

Seminar on “Cooperation between  
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***General view on accreditation and  
evaluation activities in European  
countries: the case study of ANECA  
(Spain)***

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# Accreditation and evaluation: the case study of ANECA (Spain)

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# Origin and current situation

## 'Quality culture':

### The necessary step for accreditation

- Official recognition of the Ministry Education to HE degrees
- Quality minimum threshold and not an excellence label
- Administrative decision rather than *quality control process*
- Accreditation as a quality process assumed by HE Institutions
- Designing and implementing mechanisms for on-going quality
- Strengthening transparency procedures within the HE system

*Accreditation cannot exist apart from quality evaluation (...) they are not opposite, but two expressions of systems which pay a lot of attention to quality enhancement and assurance.*

Karl Dittrich, 2004

# Legal background in Spain



## University Reform Act (LRU) (1983)

1. New legal framework for higher education structures in democratic times
2. *Aggiornamento* of the Spanish universities both concerning academic staff and student cohorts
3. Development of university autonomy
4. Unprecedented development of the research effort
5. Strengthen the image of universities as the key element of the R+D+i system
6. Momentum for private universities and public universities

# Legal background in Spain



## University Organic Act (LOU) (2001)

1. Conflicting environment of the academic world as a whole against the educational authorities
2. In-depth changes concerning poll system for rectors, promoting procedures for professors,.....
3. Evaluation of hired academic staff of HEIs
4. The Act establishes quality assurance as an essential aim of higher education politics
5. Accreditation turns into an exclusive competence for the Ministry of Education
6. Establishes the creation of ANECA with competences on a national setting

# ANECA:

Spanish Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation



The University Act establishes:

**Evaluation,**  
**certification**  
and **accreditation**

as the main functions of ANECA

in order to **promote** and **guarantee** quality assurance of Spanish HEIs, in both national and international settings

ANECA holds exclusively the competence for assessing the effective development of programmes to write a report to the Ministry of Education

## GUIDELINES

**ANECA works in co-operation with HEIs as the main actors of the system and part of its mission**

### ACTIVITIES:

- Evaluation and Certification
- Institutional Evaluation and Accreditation
- Hired Academic Staff Evaluation
- Relations with Networks: Europe and Latin America
- Actions Towards the Building of the EHEA
- Programmes in co-operation with other actors

# EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION

## INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION:

- Spanish experience provided by **Quality Plans for Universities** launched in mid-nineties, to step on further in **programme evaluation** towards **accreditation**
- The first stage should be supported by **Regional Governments**

## ACCREDITATION:

- Study and valoration of **Pilot Projects for Accreditation** developed in the academic year 2003-04
- Defining indicators for graduate and post-graduate allowing programme re-homologation



# HIRED ACADEMIC STAFF EVALUATION

## AIMS

- Increasing the **transparency and credibility of processes** accomplished by ANECA concerning the different types of hired teachers according to quantifying criteria
- Close-up **co-ordination with regional agencies**, to share criteria, indicators and peer-review data bases
- Promoting an active co-operation with universities concerning academic staff benefits related both to research and teaching activities

# RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICA

- **Essential** role to be played **towards the building of an Iberoamerican Higher Education Area (UEALC)**:
  - ✓ Good practices on quality evaluation and accreditation
  - ✓ Academic experts trained both in evaluation and accreditation processes
- **Active member of RIACES** (Iberoamerican Network for Quality Accreditation of Higher Education)
  - ✓ ANECA holds the technical secretariat of RIACES
  - ✓ 2nd General Assembly in Costa Rica (8-9 March 2005)

# The needed international framework: evaluation and accreditation in the EHEA



The international framework provides:

- Good practices patterns
- *Benchmarking*
- Political agenda
  - concerning evaluation (Bologna Process):
    - ✓ Berlín Communiqué, the way to Bergen 2005
    - ✓ ENQA
  - concerning accreditation
    - ✓ ECA
    - ✓ The experiences from Eastern Europe
    - ✓ Regional networks (NVAO, D-A-CH)

# ACTIONS TOWARDS THE BUILDING OF THE *EHEA*

- Supporting the building of EHEA: promoting agreement concerning the nature of the process through different actions
- Allowing and fostering reflection and networking along with universities, particularly on services related to student and academic staff mobility
- Strengthening the relations with European agencies and networks focusing on HE systems, especially with ENQA and ECA

# PROGRAMMES IN CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER ACTORS

- **ANECA and the Ministry of Education :**
  - Quality Label for Doctorate Programmes
  - Quality Certification for HE Libraries
- **ANECA and universities: New trends on HE evaluation services:**
  - Evaluation of International Relations Offices
  - Including other strategic services of HEIs (related to research, press and communication units...)

# ANECA IN FIGURES

## ACCREDITATION PROGRAMME:

Academic year 04-05: **34 universities** involving **92 programmes** took part in the Pilot Projects

## INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION PROGRAMME:

Academic year 03-04: **36 universities** with **90 programmes**.

Academic year 04-05: **37 universities** with **112 programmes**.

## SURVEY ON LABOUR MARKET AND GRADUATES:

**148 programmes** from **30 universities** took part

## QUALITY LABEL ON DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES:

Call for proposals 03-04: **679 doctoral programmes** took part, **364 have got the Quality Label** (231 renewed the label obtained the previous year)

## QUALITY LABEL ON LIBRARY SERVICES:

**16 universities** took part and **7 have got the Label**.

# CONCLUSIONS

- **ANECA** must be understood as a **tool allowing an on-going improvement of higher education within the national system**, clearly identified by HEI as well as the stakeholders and society as a whole
- The trends accomplished by ANECA root in **independence of action, transparency**, and a sound commitment of the institution towards its mission with the HE system
- **Collaboration with HEIs** to achieve the defined goals
- **Networking** in the international setting as a condition for success and not something eligible

**Evaluation and accreditation approaches will serve to public powers to establish mid- and long-term higher education policies which will increase European economy's competitiveness, strengthening the social benefits of its citizens**