

Thomas Reil
Managing Director
Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute (ACQUIN)

Vienna, 12 October 2012

Subject: ENQA Full membership of ACQUIN

Dear Thomas,

I am pleased to inform you that, at its meeting of 14 September 2012, the Board of ENQA agreed to reconfirm ACQUIN's Full membership of ENQA for five years from 14 September 2012.

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

Though the ENQA Board concluded that ACQUIN is in substantial compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines, it found that there were some areas for development, included in the Annex to this letter. ACQUIN should submit a progress report on these areas no later than September 2014. This report will be considered in conjunction with the next external review.

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

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

Kind regards,



Achim Hopbach
ENQA President

Annex: Areas for development

The Board suggests that ACQUIN should pay particular attention to the following issues:

ENQA Criterion 1 – ESG 3.1

ESG 2.1

- **Recommendation:** albeit this is beyond the direct control of a German accreditation agency, the Board recommends that the process takes into account *explicitly* the standards in Part 1 of ESG.

ESG 2.3

- **Recommendation:** the Agency should ensure that its technical committees communicate more frequently to ensure a consistent and comparable application of criteria.

ESG 2.4

- **Recommendations:** the Agency needs to strengthen its selection process for its experts based on more defined and public criteria. The experts need to be briefed or trained more completely than at present. The processes for appointment and deployment of experts need to be more consistent and transparent. The Board encourages ACQUIN to use foreign experts, particularly with the relative proximity to other German speaking nations.

ESG 2.6

- **Recommendations:** it is necessary to document the implementation of accreditation conditions and the procedures should be made available publicly. This would facilitate the verification that there is a predetermined follow-procedure which is implemented consistently.

ESG 2.7

- **Recommendation:** the implementation of conditions for its accreditation should be made more explicit and documented publicly (as in ESG 2.6 above).

ESG 2.8

- **Recommendation:** the Agency should use its comprehensive knowledge for cross-system analysis and should make these publicly available.

ENQA Criterion 4 – Mission statement (ESG 3.5)

- **Recommendation:** the Agency should have an explicit mission statement available in English.

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

See comments above on criterion 1.

ENQA Criterion 7 – Accountability procedures (ESG 3.8)

The expert group found that the description of the quality management published on the Agency's website does not make it clear to the public what measures are employed in detail to ensure and implement the standard of quality.

- **Recommendations:** to provide more comprehensive briefing and training of the experts; to systematise and formalise the Agency's internal quality management system and to introduce follow-up measures and systematic feedback mechanisms such as conducting systematic surveys after completion of an accreditation procedure.

ENQA criterion 8i – Miscellaneous

See comment above on ESG 2.3.