EXPERIENCES USING ISO 9001 TO MEET ESG IN THREE SPANISH AGENCIES

FOURTH EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE FORUM
"CREATIVITY AND DIVERSITY: CHALLENGES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE BEYOND 2010",
COPENHAGEN, 19-21 NOVEMBER 2009.

AIM OF THE PAPER

- ISO 9001 standard has served as the basis for compliance with European standards and guidelines (ESG) for quality assurance laid down for quality assurance agencies.

- Comparison of each of the European guidelines with the requirements of ISO 9001

- The case of three Spanish Agencies:

  - ACSUCYL: certified with ISO 9001 since 2006 and member of ENQA since 2007.

  - ACSUG: certified with ISO 9001 since 2006 and member of ENQA since 2007.

  - AQU: certified with ISO 9001 since 2000 and member of ENQA since 2007.

ISO 9001-EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

❖ ISO 9001

- Model recognised as an international standard for good practices in the management of internal quality
- Public or private organisations.
- Process management system
- Ongoing improvement and customer satisfaction.

ISO 9001-EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

❖ EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

➢ General Framework for quality assurance in higher education.

➢ Three sections:
  ➢ Internal quality assurance within higher education institutions
  ➢ External quality assurance within higher education institutions
  ➢ Quality assurance within external quality assurance agencies

SIMILARITIES ISO 9001-ESG

- Both are intended to guarantee internal quality assurance

- Both allow agencies to choose the most appropriate mechanisms for action

- Both allow agencies to choose how activities are developed and measured.

3.1/3.3 ESG-ISO 9001 SECTION 7

ESG

3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures by agencies

- *Standard:*

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

3.3 Activities

- *Standard:*

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

ISO 9001

Section 7: Product realisation

- Determination of the requirements of activities and customer and user communication

- Planning of activities to be undertaken

- Design and development activities

- Service provision

3.1/3.3 ESG-ISO 9001 SECTION 7

- A process map that identifies all of its activities
- A process for planning and monitoring all activities

3.2 ESG-ISO 9001

ESG	ISO 9001
3.2 Official status *Standard:* *Agencies should be formally recognised by competent public authorities in the European Higher Education Area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdictions within which they operate.*	No specific requirement is set out in relation to this ESG standard, although a presentation of the organisation is necessary with the ISO 9001 standard, which is normally set out in the Quality Manual and includes a description of the organisation and its organisational structure.

3.4 ESG-ISO 9001 SECTION 6

ESG	ISO 9001
3.4. Resources ***Standard*** *Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources, both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective and efficient manner, with appropriate provision for the development of their processes and procedure.*	 • Section 6 on resource management (NON-FINANCIAL)

3.4 ESG-ISO 9001 SECTION 6

- Human resources management procedure
- A management review procedure
- A quality manual
- A process for the planning and follow-up of actions
- An information systems management procedure
- An inventory of assets
- Adequate infrastructures

3.5 ESG-ISO 9001 SECTION 5

ESG	ISO 9001
3.5. Mission Standard *Agencies should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, contained in a publicly available statement.*	**Section 5** of the ISO specifies, in general terms, that management is responsible for making a commitment to a quality policy and for setting out clear goals and objectives that contribute to the system's continuous improvement in a definitive way.

3.5 ESG-ISO 9001 SECTION 5

- A Strategic Plan

- Activities plan

- Quality manual

- A review process by the management

3.6 ESG-ISO 9001

ESG

- **3.6 Independence**

Standard:

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

ISO 9001

No direct correspondence with any of the sections of the ISO 9001 standard. HOWEVER

✓ Quality management systems include control over the staff involved in the activities

✓ Code of Ethics defined by the organisation

✓ A management review procedure

✓ Regulations governing the Agencies

3.7 ESG-ISO 9001 SECTIONS 4 AND 7

ESG

3.7 External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies

Standard:

- *The processes, criteria and procedures used by agencies should be pre-defined and publicly available.*

- *These processes will normally be expected to include: self-assessment, external assessment, publication of a report, and a follow-up procedure, together with an appeals process for formal decisions.*

ISO 9001

Section 4:

General Requirements,

Section 7:

Product realisation calls for the identification of all processes, their sequence, interaction, monitoring, measurement and analysis.

3.7 ESG-ISO 9001 SECTIONS 4 AND 7

- A process map

- Detailed procedures and instructions, with specifications on how each activity is to be carried out.

- Publication of outcomes on the website

- All procedures are validated, documented and constantly updated.

3.8 ESG-ISO 9001 SECTIONS 8 AND 5.6

ESG	ISO 9001
3.8 Accountability procedures ***Standard:*** *Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.*	**Section 8** Call for the organisation to plan and implement the necessary monitoring, measurement, analysis and improvement processes to ensure service compliance and improvement in the efficacy of the quality management system **Section 5.6** Management must review the entire quality assurance system on an annual basis

3.8 ESG- ISO 9001 SECTIONS 8 AND 5.6

- A quality policy approved by the Board of Directors
- Internal feedback systems:
  - meta-evaluation
  - processing of all positive and negative comments
  - annual internal audit
  - surveys
  - internal non-conformities and measures for improvement
- External feedback systems:
  - satisfaction surveys
  - mailbox on the website
  - external audit
  - Set out and control indicators for each process

Summary of the correlation between the two standards:

ESG: EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES		ISO 9001: 2008
3.1 The use of external quality assurance procedures in Higher Education		7. Product realisation
3.2 Official status		No legal aspects mentioned 4.2.2 Quality Manual
3.3 Activities: evaluation, review, audit, assessment, accreditation		7. Product realisation
3.4 Resources: human and financial		6. Resource management (non-financial)
3.5 Mission statement: goals, objectives, policy, management plan		5. Management responsibility: Q. policy, Q. objectives, Q. management system
3.6 Independence		No legal aspects mentioned
3.7 External Quality Assurance Criteria and Process		4. Quality management system: process, criteria, methods, improvements 7. Product realisation
3.8 Accountability procedures: policy, experts, subcontractors, feedback		5.3 Quality policy 8.Measurement, analysis and improvement 7.4 Evaluate and select suppliers

Conclusions

- The European Standards provide the guidelines for quality assurance by quality assurance agencies in higher education, with the focus on institutional and program review.

- The ISO 9001 standard on Quality Management Systems is a good tool that enables organizations to improve their internal quality assurance system and be aware of their processes.

- The implementation of a management system and subsequent external certification according to ISO 9001 is a good basis that provides for compliance with the majority of European guidelines (ESG).

Proposed Questions

- Have you implemented other quality assurance systems or standards (other than ISO 9001) that have contributed to compliance with the ESG?

- Do you think that establishing an internal quality assurance system leads to a bureaucratic way of doing things?

- Is ISO 9001 and ESG a good combination for quality enhancement?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION

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