Civil servants	3.322	37,0%	5.650	63,0 %	8.972	48,5%
	Non civil servants	4.312	45,2%	5.227	54,8%	9.539	51,5%
	Total	<b>7.634</b>	<b>41,2%</b>	<b>10.877</b>	<b>58,8%</b>	<b>18.511</b>	<b>100%</b>
Private	Non civil servants	94	40,3%	139	59,7%	233	100%
	Total	<b>94</b>	<b>40,3%</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>59,7%</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>100%</b>
Total		<b>7.728</b>	<b>41,2%</b>	<b>11.016</b>	<b>58,8%</b>	<b>18.744</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Integrated University Information System (SIIU) - General Secretariat of Universities - Ministry of Universities.





The field of knowledge of Social Sciences and Law shows the highest percentage of university teaching staff (36.5%), followed by the field of Engineering and Architecture (18.6%) (Table 7).

**Table 7. Distribution of teaching staff in the own centers of public universities by field of knowledge in the academic year 2021-22**

FIELD OF KNOWLEDGE	PERCENTAGE
Arts and Humanities	13,0%
Social Sciences and Law	36,5%
Sciences	15,9%
Engineering and Architecture	18,6%
Health Sciences	16,0%

Source: Integrated University Information System (SIU) - General Secretariat of Universities - Ministry of Universities.



### 3.1.6. Technical, Administrative, and Services Staff (*PTGAS*)

The technical, administrative, and services staff (*PTGAS*) constitute an essential group for the adequate functioning of any university. In Andalusia, this group consists of around 11.000 people in the academic year 2021/2022 (Table 8). They work as attendants, caretakers, administrative personnel, etc. All these individuals ensure the smooth operation of the services that make up the day-to-day activities in these institutions.

**Table 8. Distribution of *PTGAS* in Andalusian universities according to contractual relationship and gender in the academic year 2021-22**

		FEMALE		MALE		TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
		TOTAL	%	TOTAL	%		
Public	Civil servants	4.330	62,0%	2.656	38,0%	6.986	64,9%
	Non civil servants	1.748	46,2%	2.034	53,8%	3.782	35,1%
	Total	6.078	56,5%	4.690	43,5%	10.768	100%
Private	Non civil servants	109	63,0%	64	37,0%	173	100%
	Total	109	63,0%	64	37,0%	173	100%
Total		6.187	56,5%	4.754	43,5%	10.941	100%

Source: Integrated University Information System (SIU) - General Secretariat of Universities - Ministry of Universities.



## 3.2. Other Bodies and Institutions

In addition to universities, the Andalusian Higher Education System has bodies and institutions that contribute to improving the functioning of this system and the quality of higher education.

In the field of the Administration of the Junta de Andalucía:

- [Secretaría General de Universidades](#) (SGU). The General Secretariat of Universities is the body of the Junta de Andalucía responsible for all functions related to policies in Higher University Education and, in particular, the coordination of the universities in the Autonomous Community.
- [Dirección General de Coordinación Universitaria](#) (DGPU). The General Directorate of University Coordination is the body, hierarchically dependent on the SGU, responsible, among other attributions, for establishing the educational offerings of Andalusian universities and their various centers, as well as authorizing the implementation, modification, and elimination of university programs.
- [Agencia para la Calidad Científica y Universitaria de Andalucía](#) (ACCUA). The Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia is the public agency responsible for promoting quality in the Andalusian Knowledge System, in accordance with international scientific and academic standards, and providing its entities with quality criteria and references to ensure the optimal fulfilment of their social function.

In the field of universities:

- [Instituto de Academias de Andalucía](#). The Institute of Academies of Andalusia brings together all the academies from different provinces in the region.
- [Consejos Sociales](#). The Social Councils are collegial bodies part of every Andalusian university for the participation of society in the university.
- [Consejo Andaluz de Universidades](#) (CAU). The Andalusian University Board is the collegial advisory body of the Junta de Andalucía in matters of university coordination.

In the field of students:

- [Consejo Asesor de Estudiantes Universitarios de Andalucía](#) (CASEUA). The Advisory Council of University Students of Andalusia performs advisory functions to ensure the rights and duties of students are preserved as established by regulations.

In the field of quality assurance of higher education:

- [Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación](#) (ANECA). The National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain is a public body with competences for the assessment, certification and accreditation of the Spanish university system.
- Regional quality assurance bodies. As detailed at the beginning of [Chapter 3](#), there are regional quality assurance bodies in 10 out of the 17 regions (autonomous communities) of Spain, 9 of them listed in EQAR. ANECA is the sole competent body in those regions without a regional agency registered in EQAR.
- [Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies](#) (REACU). Formed by ANECA and the 10 regional QA bodies to facilitate collaboration and contribute to the establishment of common references.



- The Council of Universities. This body exercises advisory, cooperation and coordination functions. It is formed by the Spanish Minister in charge of universities, and the Chancellors of public and private universities. Among other functions, current applicable laws grant this Council the power to decide about the ex-ante and ex-post accreditation and to approve changes in official study programmes, on the basis of the evaluation reports submitted by the quality assurance agencies.
- The General Conference on University Policy. This is the body responsible for developing and coordinating the Spain's general university policy. It is composed of the Spanish Ministry and the Regional Ministers in charge of universities in the different Autonomous Regions. This body establishes and assesses the general lines of university policy and approves the criteria for the coordination of evaluation, certification and accreditation activities.



## 4. History, profile and activities of the Agency

### 4.1. History

The Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia (ACCUA) was established on March 1, 2023, with the entry into force of [Decree 17/2023](#), dated February 14, which approves its statutes. ACCUA was created by [Law 9/2021](#), dated December 23, which establishes the Business Agency for Economic Transformation and Development (TRADE) and the Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia (ACCUA). This new entity is constituted as an administrative agency under Article 65 of Law 9/2007, of October 22, on the Administration of the Junta de Andalucía, to carry out the competences in quality assurance of university activities and of research, development, and innovation activities of the Agents of the Andalusian Knowledge System.

Since 2011, these competences had been exercised by the Directorate of Evaluation and Accreditation (DEVA) of the Andalusian Agency of Knowledge (AAC). This agency was established on April 30, 2011, with the entry into force of Decree 92/2011, dated April 19, which approved its statutes. Its creation took place through Law 16/2007, dated December 3, the Andalusian Law of Science and Knowledge. Previously, the functions of ensuring scientific and university quality were carried out by the Andalusian Agency for Evaluation and University Accreditation (AGAE), created in 2005, and by the Administrative Consortium Unit for the Quality of Andalusian Universities (UCUA), established in 1998.

**Table 9. Historical Milestones in the Evolution of Institutions Responsible for quality assurance in higher education and scientific research in Andalusia**

YEAR	HISTORICAL MILESTONE
2023	Approval of ACCUA statutes
2021	Creation of ACCUA: Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia
2020	DEVA-AAC renews its registration in EQAR
2019	DEVA-AAC positively evaluated by ENQA
2018	Modification of AAC statutes
2014	DEVA-AAC renews its registration in EQAR
2014	DEVA-AAC positively evaluated by ENQA
2011	Approval of AAC statutes
2009	AGAE is admitted to the EQAR registry
2009	AGAE positively evaluated by ENQA
2007	Creation of AAC: Andalusian Agency of Knowledge
2005	Approval of AAC statutes
2003	Creation of AGAE: Andalusian Agency for Evaluation of Quality and University Accreditation
1998	Creation of UCUA: Administrative Consortium Unit for the Quality of Andalusian Universities

ACCUA is attached to the Ministry of University, Research, and Innovation, specifically to its General Secretariat for Universities.

The Agency has its institutional headquarters in the city of Córdoba, at *Calle Doña Berenguela, s/n, Edificio Vial Norte*, 3rd floor. It also has a branch in the city of Seville, at *Calle Johannes Kepler 1*.



## 4.2. Profile

### 4.2.1. Organisational structure

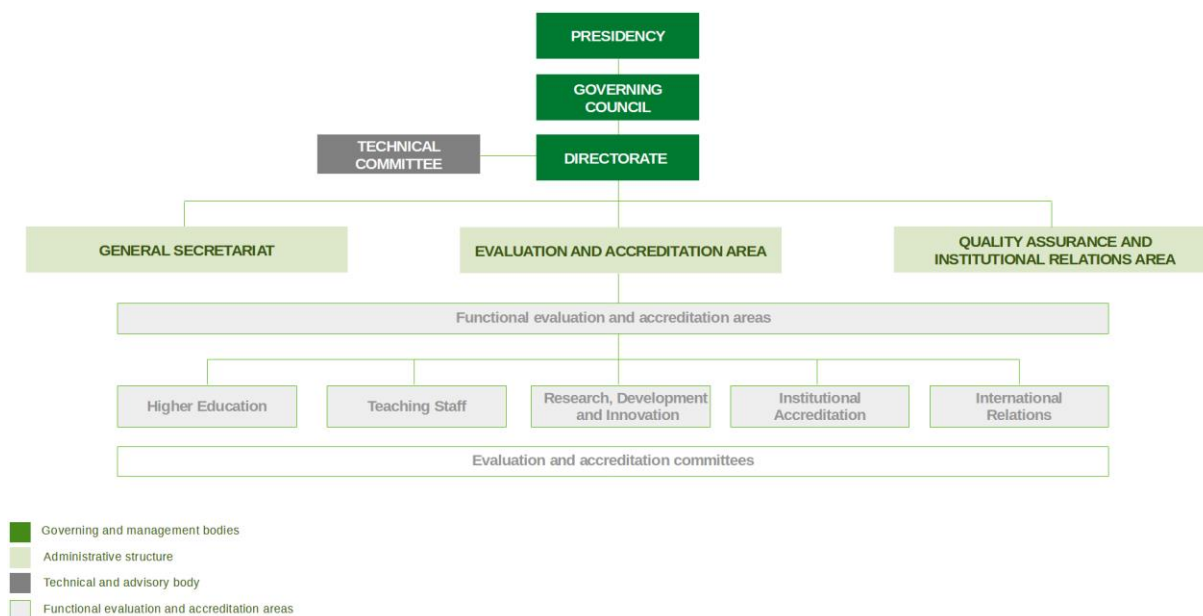


Figure 5. Organisational structure of ACCUA

In accordance with its Statutes, ACCUA is structured in the following bodies:

- Governing Bodies: The Presidency and the Governing Council.
- Management Body: The Directorate.
- Technical and Advisory Body: The Technical Committee.

Additionally, under the hierarchical dependence of the Directorate, the **administrative structure** of the Agency is completed with the General Secretariat, the Evaluation and Accreditation Area, and the Quality and Institutional Relations Area. These areas are organized through the administrative units specified in the Agency's staffing table and assist the directorate in exercising their competencies in their respective functional areas. The staffing table for the agency is yet to be formally adapted to the new structure. Therefore, the positions of Head of the Evaluation and Accreditation Area, and the Quality and Institutional Relations Area are vacant. Their functions are currently exercised by the Director. The process for adapting the staffing table has started and involves several bodies at the regional administration. Further details might be provided during the visit.

The **Presidency** of the Agency is held by the head of the Regional Ministry of University, Research, and Innovation, to which the Agency is attached. The Presidency is responsible for the highest institutional and legal representation of the Agency, ensuring the fulfilment of its objectives, purposes, and functions, as well as presiding over the Governing Council.



The **Governing Council** is the highest collegial governing body of the Agency. It is responsible for establishing the multi-year strategic planning of the Agency, approving the annual activity report, the staffing table, public employment offers, training plans, and equality plans, as well as being informed about the agreements entered into by the Agency.

The Governing Council has the following composition:

- a) The President of the Agency, who chairs it.
- b) The Director of the Agency.
- c) The General Secretary responsible for university matters of the Regional Ministry to which the Agency is attached: General Secretary of Universities.
- d) The General Secretary responsible for scientific and technical research of the Regional Ministry to which the Agency is attached: General Secretary of Research and Innovation.
- e) The General Secretary responsible for educational planning and evaluation of the Regional Ministry with competencies in primary and secondary education: General Director of Educational Planning, Participation and Evaluation.
- f) Twelve members appointed by the Regional Minister to which the Agency is attached, in accordance with the following distribution:
  1. Two representatives of the Chancellors of Andalusian Universities, proposed by the Andalusian Council of Universities, currently the Chancellor of the University of Seville and one vacancy.
  2. Two representatives of the Presidents of the Social Councils of Andalusian Universities, proposed by the Andalusian Council of Universities, currently the Presidents of the Social Councils of the University Pablo de Olavide and the University of Granada.
  3. Four individuals of recognized prestige in the field of scientific research or professional activity, with proven experience in the evaluation of scientific or university quality, currently four full professors at the universities of Sevilla, Córdoba, Cádiz and Jaén.
  4. Two representatives of the Administration of the Junta de Andalucía, with a minimum rank of General Directorate, belonging to Departments with competencies in scientific or technological research, currently the General Secretary of Public Health and R+D+I in Healthcare and the President of the Andalusian Institute of Agricultural, Fisheries, Food, and Organic Production Research and Training (IFAPA).
  5. Two representatives of the Advisory Council of University Students of Andalusia, proposed by the Council, currently two members of this body.

The secretary of the Governing Council will be held by the General Secretary of the Agency, acting with voice but without a vote.

The current members of the Governing Council can be accessed [here](#).

The **Directorate** is the highest executive body of the Agency, with the rank of General Directorate. It is responsible for the ordinary legal representation of the Agency and the adoption of measures necessary for the execution of the Governing Council's agreements. As the competent body in the field of evaluation and accreditation, the Directorate performs these functions autonomously, independently, and objectively. It does not receive explicit instructions from any authority regarding its academic, evaluation, or accreditation decisions. In this area, the Directorate, applying the criteria and standards of national and international reference evaluation within the framework of the European Higher Education Area, is responsible for the following functions:

- a) The exercise of all the powers and functions of evaluation and accreditation that correspond to the Agency in accordance with Article 7, by issuing the corresponding acts, resolutions or



reports of evaluation and accreditation in accordance with the provisions of these Statutes.

b) The proposal of assessment and accreditation criteria, guidelines and protocols for approval by the Technical Committee.

c) The designation of the technical collaborating personnel of the Agency for the development of the evaluation and accreditation activity (the evaluators).

d) The designation of the Agency's technical collaborating personnel for the coordination of the functional areas (the area coordinators).

e) The appointment of the members of the evaluation and accreditation commissions, assigning the functions of chair and secretary to them.

f) The other functions of scientific and higher education evaluation and accreditation within the competence of the Agency that are attributed to it by the laws, the present Statutes and other regulations in force.

The Directorate of the Agency adopts its formal decisions on the basis of the evaluation and accreditation reports issued by the evaluators, either individually or in committees, and the applicable regulations.

In its functions of internal quality and institutional collaboration, ACCUA's Directorate promotes and supervises the internal and external quality assurance policy of the Agency, ensures its recognition by the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), and may issue instructions, circulars, or service orders it deems necessary to ensure the best functioning of the Agency and compliance with its functions according to international standards.

In this regard, the Directorate will promote collaboration between the Agency and Universities, Higher Education Institutions, Research Institutions and other Agents of the Andalusian Knowledge System. It will also collaborate with other quality assurance bodies with similar purposes and with national and international networks and associations.

The **Technical Committee** is a collegial technical, advisory, and consultative body to the Directorate in the exercise of its evaluation and accreditation functions. It consists of the head of the Directorate, who serves as its president; the heads of the Evaluation and Accreditation Area and the Quality and Institutional Relations Area; the coordinators of the functional areas of evaluation and accreditation; and sixteen individuals, fourteen of them with international academic prestige and experience in scientific, academic, or professional evaluation, and two students; all of them appointed by the Head of the Directorate, with the advice of the Governing Council. The General Secretary of the Agency will act as the Secretary. The members of the Technical Committee have not been appointed as of the completion of this document. They have been selected by the Director, but the Governing Council has to be heard before they are appointed. This will happen in the next meeting of this body. It is expected that they will be appointed shortly and in any case before the visit.

According to ACCUA's statutes, the functions of the Technical Committee include:

a) Approve the Agency's evaluation and accreditation plans and programmes.

b) Approve the evaluation and accreditation criteria as proposed by the Directorate.

c) Approve assessment and accreditation guidelines and protocols.

d) Supervise the compliance of the Agency's organisational structure with the accreditation plans and programmes.

e) Approve, if necessary, the measures required for the proper functioning of the evaluation and accreditation committees.

f) Prepare reports and studies on matters within its competence.

g) Assess reports on the outcome of evaluation and accreditation plans and programmes.





- h) To be aware of the procedures for the selection and appointment of evaluators.
- i) To inform and advise the Agency's when required.
- j) In general, all those duties that are related to the performance of its function and those that may be delegated to it by other bodies of the Agency, in matters of quality assurance.

Under the Directorate, and the area of Evaluation and Accreditation the Agency is structured into **functional evaluation and accreditation areas**, approved by the Governing Council upon the proposal of the Directorate. Each functional area of evaluation and accreditation may be organized by scientific fields or areas of knowledge and is coordinated by an external expert. The **area coordinators** cannot issue evaluation and accreditation reports or be members of evaluation and accreditation committees. The reason for the area coordinators to be external experts, and not Agency staff, is that this allows for a more agile recruitment of high-level experts in higher education and quality assurance, with direct experience in HEI. These experts keep their academic positions at their respective HEI and only perceive a proportional compensation from the Agency for their dedication. The five functional areas are the same as in AAC-DEVA:

- Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education
- Evaluation of Research, Development, and Innovation activities
- Evaluation and Accreditation of Teaching Staff
- Institutional Accreditation
- International Relations (including European Approach and all related with ESG).

The functional evaluation and accreditation areas provide administrative and technical support to review panels (that can be referred also as committees or commissions) and assist the Direction in the exercise of his evaluation and accreditation functions: adoption of formal decisions, proposal of criteria and guidelines, appointment of panel members. The coordinators of these areas receive support from ACCUA's technical and administrative staff, that can be attached to a single area or to several of them. No external experts or students get involved at this level, but at the following: the review panels.

The Agency's evaluation and accreditation activity is carried out by expert and independent individuals who are part of the “technical collaborating staff of the Agency for evaluation and accreditation” (as literally translated from the Agency's Statutes): **the evaluators**, that can work individually or as part of committees, commissions or panels. In addition to issuing independent evaluation and accreditation reports as outlined in the Agency's statutes, the evaluators collaborate with the Directorate in developing criteria, guidelines, and protocols for evaluation and accreditation.

The Director appoints evaluators based on the following criteria: objectivity, suitability, territorial diversity, independence, absence of conflicts of interest, and availability. These experts must meet the requirements specified by the regulations applicable to each evaluation or accreditation procedure and international standards. They are selected from external experts in the academic, research, or professional fields registered in the Agency's [database of evaluators](#). The selection process is approved by the Governing Council of the Agency, upon the proposal of the Directorate and with input from the Technical Committee.

The **General Secretariat** assists the Director in the exercise of the executive functions described in article 21 of the Statutes: strategic planning, reporting, economic and budgetary management, contracting, legal affairs, human resources, data protection, transparency.



The Head of the **Evaluation and Accreditation Area** assists the Director in the exercise of the above-mentioned evaluation and accreditation functions described in article 22 of the Statutes: issuance of quality assurance decisions, development of assessment guidelines and protocols for approval by the Technical Committee and coordination of the five functional evaluation and accreditation areas mentioned above: Higher Education, RDI, Teaching Staff, Institutional Accreditation, International Relations.

The Head of the **Quality and Institutional Relations Area** assists the Director in the exercise of the quality assurance and institutional cooperation: internal quality assurance, compliance with European standards and specifically of the requirements to maintain the registration in EQAR, and cooperation with HEI and other national and international stakeholders.



## 4.2.2. Strategic Planning

ACCUA's strategic planning has its first reference point in the entity's own **statutes**, which were developed after an audit process of the executive entities of the Andalusian public sector. The conclusions of this audit recommended that the then AAC-DEVA continue its activities as an independent entity, adopting the legal nature of an administrative agency to strengthen its specialization and benefit from the guarantees offered by the administrative procedure. The formulation of these statutes resulted from a process that involved the participation of our stakeholders. In this context, the entity's own statutes serve as the first document of strategic planning, outlining its general purpose (mission), as well as its functions, competencies, objectives, and guiding principles (vision, objectives, values).

