

**Approval of the Application
by Fundación para el Conocimiento Madrimasd (fmid) for
Inclusion on the Register**

Register Committee

Ref. RC15/A23

Ver. 1.0

Date 11/06/15

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Application of:	10/03/2015
External Review Report of:	February 2015
Review coordinated by:	ENQA
Review panel members:	David Timms (chair), Pieter-Jan van de Velde (secretary), Cláudia Sarrico, Marcel Crochet, Simona Divoska
Decision of:	5 June
Registration until:	29 February 2020
Absented themselves from decision-making:	none

1. The application of 10/03/15 adhered to the requirements of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.
2. The Register Committee considered the external review report of February 2015 on the compliance of fmid with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)¹. The Register Committee found that the report provides clear evidence and analysis of how fmid complies with the ESG.
3. The Register Committee sought and received clarification from fmid (letter of 08/05/15).

Analysis:

4. In considering fmid's compliance with the ESG, the Register Committee only took into account the monitoring and accreditation of official degree programmes, ex-ante evaluation of master programmes in the Arts, evaluation of the quality of teaching (DOCENTIA) as well as cooperation agreements for sectorial accreditation. **Activities related to evaluation of teaching and research staff are not within the scope of the ESG and, thus, not pertinent to fmid's registration.**
5. With regard to the specific European Standards and Guidelines, the Register Committee considered the following:

ESG 2.2 The review panel stated that fmid's freedom in developing its external QA activities (p. 13) is to some extent limited. The review panel

¹ The application was made before adoption of the 2015 version of the ESG. It has therefore been considered on the basis of the 2005 version of the ESG, and all references refer to that version.

noted that the direct involvement by employers or their organisations “is not built into the arrangements for operation and oversight of review methods” of the agency (p. 13).

In its letter of 08/05/2015, fmid stated that it has decided to involve a representative from the Madrid Confederation of Employers and Industries (CEIM) in the working group responsible for designing the new protocols and procedures for the verification of official programmes.

ESG 2.6: The review panel stated that within the Spanish legal framework fmid is responsible for the periodic follow-up of accredited study programmes. In case of a positive accreditation renewal, the responsibility for follow-up remains with the institution without further need for follow-up by the agency.

Within the DOCENTIA programme, fmid monitors the implementation for two years and offers a certification for five years if conditions have been met. After certification no follow-up is organised by the agency.

The Register Committee concluded that fmid’s follow-up procedures as they are designed do not guarantee that areas for improvement are dealt with consistently. This matter has therefore been flagged.

ESG 2.8: The Register Committee noted that fmid had produced a provisional analysis of its first round of monitoring activities and that it takes part in preparing the annual reports on the Spanish higher education system in cooperation with the National Agency for the Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA) and the Spanish Network of University Quality Assurance Agencies (REACU). While the Register Committee acknowledges that fmid has been operating for a short time, it nevertheless concurs with the view of the panel that further efforts are necessary in order to develop a global analysis of the findings from its external quality assurance processes within the Region of Madrid.

ESG 3.4: The Register Committee noted the panel’s concern regarding fmid’s expected increase in workload due to the renewal of accreditation procedures set out for 2015 and acknowledged the financial and logistical challenges that this implies. The Committee concluded with the view of the review panel that fmid needs to develop an effective internal communication that would enable the agency to organise and run their external quality assurance processes more effectively.

ESG 3.6: The Register Committee noted the involvement of the Regional Minister of Education in appointing the majority of members in the Board of Trustees. The Register Committee also noted that among the members of the Board, fmid includes two Rectors. Considering the Board of Trustees’ role in the governance and management of fmid and

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the unclear procedure for the selection of the Executive Director, the Register Committee asked the agency for further clarification.

In its letter, fmid stated that in order to reinforce the independence of the agency the next Board of Trustees would appoint two new members that will not require a designation of any kind from the Regional Ministry. The agency further explained that the Board is not involved in the day-by-day management of fmid and the Ministry appointment is the normal procedure for the Spanish independent public agencies.

Regarding the selection procedure for the Executive Director, fmid referred to its Articles of Association. These texts stipulate that the Board of Trustees designates the Director “among professionals of renowned prestige in the areas of the subjects within the Foundation’s remit”.

The Register Committee concluded with the view of the panel that the agency should reconsider the appointment procedure of the Board of Trustees in order to enhance its formal independence from the Regional Government and has therefore flagged this matter for future review.

ESG 3.7: The Register Committee noted that fmid has established an appeals procedure. The review panel findings, however, suggest that the appeals procedure has not been adequately communicated to higher education institutions or presented explicitly in the agency’s documents. The Register Committee concurs with the recommendations of the panel that information on the appeal system should be clearly communicated.

Conclusion:

6. Based on the external review report and the considerations above, the Register Committee concluded that fmid complies substantially with the ESG and therefore approved the application for inclusion on the Register.

Fmid’s inclusion shall be valid until 29/02/2020².

7. The Register Committee noted that fmid has cooperation agreements with a number of international sectorial accreditation agencies and plans to accept the decisions of these agencies as replacement for its own accreditation renewal processes.

The Register Committee noted the panel’s recommendation to formalise the examination by fmid of these agencies’ assessment frameworks (see ESG 2.1, p. 12). **The Register Committee underlined that fmid is required to make a Substantive Change Report once it has recognised the first accreditation decisions from any of these agencies. In this report, fmid should elaborate on how it had verified that these decisions by other agencies were made according to the ESG.**

² Inclusion is valid for five years from the date of the external review report, see §4.1 of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.

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8. The following issues have been flagged for particular attention when considering a potential application for renewal of inclusion. Fmid is expected to address these issues specifically in its next self-evaluation report, setting out whether the issue has been resolved or indicating what progress has been made. Fmid is further responsible for informing the coordinator of the next external review and the review panel of the need to address these issues in the external review report.

ESG 2.6: Follow-up procedures

It should receive attention whether the procedure for the periodic follow-up of accredited study programmes and the DOCENTIA programme have been revised to guarantee that areas for improvement are dealt with consistently.

ESG 3.6: Independence

It should be addressed whether the formal independence in the appointment procedure for the members of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director has been ensured.

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