Secondly, the [Initial Action Plan](#) of the entity (PIA) is the document that sets out the objectives for its first four years of operation (2023-2026), as well as the human and financial resources for achieving these objectives. The PIA proposal has been developed by the Agency itself and approved by the Minister of University, Research, and Innovation, in accordance with the provisions of Article 58 of Law 9/2007, of October 22, on the Administration of the Junta de Andalucía. This plan defines the strategic lines to be followed and the objectives of the entity, which must be developed annually through the Agency's budgets. These budgets are approved by the Andalusian Parliament after formulation by the ACCUA Directorate, along with the [Annual Action Plan](#), whose approval is the sole responsibility of the ACCUA Directorate.

The **strategic lines** of ACCUA established in the Initial Action Plan are as follows:

### 1. Strategic Governance and Quality:

ACCUA must develop a strategic governance system based on the principle of continuous improvement to achieve the highest satisfaction of its stakeholders and promote a culture of quality in the Andalusian Knowledge System.

### 2. Continuous Improvement of Procedures:

ACCUA must advance in optimizing resources and systems dedicated to evaluation procedures to make them more efficient and effective, thus improving their external recognition.

### 3. Communication and Enhancement:

ACCUA must share with stakeholders and society in general the results of its evaluation work so that the strengths of the Andalusian Knowledge System can be recognized and valued.

At the end of the validity of this initial plan, and in accordance with the provisions of the ACCUA Statutes, the multi-year strategic plan must be formulated by the Directorate and approved by the Governing Council. Subsequent multi-year strategic plans will also be supplemented annually with the corresponding **annual action plan**, accompanied by an explanatory report of its content. In this context, the ACCUA Directorate has the authority to adapt the annual action plan to any modifications that may occur in the Initial Action Plan or in the corresponding multi-year strategic plan.



## Strategic Planning for the Period 2021-2023

Since the expiration of the last Strategic Plan of DEVA-AAC (2016-2020) until the establishment of ACCUA, the strategic planning of the entity has been carried out through its annual budgets. These budgets include a diagnosis of the situation, establish strategic and operational objectives for the fiscal year, define monitoring indicators, and detail the resources allocated to each activity. This information is documented in the budget report of each entity, available for the years 2021, 2022 (where the budget of the previous fiscal year was extended), and 2023, now as ACCUA.

It is important to note that in 2019, the results of the operational audit of the executive public sector of the Junta de Andalucía were published. Regarding DEVA-AAC, the audit concluded: *"Taking into account the size of the Andalusian Knowledge System, the Directorate of Evaluation and Accreditation - DEVA of the AAC becomes a necessary entity that provides agility and allows direct contact between each of the agents. If the agents of Andalusian Knowledge System had to go to national entities to obtain evaluations and accreditations for university centers and research activities, the process would be arduous, slow, and laborious. Therefore, it is concluded that the AAC provides an important and necessary public service for the proper functioning of the Andalusian Knowledge System as a whole."* This led to the initiation of the regulatory process that culminated in the establishment of ACCUA.

Initially, in 2019, work began on the successor to the AAC 2016-2020 Strategic Plan. However, the decision of the Junta de Andalucía to separate DEVA from AAC to become what is now ACCUA made it advisable to focus efforts on designing the new agency. Therefore, during the period when [Law 9/2021](#), of December 23, which created ACCUA, and [Decree 17/2023](#), of February 14, approving its Statutes, were being processed, strategic planning was carried out through the corresponding annual budgets.

### 4.2.3. Purpose and objectives

The **general purpose** of the Agency is to promote the quality of the Andalusian Knowledge System, in accordance with international scientific and academic standards, and to provide the Universities, Higher Education Institutions, Research Institutions and other Agents of the Andalusian Knowledge System with the quality criteria and references that allow them to fulfil their social function in the best possible way (Article 6 of its Statutes):

- a) External quality assurance of university institutions and higher education centers in the fields of teaching, research and innovation, without prejudice to university autonomy.
- b) Support for the guarantee and improvement of the scientific and technical research, development and innovation activities of the Andalusian Knowledge System.
- c) The development of methodologies, tools and proposals, in the field of quality, which contribute to the progress and international projection of the Andalusian Knowledge System.
- d) The promotion and coordination of mechanisms for mutual recognition and collaboration with national and international evaluation and accreditation bodies.
- e) The identification and consolidation of best practices in the processes of evaluation and accreditation of scientific and university quality.
- f) The elaboration, analysis and dissemination of information on the functioning and quality of the Andalusian Knowledge System to society, to interested persons and entities and to the Public Administrations.



These general objectives, established in the Statutes of the entity, have been further developed as objectives of the Initial Action Plan within the three established strategic lines:

## **Strategic line 1. Strategic Governance and Quality:**

### **Initial Action Plan objectives:**

- 1.1. Promote the development of a quality culture in all areas of the Agency's activity.
- 1.2. Reduce the risks and contingencies associated with the work of the Agency through the proper organization of its services and the adequate training of its staff.
- 1.3. Maximize the satisfaction of users of the Agency's services, as well as the human resources at its disposal.

## **Strategic line 2. Continuous Improvement of Procedures:**

### **Initial Action Plan objectives:**

- 2.1. Improve the design of the Agency's evaluation programs to facilitate their use and reduce errors in their implementation.
- 2.2. Expand the scope of the Agency's software applications to optimize evaluation and internal management processes.
- 2.3. Adapt the Agency's procedures to international standards in their different areas.

## **Strategic line 3. Communication and Enhancement:**

### **Initial Action Plan objectives:**

- 3.1. Increase the transparency and scope of the Agency's communication actions in response to the needs of its stakeholders.
- 3.2. Develop a data management and processing system that facilitates decision-making and the diffusion, and dissemination of results.
- 3.3. Promote alliances with entities and stakeholders that enhance the visibility of the quality of the Andalusian Knowledge System.

## **4.2.4. Functions and competencies: Agency activities**

The **quality assurance** activities assigned to ACCUA are described as functions and competencies (Article 7 of its Statutes), and are essentially the same as those previously carried out by DEVA-AAC, though for further clarity, they are described with higher detail:

- a) The establishment of criteria, standards, indicators and methodologies for the evaluation and improvement of the quality of the Andalusian Knowledge System, as well as participation in the establishment of criteria, standards, indicators and methodologies for scientific evaluation and higher education at national, European and international levels.
- b) The exercise of the functions of evaluation and accreditation of university institutions and Higher Education Centres and their teaching staff entrusted to the university quality agencies by state legislation, within the scope of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia.
- c) The evaluation and accreditation functions that correspond to it as a university quality agency in other geographical areas, in accordance with the provisions of the international agreements that regulate the European Higher Education Area and international collaboration agreements, without prejudice to the provisions of state legislation on universities.
- d) The optional and non-binding issuing of reports on projects for the creation and recognition



of Universities in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, at the request of the Regional Ministry responsible for Universities.

e) The evaluation of teaching centers established in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia that provide education in accordance with foreign higher education systems, without prejudice to what is established for this purpose by State legislation on Universities.

f) The evaluation of official higher education programmes with regard to their verification, modification, monitoring and renewal of accreditation, in accordance with the provisions of state and autonomous community regulations on quality assurance.

g) The certification of the internal quality assurance systems of Universities and Higher Education Institutions, both in the case of systems that assure the quality of official courses and of their own courses, including lifelong learning courses.

h) The evaluation of the teaching, research and management activities of civil servant and contracted staff of the Universities for the assignment of salary complements linked to individual merits, established in the scope of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia.

i) The evaluation and accreditation of the activities of scientific and technical research, development, innovation, promotion and dissemination of knowledge of the Agents of the Andalusian Knowledge System and their research personnel. In particular, the evaluation of the activity of the Agents of the Andalusian Knowledge System and of the personnel who carry out research functions within the framework of the incentives to be granted by the competent Regional Ministry for the promotion of scientific and technical research in the Andalusian Knowledge System.

j) The evaluation and monitoring of the scientific and technical research programmes promoted by the Regional Government of Andalusia.

k) The evaluation and accreditation of scientific and technical research activities in other geographical areas, when so authorised by the Regional Ministry responsible for scientific and technical research.

l) The issuing of mandatory and binding reports for the creation of University Research Institutes. Every five years the Agency will evaluate its research activity in accordance with the provisions of article 65.4 of the revised text of the Andalusian Law on Universities, approved by Legislative Decree 1/2013 of 8 January.

m) The issuing of mandatory and non-binding reports for the creation, modification and dissolution of academies of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, as well as for the approval and modification of their statutes.

n) The prospective and retrospective analysis of scientific and university activity in Andalusia, its application to quality assurance in these fields and its social dissemination.

o) Any other activities related to evaluation and accreditation that may be entrusted to it by the Regional Ministry responsible for Universities and Research or other Regional Ministries, within the framework of the planning approved by the Governing Council.

p) Those expressly attributed to it by autonomous community and state regulations, as well as any other activity, competence or function specifically attributed to it in relation to its aims.



## 4.2.5. Principles

ACCUA carries out its functions with objectivity, professionalism, compliance with legal regulations, and independence in the exercise of its duties. The Agency's actions are guided by the following general principles of operation (Article 10 of its Statutes):

- a) Autonomy, impartiality and independence in the exercise of its evaluation and accreditation functions.
- b) Scientific and technical competence and professional ethics, in accordance with academic and social standards. The Agency will promote the participation of technical collaborating staff with the highest level of experience and professionalism.
- c) Internal and external quality assurance, following international quality assurance guidelines. The Agency will ensure a balance between qualitative and quantitative criteria in quality assessment processes, and will encourage the participation of students, teaching and research staff in quality assurance processes.
- d) Methodological innovation and continuous improvement of processes in order to maximise their efficiency and effectiveness.
- e) Cooperation with all the Agents of the Andalusian Knowledge System and with other Public Administrations, as well as with other quality agencies with similar aims.
- f) European approach in the actions for the integration of Universities in the European Higher Education Area.
- g) Readiness to meet social demands related to scientific and university quality.
- h) Transparency in all administrative activities, understood as public access to complete, accurate and clear information about the Agency's activity.



## 4.3. Quality assurance activities

ACCUA carries out quality assurance activities at the level of official university degrees, institutions, teaching staff, and research activities (Table 10). The activities in the field of official degrees and institutions fall within the scope of the ESG, while those that assess teaching and research activities are not included in the activities registered in EQAR.

**Table 10. Quality Assurance Activities of ACCUA**

AREA	QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITY
<b>OFFICIAL DEGREES</b>  <b>(Activities within the scope of ESG)</b>	<a href="#">Ex-ante verification of study programmes<sup>1</sup></a>
	<a href="#">Follow-up/monitoring of study programmes</a>
	<a href="#">Modification of study programmes<sup>2</sup></a>
	<a href="#">Ex-post re-accreditation verification of study programmes</a>
	<a href="#">European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes</a>
<b>INSTITUTIONS</b>  <b>(Activities within the scope of ESG)</b>	<a href="#">DOCENTIA program for teaching activity evaluation</a>
	<a href="#">Accreditation of Quality Assurance Systems (IMPLANTA)</a>
	<a href="#">Institutional Accreditation</a>
	<a href="#">Reviews of universities for recognition</a>
	<a href="#">Accreditation of foreign language skills</a>
<b>TEACHING ACTIVITIES</b>	<a href="#">Accreditation of teaching staff</a>
	<a href="#">Evaluation of emeritus teaching staff</a>
	<a href="#">Teaching performance incentives</a>
<b>RESEARCH ACTIVITIES</b>	<a href="#">Evaluation of RDI projects</a>
	<a href="#">Evaluation of university institutes</a>
	<a href="#">Evaluation of human resources</a>
	<a href="#">Evaluation of knowledge transfer activities</a>
	<a href="#">Evaluation of other research calls</a>

According to [Royal Decree 822/2021](#), of September 28, which establishes the organization of university education and the quality assurance procedure, once a study programme have been developed, it must undergo mandatory verification, follow-up once implemented, and a renewal process of the initial accreditation obtained in the verification process (Figure 7). Previously, from 2007 to 2021, Royal Decree 1393/2007, of October 29, was applied, which established similar regulations, although it did not differentiate between accredited and non-accredited centers at that time and did not specify issues such as substantial and non-substantial modifications and academic programs with successive pathways.

The accreditation renewal is carried out after six years (Bachelor's degree of 240 ECTS, Master's, and Doctorate) or eight years (Bachelor's degree of 300/360 ECTS) of implementation. HEI must design and

<sup>1</sup> This activity also includes the procedures for the substantial modification of study programmes (more information on [Chapter 4.3.1.1.](#))

<sup>2</sup> This activity also includes the procedures for Academic Programmes with Successive Pathways – PARS (more information on [Chapter 4.3.1.3.](#))





implement internal quality assurance systems that include procedures related to the processes of verification, modification, monitoring, and renewal of the accreditation of official degrees and the quality of teaching staff, and their implementation can be certified (IMPLANTA program). The accreditation renewal of the official degrees of a HEI plus the certification of the implementation of its quality assurance system can lead to its Institutional Accreditation (voluntary). These activities are interrelated as schematized in Figure 6. Additionally, HEI can voluntarily establish processes to ensure the quality of their teaching staff (DOCENTIA program).

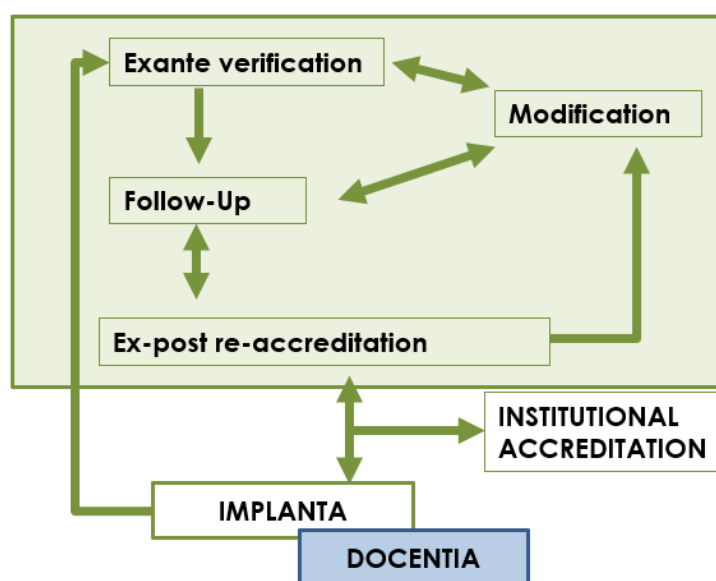


Figure 6. Relationship between the assessment programs of official degrees taught in centers with institutional accreditation

In the green box are those directly related to the assessment of official degrees taught in centers without institutional accreditation.

Details about other quality assurance activities within the competencies of ACCUA are available through the links on Table 11.

In order to carry out all these activities, ACCUA designs specific guides and protocols to provide support and guidance to higher education institutions. These guides describe the different steps of the evaluation process, explain how to correctly justify each criterion and how they will be assessed (see [Chapter 6.5](#) ESG2.5 Criteria for outcomes), and the procedure for appeals, if applicable. These guides are updated with the contributions of higher education institutions and members of the evaluation committees (see [Chapter 7](#) Information and opinion of stakeholders). For each program, specific panels of experts are established (see [Chapter 6.4](#) ESG2.4 Evaluators).



### 4.3.1. Quality of Official University Degrees

ACCUE's activities related to the quality assurance of official study programmes (see Table 11) follow a series of common milestones:

- Every year, upon a proposal from ACCUE, a schedule for submitting applications for different programs is approved by the Andalusian Council of Universities.
- Universities submit the required information to the relevant ministry or ACCUE.
- This information is evaluated by a panel of experts appointed by ACCUE (see Chapter 6.4) that prepares the provisional report (except for non-substantial modifications, follow-up of titles, and follow-up of IMPLANTA). If necessary, the university can submit allegations to this report.
- The panel reviews the allegations and generates the final report, which may include aspects of improvement or special monitoring and the final decision (favourable or unfavourable) when applicable.
- There is a committee that conducts a cross-review of reports from the same university to ensure homogeneity.
- ACCUE's Directorate signs the final report, which is published openly, allowing for search by university, title, knowledge area, etc.

Public information about each program can be accessed on ACCUE's website by clicking on the title of each subsection below.

#### 4.3.1.1. Ex-ante verification of study programmes

The ex-ante verification of official university programmes responds to the provisions established in Royal Decree 1393/2007, of October 29, and, starting from 2021, to [Royal Decree 822/2021](#), of September 28, which establishes the organization of university education and the quality assurance process. Additionally, it aligns with [Decree 154/2023](#), of June 27, on the organization of official university education in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, applicable from the academic year 2024-25. According to this, study plans leading to official university degrees must be verified by the Council of Universities (central government), and their implementation authorized by the respective Autonomous Community.

Evaluation bodies determined by the Autonomous Community laws, registered EQAR, and having successfully undergone an external evaluation according to the ESG (Article 25.2 of Royal Decree 822/2021), are responsible for assessing study programmes. Therefore, the degree verification process is the first step for a university to obtain recognition for an official Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral degree, which is then included in the Register of Universities, Centers, and Degrees ([RUCT](#)) managed by the Ministry in charge at the Government of Spain.

In line with the protocols approved by the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU), ACCUE has two guides, one for official [Bachelor's and Master's degrees](#) and another for [Doctoral programmes](#). More information about REACU can be found on [Chapter 3](#), and specifically about other agents on the Spanish QA framework on [Chapter 3.2](#).

Universities request the verification of a new official degree through the Spanish [Ministry's website](#). Until 2021, the evaluation was managed using a computer application designed by the ministry. However, as



of 2023, ACCUA has detached from this platform, using his own one. The evaluation reports issued by ACCUA are submitted to the Council of Universities, the body responsible at the Government of Spain for verifying official university degrees according to current legislation, which is in charge of making the final decision.

Since the last review in 2019, Andalusian universities have requested the verification of 151 Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees, of which 123 (81.4%) have received a favourable assessment ([Annex I](#)).

## Substantial modifications of study programmes

Once implemented, it may be the case that during the follow up and monitoring of a study programme, or through the application of their Internal Quality Assessment System, it is determined that a study programme requires modifications. When these modifications affect the nature, objectives, and fundamental characteristics of the degree, they are considered substantial, and require an evaluation by ACCUA before being implemented. The procedure and evaluation criteria for substantial modifications of study programmes are the same as for the ex-ante the verification process.

Since the last evaluation by ENQA in 2019, a total of 563 substantial modifications affecting the nature, objectives, and fundamental characteristics of the degree have been evaluated, of which 516 have been positively evaluated (91.6%). ([Annex III](#)).

### 4.3.1.2. Follow-up/monitoring of study programmes

Before the entry into force of [Royal Decree 822/2021](#), on September 28, once an official university degree was authorized by the competent body, the Agency carried out its follow-up and monitoring to determine if the degree is being executed according to the verification report, meets the initially established quality standards, and has established a process to ensure continuous improvement.

With the entry into force of Royal Decree 822/2021, a differentiation is established for the follow-up of degrees taught by an institutionally accredited HEI, based on Royal Decree 640/2021, of July 27, on the creation, recognition, and authorization of universities and university centers, and institutional accreditation of university centers. This promotes greater autonomy for universities in quality assurance by considering the certification of the implementation of an Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) as one of the requirements for obtaining Institutional Accreditation by HEI. Therefore, aiming to enhance the responsibility of such institutions in assuring the quality of their degrees, the follow-up of degrees in institutionally accredited HEI is carried out within the framework of the monitoring of the certification of the Quality Assurance System of the center, which is conducted by the HEI and evaluated by ACCUA through the IMPLANTA program.

For programmes in HEI without institutional accreditation, both the previously mentioned Royal Decree 822/2021, of September 28, and [Decree 154/2023](#), of June 27, on the organization of official university education in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, establish that ACCUA is responsible for this follow-up. For this purpose, the [Protocol for the Follow-up of University Degrees of Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate](#) was established, following the same dimensions, criteria, and evaluation guidelines as for the ex-post re-accreditation verification of study programmes.

To facilitate the exchange of documentation with university institutions, ACCUA designed its [own online application system](#) in which all the information about the process is stored.



Since 2019, 500 follow-ups have been conducted for Bachelor's degrees, 626 for Master's degrees, and 237 for Doctoral Programs ([Annex II](#)).

#### 4.3.1.3. Modification of study programmes

Since the entry into force of [Royal Decree 822/2021](#), of September 28, which establishes the organization of university education and the quality assurance procedure in Spain, and the future application of [Decree 154/2023](#), of June 27, on the organization of official university education in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia (non-substantial modifications), a distinction has been established between substantial modifications, managed under the ex-ante verification process ([Chapter 4.3.1.1.](#)), and non-substantial modifications, which are addressed in this chapter.

From a regulatory standpoint, Royal Decree 822/2021 establishes a classification of modifications as substantial or non-substantial, depending on whether they entail a change in the nature, objectives, and fundamental characteristics of the degree registered in the Register of Universities, Centers, and Degrees (RUCT).

Substantial modifications are explained in [Chapter 4.3.1.1.](#), as they follow the same procedure as the ex-ante verification of study programmes, both for HEI with and without institutional accreditation.

In contrast, a "non-substantial modification" is understood to be any formal request that does not involve a change in the nature, objectives, and fundamental characteristics of the official university degree registered in the RUCT

The non-substantial modification of a study programme taught at HEI which are not institutionally accredited, will be remitted to ACCUA for its review. For this purpose, ACCUA approved in 2022 its own [Evaluation protocol for non-substantial modifications of official university degrees taught in university centers not institutionally accredited](#).

The non-substantial modifications of the study plans provided at institutionally accredited HEI will be approved by the HEI governing body, with a previous favourable report, binding and preceptive, of their IQAS.

Since the launch of the programme for the evaluation of non-substantial modifications in 2022, 131 requests have been evaluated, with 120 resulting in a positive report (91.6%) ([Annex III](#)).

#### Academic Programs with Successive Pathways (PARS)

The [Royal Decree 822/2021](#), of September 28, which establishes the organization of university education and the quality assurance procedure, regulates the possibility for HEI to offer academic programmes with successive pathways—consecutive cycles—in the fields of Engineering and Architecture. This does not imply the creation of a new programme, but creating a pathway that connects specific Bachelor's and a Master's degrees and allows for students to register at the Master before obtaining the Bachelor's degree, under certain circumstances.

The reason for creating this pathway is that, traditionally, in Spain, most Engineering and Architecture students fail at completing their Bachelor's degrees in the ideal timeframe of four academic years. Many



students, even the best ones, reach the final year with some failed subjects, and complain they are missing a year if they can't start the Master's degree immediately after the fourth year. This system allows them to start the Master's degree while trying to pass the remaining subjects of the Bachelor's degree.

So, the PARS is not a new programme (it does not imply a new registry in the RUCT) nor does it modify the study programmes of the Bachelor's and Master's degrees for students not following the PARS, but it does create the so called "pathway" in those programmes in order to allow students to further their professional specialization, all with the aim of reinforcing the comprehensive education of students.

In summary, PARS allow Bachelor's students to access and enrol in a specific Master's program linked to that Bachelor's degree, provided they only have the Final Degree Project and some subjects left to complete, without exceeding a total of 30 ECTS credits.

These academic programs must receive a favourable report from the competent evaluation body, in the case of our autonomous community, from ACCUA. For this purpose, [REACU has established a common protocol](#) among all Spanish agencies for the evaluation of PARS. From the point of view of the compliance with the ESG, the [procedure established by ACCUA](#) is similar in weight to that established for the evaluation of non-substantial modifications at non institutionally accredited HEI. A computer platform has been adapted for the management of applications.

During this period, 50 reports have been issued, all of which were favourable. These reports are public and accessible through the following [link](#).

#### **4.3.1.4. Ex-post re-accreditation verification of study programmes**

According to current legislation in Spain, official university degrees must undergo a process of renewal of their initial accreditation (ex-post re-accreditation verification of study programmes) within six years from the implementation of the program or the renewal of the previous accreditation. The deadline is eight years for degrees with 300 or 360 credits. In Andalusia this process is managed by ACCUA. In accordance with the regulations, the Regional Ministry publishes an annual call where the procedure for submitting the applications is established.

Two substantial changes were implemented in this program during the period 2019-2023:

- Due to changes in national regulations, from the entry into force of Royal Decree 822/2021, of September 28, applications for the ex-post re-accreditation verification of study programmes are no longer addressed to the regional body but to the Spanish Ministry responsible for universities.
- Due to the adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic, on-site visits to university centers were replaced by virtual visits, maintaining quality standards in evaluations at all times.

Considering the guidelines approved by REACU and the ESG2015, ACCUA has developed a [Guide for the renewal of accreditation for university programs of Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate degrees](#) in Andalusia, approved by the CTEyA on 07/21/2022. The renewal procedure for doctoral programs has been implemented since the last review from ENQA. The guide incorporates improvements suggested by evaluation committees and participating universities.

During the evaluation period of this report, 323 Bachelor's degrees, 404 Master's degrees, and 120 Doctorates were assessed ([Annex IV](#)).



The exchange of documentation with university institutions is carried out through ACCUA's own online application system, where all the information is stored, and each institution can only access its own information. Evaluation reports issued by ACCUA are sent to the Council of Universities, the central government body responsible for the renewal of accreditation for official university degrees according to current legislation, which issues the final decision.

#### **4.3.1.5. European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes**

[Royal Decree 822/2021](#), of September 28, which establishes the organization of university education and the quality assurance procedure, allows Spanish universities to request the verification of a joint programme designed between one or more Spanish and foreign universities for the award of an international Joint Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctorate degree. This decree states that HEI can use the [European Approach](#) for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes for ex-ante verification, modification, and ex-post re-accreditation, provided that the country of the coordinating university for the program has the right to use the European Approach.

In order to carry out this procedure, ACCUA has developed a [Guide for the Evaluation of International Joint Programmes within the European Approach for Quality Assurance](#), considering European standards and the protocol previously approved by the Spanish Network of University Quality Assurance Agencies (REACU). According to this procedure, the HEI applies for the verification of a new official degree to the Spanish Ministry, and the evaluation of the documentation is carried out by the Agency. Evaluation reports issued by ACCUA are used by the Council of Universities, the body responsible for the verification of official university degrees according to current legislation, to make the final decision.

In 2023, an evaluation report was issued for an international joint degree, the [Joint European Master Degree in Efficient and Sustainable Energy, Transport and Mobility to Build the Smart Cities of the Future](#), offered by the European University Ulysseus.

Likewise, ACCUA has issued a favourable report on the recognition of the Bachelor Degree in European Transcultural Studies: Languages, Cultures, and Interactions, which will be jointly offered by the University of Malaga, Universität Flensburg (Germany), and Université de Strasbourg (France), and which has been evaluated by the German agency AQAS, the Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programs.



## 4.3.2. Quality of Institutions

### 4.3.2.1. Program for Teaching Activity Evaluation (DOCENTIA)

To support HEI in developing models for evaluating the quality of the teaching activities of their faculty, ACCUA continues to collaborate in the DOCENTIA Program under the agreement signed with ANECA in 2007, updated in 2022. A [Support Programme](#) was developed among all participating agencies to help HEI design and implement a program for evaluating the teaching activities of their faculty.

As detailed in the support programme and reflected in the [flowchart](#), ACCUA evaluates the design, and monitors and certifies the implementation of the DOCENTIA Program in Andalusian universities. The outcome of this activity is publicly available. Of the 11 Andalusian universities that had positive design evaluations, two designs have been reevaluated during this period, and three of the eleven universities (UAL, UJA, and UCO) have already submitted their third implementation monitoring report. As of the writing of this report, they are in the stage of submitting their objections, if any.

So far, no Andalusian university has moved on to the certification phase of the implementation of the DOCENTIA program.

### 4.3.2.2. Accreditation of Quality Assurance Systems (IMPLANTA)

Following the European trend towards greater involvement of HEI in quality assurance, the [Royal Decree 640/2021](#), of July 27, on the creation, recognition, and authorization of universities and university centers, and institutional accreditation of university centers, establishes a new framework that allows the transition to a model of Institutional Accreditation for university institutions. The proposed model establishes the certification of the implementation of Quality Assurance Systems (QAS) as one of the necessary requirements to obtain such Institutional Accreditation.

In response to this requirement, ACCUA has been offering Andalusian universities the IMPLANTA program for the Certification of Quality Assurance Systems implemented in the centers of Andalusian universities since the end of 2017. A pilot was conducted in 2018, and various calls for the program have been made since 2019. According to the corresponding [Guide](#), this program begins with the publication of the resolution by ACCUA for the submission of applications by the university for those centers that intend to certify the implementation of the QAS. The program includes a visit to the center if the initial evaluation of the documentation shows that the QAS reaches a suitable implementation. The evaluation result proposes the certification or not of the implemented QAS. This certification is valid for six years, and a follow-up of the QAS implementation is conducted in the third year. The program, voluntary for the centers, was launched in 2018 with a pilot phase, and nine centers have been certified since then.

In 2022, the first follow-up call for this certification was conducted for centers that were recognized with an AUDIT certificate (a program managed by ANECA). In 2023, the first follow-up of the centers that participated in the IMPLANTA pilot program was conducted, including the follow-up of the official degrees taught in these centers. The result was satisfactory to continue until the certification renewal (see [Annex V](#)). ACCUA uses its own evaluation [application system](#) to perform the assessment.





#### 4.3.2.3. Institutional accreditation

This program covers the institutional dimension in the accreditation process of official degrees and is aligned with the current trend in quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

The current accreditation renewal model is a costly and bureaucratic process, both for universities and agencies, lacking vision in its institutional and strategic context. Therefore, starting in 2015, central government regulations allow centers that obtain institutional accreditation to renew the accreditation of the official degrees they offer without undergoing the formal ex-post re-accreditation procedure. This aspect is regulated in Article 14 of [Royal Decree 640/2021](#), of July 27, on the creation, recognition, and authorization of universities and university centers, and institutional accreditation of university centers, and the instructions for the procedure are included in the [Resolution of March 3, 2022](#), of the General Secretariat of Universities. This resolution provides instructions on the procedure for the institutional accreditation of centers of public and private universities and publishes the Protocol for the certification of internal quality assurance systems of university centers and the Protocol for the procedure for the evaluation of the renewal of the institutional accreditation of university centers, approved by the General Conference on University Policy.

According to Royal Decree 640/2021, of July 27, in its Article 14, the university can voluntarily request institutional accreditation for centers that meet two requirements: 1. have the certification of their implemented QAS and 2. have renewed the initial accreditation of at least half of the official undergraduate degrees, half of the official master's degrees, and half of the official doctoral degrees. The request must be sent to the external evaluation body of the autonomous community in whose territory the university is established (ACCUA in the case of Andalusia). The corresponding evaluation body issues an evaluation report that will be favourable or unfavourable and binding for the Council of Universities, the body that issues the final resolution.

Following these guidelines, ACCUA has a [procedure for Institutional Accreditation](#) that determines the deadlines, the Commission, the evaluation phases, and the notification and resolution of the result. Currently this procedure is in process to be updated according to the new regulatory framework.

At the time of writing this self-assessment report, a total of 17 centers have institutional accreditation. Their reports can be consulted through the following [link](#) on the ACCUA website.

#### 4.3.2.4. Reviews of universities for recognition

According to the [Andalusian University Law](#), approved by Decree 1/2013, of January 8, the recognition of private universities is carried out by Law of the Parliament of Andalusia when they meet the basic requirements required by the central government law. The Andalusian Council of Universities and the University Coordination Council must issue a prior report. The regional administration may request ACCUA to evaluate compliance with the requirements according to twelve dimensions of analysis of the documentation provided by the university, as well as the corresponding assessment criteria. ACCUA has developed the [Evaluation Guide for the recognition of universities and university centers](#), which includes the improvements suggested by the universities and centers consulted.

Since the last review by ENQA in 2019, this agency has issued 9 reports prior to the recognition of private universities and university centers.





#### 4.3.2.5. Accreditation of foreign language skills

Mastery of different languages has become a fundamental skill for students in the Andalusian university system, as it facilitates mobility and access to knowledge and skills.

Following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), Andalusian universities and ACCUA have developed a [Procedure](#) for accrediting proficiency in foreign languages in Andalusian universities, allowing universities to structure and evaluate proficiency exams in a foreign language using the same criteria (see [Chapter 6.5](#)). For the certification of the implementation of this procedure, ACCUA prepared a document with [Guidelines for the certification of the Procedure for accrediting proficiency in foreign languages in Andalusian universities](#). Once initial accreditation is obtained, universities must undergo annual monitoring and apply for certification renewal four years after obtaining it, a renewal that must be achieved before five years have passed since the previous one.

The evaluation is carried out by the [Accreditation of foreign languages skills committee](#), which [openly publishes](#) the results of the certification process for the requesting universities. Both UJA and UPO renewed their certification in 2018 and have undergone several follow-ups during this period.



## 4.4. International activities

ACCUE's international commitment stems from the first organization in Andalusia that carried out quality assessment activities (Unit for the Quality of Andalusian Universities-UCUA), which was a member of ENQA since 2000. In 2009, it was evaluated and recognized as a full member of ENQA. In 2014, this recognition was renewed as DEVA-AAC, and ACCUE organized the [5th ENQA Forum in 2015](#). Additionally, it has been continuously registered with EQAR since 2009 and has been a member of INQAAHE since 2010 as a "full member." Furthermore, ACCUE recently joined the Global Academic Integrity Network (GAIN), and was one of the driving agencies of the Coalition for the Advancement of Research Assessment (CoARA).

The agency has carried out several [international evaluation activities](#). It has collaborated with the Russian agency AKKORK since 2013 in the joint implementation of evaluation activities. As a result of this agreement, degrees and the implementation of internal quality assurance systems in centers have been evaluated. The evaluations conducted since 2019 are indicated in Table 12.

As explained in [Chapter 4.3.1.5](#) ACCUE has incorporated the European Approach to its activities within the scope of the ESG, and in this regard, it recently coordinated the evaluation of a Joint European Master Degree, offered by the European university Ulysseus. Additionally, a new request for the evaluation of another joint degree has been received, and it is expected to receive applications for the evaluation of two more degrees (a Bachelor's and a Master's) from another European University.

The agency has also participated in the European project [STUPS](#)-Student participation without borders (ERASMUS+, 2019-2022), which aimed to increase knowledge, cooperation, training, and awareness of student participation as a driver of more efficient governance and a more inclusive higher education system and society.

Currently, ACCUE participates in the [EDLab](#) project, which aims to advance the implementation of international joint programs through the development of the European Degree Label, involving a network of 13 universities and 35 partners, including European University alliances, ministries, and quality assurance agencies.

In the same vein, the Agency has formed a workgroup with representatives from European Universities that include Andalusian universities, to coordinate the design and verification of international joint degrees. European Universities are transnational alliances called to promote European values and identity and to revolutionize the quality and competitiveness of European higher education. Andalusian universities have successfully participated in this future-oriented project by coordinating four European consortia: ARQUS (University of Granada), SEA-EU (University of Cádiz), ULYSSEUS (University of Seville), and UNIGreen (University of Almería).

**Table 11. Overview of international activities in which ACCUE has participated since 2019**

DATE	PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES
08 Nov 23	<a href="#">ACCUE participates in the EQAR Members' Dialogue in Granada</a>
13 Mar 23	<a href="#">ACCUE coordinates its first evaluation of an international joint program through the European Approach</a>
02 Feb 23	<a href="#">Training session for AAC-DEVA staff on the evaluation of international joint programs through the European Approach</a>



DATE	PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES
05 Dic 22	<a href="#">AAC-DEVA joins the Global Academic Integrity Network (GAIN)</a>
05 Oct 22	<a href="#">AAC-DEVA joins the EDlab consortium coordinated by UGR to advance the implementation of international joint programs through the development of the European Degree Label</a>
13 Sep 22	<a href="#">AAC-DEVA participates in the training course on the European Approach organized by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA)</a>
01 Apr 22	<a href="#">DEVA participates in the International Seminar 'Advancing in the construction of the Ibero-American Knowledge Space: a look to the future' in Barranquilla (Colombia)</a>
29 Nov 21	<a href="#">DEVA-AAC receives the progress visit from the ENQA evaluation panel</a>
21 Oct 21	<a href="#">ENQA General Assembly</a>
27 Sep 21	<a href="#">DEVA participates in the activities of the STUPS project in Austria: improving soft skills for participation</a>
16 Sep 21	<a href="#">Registration open for the 2021 European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF)</a>
17 May 21	<a href="#">The European Students' Union (ESU) opens a call to recruit students for its Expert Bank in quality assurance</a>
26 Apr 21	<a href="#">INQAAHE General Assembly</a>
25 Jan 21	<a href="#">ENQA organizes the online seminar "Outcomes of the EUniQ Pilots and Implications for the Framework for QA of European Universities" for Tuesday, March 9, 2021</a>
02 Oct 20	<a href="#">DEVA-AAC initiates collaboration with Andalusian universities coordinating European University initiatives</a>
01 Jul 20	<a href="#">DEVA participates in DEQAR, the European database of quality assurance agency reports</a>
24 Jun 20	<a href="#">DEVA-AAC renews its registration in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)</a>
10 Jun 20	<a href="#">The European Students' Union (ESU) opens a call to recruit students for its Expert Bank in quality assurance</a>
29 Apr 20	<a href="#">The Director and the Coordinator of the International Relations Area attended the ENQA General Assembly held online on April 29, 2020</a>
20 Nov 19	<a href="#">Participation of DEVA-AAC in an ERASMUS+ project</a>
17 Oct 19	<a href="#">10th ENQA General Assembly 2019</a>
01 Oct 19	<a href="#">DEVA-AAC participates in the second ENQA Seminar for recently evaluated agencies</a>
27 Sep 19	<a href="#">DEVA renews its membership in ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) for the third time</a>
25 Apr 19	<a href="#">DEVA-AAC participated in the 9th ENQA Forum held on April 25 and 26 in Tallinn, Estonia</a>
02 Apr 19	<a href="#">On April 2, 3, 4, and 5, DEVA-AAC received the evaluation committee's visit in the process of renewing its membership in ENQA as a full member</a>



## 5. Profile, functioning and (EQA) activities of the Agency (compliance with Part 3 of the ESG)

### 5.1. ESG Standard 3.1: Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

*Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities as defined in Part 2 of the ESG on a regular basis. They should have clear and explicit goals and objectives that are part of their publicly available mission statement. These should translate into the daily work of the agency. Agencies should ensure the involvement of stakeholders in their governance and work.*

ACCUA exercises competencies in the evaluation and accreditation of university activities and research, development, and innovation activities of entities within the Andalusian Knowledge System, in accordance with Article 1.c) of [Law 9/2021](#), of December 23. The agency's regular external quality assurance activities cover all stages of program verification as well as activities at the institutional level, all of them described in [Chapter 4.3](#). ACCUA also carries out other QA activities not currently within the scope of the ESG, regarding teaching staff and scientific activities. The number of procedures per quality assurance activity implemented per year for the last five years can be found in Table 12.

**Table 12. Number of procedures per QA activity implemented per year for the last five years**

QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITY	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>OFFICIAL DEGREES (within the scope of ESG)</b>					
<a href="#">Ex-ante verification of study programmes</a>	36	29	17	37	32
<a href="#">Follow-up/monitoring of study programmes</a>	356	287	364	223	133
<a href="#">Modification of study programmes</a>	112	114	108	111	249
<a href="#">Ex-post re-accreditation verification of study programmes</a>	217	171	149	224	86
<a href="#">European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes</a>					1
<b>INSTITUTIONS (within the scope of ESG)</b>					
<a href="#">DOCENTIA program for teaching activity evaluation</a> (*1)	2		3		
<a href="#">Accreditation of Quality Assurance Systems (IMPLANTA)</a>		5	2	5	8
<a href="#">Institutional Accreditation</a>	8	3	2		4
<a href="#">Reviews of universities for recognition</a> (*2)	2	1	2	3	1
<a href="#">Accreditation of foreign language skills</a> (*3)	1	2	1		1
<b>TEACHING ACTIVITIES</b> (*4)	1.246	1.036	1.200	1.342	1.195
<b>RESEARCH ACTIVITIES</b>	5.926	3.668	4.972	1.973	1.841

(\*1) Includes the evaluation of programme designs and follow-ups.

(\*2) Also includes centers and the evaluation of submitted allegations.

(\*3) Follow-up reports have been issued.

(\*4) In 2019, 10.560 requests for regional supplements were evaluated, which are not included.



The **objectives** of ACCUA are outlined in Article 6 of its [Statutes](#), where its mission is also stated as a general purpose: *"to promote the quality of the Andalusian Knowledge System, in accordance with international scientific and academic standards, and to provide Universities, Higher Education Centers, Research Institutions, and other Agents of the Andalusian Knowledge System with the quality criteria and references that allow them to fulfil their social function optimally."* Additionally, ACCUA's Statutes have elevated the declaration of values of the entity to regulatory status, including them in Article 10, titled principles of action, as discussed in [Chapter 4.2.5](#).

In the development of ACCUA's Statutes, all stakeholder groups of the agency have participated, and the draft decree has been shared with them in different phases of its elaboration, both within DEVA-AAC and through the required public information procedures in [regulatory development](#).

The goals and objectives of ACCUA, as set out in its Statutes, are reflected in the agency's daily work through the preparation and execution of its budget, the main annual planning document. In this budget, objectives for the upcoming year are defined, indicators for monitoring are established, and necessary resources are allocated. The budget preparation follows a formal process involving the Directorate, the Governing Council of the Junta de Andalucía, and final approval by the Parliament of Andalucía.

The strategic planning of ACCUA begins with the [Initial Action Plan](#), a mandatory document to be approved at the start of a new agency's activity. This initial plan, approved by the Regional Minister of Universities, Research and Innovation, to whose department this Agency is attached, outlines the objectives and necessary resources for its operation. In order to preserve the independence of the Agency, the formal development of this initial plan was entrusted to AAC-DEVA in April 2022, which followed a participatory process that included consultations with stakeholders and agency staff. This plan is developed each year with the corresponding [Annual Action Plan](#), approved by the Directorate.

ACCUA's Initial Action Plan is based on the mission, vision, values, and objectives of the entity, as established in the Law that created it and its Statutes. The plan establishes three strategic lines and nine objectives, as detailed in [Chapter 4.2.3](#). These objectives will be developed annually through the annual action plan, in line with the annual budget. This annual plan, approved in December 2023 for the 2024 fiscal year, details the entity's objectives and allocates necessary resources.

ACCUA's activities are documented in the [Annual Activity Report](#), which is made public for general knowledge, in accordance with its Statutes. This report is formulated annually, submitted for approval to the Governing Council, and published on the agency's website. Additionally, ACCUA publishes [annual reports](#) on the results of its main evaluation processes.

In [Chapter 6.2](#) of this SAR, the details of how the evaluation methodologies align with the criteria of the ESG2015 are explained. These methodologies are tailored to fit the mission, vision, values, and objectives of the entity, as described earlier and outlined in its Statutes.

The involvement of stakeholders is achieved through various bodies and regular meetings with higher education institutions as outlined in [Chapter 7](#). Representatives of HEI, of their academic and scientific staff, of their social bodies, professionals with experience in higher education and students are represented both in the Governing Council of the Agency and its Technical Committee as detailed in [Chapter 4.2.1](#). Likewise, students, academic staff, quality assurance experts, and professionals



participate in evaluation panels as described in [Chapter 6.4](#). The Agency The agency maintains an open [Complaints and Suggestions mailbox](#) for all stakeholders and the general public.

ACCUA recognizes future challenges, particularly in its transition from AAC-DEVA to ACCUA, involving the adaptation of its structure and processes. The Quality Assurance Commission works on continuous improvement of internal procedures to meet the needs of the new organization. Although the time elapsed since the end of the last Strategic Plan of DEVA-AAC until the establishment of ACCUA has been considerable, the agency has progressed in its strategic planning from 2021 until the constitution date in March 2023. During this period, adaptations were made in response to the COVID-19 health emergency, allowing the agency to maintain its activity levels through remote work.



## 5.2. Standard 3.2 Official status

*Agencies should have an established legal basis and should be formally recognised as quality assurance agencies by competent public authorities.*

As described earlier, ACCUA was created by law in 2021 and **formally constituted on March 1, 2023**, with the entry into force of its Statutes. Its functions and are reproduced in [Chapter 4.2.4](#).

ACCUA's official status is reinforced by national regulations. Article 5 of Organic Law 2/2023, dated March 22, on the University System, establishes that: *"The functions of accreditation and evaluation of university teaching staff, institutional accreditation, evaluation of university degrees, monitoring of results, and reports in the university field, as well as any others assigned by state and regional laws, belong to the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (hereinafter, ANECA) and to the quality assessment agencies of the Autonomous Communities registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)."*

Likewise, Article 25 of Royal Decree 822/2021, dated September 28, which establishes the organization of university education and the quality assurance procedure, regulates the actions of quality agencies in the Autonomous Communities registered in EQAR as the entities authorized to carry out external evaluation of university studies to ensure their quality in accordance with the ESG. The mentioned article is reproduced below.

*"Article 25. Quality assurance of official university education.*

- 1. In order to ensure the quality of university studies as an educational service for the whole of Spanish society, official university degrees must undergo external evaluation procedures in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area(ESG), in accordance with the provisions of Title V of Organic Law 6/2001 of 21 December 2001, and in accordance with the provisions of this Royal Decree. Universities should take co-responsibility for quality assurance by developing their internal quality assurance systems and promoting a culture of quality among the university community.*
- 2. The external evaluation bodies responsible for processing the quality assurance procedures of the Spanish university system are the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) and, for their corresponding territorial scope, the quality agencies of the Autonomous Communities registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), after having successfully passed an external evaluation in accordance with the ESG.*
- 3. The quality assurance procedures that involve all the syllabuses of official university degrees are those of verification, monitoring and modification, as well as the renewal of degree accreditation. To this end, the quality agencies will jointly establish the quality assessment protocols that underpin them.*
- 4. The Ministry of Universities will maintain an Integrated University Information System (SIIU) to cover the information needs of the Spanish university system as a whole and of the administrations, and will provide the competent external assessment bodies with the necessary information to carry out quality assurance procedures. In addition, this system will develop activities, based on the statistics and information gathering, observation, analysis and foresight, in collaboration with universities and quality agencies."*



This set of rules establishes that the functions of quality assurance in the Andalusian university system belong to ACCUA, by virtue of its registration in the EQAR register and its authorization after successfully undergoing an external evaluation in accordance with the ESG.

Organically, the exercise of evaluation and accreditation functions falls under the purview of the Directorate, which issues official resolutions in the exercise of administrative powers and prerogatives as stipulated in the entity's statutes.

As described in [Chapter 4](#), History, Profile, and Activities of the Agency, ACCUA succeeds the Directorate of Evaluation and Accreditation (DEVA) of the Andalusian Agency of Knowledge (AAC), which held these competencies between 2011 and 2023. Before that, the competencies belonged to the Andalusian Agency for the Evaluation and Accreditation of Universities (AGAE), established in 2005.

As stated in the ToR, referring to the external review to which this SAR serves *«This review will evaluate the extent to which ACCUA continues to fulfil the requirements of the ESG, taking into consideration that ACCUA became the legal successor of the Andalusian Agency of Knowledge, Directorate for Evaluation and Accreditation (AAC-DEVA) following a law issued by the Andalusian government. »*

Both AAC-DEVA and ACCUA were created by law of the regional government, the first with functions beyond quality assurance of higher education, the former as an administrative agency with the sole purpose of serving as the QA body for HEI, teaching and RDI activities in Andalusia.

Both agency's structures are similar in that they have a Governing Council, chaired by a President, a Technical Committee as an advisory body, and a General Secretariat for support on executive functions and legal compliance. Equally, both structures include functional areas of evaluation and accreditation, coordinated by external experts. The members at all the above-mentioned bodies and areas are appointed the same way in ACCUA as they were in AAC-DEVA.

In terms of management, AAC-DEVA had a General Directorate, with executive functions, and then in the field of quality assurance, a Directorate of Evaluation and Accreditation, with independence for exercising the competencies in this area. Now, at ACCUA, the Director also holds the executive functions, as well as the evaluation and accreditation functions, and the internal quality assurance and institutional relations functions. The new management structure is reinforced by the creation of two sub-areas, for support on the above-mentioned functions: Evaluation and Accreditation and Quality Assurance and Institutional Relations.

In terms of recognition by external bodies nothing has changed: ACCUA has been recognized as the legal successor of AAC-DEVA by the Spanish Minister of Universities, ANECA, REACU, EQAR, ENQA, INQAAHE, GAIN and CoARA.





## 5.3. Standard 3.3 Independence

*Agencies should be independent and act autonomously. They should have full responsibility for their operations and the outcomes of those operations without third party influence.*

The creation of ACCUA as an agency exclusively in charge of quality assurance in higher education and scientific research implies its Directorate is not part of the structure of an agency which also served other functions (technology transfer and management of calls). Whereas at AAC-DEVA there was a General Directorate, which held the executive functions, and a Directorate of Evaluation and Accreditation, with exclusive functions in this field; at ACCUA the Directorate holds both powers, which enhances independence and autonomy in terms of resource allocation and self-organization. This has a direct impact on organisational and operational independence. Independence of formal outcomes was guaranteed in both agencies. In any case, such independence is formally stated in the Agency statutes.

### 5.3.1. Organizational independence

As stated among the principles of action for ACCUA, outlined in Article 10 of its statutes, "*the Agency will exercise its functions with objectivity, professionalism, compliance with legal provisions, and **independence** in their exercise*", detailing in subsection a) "*autonomy, impartiality, and **independence in the exercise of its evaluation and accreditation functions.***"

The organisational structure of ACCUA is the result of a participatory process that involved all stakeholders during the processing of the Law that created the Agency, as well as during the development of its Statutes. In this process, recommendations made by EQAR and ENQA in previous reviews were considered in order to ensure independence according to the international standards.

The Governing Council is the highest collegiate governing body and is responsible for establishing the agency's multi-year strategic planning, based on the proposal from the Directorate. The Governing Council is representative of the bodies of the administration with competencies in education and scientific research, Andalusian universities and their social councils, the field of scientific research and professional activity, and university students. Its composition, which must respect a gender balance of at least 60/40, is regulated in Section 1 of Article 17 of the Agency's Statutes, and the current composition can be consulted [here](#). The ACCUA Directorate is accountable to this governing body, which is responsible, among other functions, for approving the agency's annual activity report.

The Director of ACCUA is appointed by the Governing Council of the Junta de Andalucía, proposed by the head of the Regional Ministry of University, Research, and Innovation, from among individuals of recognized academic and scientific merit who are career civil servants. The appointment is made through a public competition based on the principles of equality, merit, and capacity, with the competition's bases approved by proposal of the ACCUA Governing Council. Information about the call can be found [here](#) (in Spanish). The previous appointee, who served from January 2020 to February 2023, was also selected through a public call. The ACCUA Directorate is the highest executive body of the agency and the competent body for approving the agency's annual action plan, within the framework of the Initial Action Plan or the corresponding multi-year strategic plan, as stipulated in Article 36 of its statutes.

Finally, as explained in more detail in [Chapter 4.2.1](#) of this report, the Technical Committee is the technical, advisory, and consultative collegiate body to the Directorate in the exercise of its evaluation functions. Among its functions are approving the agency's evaluation and accreditation plans and



programmes, its evaluation and accreditation criteria, its guides and protocols, as well as other supervisory, advisory, and reporting functions detailed in Article 25 of the Agency's statutes.

### 5.3.2. Operational independence

As mentioned earlier, the Directorate of ACCUA is the highest executive body of the Agency, with competencies extensively described in the Agency's statutes, divided into executive functions (Article 21), evaluation and accreditation functions (Article 22), and internal quality and institutional collaboration functions (Article 23). These competencies grant the body complete independence in operational terms when organizing the work of the entity, developing and implementing evaluation and accreditation activities, and establishing its own quality and stakeholder relations policies. In particular, the assumption by the ACCUA Directorate of executive functions represents a step forward in the operational independence of the entity, as in AAC, the highest-level executive functions in the entity belonged to AAC Directorate, while the DEVA was responsible for evaluation and accreditation functions.

The values of the entity, outlined in its statutes as general principles of action (Article 10), first articulate *"autonomy, impartiality, and **independence** in the exercise of its functions of evaluation and accreditation."* They include other principles that contribute to reinforcing this operational independence, such as *"scientific and technical competence and professional ethics, in accordance with academic and social standards," "internal and external quality assurance, following international quality assurance guidelines,"* as well as the participation of students, faculty, and research staff, cooperation with stakeholders, transparency, and the European approach.

The ACCUA Directorate, therefore, exercises the evaluation and accreditation competencies with independence for the appointment of technical collaborating staff for the coordination of different evaluation areas and for the appointment of members of evaluation committees. This is in accordance with the agreement adopted by the ACCUA Governing Council on May 24, 2023, which authorized the continued temporary application of the [Selection and Appointment Procedure for Evaluators](#) approved by the CTEyA on October 21, 2022.

Additionally, the Agency has a [Code of Ethics](#) that develops the application of the entity's principles. This code, approved at AAC-DEVA, is currently in the process of being updated for approval by the Directorate as the Code of Ethical Conduct of ACCUA, following the provisions of Article 12 of its statutes.

The new regulatory context in which ACCUA operates as an administrative agency, specialized in quality assurance, reinforces the independence for the development of its quality assurance activities that DEVA-AAC already enjoyed. In ordinary work, technical collaborating staff from the agency for the development of evaluation and accreditation activities continues to be selected from outside Andalusia to avoid conflicts of interest, and the evaluation panel remains responsible for the content of the final report. Similarly, the role of ACCUA staff remains to provide technical and methodological support to the panel.

### 5.3.3. Independence of formal outcomes

Article 22 of the statutes establishes that *"as the competent body in evaluation and accreditation matters, the Directorate of the Agency will perform its duties with **autonomy, independence, and objectivity**, and will not receive explicit instructions from any authority regarding its academic, evaluation, or accreditation decisions."*



The evaluation and accreditation activities are carried out by the evaluators by applying the criteria, guidelines, and protocols for evaluation and accreditation approved by the Technical Committee and by issuing independent evaluation and accreditation reports, either individually or in a designated commission. The evaluation and accreditation process concludes with the corresponding acts or resolutions issued by the Directorate of the agency based on the evaluation and accreditation reports. These aspects are regulated in Articles 22.2, 30, 31, and 32 of ACCUA's statutes.

In light of the above, ACCUA carries out its activities with complete independence from the governing bodies of the autonomous community, higher education institutions and other third parties. ACCUA develops and implements its own evaluation procedures, and subjects them to continuous improvement processes, taking into account the contributions of stakeholders and collaborating with other agencies within the framework of REACU, without facing any external pressure. Organizational, operational, and formal results independence were acknowledged during the ENQA evaluation in 2018 and have been maintained in the same manner since then.



## 5.4. Standard 3.4 Thematic analysis

*Agencies should regularly publish reports that describe and analyse the general findings of their external quality assurance activities.*

ACCUA's actions are guided by its general principles of operation, which include a "willingness to address social demands related to scientific and university quality," "methodological innovation and continuous improvement of processes to maximize efficiency and effectiveness," transparency, cooperation with stakeholders, and the "involvement of technical collaborating staff with maximum experience and professionalism."

Following the recommendations made after the last evaluation, DEVA-AAC began to conduct thematic analyses on aspects of social interest from the perspective of improving the quality of university activities. The studies published to date are as follows (in Spanish):

- [Academic Integrity in Andalusian Public Universities: Regulatory Framework and Proposed Actions](#). March 2022.
- [Thematic Study on the Employment Outcome of Graduates from the Nursing Degree in Andalusia](#). August 2022.
- [Thematic Study on the Employment Outcome of Graduates from the Tourism Degree in Andalusia](#). August 2022.
- [DEVA-AAC Proposals for a Reform of the University Teaching Staff Accreditation System](#). October 2022.
- [Report on the Adaptation of Andalusian University Degrees to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). February 2023.

The topics for these studies were agreed in the framework of REACU, or were raised by the governing and advisory bodies of the Agency. These studies have been coordinated by working groups within the CTEyE of DEVA-AAC, with the assistance of technical staff from the Agency specializing in statistical analysis. This staff, now fully integrated into ACCUA and dedicated in full to evaluation and accreditation functions, constitutes its own Statistical Unit, integrated into the [Statistical and Cartographic System of Andalusia](#). Currently, this Statistical Unit regularly publishes [13 reports](#) on topics of interest for the Andalusian Knowledge System.

At ACCUA, the topics for thematic analysis may be proposed by the Governing Council, the Technical Committee or by the Directorate, taking into consideration the strategic interests of the higher education system in Andalusia as well as the feedback from our stakeholders.

### 5.4.1. Reports on the results of verification, modification, monitoring, and re-accreditation processes

ACCUA annually publishes [reports on the results](#) of its various evaluation processes for official university degrees:

- Results and analysis of the Verification and Modification processes for the official degrees of Andalusian universities and the satisfaction of key stakeholders.
- Results and analysis of the Monitoring process, as well as the satisfaction of key stakeholders in this evaluation procedure.



- Results and analysis of the Re-accreditation process, as well as the satisfaction of key stakeholders in this evaluation procedure.

These reports include the results of satisfaction surveys from individuals participating in training sessions for external evaluators. The findings from these reports are taken into consideration for implementing improvements in the evaluation programs. The results of these reports are incorporated into the annual activity reports, which are public and shared with stakeholders.

### 5.4.2. Annual activity reports

An annual activity report is published each year, as established in Article 13 of ACCUA's Statutes. The report is drafted by the Directorate and submitted to the Governing Council for approval. The report for 2023 is currently being drafted. These [annual reports](#) are freely accessible and presented to the Governing Council, universities, and the Advisory Council of University Students in Andalusia. The activity report allows accountability and showcases the agency's work to stakeholders, in line with one of ACCUA's general principles of action: *'transparency in all administrative activities, understood as public access to complete, accurate, and clear information about the agency's activities.'*

### 5.4.3. Virtual seminars cycle

In cooperation with other regional agencies (AQU, ACSUCyL, ACPUA, ACCUE, ACSUG y UNIBASQ) and in order to deepen in the analysis of the impact of QA activities, a cycle of [virtual seminars](#) on professional occupations has been conducted since 2020. The following seminars have been held, and their contents can be consulted on the ACCUA website:

- Seminar 6: Secondary education teacher Master's Degree. January 2022.
- Seminar 5: Challenges in university education in Journalism and Audiovisual Communication. June 2021.
- Seminar 4: The case of university education in computer science and telecommunications. May 2021.
- Seminar 3: The case of university studies in early childhood and primary education. February 2021.
- Seminar 2: Challenges in university education according to the employer group: the case of university studies in Tourism. December 2020.
- Seminar 1: Challenges in university education according to the employer group: the case of university studies in Nursing. September 2020.

The purpose of these seminars was in some cases to further deepen in the analysis of the topics of the thematic studies, and in other cases had the same purpose but for other topics which have not yet been subject of thematic studies.



#### **5.4.4. Reports on faculty satisfaction with the evaluation program**

An annual [report](#) on the satisfaction of HEI teaching staff participating in the evaluation process for the contractual modalities of university faculty in the Andalusian university system is also prepared and published, along with improvement proposals that arise from the analysis of the results.

#### **5.4.5. Information on activities**

On its official website at <https://ws262.juntadeandalucia.es/accua/>, ACCUA has a section for [News](#) where it informs the general public about the main developments, activities, and events related to quality assurance in higher education institutions.

Despite the above, ACCUA is aware of the need to expand the scope of activities in this regard, as the studies conducted have been well-received by Andalusian universities and have helped strengthen collaboration for the improvement of quality assurance in the Andalusian University System. The Initial Action Plan of the Agency, within the strategic line entitled Communication and enhancement, includes actions addressed at increasing the reach of communication activities as an answer to the needs of its stakeholders, and developing a data management system that supports decision making as well as the dissemination of activities and results.



## 5.5. Standard 3.5 Resources

*Agencies should have adequate and appropriate resources, both human and financial, to carry out their work.*

### 5.5.1. Human resources

The split of DEVA from AAC and the creation of ACCUA has resulted in an increase in staff from 20 full-time staff in 2019 (plus part-time support from horizontal services of AAC-DEVA) when the previous evaluation was completed, to 44 full-time staff at present. This is because some of the AAC personnel who provided part-time horizontal services to DEVA in the previous agency (Statistics, Communication, IT, Archive, Financial, Contracting) now exclusively provide these services at ACCUA. It would be difficult to estimate how much the staff has grown, in terms of man-hours, but it has certainly grown.

Of the 44 individuals currently working at ACCUA at the end of the 2023 fiscal year, 35 are agency staff, 8 are civil servants of the Junta de Andalucía, and 1 is the Director of the entity. 73% of the staff holds a university degree. Currently, staff members have the option to work from home one day a week. The entity has adapted its computer systems for remote work and has provided its staff with laptops for this purpose.

In addition to its own staff, ACCUA has technical collaborating personnel for the coordination of the functional areas of evaluation and accreditation (**area coordinators**). This personnel is appointed by the Directorate for a period of four years, based on their specialization and experience, following principles of publicity, equality, objectivity, and suitability. These functional areas are: Higher Education; Research, Development, and Innovation; Teaching Staff; Institutional Accreditation; and International Relations. The reason why these roles are covered through collaborating personnel and not Agency staff is that it allows for a more flexible recruiting of experts with experience at higher education institutions, scientific research and quality assurance.

In conclusion, ACCUA believes it has sufficient in-house personnel to fulfil its objectives and address future challenges. However, among the weaknesses included in the SWOT analysis it is stated that the structure and reorganization of human resources for the new agency is in progress, and that it has been observed an insufficient adaptation of the training plan for human resources to the new needs of the Agency. In the same line, regulatory limitations to administrative streamlining and simplification and budgetary constraints are mentioned as threats.

### 5.5.2. Material and financial resources

In Spain, university evaluation and accreditation agencies, both at the national and regional levels, are funded with **public funds** managed by the corresponding public administration bodies. This does not compromise their total independence and autonomy in the exercise of their assigned competencies.

According to its Statutes (Article 4), the Agency's resources come from, among other sources:

- “a) The budgetary allocations annually assigned by the Budget Law of the Autonomous Community.*
- b) Subsidies or budgetary allocations that may correspond to it from the budget of any other public or private entity.*



*c) Income it may receive from the exercise of its activities and the provision of evaluation or accreditation services, in accordance with the applicable regulations.”*

ACCUE prepares its annual budgets in accordance with the provisions of the Consolidated Text of the General Law on Public Finance of the Junta de Andalucía, which are submitted to the department responsible for finance. The annual budget of the Agency is formulated by its Directorate. The Agency is subject to the public accounting system.

For the year 2024, the Agency has a total budget of 3.947.580 euros for the exercise of its competencies in the quality assurance of university and research, development, and innovation activities of the agents of the Andalusian Knowledge System. This represents an increase of 3.65% compared to the previous year. The whole of the resources come from the budget of the Regional Government as currently ACCUE (as well as previously AAC-DEVA) is not entitled to charge for its services.

The nature of quality assurance activities determines that expenses are concentrated on personnel, with an amount of 2.451.674 euros; and on the other hand, on expenses to compensate external evaluators, with an amount of 1.445.906 euros. The detail of the expenditure on evaluation and accreditation activities for the previous five years is included in table 13.

**Table 13. Yearly expenditure on quality assurance activities for the past five years**

YEAR	EXPENDITURE ON QA ACTIVITIES
2019	1.837.445,25
2020	956.400,00
2021	1.627.593,00
2022	1.156.206,00
2023	717.580,00

The fluctuations in the yearly expenditure that can be observed are due to several reasons. As it can be inferred from table 15 in [Chapter 5.1](#), the number of study programmes, institutional activities, teaching activities, and particularly research activities to be reviewed each year can change significantly, so does the cost of their external evaluation. For this reason, the budget is adjusted each year to the actual activities performed by the Agency.

In all previous years, the Agency has had sufficient financial resources to carry out the quality assurance activities assigned to it in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Regarding the transition from AAC-DEVA to ACCUE, the procedure for the approval of the Agency’s budget has not changed, as it is formulated by the Agency itself and approved by the Regional Parliament. Nevertheless, ACCUE Statutes have established a new legal basis for compensating external evaluators, which gives stronger legal support to the use of the peer-review system for all quality assurance activities. On the other hand, the new legal nature as an administrative agency has changed the internal audit, going from an ex-post to an ex-ante system, which provides more legal guarantees to expenditure but can also result into being more bureaucratic for certain procedures.

Regarding material resources, the institutional headquarters of ACCUE are located in the city of Córdoba, Calle Doña Berenguela s/n, in the Vial Norte building, which has two floors with offices, meeting rooms, and recreation rooms. Additionally, the Agency has facilities in the city of Seville, Calle Johannes Kepler.





Regarding the availability of material resources, it is worth noting the effort involved in adapting the organization to telecommuting as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. An investment was made in computer equipment and the development of applications that continues to bear fruit today, allowing both the Agency's own staff and external evaluators to work more effectively and efficiently.

**Table 14. Technological resources available at ACCUA**

<b>HARDWARE</b>	Servers: 2 file servers, 2 application servers, 2 database servers, 1 development and testing server.
	Computers: 40 laptops, 6 desktop computers.
	Printers: 4 multifunction printers, 2 local printers.
	Others: 4 projectors, 2 video conferencing systems, 4 backup units, 1 television.
<b>WEB PLATFORMS</b>	ACCUA Website
	Institutional Space on the Portal of the Junta de Andalucía
<b>MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS</b>	Follow-up of Titles (Management of the Follow-up of Official Titles of Andalusian Universities).
	Accreditation Renewal (Management of the Renewal of Accreditation for Official Titles of Andalusian Universities).
	IMPLANTA (Management of Certification of Internal Quality Assurance Systems implemented in university centers in Andalusia).
	Evaluators Management for the Area of Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education (Management of evaluators participating in the verification, monitoring, and renewal procedures of accreditation for titles).
	Innovation Bank (Evaluator bank shared by various Andalusian Universities for teaching innovation projects).
	SIGAP (Management of the Teacher Accreditation Program).
	GESVAL (Management of evaluations for the Area of Research and Development: excellence projects, research groups).
	Evaluators Bank (Registration of evaluators to participate in evaluation processes).
	[In development] Title Verification (Information system for the evaluation of the Title Verification program).
	[In development] Teacher Accreditation (Information system for the evaluation of the Teacher Accreditation program).
<b>ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS</b>	eCO: Internal communication management system between organizations electronically.
	Portafirma: Electronic document signature management system.
	File System: Used to store and share information classified according to the different areas of work of the Agency.
	Extranet: Online workspace open to all evaluators. Access information and submit reports online.
<b>COMMUNICATION AND NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS</b>	CIRCUIT: Junta de Andalucía's tool for video conferences and online calls.
	Cisco WebEx: Junta de Andalucía's tool for video conferences and online calls.
	Notific@: Junta de Andalucía's tool for electronic notifications.
	BandeJA: System for the management, sending, and receipt of electronic communications in the Junta de Andalucía.
	@ries: Integrated registry for incoming and outgoing documents in the Junta de Andalucía.



## 5.6. Standard 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct

*Agencies should have in place processes for internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of their activities.*

The general principles of action of ACCUA, established in Article 10 of its Statutes, include "scientific and technical competence and professional ethics, in accordance with academic and social standards," as well as the "internal and external assurance of quality, following international quality assurance guidelines."

To further support this commitment, Article 12 of the Statutes exclusively refers to the Ethical Code of the entity. It states that "the Agency's Management will approve an Ethical Code linked to a repertoire of best practices, ensuring an impartial and independent evaluation and accreditation activity, free from any conflict of interest or incompatibility."

Furthermore, ACCUA's first strategic line in its [Initial Action Plan](#) is titled "Strategic Governance and Quality," and the first objective within that strategic line is to "Promote the development of a culture of quality in all areas of the Agency's activity."

ACCUA is committed to the continuous improvement of its procedures, and as a result, has put in place several [instruments](#) to apply quality management principles to its actions. These instruments include:

- [Quality Assurance Commission](#): This body involves personnel from different areas of the agency and is responsible for analysing internal processes, proposing improvements, and developing various instruments to apply quality management principles.
- [Initial Action Plan](#) for the period 2023-2026: This document outlines the objectives ACCUA must achieve, along with the human, financial, and material resources necessary for its operation. It will be developed through annual action plans formulated by the Agency's Directorate and, after the expiration of the Initial Action Plan, corresponding multi-year strategic plans that will be approved by ACCUA's Governing Council on the proposal of its Directorate.
- [Service Charter](#): This document provides information about the services provided by ACCUA and its commitment to their quality and improvement. The Service Charter was published in the Official Gazette of the Junta de Andalucía in 2021 (as DEVA-AAC), and two follow-up reports have been conducted.
- [Quality Plan \(Manual\)](#): This document outlines the general guidelines of the Quality Assurance System, including ACCUA's quality policy defined by its mission, vision, and values. It includes the definition of stakeholders and the process map.
- [Code of Ethics](#): This document outlines the values and conduct guidelines for ACCUA's staff and technical collaborators.

These instruments will soon be part of ACCUA's Quality Assurance System (QAS), to be implemented in accordance with Article 11 of its Statutes. Consolidating the internal quality assurance system as a mandate of its Statutes is a significant step forward, allowing resources to be allocated to its implementation.

The development of the QAS was interrupted in 2021 with the initiation of the process to separate DEVA



from AAC and the establishment of ACCUA as an administrative agency. However, progress has been made, indicating that ACCUA's quality assurance policy, while not yet fully reflected in a quality assurance system, aligns with the criteria and guidelines for quality assurance in the EHEA, as well as with relevant national and regional regulations. This matter is also discussed in [Chapter 6.1](#).

Illustratively, some of the quality-related activities conducted since the last external evaluation include:

- Analysis of the QAS documentation and proposals for modification.
- [SWOT analysis](#) of the entity and presentation of contributions.
- Compilation of indicators and preparation of the "Deployment of the Action Plan" for the years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022, as well as the "Final Monitoring Report of the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan."
- Development, processing, and implementation of the Service Charter and subsequent monitoring.
- Approval and review of the "Internal Protocol for the Processing of Complaints, Suggestions, Congratulations, and other types of Messages on the quality of service," as well as the Annual Monitoring Reports for the procedure in 2021 and 2022.
- Approval of the Process Map and review of the mission and vision of the agency.
- Development of the Action Plan aimed at improving the economic-administrative procedures of the agency.
- Identification and analysis of actions to achieve ACCUA's Initial Action Plan objectives.
- Review and approval of the Procedure for the Design and Modification of Evaluation Programs.
- Analysis of the Expert Report on the draft Decree on the Organization of official university teachings in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia.
- Approval of the 2022 Annual Report of Complaints and Suggestions.
- Compilation of indicators for the development of the 2024 Annual Action Plan.
- Preparation of a satisfaction report (see [Chapter 6.6](#)) for different stakeholder groups of the Agency, based on specific [questionnaires](#) for each evaluation program, made available to users for anonymous completion through the Agency's website.

Taking all into consideration, as well as the ESG2015 as a reference, ACCUA's quality assurance policy:

- Ensures that all individuals involved in its activities are competent and act in a professional and ethical manner. Therefore, all ACCUA personnel and collaborators (experts from evaluation panels and area coordinators) must subscribe to its ethical code, implying a commitment to work in accordance with the 10 general principles of action of the entity, reproduced in [Chapter 4.2.5](#).
- The Ethical Code ensures that there are no conflicts of interest related to the activities carried out. Continuous improvement of agency personnel is evidenced by support for participation in training activities and regular training sessions organized to educate participants in the evaluation committees.
- Includes internal and external mechanisms to gather the opinion of stakeholders, allowing continuous improvement of the Agency. The Agency has developed these mechanisms, including:
  - surveys to evaluators and universities, whose results have been used to improve guidelines, procedures, and training sessions (see examples in [Chapter 7](#));
  - an annual meta-evaluation process culminating in the publication of a results report and the opinion of stakeholders (see Chapter 5.4);
  - regular meetings of the Technical Committee where the Director explains activities and obtains the opinion of members (including students) of this advisory body;
  - regular meetings of the Director and area managers with universities;



- participation in REACU and other organizations related to quality assurance in higher education.
- Prevents any form of intolerance or discrimination. ACCUA ensures equality and equity in its relationships with individuals and institutions involved in its processes and activities. Fulfilling the principle of equality and equity means avoiding discrimination or favouritism based on gender or any other reason, particularly in the quality assurance processes of universities and faculty, and in the selection processes of its own personnel. Additionally, ACCUA ensures access for personnel with disabilities by facilitating the tasks assigned to them. This principle of equality and non-discrimination is reflected in the balanced composition of men and women on its Board of Directors and Technical Committee, for example.
- Allows adequate communication with authorities. ACCUA communicates with relevant authorities through its Management, as the highest executive body of the entity, with functions of internal quality and institutional collaboration (Article 23).
- Ensures that if any of its quality assurance activities or elements are subcontracted, they align with the ESG. ACCUA does not subcontract any of its quality assurance activities. External support activities, such as organizing travel and accommodation, English translations, or catering, are the only externally required services.
- Allows the Agency to establish the recognition of higher education institutions for which it carries out external quality control.

As part of its social responsibility, ACCUA annually assesses the results of its activities, formally reporting to the Board of Directors, and making the information available to stakeholders on its website in its [annual activity reports](#). These actions are supervised and carried out by the Agency's Quality Assurance Commission.



## 5.7. Standard 3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies

*Agencies should undergo an external review at least once every five years in order to demonstrate their compliance with the ESG.*

As mentioned in [Chapter 5.2](#) of this report, [Royal Decree 822/2021](#), of September 28, establishes the organization of university education in Spain and the procedure for ensuring its quality. In Article 25, this regulation determines that *"in order to ensure the quality of university studies as an educational service for the entire Spanish society, official university degrees must undergo external evaluation procedures in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG)."*

It further states that *"the external evaluation bodies responsible for processing the quality assurance procedures of the Spanish university system are the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) and, for their corresponding territorial scope, the quality agencies of the Autonomous Communities registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), having successfully undergone an external evaluation in accordance with the ESG"*, in this latter case, referring to ACCUA. This regulation repeals the previous Royal Decree 861/2010, of July 2, which in turn modified Royal Decree 1393/2007, of October 29, all of which regulate the organization of official university education.

According to these regulations, in order to pass the aforementioned external evaluation in accordance with the ESG and maintain the requirement of registration in EQAR, the Agency has undergone and successfully passed external reviews by ENQA on three occasions: the first in [2009](#) with its follow-up report in [2011](#), the second in [2014](#) with its follow-up in [2016](#), and the third in [2019](#) with its follow-up in [2021](#). The present evaluation represents the fourth external review of the activities of this Agency, now ACCUA. The successful completion of these external reviews has allowed ACCUA to be a part of EQAR since 2009.



## 6. Design and implementation of the Agency's EQA activities (compliance with Part 2 of the ESG)

### 6.1. Standard 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

*External quality assurance should address the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the ESG.*

Since the last evaluation by ENQA, ACCUA has reviewed its quality assurance activities to align them with the ESG2015, particularly Part 1 of the ESG2015, with the ultimate goal of improving the internal quality assurance systems of HEI in Andalusia and increasing their responsibility for the quality of their activities. As part of this, the documents establishing the guidelines for quality assurance have been updated taking into account new regulations, pilot projects have been developed prior to the launch of new activities, and support has been given to HEI in order to navigate the different QA processes.

The specific criteria for different ACCUA external quality assurance activities related to Part 1 of the ESG2015 are summarized in Table 16. [Chapter 4.3](#) provides links to guides explaining the criteria for each activity. The same criteria used for ex-ante verification of study programmes are applied to substantial modification of study programmes.

According to Royal Decree 640/2021, of July 27, for institutional accreditation, HEI have to fulfil two requisites: that at least 50% of the study programmes have renewed their accreditation, and that their implemented IQAS has been certified by a competent body, such as ACCUA. The rest of the standards IN Part 1 of the ESG 2015 are not applicable at this point, as they would have been reviewed prior to the certification of the implementation of the IQAS, as detailed in the [Guide for the IMPLANTA-SGCC Programme](#).

The activity Review of universities for recognition addresses the creation of higher education institutions and centers, not the design of study programmes. This is the reason why some criteria of the Part 1 of the ESG are not directly applicable. Details on the criteria applied to this activity can be found on the [Evaluation guide for recognition of universities and university centers](#).

Likewise, the activity Accreditation of foreign language skills is addressed at reviewing the process implemented by the HEI for the accreditation of foreign language skills by their students, which does not directly apply to some of the criteria in Part 1 of the ESG. Further details can be found on the [Guidelines](#) for this activity.



The following describes how the Agency addresses each of the criteria for internal quality assurance outlined in Part 1 of the ESG:

**1.1 Policy for quality assurance:** ACCUA addresses this standard in all its procedures related to the quality of official degrees (verification, modification, monitoring, re-accreditation), with the implementation of IQAS in HEI (IMPLANTA), and with the quality of teaching staff (DOCENTIA), considering it a fundamental pillar of the culture of quality in a HEI institution.

**1.2 Design and approval of programmes:** The verification activity evaluates whether the design of the programmes complies with the ESG2015. During follow-up, the implementation of this design is monitored, and in re-accreditation it is checked that the implementation has been carried out as designed or that modifications have been introduced as a result of monitoring and continuous improvement. Additionally, the IMPLANTA program establishes the need for a IQAS procedure for the design and approval of programmes.

**1.3. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment:** Aspects such as the competencies to be acquired by students, the assessment systems to test the acquisition of these competencies, and the implementation planning of the degree are considered in the design of the verified official degree. The results are analysed during the implementation process in monitoring and accreditation renewal, and it is one of the criteria whose negative assessment may lead to the non-renewal of accreditation. The QAS certification evaluates the procedures of the system related to the management of teaching-learning processes. The DOCENTIA program includes the evaluation of teaching methodologies used by faculty, and in the foreign language accreditation activity, HEI must justify the characteristics of the language proficiency exam that ensures the acquisition of language skills.

**1.4. Student admission, progression, recognition, and certification:** This aspect is considered at the level of the design and modification of the programme (verification/modification), its monitoring, and its re-accreditation. The IMPLANTA program requires the existence of procedures in the IQAS that guarantee the quality of these processes. Specific criteria are established in the foreign language accreditation program for the review of these aspects.

**1.5 Teaching staff:** The quality of teaching staff is an essential element in HEI, and therefore, all ACCUA evaluation activities include elements that monitor institutions taking the quality of their teaching staff seriously, evaluating it, and establishing actions for improvement. This is one of the criteria that, if not met, can lead to a negative review in the re-accreditation.

**1.6 Learning resources and student support:** The availability of sufficient and appropriate resources is another essential element in ACCUA's evaluation activities. In fact, in the re-accreditation activity, it is one of the criteria whose non-compliance can lead to a negative evaluation.

**1.7 Information management:** ACCUA's evaluation activities monitor that institutions have in place systems to collect information resulting from the implementation of official degrees, analyse it, and use it for improvement. The QAS must include specific procedures for this. The development of improvement plans (mandatory in monitoring and re-accreditation) is an essential element for the review of this standard.

**1.8 Public information:** The availability of public information is evaluated in all activities. In fact, the first monitoring to which degrees are subjected involves assessing the adequacy of their public information by students from the panel of experts.

**1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes:** Continuous monitoring and periodic evaluation of programmes must be included in the institution's QAS and applied systematically. ACCUA's activities review that this activity is carried out and results in the establishment of improvement plans.

**1.10 Cyclic external quality assurance:** All ACCUA evaluation activities establish a validity period for the obtained result, so that institutions must undergo external review processes cyclically.



**Table 15. Description of the standards of ACCUA's external quality assurance activities that assess the standards included in Part 1 of the ESG2015**

ESG 2015	ACCUA REVIEW ACTIVITIES								
	EX-ANTE VERIFICATION/ MODIFICATION*	FOLLOW UP /MONITORING	EX-POST RE- ACCREDITATION	EUROPEAN APPROACH	DOCENTIA	IMPLANTA	INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION	REVIEW OF UNIVERSITIES FOR RECOGNITION	ACCREDITATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS
<b>1.1 Policy for quality assurance.</b>	9. Internal Quality Assurance System.	2. Quality Assurance System.	2. Quality Assurance System.	9. Quality assurance.	1. Strategic Dimension of Teaching Evaluation.	2. Quality assurance policy.	Non applicable at this stage, but when the IQAS is certified.	II.A.5. Quality assurance system.	Non applicable.
<b>1.2 Design and approval of programmes.</b>	1. Description, educational objectives, and justification of the degree. 2. Results of the training and learning process.	3. Design, organization, and development of the training program.	3. Design, organization, and development of the training program.	2. Learning outcomes. 3. Curriculum.	Non applicable.	2. Quality assurance policy.	Non applicable at this stage, but when the IQAS is certified.	II.A.5. Quality assurance system.	Non applicable.
<b>1.3. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment.</b>	4. Degree planning.	4. Learning outcomes.	4. Learning outcomes.	5. Learning, teaching and assessment.	2. Methodological Dimension of Teaching Evaluation.	5. Learning resources and student support.	Non applicable at this stage, but when the IQAS is certified.	Non applicable.	2. Characteristics of the proficiency exam: content, structure, and evaluation criteria for the exams.
<b>1.4. Student admission, progression, recognition, and certification.</b>	4. Admission, recognition, and mobility.	3. Design, organization, and development of the training program.	3. Design, organization, and development of the training program.	4. Admission and recognition.	Non applicable.	6. Management of teaching and learning processes.	Non applicable at this stage, but when the IQAS is certified.	II.B.1.- Access and admission (number of students, ratios).	3. Exam delivery. 4. Exam reappeal process. 5. Certificates.
<b>1.5 Teaching staff.</b>	5. Academic and teaching support staff.	4. Teaching staff.	4. Teaching staff.	7. Resources.	All dimensions.	4. Academic staff.	Non applicable at this stage, but when the IQAS is certified.	IV. Academic staff.	6. Suitability of examiners.





ESG 2015	ACCUA REVIEW ACTIVITIES								
	EX-ANTE VERIFICATION/ MODIFICATION*	FOLLOW UP /MONITORING	EX-POST RE- ACCREDITATION	EUROPEAN APPROACH	DOCENTIA	IMPLANTA	INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION	REVIEW OF UNIVERSITIES FOR RECOGNITION	ACCREDITATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS
<b>1.6 Learning resources and student support.</b>	6. Learning resources: materials and infrastructure, internships, and services.	5. Resources and teaching support.	5. Resources and teaching support.	6. Student support. 7. Resources.	2. Methodological Dimension of Teaching Evaluation.	5. Learning resources and student support.	Non applicable at this stage, but when the IQAS is certified.	VI: Facilities.	Non applicable.
<b>1.7 Information management.</b>	9. Internal Quality Assurance System.	2. Quality Assurance System.	2. Quality Assurance System.	9. Quality assurance.	1. Strategic Dimension of Teaching Evaluation. 3. Results dimension of teaching evaluation.	2. Quality assurance policy.	Non applicable at this stage, but when the IQAS is certified.	Non applicable.	1. Contextual characteristics of the model. 3. Administration of exams.
<b>1.8 Public information.</b>	9. Internal Quality Assurance System.	1. Publicly available information.	1. Publicly available information.	9. Quality assurance.	1. Strategic Dimension of Teaching Evaluation. 3. Results dimension of teaching evaluation.	1. Public information.	Non applicable at this stage, but when the IQAS is certified.	Non applicable.	1. Contextual characteristics of the model. 3. Administration of exams.
<b>1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes.</b>	9. Internal Quality Assurance System.	6. Results of the training program.	6. Results of the training program.	9. Quality assurance.	3. Results dimension of teaching evaluation.	3. Design, monitoring, and improvement of training programmes.	Non applicable at this stage, but when the IQAS is certified.	Non applicable.	7. Review, improvement, and staff responsible for the procedure.
<b>1.10 Cyclic external quality assurance.</b>	9. Internal Quality Assurance System.	Follow-up after three years of the implementation of the title for the renewal of accreditation.	Renewal of accreditation every 6/8 years for Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral Programs.	9. Quality assurance.	Accreditation renewal every 5 years.	2. Quality assurance policy. Certification renewal every 5 years.	Certification renewal every 6 years.	Non applicable.	7. Review, improvement, and staff responsible for the procedure. Certification renewal every 4 years.

\*Standards for Graduate and Master programmes. For Doctorate programmes please check the specific guide.



## 6.2. Standard 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose

*External quality assurance should be defined and designed specifically to ensure its fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for it, while taking into account relevant regulations. Stakeholders should be involved in its design and continuous improvement.*

ACCUA's methodology for designing its evaluation activities takes into consideration the agreements established at the REACU level, the current regulations at the state and regional levels, and European standards and guidelines, all of the above with the involvement of its stakeholders (Figure 7).

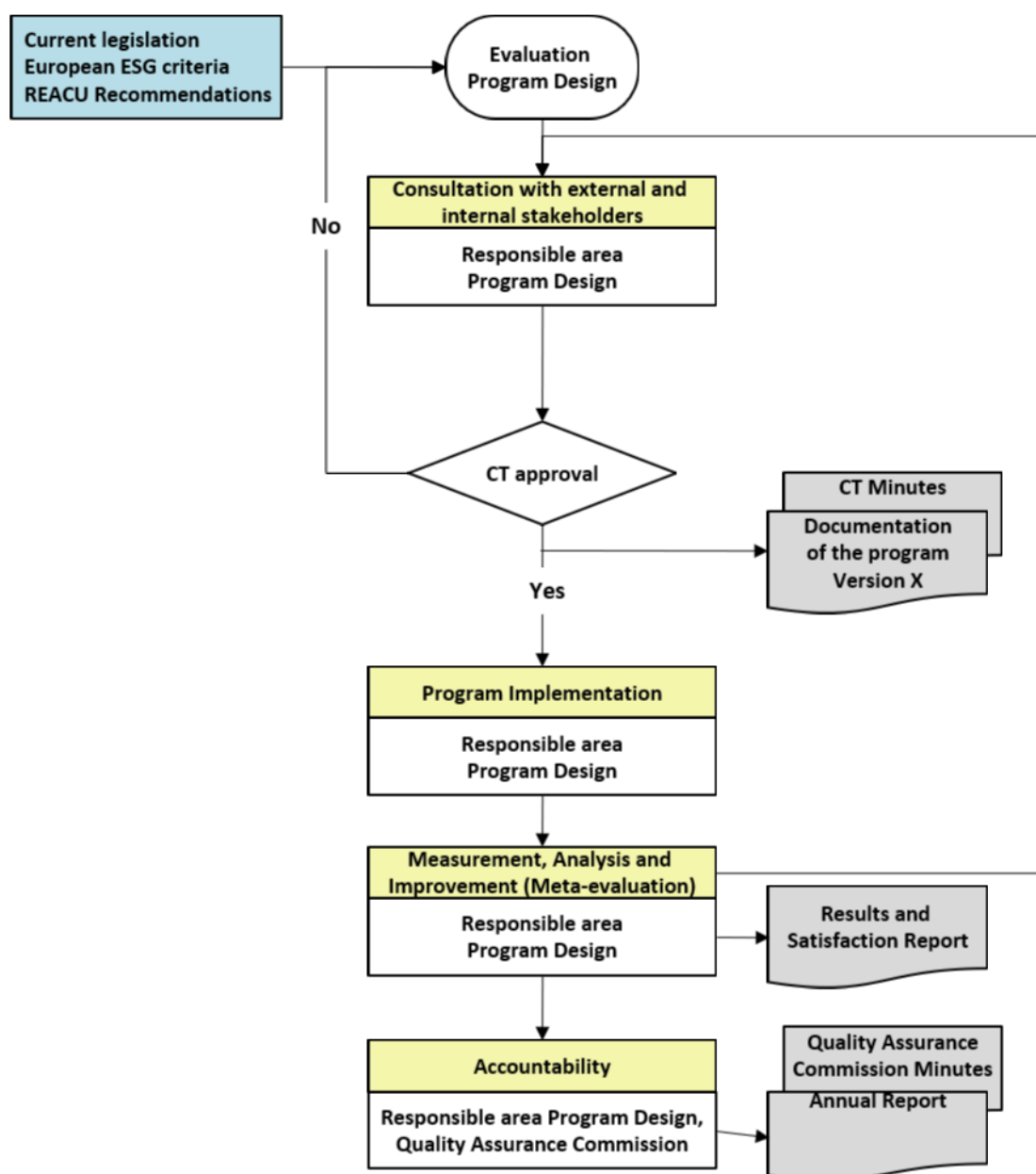


Figure 7. General procedure for the design and implementation of quality assurance programmes



The common elements of the quality assurance activities are explained in [Chapter 4.3](#), and the specific criteria for each one are detailed in [Chapter 6.5](#). Additionally, the specific elements used for the evaluation are described in [Chapter 6.3](#).

Once the contributions of the stakeholders are collected and analysed, the documentation is prepared by Agency staff and approved by the [Technical Committee](#) (for more information on this committee, see [Chapter 4.2.1](#)).

After each call, stakeholder satisfaction is gathered through specific questionnaires and used to develop improvement proposals and update the Guides (see [Chapter 7](#) for the current surveys and specific improvement proposals). In this regard, following the enactment of Royal Decree 822/2021, of September 28, the evaluation guides have been adapted after sharing them with universities and conducting presentation sessions on the main innovations in each of the Andalusian universities.

Review activities for official study programmes are designed based on their specific characteristics. Therefore, although they share the same general criteria, different guides are established for Bachelor's and Master's degrees and for Doctoral Programmes. The guides for different evaluation programs include explanatory diagrams of the different phases of the review process, the involved parties, and the elements to be reviewed.

During the design and modification of review activities, ACCUA aims to minimize the workload and cost of implementation for Andalusian HEI. For example, in programmes to be delivered by institutionally accredited centers, criterion 9 of the verification activity (internal quality assurance system) is not reviewed. Additionally, the IMPLANTA program does not require a prior certification of the design, so only the effectiveness of the implemented IQAS is reviewed.

HEI can demonstrate their development through the design and implementation of improvement plans. These plans are key elements in modification, monitoring, re-accreditation, IMPLANTA, and DOCENTIA review activities.

Although ACCUA believes that all activities are functioning correctly, universities perceive the evaluation processes as highly bureaucratized, as indicated in the SWOT analysis. For this reason, ACCUA is meeting with HEI to coordinate processes and streamline documentation submission. Additionally, it intends to increase university participation in quality assurance by promoting programs such as IMPLANTA for institutional accreditation. Overall, ACCUA perceives that the implementation of these programs has contributed to improving the quality of Andalusian HEI. A clear example is the improved public information provided by Andalusian universities to their students and society today.



### 6.3. Standard 2.3 Implementing processes

*External quality assurance processes should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. They include: a self-assessment or equivalent; an external assessment normally including a site visit; a report resulting from the external assessment; a consistent follow-up.*

ACCUA meets this standard by establishing in its review activities the required elements, which are summarized in Table 16.

These activities align with the ESG2015 (see [Chapter 6.1](#)), are consistently carried out, are public, and include: the evaluation of an institutional self-assessment report and a visit (when applicable, and which could be conducted online), the issuance of a preliminary report to which the institution can make allegations, and propose an improvement plan before the final report is issued. The final report includes a formal decision and recommendations that may be subject to special follow-up in future evaluations. The final report can be appealed to the relevant body, following the procedure established in the regulations applicable to each review activity (see [Chapter 6.7](#)). In the evaluation guides, in addition to the criteria, each review process is described (see [Chapter 4.3.1](#)), and the final reports are publicly available on the ACCUA website. The specific information used by the review panels to assess each criterion of each activity is detailed in the specific guides.

All of the quality assurance activities include a **self-assessment report**, apart from the institutional accreditation activity, where the self-assessment report is included in the application for the certification of the certification of QAS implemented by the HEI. For the institutional accreditation, only being in possession of such certification and have renewed the initial accreditation of at least half of the official undergraduate degrees, half of the official master's degrees, and half of the official doctoral degrees is required.

An **external assessment** is carried out for all programmes through a review panel that includes students, with the exception of institutional accreditation for the same reason explained above. This external assessment includes a **site visit** for ex-post reaccreditation, European Approach, in the certification phase for DOCENTIA and IMPLANTA and in the certification of the procedure for the accreditation of foreign language skills. Ex-ante verification, follow-up and monitoring and modification of study programmes do not include a visit, nor does the institutional accreditation and the review of universities for recognition. The introduction of virtual visits, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, is an option that continues to be used even after the health alert has ended, as it allows for a more efficient use of resources and greater availability of external evaluators. Visits are conducted by members of the evaluation committee, ensuring the presence of a student. Technical staff from ACCUA provides supports to the committee and evaluates the work of the committee members during the visit. HEI must inform their studentship and staff about the visit and must include a mandatory public hearing for the attendance of any member of the institution not selected to participate in the scheduled hearings.

A **report** resulting from the external assessment is issued in all cases, with individual differences between activities. Typically, there will be a preliminary report, followed by a period where HEI can make allegations; then a public final report is issued, which the HEI can appeal. All final reports include recommendations for improvement.

A **consistent follow-up** is part of all quality assurance activities. The follow-up and monitoring activity takes care of the follow up of all official study programmes. Then all of the other activities, apart from the review of universities for recognition, include their own follow-up system.



**Table 16. Elements used in quality assurance activities**

ELEMENTS OF THE REVIEW ACTIVITIES	QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES									
	VERIFICATION / SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION	FOLLOW UP / MONITORING	EX POST RE-ACCREDITATION	NON SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION	EUROPEAN APPROACH	DOCENTIA	IMPLANTA	INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION	REVIEW OF UNIVERSITIES FOR RECOGNITION	ACCREDITATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS
Self-assessment report	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Not applicable	File	YES
External review by a committee that includes students	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Not applicable	YES	YES
Visit	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES, in certification phase	YES/NO*	Not applicable	NO	YES
Preliminary evaluation report	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES/NO*	Not applicable	NO	YES
Allegations to the preliminary report	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES/NO*	Not applicable	NO	YES
Public final evaluation report	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES. Not public.	YES
Appeal to the final report	YES, before the Council of Universities (state level)	NO	YES, before the Council of Universities (state level)	YES, before ACCUA	YES, before the Council of Universities (state level)	YES, before ACCUA	YES/NO* before ACCUA.	YES**	YES, before the Regional Ministry	YES, before ACCUA
Recommendations in the final report	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Not applicable	YES	YES
Follow-up	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Not applicable	NO	YES

(\*) YES in the Certification of implementation and in the renewal. NO in the follow-up of certification.

(\*\*) YES. In the event of an unfavourable resolution, which must be justified, it will specify the appeals that may be filed against it, the administrative or judicial body before which they must be filed, and the deadline for filing them.



## 6.4. Standard 2.4 Peer-review experts

*External quality assurance should be carried out by groups of external experts that include (a) student member(s).*

For the performance of evaluation activities related to the ESG, the Agency has an [Evaluator Database](#), which is publicized among its interest groups and includes individuals who formally register online. The number of registrants has reached 9.397 (60% men and 40% women), showing an increase of more than 250% in the last four years. The profiles in which they are classified include academics (89.1% of registered individuals), students (5.7%), and professionals (5.2%). In accordance with the provisions of Organic Law 3/2018, of December 5, on Personal Data Protection and guarantee of digital rights, individuals registered in this database can exercise their rights of access, rectification, cancellation, and opposition to their data by writing to ACCUA.

The individuals who are part of the evaluation committees are selected from the aforementioned Bank of Evaluator Database based on a set of general criteria (Table 17) in accordance with the ESG2015 and the principles for the selection of experts established by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA), as outlined in the procedure for [Selection and Appointment of Evaluators](#).

**Table 17. Criteria for the selection of evaluators**

OBJECTIVITY AND SUITABILITY	TERRITORIAL REPRESENTATION	INDEPENDENCE AND CONFLICT OF INTERESTS	AVAILABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY	GENDER BALANCE
Selection procedure regulated and balanced representation of all branches and fields of knowledge.	Evaluators from Autonomous Communities different of Andalusia and from abroad.	Guarantees for independence and a procedure for the identification and resolution of potential conflicts of interest.	Availability to participate in the process and the ability to assume assigned activities responsibly.	Commitment to establish a balanced representation between the number of women and men.

Source: procedure for Selection and Appointment of Evaluators.

The **evaluators** participating in activities related to the ESG2015 are classified into four profiles: academic, technical, professional, and student. Their independence is guaranteed as they **are not part of the Andalusian University System**. Through agreements with international agencies, ACCUA incorporates international evaluators into fields where experts are scarce. Although this participation is greater in R&D evaluation activities, ACCUA has succeeded in incorporating international evaluators into the ex-ante verification and re-accreditation panels (see below for the composition of each commission). In recent years, efforts have been made to incorporate more international evaluators into our database. In May 2020, a call for expressions of interest was opened through ENQA, INQAAHE, and ESU, resulting in an increase of 94 evaluators residing abroad. Additionally, the database includes 232 foreign evaluators residing in Spain. However, it is challenging to find experts with the appropriate level of Spanish within the EHEA, so ACCUA is redirecting its efforts to Ibero-American quality assurance agencies and organizations such as RIACES.



Members of evaluation committees and panels are appointed by the Director of ACCUA following an internal selection process from ACCUA's Evaluator Database according to the criteria detailed in table 18 and as detailed in the procedure for [Selection and Appointment of Evaluators](#). The selection of evaluators is carried out by a selection commission composed by the coordinator of the functional area plus two members of ACCUA staff. The criteria for the selection are those in table 17.

Members of committees and panels are appointed for different roles, according to their profile: president, secretary, academic, professional, student, in a number and a proportion that is considered adequate for each activity.

After confirming their participation, evaluators must formally accept their appointment, including subscribing to the entity's Code of Ethics, which ensures, among other things, the confidentiality of supplied documentation (of individuals or institutions) and the result of the evaluation.

Once appointed, the evaluators receive specific training on the review activity they will participate. This training includes the regulations applicable to the activity and the internal procedure followed by ACCUA. Institutions can challenge one or more panel members for justified reasons motivated by potential conflicts of interest. The work of panel members is evaluated by the area coordinators, ACCUA personnel, and the evaluators themselves. This evaluation is used for the renewal of panel members, which takes place in a staggered manner. Evaluators can remain in the database for as long as they wish so. Being registered in the database does not imply to be an evaluator for ACCUA. Typically, evaluators for study programmes are appointed for a period of four years. The review panels needed for each program are established based on the guidelines provided in the different guides (see [Chapter 4.3.1](#)) and depending on the number of experts needed and the required profile.

The evaluators are distributed as follows in different branches of knowledge (Table 18).

**Table 18. Distribution of individuals registered in the Evaluators Database for evaluation activities related to the ESG2015**

KNOWLEDGE FIELD	Nº
Arts and Humanities	1.172
Sciences	2.402
Health Sciences	1.421
Economic and Business Sciences*	731
Legal Sciences*	563
Social Sciences and Education*	1.531
Engineering and Architecture	1.577
Total	9.397

\*The branch of Social Sciences and Law is broken down into three: Economic and Business Sciences, Legal Sciences, and Social Sciences and Education. Source: ACCUA.

The composition of evaluation committees may vary depending on their purpose: study programmes, institutional activities, teaching staff, research activities. They may be specific for academic areas or multidisciplinary. And they may issue evaluation reports or reports on appeals to previous evaluation reports. As this external review pertains the application of the ESG to the evaluation of study



programmes, we are going to focus on how ACCUA organises its peer-review activities for official study programmes.

For the review of study programmes, larger evaluation committees, by academic field, are appointed (of up to 16 members), from which smaller review panels (of about 5 members) are built for each specific study programme. This panel reviews the programme and its Secretary drafts the preliminary report, which is then reviewed and approved by the field committee. The number of members and profile of each committee and each panel depends on the volume of programmes to evaluate and the characteristics of the specific programme to be evaluated. Finally, the evaluation report is issued by the Committee for Issuing Reports, a multidisciplinary committee that ensures consistency in the application of the criteria across different academic fields and HEI. If allegations to the preliminary evaluation report are issued by the HEI, the report is reviewed by the field committee. When an appeal is made against the final decision a separate Appeals Committee evaluates. This is explained in [Chapter 6.7](#).

For the review of Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees, review panels are established by knowledge area. The current composition can be consulted in the following links:

- [Ex-ante verification/Modification](#)
- [Follow up / monitoring](#)
- [Ex-post re-accreditation verification](#)

For the evaluation of non-substantial modifications, a specific committee has been created, which can be consulted [here](#).

For [DOCENTIA](#), which evaluates teaching activity, and as agreed with ANECA, since 2022 external evaluators are selected from ACCUA's database following the procedure mentioned above. Previously, members of the committee were selected in agreement with ANECA. The DOCENTIA evaluation committee has four members, which is an adequate number for the current volume of activity. They were appointed for four years.

For [IMPLANTA](#), which reviews the implementation of QA system at HEI, there are two committees: one for evaluation and another for certification. The first conducts the evaluation according to the Guide's criteria, prepares the preliminary report, and responds to any received allegations. It is composed of:

- Chair: academic staff with experience in QAS evaluation and university management.
- Secretary: administrative staff member with experience in QAS evaluation and review of degrees and institutions.
- Academic: a member of the academic staff with experience in QAS evaluation and university management.
- Student: undergraduate or postgraduate student with training and knowledge of QAS.

The evaluation committees for IMPLANTA can be consulted [here](#). The certification committee is responsible for issuing the certification report, using the evaluation committee's report as the main evidence.

For [Institutional Accreditation](#), the evaluation committee analyses the documentation provided to meet the requirements and prepares the evaluation report.





For the [Accreditation of foreign languages skills](#), a certification committee is established for accreditation, monitoring, and renewal of accreditation. The current composition can be consulted [here](#).

All individuals who are part of the evaluation committees are treated equally, and their opinions are considered in the same way. To date, no problems have been evidenced in the composition and functioning of the committees. However, while recognizing the advantages of virtual visits, a preference is maintained for in-person visits, which, although they are more costly and may pose additional difficulties depending on the availability of international experts, also have undeniable advantages in terms of the quality of information that can be gathered.

As a general rule, the number and size of committees and panels is the adequate taking into account workload of each activity. As an example, the number of committees and evaluators involved in the quality assurance activities carried out during the year 2023 is provided (Table 19).

**Table 19. Number of evaluators, committees and members of appeal committees by activity in 2023**

	QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF EVALUATORS	NUMBER OF COMMITTEES	NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF APPEAL COMMITTEES
<b>OFFICIAL DEGREES (within the scope of ESG)</b>	Ex-ante verification of study programmes	81	8	8
	Follow up / monitoring of study programmes	27	8	
	Non substantial modification of study programmes	9	1	
	Ex-post re-accreditation verification of study programmes	64	8	
	Academic programmes with successive pathways - PARS	10	1	
	European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes	5	1	
<b>INSTITUTIONS (within the scope of ESG)</b>	DOCENTIA	4	1	
	IMPLANTA	12	3	
	Institutional accreditation	4	1	
	Review of universities for recognition	4	1	
	Accreditation of foreign language skills	3	1	
<b>TEACHING ACTIVITIES</b>	Accreditation of teaching staff	27	9	6
	Evaluation of emeritus teaching staff	35	1	
	Teaching performance incentives	12	1	
<b>RESEARCH ACTIVITIES</b>	Evaluation of RDI projects	200	28	
	Evaluation of university institutes	33	1	
	Evaluation of human resources	0	0	
	Evaluation of knowledge transfer activities	12	1	
	Evaluation of other research calls	29	1	



## 6.5. Standard 2.5 Criteria for outcomes

*Any outcomes or judgements made as the result of external quality assurance should be based on explicit and published criteria that are applied consistently, irrespective of whether the process leads to a formal decision.*

The evaluation criteria used to support the decisions included in the reports issued by the review panels are published in the guides of each activity (see the links to the guides in [Chapter 4.3](#)). In training sessions for evaluators emphasis is placed on the need to apply these criteria systematically and consistently. To improve this aspect, and taking into account the feedback from stakeholders, ACCUA has established the Committee for Issuing Reports whose members have the role of standardizing the way criteria are applied and reports are drafted (see [Chapter 6.4](#)).

The support guides for the drafting of the reports include information about each QA activity, including applicable regulations and the detailed contents of the review. The technical and legal support that the panel may need is provided by ACCUA's technical staff. This support may consist in help understanding the national or regional regulations, with the interpretation of the information provided by the HEI, or with the consistency of the report compared to previous reports about similar study programmes.

The evaluable criteria for each program can be found in [Annex VI](#). Their correspondence with the ESG2015 can be consulted in Table 16. In ACCUA's opinion, the criteria assessed in each activity are appropriate and align with the ESG2015.



## 6.6. Standard 2.6 Reporting

*Full reports by the experts should be published, clear and accessible to the academic community, external partners and other interested individuals. If the Agency takes any formal decision based on the reports, the decision should be published together with the report.*

ACCUA's evaluation reports are published on its website. All evaluations reports issued by ACCUA that lead to a formal decision are available and notification of their publication is sent to the parties involved. Ex-ante verification, modification and ex-post re-accreditation reports for official study programmes can be found in the [Reports and Publications](#) section under Evaluation Reports of University Degrees. Reports for European Approach, PARS, DOCENTIA, IMPLANTA, Institutional Accreditation, Review of universities for recognition and Accreditation of foreign language skills are published on the respective section of the website.

ACCUA publishes both positive and negative reports for all its QA activities except the evaluation reports of the activity Review of private universities for recognition.

Searches for these reports based on various criteria can be conducted in the [reports database](#). Similarly, reports on European Approach, PARS, certification reports for implemented QAS, IQAS follow-up reports (IMPLANTA), DOCENTIA program, Accreditation of foreign language skills reports, and Institutional Accreditation reports are also published on the website. HEI may use these reports to develop their improvement plans, and ACCUA can verify and monitor their use by requiring a response to each recommendation made with each review.

ACCUA has published 4.257 reports on 177 institutions on DEQAR, making it one of the agencies with the highest number of published reports.



## 6.7. Standard 2.7 Complaints and appeals

*Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.*

Complaints and appeals in the context of the ESG can mean four different things in the context of ACCUA:

- Allegations to a provisional review report.
- An appeal to a final decision.
- A suggestion or complain through the Complaints Book of the Junta de Andalucía.
- A message to ACCUA regarding the quality of our services or a compliment.

**Allegations to a provisional review report** within a QA activity lead to a new review performed by the same committee that issued the provisional report. This review is performed by a different panel within the same committee and is addressed at re-considering whether the initial evaluation was formally correct in terms of the consideration of the evidence provided and the application of the evaluation criteria.

**An appeal to a final decision** on the review of a study programme may be filed by HEI against the Council of Universities (State). This starts an administrative procedure where this body may or may not request a new evaluation report to be issued by ACCUA. If this is the case, reports after an appeal are issued by ACCUA's Appeals Committees. The whole procedure is conducted according to section 10 of article 26 of [Royal Decree 822/2021](#), of September 28, whose translation is reproduced below:

*«10. Once the applicant university has received notification from the Council of Universities, it may request a review of the verification resolution before the Presidency of the Council of Universities, for which it will have 10 working days from the moment of receipt of the notification. If the complaint is admitted for processing, it must be assessed by the University Council's Committee for Complaints on the Verification and Accreditation of Study Plans, in accordance with the provisions of Article 13 of the Regulations of the University Council. The committee shall be composed of academic and professional experts who have not been involved in the evaluation procedure so far. This committee shall assess the verification report, taking into account only the syllabus report submitted by the university. In the event that it has the necessary evidence to do so, the committee shall draw up a proposal for a resolution to the Standing Committee of the Council of Universities. In this case, the duration of the review procedure may not exceed one month from the lodging of the complaint.*

*The committee may, if it deems it necessary, refer the dossier to the quality agency that issued the report for review in the light of the aspects detected that merit a new assessment. Once the quality agency's report has been received, the committee will draw up a resolution proposal that will be sent to the Standing Committee of the Council of Universities for its final decision. In this case, the duration of the entire review procedure may not exceed three months from the Presidency of the Council of Universities' receipt of the university's complaint.*

*The corresponding decision will put an end to administrative proceedings in accordance with the provisions of article 114.1b) of Law 39/2015, of 1 October. If the time limits foreseen have elapsed without the corresponding decision on the appeal having been issued, the appeal may be understood to have been rejected.*

*The Council of Universities shall notify the applicant university of the final decision, and shall also notify the Autonomous Community and the quality agency involved, and the Ministry of Universities.»*



In any case, the processes for dealing with claims and appeals are outlined in the documents [Appeals resolution of university programmes](#) and [Appeals resolution of teaching staff](#) published on ACCUA's website. These procedures are notified to HEI by electronic means which guarantees the identity of the recipient and the date it was delivered and accessed.

The activities subject to allegations to a provisional report and appeals of final decisions are detailed in Table 16. Elements used in quality assurance activities, under [Chapter 6.3](#) on the standard 2.3 about implementing processes.

The number appeals to final decisions received is usually very low, as evidenced in the [results reports](#) published. This is a consequence of the procedures having a phase of allegations to provisional review reports before the issuance of the final review report.

Regarding the handling of appeals, it should be highlighted that since the previous evaluation by ENQA, [appeal committees](#) has been established. The procedure for the constitution of appeal committees is the same as for evaluation committees, as detailed in [Chapter 6.4](#) on the peer-review experts. These are separate collegial bodies from the evaluation committees, aiming to provide greater guarantees to the processes and align with recommendations made by ENQA and EQAR. The appeal committee issue a new review report for the consideration of the body in charge of taking the formal decision. All formal decisions for all QA activities can be appealed, as they all constitute administrative decisions.

Additionally, as a public body, ACCUA has the obligation to handle **complaints and suggestions** submitted by the public through the [Suggestions and Complaints Book of the Junta de Andalucía](#), in accordance with applicable regulations.

Furthermore, ACCUA has a mechanism to receive and address **messages regarding the quality of our services or compliments**. Anyone, whether an individual or an institution, can use the [contact form](#) or communicate via email to [info.accua@juntadeandalucia.es](mailto:info.accua@juntadeandalucia.es). The procedure to dealing with such messages is the following:

1. The message is registered for further reference.
2. The issue is allocated to the relevant technical staff for a reply to be drafted within five days.
3. The reply is reviewed by the area manager and sent to the competent governing body for a review of its compliance.
4. The governing body drafts a final reply and proposes it to the Direction for its signature and notification.
5. User satisfaction is surveyed and registered.
6. All messages are registered for further reference and included in a yearly Report on complaints, suggestions, congratulations and other types of messages related to the quality of the service. The report for 2023 can be accessed [here](#).



## 7. Opinions of stakeholders

The opinions of stakeholders are fundamental pillars in the continuous improvement of ACCUA's activities. Therefore, in addition to the comprehensive public information available on its official website, ACCUA periodically undertakes actions to inform and gather the opinions of its stakeholders. The main mechanisms used include participation in various bodies that involve different stakeholder groups, holding regular meetings, conducting satisfaction surveys, the activity of the Quality Assurance Commission, a suggestions mailbox, etc. (Table 20).

All these mechanisms provide stakeholder opinions for improving ACCUA's activities at various levels, such as the Agency's internal organization, evaluation guides, evaluation procedures, etc. For activities related to the ESG2015, one of the most important sources is satisfaction surveys conducted with university staff and evaluators (academics, professionals, and students) regarding the different review activities. ACCUA regularly conducts satisfaction surveys in verification, modification, monitoring, and re-accreditation activities for undergraduate, master's, and doctoral study programmes, the review of academic programs with successive pathways (PARS), the review of international joint programs within the European Approach, and certification/monitoring of quality assurance systems in HEI. These surveys are designed with a Likert scale and contain multiple assessment dimensions.

Specifically, for the development of ACCUA's Initial Action Plan proposal, the now extinguished DEVA directly consulted different stakeholder groups through meetings and questionnaires, including:

- Andalusian universities and their staff
- Evaluators
- Teaching and research staff
- Students
- Competent regional ministry for universities and scientific research
- Other evaluation agencies
- Other public bodies and entities requiring quality assurance services
- ACCUA staff



**Table 20. Summary of the participation and opinion gathering mechanisms**

		STAKEHOLDER GROUP							
		Universities	Academics	Students	Government	Professionals	Society	ACCUA staff	Agencies
<b>INFORMATION AND OPINION GATHERING MECHANISM</b>	<b>Governing council</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	<b>REACU</b>								X
	<b>Advisory Council of Students of Andalusia</b>			X					
	<b>Technical Committee</b>		X	X		X		X	
	<b>Evaluator Training</b>		X	X		X			
	<b>Quality Assurance Commission</b>							X	
	<b>Quality Assurance Conferences</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	<b>Satisfaction Surveys</b>	X	X	X		X			
	<b>Official Website</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	<b>Suggestions Mailbox</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	<b>Contact Email</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X



The assessment of the **ex-ante verification of study programmes** activity by evaluators and universities is shown in Table 21.

**Table 21. Assessment of the ex-ante verification of study programmes activity for Bachelor, Master and Doctorate programmes by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5)**

	EX-ANTE VERIFICATION				
	Call	Evaluators	N° Replies	Universities	N° Replies
BACHELOR, MASTER AND DOCTORATE	<a href="#">2019</a>	4,71	52	3,36	50
	<a href="#">2020</a>	4,72	43	3,92	23
	<a href="#">2021</a>	4,57	71	3,85	25
	<a href="#">2022</a>	4,55	70	3,30	43

The complete report for each call can be consulted through the provided links. Source: ACCUA.

The main improvements introduced in this review activity have been:

1. Review of evaluation questionnaires.
2. Incorporation of new members into evaluation commission.
3. Update of the guide following the entry into force of Royal Decree 822/2021, of September 28.
4. Design of requirements for the development of a new application system for the review of study programmes, specific to ACCUA.

The assessment of the **follow-up/monitoring of study programmes** activity is shown in Table 22.

**Table 22. Assessment of the follow-up / monitoring of study programmes activity for Bachelor, Master and Doctorate programmes by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5)**

	FOLLOW-UP/MONITORING				
	Call	Evaluators	N° Replies	Universities	N° Replies
BACHELOR, MASTER AND DOCTORATE	<a href="#">2018-19</a>	4,72	41	3,04	147
	<a href="#">2019-20</a>	4,14	32	3,44	97
	<a href="#">2020-21</a>	4,51	20	3,64	56
	<a href="#">2021-22</a>	4,40	18	3,09	53

The complete report for each call can be consulted through the provided links. Source: ACCUA.

The main improvements introduced in this review activity have been:

1. Introduction of requested upgrades in the computer application.
2. Revision of the working documents of the follow-up/monitoring activity (evaluators' assessment questionnaires, guidance document for panel members) to introduce the necessary changes for improvement.
3. Incorporation of new members into the evaluation commission.
4. Improvements in the organization of evaluation commissions and coordination meetings.
5. Review and implementation of the new [Guide](#) for monitoring bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, which includes changes related to the adaptation to REACU and the General Secretariat of





Universities documents, as well as the elimination of monitoring modalities and the update of the self-report model and content.

The assessment of the **re-accreditation verification of study programmes** activity is shown in Table 23.

**Table 23. Assessment of the re-accreditation verification of study programmes activity for Bachelor, Master and Doctorate programmes by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5)**

BACHELOR, MASTER AND DOCTORATE	RE-ACCREDITATION VERIFICATION				
	Call	Evaluators	Nº Replies	Universities	Nº Replies
	<a href="#">2018-19</a>	4,23	77	3,51	140
	<a href="#">2019-20</a>	4,40	60	3,84	149
	<a href="#">2020-21</a>	4,52	52	3,63	84
	<a href="#">2021-22</a>	4,35	76	3,64	133

The complete report for each call can be consulted through the provided links. Source: ACCUA.

The main improvements adopted after the meta-evaluation process of the re-accreditation verification of study programmes review activity for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees have been:

1. Improvements in the organisation of the visits.
2. Working documents of the accreditation activity have been reviewed to introduce the improvements identified as necessary. Thus, the documents "Guidelines for Evaluators" and "Guidelines for Universities" have been reviewed.
3. Improvements have been made to the computer application, incorporating some functions requested by universities and members of different commissions.
4. Various aspects related to universities have been improved, such as the management of virtual visits, the presentation of evidence, or the selection of attendees for various hearings.

The assessment of the **European Approach for quality assurance of joint programmes** activity is shown in Table 24.

**Table 24. Assessment of the European Approach for quality assurance of joint programmes activity by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5)**

BACHELOR, MASTER AND DOCTORATE	EUROPEAN APPROACH FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE OF JOINT PROGRAMMES				
	Call	Evaluators	Nº Replies	Universities	Nº Replies
	<a href="#">2023</a>	5,00	3	4,56	8

The complete report for each call can be consulted through the provided links. Source: ACCUA.

The main improvements after the meta-evaluation process in the procedure for the evaluation of international joint programs within the European Approach have been:

1. Extending the deadline for universities offering the program to manage the selection of participants in various hearings.
2. Changes in the Guide to clarify the procedure and the report template.



The assessment of the **academic programmes with successive pathways (PARS)** activity is shown in Table 25.

**Table 25. Assessment of the academic programmes with successive pathways (PARS) activity by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5)**

	ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES WITH SUCCESSIVE PATHWAYS (PARS)				
	Universities	Universities	Universities	Universities	Universities
<b>BACHELOR AND MASTER</b>	<a href="#">2022</a>	4,59	6	3,24	7

The complete report for each call can be consulted through the provided links. Source: ACCUA.

The main improvements implemented after the meta-evaluation process in the activity for the review of **academic programs with successive pathways (PARS)** have been:

1. Upgrade of in the computer application.
2. Revision of the working documents for the review of academic programs with successive pathways in the field of Engineering and Architecture (PARS-IA).

The assessment of the **certification and monitoring of quality assurance systems implemented by HEI** activity is shown in Table 26.

**Table 26. Assessment of the certification and monitoring of quality assurance systems implemented by HEI activity by evaluators and universities (Likert scale from 1 to 5)**

	ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES WITH SUCCESSIVE PATHWAYS (PARS)				
	Universities	Universities	Universities	Universities	Universities
<b>CERTIFICATION</b>	<a href="#">2020-21</a>	4,56	15	3,29	9
	<a href="#">2021-22</a>	4,52	5	3,54	7
<b>MONITORING</b>	<a href="#">2021-22</a>	4,83	7	3,80	3

The complete report for each call can be consulted through the provided links. Source: ACCUA.

The main improvements implemented after the meta-evaluation process in the certification and monitoring of quality assurance systems implemented by HEI have been:

1. Revisions of the Guide (versions 2 and 3).
2. [Training](#) activity on Quality Assurance Systems for HEI in collaboration with the International University of Andalusia (UNIA).
3. Two webinars on QAS.
4. Training sessions for evaluators and universities.
5. Upgrade of the computer tool to adapt it to the approved changes in the review activity.

Reports that include the satisfaction of evaluators with the training sessions they received and the satisfaction of individuals participating in the faculty evaluation program can be consulted [here](#).



## 8. Recommendations and main findings from previous reviews and agency's follow-up

In the external review conducted in 2019 by ENQA under the ESG2015, it was determined that the Agency had been acting in accordance with the membership criteria to ENQA in the following standards (full compliance / substantial compliance).

Part 3 of the ESG. Standards and guidelines for quality assurance agencies:

- 3.2. Official status. Full compliance.
- 3.3. Independence. Full compliance.
- 3.4. Thematic analysis. Substantial compliance.
- 3.5. Resources. Substantial compliance.
- 3.6. Internal quality assurance and professional conduct. Substantial compliance.
- 3.7. Cyclical external review of agencies. Full compliance.

Part 2 of the ESG. Criteria for external quality assurance:

- 2.1. Consideration of internal quality assurance. Full compliance.
- 2.2. Designing methodologies fit for purpose. Substantial compliance.
- 2.3. Implementing processes. Full compliance.
- 2.4. Peer-review experts. Full compliance.
- 2.5. Criteria for outcomes. Full compliance.
- 2.6. Reporting. Full compliance.
- 2.7. Complaints and appeals. Substantial compliance.

However, EQAR considered that compliance was partial in the following standard:

- 3.1. Activities, policy, and processes for quality assurance.

On the other hand, in response to the request for renewal of registration in EQAR, its Register Committee expressed disagreement with ENQA regarding the full compliance of standard 2.6, rating it as partial compliance, while substantially agreeing on the assessment of the rest of the criteria.



In its conclusions, the ENQA evaluation panel made a series of recommendations, which can be grouped into six concepts related to five criteria (3.1, 3.4, 3.6, 2.2, and 2.7), as detailed in table 27.

**Table 27. Summary of recommendations made by ENQA in 2019**

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY ENQA IN 2019		ESG
1	As a matter of urgency, DEVA should complete its own <b>Strategic Plan</b> .	3.1
2	AAC-DEVA should conduct a <b>review of its organisational structure</b> with a specific focus on the DEVA structure. External expertise should inform this exercise.	3.1
	AAC-DEVA should review its organisational structure and its deployment of <b>resources</b> and make what changes are required to provide for consistent strategic planning and implementation and review of that strategy.	3.5
3	AAC-DEVA should begin the process of much wider <b>stakeholder engagement</b> . AAC-DEVA's engagement with stakeholders needs to be reviewed in order to create the same weight of influence and parity of esteem with stakeholders outside the universities. In particular, the creation of an advisory board for DEVA itself (as distinct from AAC-DEVA) would be of assistance.	3.1 2.2
4	The review panel suggests that immediate steps be taken to start a programme of <b>thematic analysis</b> through the use of project funding and in association with the universities of the system. The review panel would like to see a thematic analysis of reports conducted and published. Such a thematic approach should inter alia address regional priorities.	3.4
5	A rigorous and continuous programme of <b>internal quality assurance</b> needs to be embedded in AAC-DEVA and used as an exemplar throughout the system	3.6
6	AAC-DEVA needs to develop a specific procedure to deal with <b>complaints</b> .	2.7

Table 28 summarizes the recommendations from ENQA review panel in 2019, recommendations from the EQAR Register Committee in 2020 (including those related to standard 2.6, as well as recommendations on standards with total compliance), the summary of recommendations after the follow-up visit conducted in 2020 and 2021, and their status in 2023.



**Table 28. Summary of recommendations made by ENQA in 2019, EQAR in 2020, and the Agency's response**

RECOMMENDATIONS ENQA 2019	CONCLUSIONS EQAR 2020	RESPONSE DEVA-AAC FOLLOW-UP 2020/21	RECOMENDATIONS AFTER THE FOLLOW-UP VISIT 2021	STATUS IN 2023	ESG
As a matter of urgency, DEVA should complete its own <b>Strategic Plan</b> .	Lack of a strategic focus.	Initiation of the development of the strategic plan.	Develop a strategic plan tailored to the creation of ACCUA. A proactive plan that specifies lines of action. Include values. Involve stakeholders. Include key challenges.	Initial Action Plan developed with stakeholder involvement, strategic lines, mission, vision, and values. Approved annual action plan for 2024, aligned with the budget for the entity.	3.1
AAC-DEVA should conduct a <b>review of its organisational structure</b> with a specific focus on the DEVA structure. External expertise should inform this exercise. AAC-DEVA should review its organisational structure and its deployment of <b>resources</b> and make what changes are required to provide for consistent strategic planning and implementation and review of that strategy.	Emphasizes the need to develop the structure and increase available resources.  Insufficient resources for on-site visits. Lack of implementation of actions such as thematic analysis due to resource constraints.	Structural reforms underway.  There are sufficient resources, although the Statistics area could not be launched yet. However, there is a commitment to create it.	The creation of ACCUA with a new structure is in progress.  The structure of functional areas has been renewed. More staff members have been allocated to the Agency.	New agency, new statutes, specialized structure in quality assurance. New strategic approach. Increased number of staff. New Statistics department. The number of international evaluators and professionals has been increased.	3.1  3.5
AAC-DEVA should begin the process of much wider <b>stakeholder engagement</b> . AAC-DEVA's engagement with stakeholders needs to be reviewed in order to create the same weight of influence and parity of esteem with stakeholders outside the universities. In particular, the creation of an advisory board for DEVA itself (as distinct from AAC-DEVA) would be of assistance.	Weak representation of students and other stakeholder groups.	More students have been incorporated into review committees. The CTEyA has been renewed with more profiles.		Governing Council members with HEI and QA expertise. Two student representatives included in the Governing Council. Renewal of the Technical Committee.	3.1  2.2



RECOMMENDATIONS ENQA 2019	CONCLUSIONS EQAR 2020	RESPONSE DEVA-AAC FOLLOW-UP 2020/21	RECOMENDATIONS AFTER THE FOLLOW-UP VISIT 2021	STATUS IN 2023	ESG
The review panel suggests that immediate steps be taken to start a programme of <b>thematic analysis</b> through the use of project funding and in association with the universities of the system. The review panel would like to see a thematic analysis of reports conducted and published. Such a thematic approach should inter alia address regional priorities.			A series of virtual seminars is held. Thematic analysis are being conducted.	Thematic studies and seminars on regional priorities have been conducted. A Statistical Unit with specialized staff has been established.	3.4
A rigorous and continuous programme of <b>internal quality assurance</b> needs to be embedded in AAC-DEVA and used as an exemplar throughout the system	Inadequate evidence of the implementation of the internal quality assurance system.  The Agency must continue to streamline procedures.	A Quality Assurance Commission is established. The Service Charter is under review.	The Service Charter has been reviewed. Mechanisms for stakeholder participation have been introduced. New quality assurance indicators have been established.	Service Charter. Complaints and Suggestions Box. Approval of the Initial Action Plan and definition of objectives for the 2024 annual action plan. Quality Assurance Commission established to simplify procedures.	3.6  2.1
AAC-DEVA needs to develop a specific procedure to deal with <b>complaints</b> .	The existing procedure in 2019 does not guarantee impartiality in resolving appeals.  There should be a specific procedure for processing complaints and suggestions.	The Agency follows the legally established procedure. The matter will be escalated to the REACU level.  It is agreed to create the Resource Committees.  The complaints and suggestions procedure is implemented.	A Complaints and Suggestions procedure has been created, approved by the CTEyA, and specific quality objectives have been set.	Administrative procedure for appeals. Appeals Committee.   Complaints and Claims Box.	2.7



RECOMMENDATIONS ENQA 2019	CONCLUSIONS EQAR 2020	RESPONSE DEVA-AAC FOLLOW-UP 2020/21	RECOMENDATIONS AFTER THE FOLLOW-UP VISIT 2021	STATUS IN 2023	ESG
In addition to <b>publishing reports</b> on its official web site, the Agency might consider how best to communicate its work to a wider audience. The Agency could view its reports through the lens of enhancement in order to ensure a stronger focus on a positive tone and specific recommendations for enhancement.	Both positive and negative reports should be fully published.	It is considered that only negative reports resulting in an implemented plan should be published. However, it is decided to publish all reports for degrees, both positive and negative, once the procedures are completed.	<p>The Agency has published 4.258 reports on 177 institutions in DEQAR.</p> <p>The Agency continues to develop the IMPLANTA programme to implement internal quality systems in higher education institutions.</p>	<p>All reports (positive and negative) continue to be published, except reports for the activity Review of private universities for recognition.</p> <p>ACCUA is one of the agencies with the highest number of reports published in DEQAR.</p>	2.6



## 9. SWOT analysis

**Table 29. Strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats analysis**

	INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
	STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
STRONG POINTS	<p>S1. Establishment of ACCUA with greater autonomy, visibility, and its own structure.</p> <p>S2. Consolidation of the Agency's values as general guiding principles.</p> <p>S3. High satisfaction of users with the Agency's programs and personnel.</p> <p>S4. Updated pool of evaluators with objective selection criteria.</p> <p>S5. Adaptability to change (COVID-19, new agency, regulatory modifications, etc.).</p> <p>S6. Progress in the internationalization of the Agency (COARA, GAIN, European Approach, etc.).</p>	<p>O1. Increased operational independence of ACCUA in terms of planning.</p> <p>O2. Participation in the REACU Network and collaboration with other evaluation agencies.</p> <p>O3. Regulatory development of Institutional Accreditation that provides more autonomy to universities.</p> <p>O4. Implementation of Quality Assurance Systems in Andalusian universities.</p> <p>O5. Evaluation through the European Approach and expansion at the international level, especially in Latin America.</p> <p>O6. The new regulatory context of the LOSU and its normative development in Andalusia.</p>
	WEAKNESSES	THREATS
WEAK POINTS	<p>W1. Structure and reorganization of human resources for the new agency, in progress.</p> <p>W2. Insufficient adaptation of the training plan for human resources to the new needs of the Agency.</p> <p>W3. Need to improve the communication strategy to increase the visibility of the Agency's activities and leverage available data.</p> <p>W4. Insufficient adaptation of specific IT tools for the development of review activities.</p> <p>W5. Limited participation of international evaluators.</p>	<p>T1. Submission to a changing and not always predictable regulatory framework.</p> <p>T2. Emergence of artificial intelligence and its impact on academic integrity.</p> <p>T3. External perception of quality assurance as a bureaucratic and administrative process with an auditing orientation.</p> <p>T4. Regulatory limitations to administrative streamlining and simplification.</p> <p>T5. Budgetary constraints.</p>





## 10. Key challenges and areas for future development

In light of the strategic analysis conducted on the quality assurance of scientific and university activities in Andalusia, which has resulted in the creation of ACCUA, the Agency sets forth the challenges and areas for future development outlined below. The strategic context underpinning these challenges is succinctly described in this self-assessment report and is further elaborated in the Agency's [Initial Action Plan](#).

### **1. Consolidate the role of ACCUA as a benchmark in promoting quality in the Andalusian Knowledge System.**

This challenge aligns with the Agency's vision outlined in its Initial Action Plan, derived from the functions and competencies specified in Article 7 of its Statutes. Additionally, it is consistent with addressing communication weaknesses, countering the threat of negative perceptions of quality assurance activities, and leveraging the Agency's strength in adapting to change, given its establishment as an administrative agency exclusively dedicated to quality assurance.

### **2. Support universities in assuming greater responsibility for the quality assurance of official study programmes.**

This challenge directly stems from the Agency's mission, which is to promote quality in the Andalusian Knowledge System and provide institutions with criteria and references for optimal fulfilment of their social function. It also capitalizes on the Agency's strengths and the development opportunities presented by the IMPLANTA Programme and Institutional Accreditation activities.

### **3. Advance the national and international visibility of the Agency.**

This challenge aligns with one of the Agency's strategic lines established in its Initial Action Plan. It involves sharing the results of its quality assurance activities with stakeholders and society to recognize and highlight the strengths of the Andalusian Knowledge System. Additionally, it takes advantage of existing opportunities for the Agency's international projection.

### **4. Streamline quality assurance procedures, reducing bureaucratic burden.**

This challenge is in line with another strategic line of the Agency, derived from its foundational objectives. ACCUA recognizes the need to address weaknesses to optimize resources and systems dedicated to quality assurance procedures, making them more efficient and effective. This approach aims to capitalize on existing opportunities for external recognition improvement.



## Annexes

### Annex I. Ex-ante verification of study programmes

Table 30. Ex-ante verification of study programmes. Number of reviews, positive and negative, by year and HEI

	2019				2020				2021				2022				2023				Total
	FV	UFV	WD	Total	FV	UFV	WD	Total	FV	UFV	WD	Total	FV	UFV	WD	Total	FV	UFV	WD	Total	
UAL	4	1		5	4			4	1	1		2	3			3				0	14
UCA	4			4	2			2	1			1				-	1			1	8
UCO	3	1	1	5	6			6	1			1	2			2	2			2	16
UGR	4	2		6	4	1		5	2			2	3			3	4			4	20
UHU				-				-	1			1	1	1		2				0	3
UJA	1	1		2	4			4				-	2			2	2			2	10
UMA	2			2		1		1	2	1		3	2			2	3			3	11
US	4			4	2			2	1	1		2	5	1		6	3			3	17
UNIA				-		1		1	1	1		2	2	1		3				0	6
ULA	3	1		4	2			2		3	3*	3	9	2		11	11	3		14	34
UPO	3	1		4		1	1	2				-	3			3	1			1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>149</b>

FV: Favourable; UFV: Unfavourable; WD: Withdrawn.

\* Coinciden con las 3 solicitudes valoradas desfavorables, retiradas después de emitir informe final.



## Annex II. Follow-up/monitoring of study programmes

**Table 31. Follow-up/monitoring of study programmes. Number of reviews for Graduate, Master and Doctorate programmes, by year and HEI**

	2018-2019				2019-2020				2020-2021				2021-2022				2022-2023				TOTAL
	G	M	D	Total	G	M	D	Total	G	M	D	Total	G	M	D	Total	G	M	D	Total	
UAL	5	10	1	16	21	9	0	30	7	9	9	25	5	6	9	20	1	2		3	94
UCA	33	22	2	57	8	13	5	26	30	11	14	55	0	14	14	28	1	5	3	9	175
UCO	18	15	0	33	15	12	0	27	16	12	9	37	1	19	9	29	3	1		4	130
UGR	6	11	0	17	54	23	1	78	6	30	24	60	5	29	1	35	1	2	23	26	216
UHU	11	11	2	24	17	6	0	23	5	4	2	11	2	9	1	12	0	4	0	4	74
UJA	31	14	0	45	1	11	0	12	17	12	13	42	3	15	4	22	1	12	13	26	147
UMA	21	7	0	28	34	17	0	51	8	19	17	44	1	22	16	39	1	2	0	3	165
US	47	53	1	101	2	24	0	26	33	25	1	59	1	6	26	33	2	27	0	29	248
UNIA	0	6	0	6	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	3	0	2	0	2	14
ULA	4	7	0	11	1	2	2	5	9	4	1	14	0	1	0	1	6	3	0	9	40
UPO	5	13	0	18	1	6	0	7	0	9	7	16	0	1	0	1	0	11	7	18	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>1363</b>

G: Graduate; M: Master; D: Doctorate.



## Annex III. Modification of study programmes

### Non substantial modifications

**Table 32. Non substantial modifications. Number of reviews, favourable, unfavourable and withdrawn, by year and HEI**

	2022				2023				TOTAL
	Favourable	Unfavourable	Withdrawn	Total	Favourable	Unfavourable	Withdrawn	Total	
UAL		1		1	5			5	6
UCA				0	24			24	24
UCO				0	4			4	4
UGR				0	26			26	26
UHU	2	1		3				0	3
UJA	1			1	1			1	2
UMA	3			3	6	1		7	10
US	18	4		22	27	2		29	51
UNIA				0				0	0
ULA	1	2		3	2			2	5
UPO				0				0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>131</b>



## Substantial modifications

**Table 33. Substantial modifications. Number of reviews, favourable, unfavourable and withdrawn, by year and HEI**

	2019				2020				2021				2022				2023				TOTAL
	FV	UFV	WD	Total	FV	UFV	WD	Total	FV	UFV	WD	Total	FV	UFV	WD	Total	FV	UFV	WD	Total	
UAL	5	3		8	2			2	4		1	5	19			19	9	6		15	49
UCA	19			19				0	11			11	11			11	4			4	45
UCO	13	1		14	19	2	3	24	10	1	1	12	12			12	9	1		10	72
UGR	9			9	10			10	19			19	3			3	10	4		14	55
UHU	3			3	15	1		16	5		1	6	2			2	9			9	36
UJA	16			16	26		1	27	10	1		11	7		1	8	6			6	68
UMA	10			10	21	1		22	10			10	6		2	8	32	2		34	84
US	14	1		15	5	1	1	7	18	1		19	6			6	45			45	92
UNIA				0				0				0	1			1	2	1		3	4
ULA	9		1	10	3			3	8			8	2	2		4	5	4	1	10	35
UPO	7		1	8	3			3	7			7	4			4	1			1	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>563</b>



## Annex IV. Re-accreditation verification of study programmes

Table 34. Re-accreditation verification of study programmes. Number of reviews for Graduate, Master and Doctorate programmes, by year and HEI

	2018-2019				2019-2020				2020-2021				2021-2022				2022-2023				TOTAL
	G	M	D	Total	G	M	D	Total	G	M	D	Total	G	M	D	Total	G	M	D	Total	
UAL		6	10	16	2	8		10	3	7	1	11	17	7		24	1			1	62
UCA		5	9	14	4	8		12	2	16		18	5	5	2	12	30			30	86
UCO		6	9	15	2	4		6	2	11		13	11	4		15	16			16	65
UGR		21	21	42	2	47		49		10	1	11	54	14		68	2			2	172
UHU	1	4	1	6		10	4	14	7	7	1	15	16	2		18	4		1	5	58
UJA	1	11	12	24		4		4		10		10	1	4		5	16			16	59
UMA		19	14	33	3	14		17	12	4		16	33	14		47	5			5	118
US	1	21	24	46	2	40		42	23	12		35	24	8		32	6		1	7	162
UNIA		1		1		2		2		3		3				0	0			0	6
ULA	5	1		6	4	1		5	2	3		5				0	2		2	4	20
UPO		7	7	14	2	8		10		12		12		3		3	0			0	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>847</b>



## Annex V. IQAS Certification of University Centers. IMPLANTA programme

Table 35. IMPLANTA programme. Number of review reports by year and HEI

	PILOT 2018		MARCH 2020		DECEMBERR 2020		JULY 2021		APRIL 2022		APRIL 2023 (*2)	
	Center	Certificates	Center	Certificates	Centro	Certificates (*1)	Center	Certificates	Center	Certificates	Center	Certificates
UAL									1	0		
UCA	1	1	1	0						0	3	
UCO	1	0							1	1		
UGR	1	0	1	0			1	1	1	1	3	
UHU					2	0				0		
UJA	1	1								0		
UMA	1	0							2	2	1	
US	1	1			1	0	1	1		0	1	
UNIA										0		
ULA										0		
UPO	1	0								0		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>

(\*1) Withdrawn before the final outcome (resolution) of the procedure.

(\*2) Pending resolution.



## Annex VI. Evaluation criteria by review activity

**Table 36. Evaluation criteria by review activity**

EX-ANTE VERIFICATION / MODIFICATION		FOLLOW-UP/MONITORING AND EX-POST RE-ACCREDITATION	EUROPEAN APPROACH	DOCENTIA	IMPLANTA	REVIEW OF UNIVERSITIES FOR RECOGNITION		ACCREDITATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS
Graduate/Master	Doctorate					Universities	Centers	
1. Description, educational objectives, and justification of the program	1. Programme description	1. Available public information	1. Eligibility	1. Strategic dimension of teaching evaluation	1. Public information	1. Project characteristics	1. Center characteristics	1. Contextual features of the model
2. Results of the training and learning process	2. Competences	2. Quality assurance system	2. Learning outcomes	2. Methodological dimension of teaching evaluation	2. Quality assurance policy	2. Teaching project	2. Teaching project	2. Characteristics of the proficiency exam
3. Admission, recognition, and mobility	3. Access and admission of students	3. Design, organization, and development of the training program	3. Disciplinary field	3. Results of teaching evaluation	3. Teaching and research staff	3. Research project	3. Studentship	3. Administration of the exams
4. Teaching planning	4. Study programme	4. Faculty	4. Study programme		4. Management of material resources and services	4. Faculty (PDI)	4. Research project	4. Exam review procedure
5. Academic and teaching support staff	5. Programme organization	5. Resources and teaching support	5. Admission and recognition		5. Management of learning outcomes	5. Technical, administrative and services staff (PTGAS)	5. Structure and organisational regulations	5. Certificates
6. Learning resources: materials and infrastructure, internships, and services	6. Human Resources	6. Training program outcomes	6. Learning, teaching and assessment			6. Facilities	6. Faculty (PDI)	6. Suitability of examiners





EX-ANTE VERIFICATION / MODIFICATION		FOLLOW-UP/MONITORING AND EX-POST RE-ACCREDITATION	EUROPEAN APPROACH	DOCENTIA	IMPLANTA	REVIEW OF UNIVERSITIES FOR RECOGNITION		ACCREDITATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS
Graduate/Master	Doctorate					Universities	Centers	
7. Implementation schedule	7. Material resources and support available for doctoral students	7. Academic guidance, career guidance, and employability	7. Student support			7. Assurance of activity and sustainability of the university	7. Technical, administrative and services staff (PTGAS)	7. Review, improvement, and responsible parties for the procedure
8. Internal Quality Assurance System	8. Review, improvement, and program outcomes		8. Resources			8. Structure and rules of representation	8. Facilities	
			9. Transparency and documentation			9. Relationship with other entities	9. Assurance of activity and sustainability of the center	
			10. Quality assurance				10. Relationship with other entities	







**Junta de Andalucía**

Consejería de Universidad,  
Investigación e Innovación

Agencia para la Calidad Científica  
y Universitaria de Andalucía