

REPORT ON THE STATE OF EXTERNAL
QUALITY ASSESSMENT AT SPANISH
UNIVERSITIES

2014

Report created by

the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation – ANECA



in collaboration with

Canary Islands Agency of University Quality and Educational Evaluation –ACCUEE, Agency for Quality of the Basque University System -Unibasq-, Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System – ACSUG and Madrimasd Knowledge Foundation –Madri+d.



and the participation of

Andalusian Knowledge Agency –DEVA-AAC-, Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education –ACPUA, University Quality Agency for the Balearic Islands – AQUIB, Quality Assurance Agency for the University System in Castilla y Leon –ACSUCYL, Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency –AQU Catalunya and the Valencian Evaluation and Quality Agency –AVAP.



Agencia Andaluza del Conocimiento
CONSEJERÍA DE ECONOMÍA, INNOVACIÓN Y CIENCIA

AGENCIA DE CALIDAD Y PROSPECTIVA
UNIVERSITARIA DE ARAGÓN





AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

INDEX

Introduction	7
Executive summary	11
1. Quality improvement at higher education institutions.....	23
1.1 Universities' internal quality assurance systems: the AUDIT programme	26
1.2 Review and improvement systems of teaching quality: the DOCENTIA programme.	41
2. Quality improvement for official university degrees.....	55
2.1 The assessment of official university degrees	56
2.2 European quality labels for university degrees as recognition of their professional orientation: the ACREDITA PLUS programme.	93
2.3 Correspondence between courses of the former Catalogue of Official University Degrees and European Higher Education Area levels	97
3. Improvement of professional quality in teaching and research staff	103
3.1 Assessment for the recognition of contracted teaching staff	105
3.2 Accreditation for access to the tenured teaching staff	121
3.3 Other recognition of teaching and research staff activity	135
4. Annex of results	141
5. References.	145



AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN



AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

INTRODUCTION

Every year the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) presents the Ministry of Education with its **Report on the state of external quality assessment in Spanish universities**, with the fundamental goal of informing the Ministry and the Council of Universities “about the progress of assessment, certification and accreditation processes in Spain” in the context of university education¹. The Report also reflects the need, in line with the European Standards and Guidelines², to produce “from time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of [agencies’] reviews, evaluations, assessments, etc.”³, and also of informing and attending to the needs of students, employers and other social and institutional stakeholders involved in the results and processes of higher education. Thus, as has been mentioned on other occasions, this study, unlike a recording of activities, provides an analysis of the data concerning assessment, certification and accreditation processes in Spain and issues directly linked to the quality of higher education; and, on the basis of such an analysis, a process of deliberation that may help in taking decisions on the main improvement measures to be taken in this field at the level of the Spanish university system as a whole.

In order to produce this report, the National Agency relied upon the collaboration of all the university quality assessment agencies belonging to the various autonomous communities.

¹ Organic Law 4/2007, dated 12 April, amending Organic Law 6/2001, dated 21 December, regulating universities (LOMLOU).

² ENQA (2009 and earlier editions); this report encompasses 2014, but it is worth pointing out that some months after the end of the year, in 2015, a new revised version of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area was approved - <http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg/>.

³ Standard 2.8 System-wide analyses in *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ENQA, 2009).

This report, pertaining to 2014, sets out and analyses the results of the main aspects and programmes of external quality assessment carried out in the Spanish university system. First it focuses on the assessment processes of such fundamental components as the centres' and institutions' internal quality assurance systems and, in relation to these, the procedures that such institutions possess for reviewing and improving teaching quality. Secondly, the report focuses on the considerable effort universities and quality agencies have been putting into providing students and society at large with a range of degrees of proven and recognised quality in the context of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA); this section also addresses the problematic issue of assimilating qualifications from the former Catalogue of Official University Degrees into the new landscape of the Spanish Framework of Higher Education Qualifications (MECES). And thirdly there is an analysis of the results emerging from the process of assessing universities' teaching and research staff (TRS), whether aimed at accrediting candidates who seek to access contractual or tenured TRS posts¹, or aimed at recognising TRS activity in the discharging of teachers' functions within the universities.

The Report is thus divided into three main sections, with one chapter devoted to each topic:

- I. Quality improvement in higher education institutions. This chapter will cover:
 - Universities' internal quality assurance systems: the AUDIT programme.
 - Teacher review and quality improvement systems: the DOCENTIA programme.
- II. Quality improvement in official university qualifications. This chapter will cover:
 - The evaluation of official university qualifications.
 - European quality labels for university degrees and recognition of their professional orientation: the ACREDITA PLUS programme.

¹ Translator's note: the difference between contractual (*contratado*) and tenured (*funcionario/cuerpo docente*) teaching and research posts is an important one in Spain, since the latter come with benefits and job security (and the status that accrue from these) that the former lack.

- Correspondence between the courses of the former Catalogue of Official University Degrees and the European Higher Education Area academic levels.

III. Improvement of professional quality in teaching and research staff. This chapter will cover:

- Evaluation for the recognition of contractual teaching staff.
- Accreditation for access to tenured teaching staff.
- Other recognitions of TRS activity.



AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This eighth *Report on the state of external quality assessment in Spanish universities*, in this case relating to the year 2014, arises from the obligation placed on ANECA by LOMLOU⁴ whereby this agency must provide the Ministry in charge of university education with information about the assessment, certification and accreditation processes in Spain.

As is widely known, the statements and agreements guiding the development of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) establish a range of goals of particular importance to higher education and university institutions that, while respecting the autonomy of the latter institutions in discharging their functions, create fundamental operating guidelines for agents involved in building the aforementioned Area so as to further social, economic and cultural development. In this respect, initiatives in the field of quality assurance will undoubtedly need to take such goals into consideration as a matter of priority.

The primary conclusion of the analysis carried out in this report is that, in general terms, the universities and evaluation agencies have made a clear commitment to complying with the European Standards and Guidelines in the quality assurance processes they implement; all of which coexists with regard for the autonomy and responsibilities of educational institutions. Thus, by observing the aforementioned Standards and the legislation in force there has been fulfilment of minimum quality thresholds, which act as the foundations for mutual recognition between the educational institutions of the various EHEA countries, an ongoing enhancement of the functions of these institutions, which are more aware of the various stakeholders' demands, and clear accountability to society.

In keeping with the above, it is also worth highlighting the growing and progressive harmonisation of the various assessment processes put into operation by the quality agencies in order to obtain, via the complementary nature of such

⁴ Organic Law 4/2007.

processes, greater efficiency in the efforts made by universities and evaluation agencies.

The report sets out to analyse the evolution of quality assurance in the Spanish university system, from the perspective of the assessment agencies, in three particularly important areas, namely the higher education institutions, official university qualifications and teaching and research staff.

1. Quality improvement in higher education institutions.

The first area that the report addresses concerns university institutions and their academic centres.

In light of the importance of achieving improvements in the internal management of Spanish universities in terms of the entirety of their functions and, in this regard, underpinning a culture of quality, the agents responsible for steering the process of harmonisation with the EHEA commended the universities and assessment agencies to put mechanisms into operation that would progressively ensure such advances.

Various assessment programmes implemented by the quality agencies have served as a means of orienting the universities, enabling them voluntarily, within the scope of their autonomy and responsibility, to develop systems for the management, review and improvement of the institutional quality that accompany the basic strands of their missions and ensure that members of the university community and society at large play a greater role as participants.

The main programmes currently geared towards institutional quality improvement, both of them with similar counterparts in other European countries, are the AUDIT programme, which deals with the assessment and recognition of universities' internal quality assurance systems and the DOCENTIA programme, which is fundamentally aimed at providing support for the creation of procedures to evaluate the teaching activity of academic staff.

These two programmes are thus not only serving to guide Spanish universities regarding quality improvement in critical aspects at the institutional level, but also to raise the profile and the public recognition of the work of the universities that

exemplify good practice and a clear commitment to quality improvement in such respects.

The AUDIT programme, the goal of which is to strengthen internal quality assurance systems (IQAS) in universities and their academic centres by providing orientation, evaluation and recognition of their labours, revolves around two main cumulative phases that address the different levels of maturity reached by the IQAS that is subject to review and improvement. Thus the initial phase focuses on the certification of the designs of the IQAS; then the second phase, once the designs have been put into practice, concerns the certification of their implementation.

The participation rates of the academic centres and universities in the two phases vary quite widely depending on the levels of maturity referred to above. Thus four out of five Spanish universities have taken part in the initial phase to some extent to date, although the participation has been uneven in terms of the proportion of academic centres at each university that have been involved. The upshot of this is that approximately half of the centres that fulfil the requirements needed to participate in the programme at the end of 2014 have had the design of their IQAS suitably certified.

In the second phase, the one that addresses implementation, the figures are appreciably different, because only one in six universities has a centre with IQAS implementation certification; and these centres, in their entirety, barely reach two per cent of those that meet the conditions for participating in AUDIT.

This circumstance can be accounted for in part by the fact that the evaluation phase leading to certification of IQAS implementation is a relatively recent addition to the programme. That having been noted however, measures seem to be needed to encourage universities and their centres to make progress in the implementation and certification of their IQAS. It is in precisely this context that future regulation of institutional accreditation is envisaged.

It is also worth highlighting the DOCENTIA programme; this is a programme that has the support of all the quality agencies operating in Spain and is succeeding in giving renewed importance to the quality of teaching and concern for its ongoing progress in the Spanish university system, at the same time as giving public

recognition and guidance to the efforts made by universities in the field of improving teaching quality.

The programme, the goal of which is to offer support to universities in designing and implementing procedures to review and improve the quality of the teaching and research staff's teaching activity, comprises various cumulative phases that culminate in the certification, by a quality agency, of the aforementioned procedures.

DOCENTIA has been well received by the universities: within the framework of the programme, nine out of every 10 universities in a position to participate have signed up to mechanisms geared towards securing advances in teaching quality. Moreover, as the result of such participation, more than half the universities, having had their designs positively evaluated, have gone on to having the implementation of their designs subjected to one or more follow-up processes. And in the case of the private universities for example, where participation in the programme has been particularly notable, one in five has succeeded in obtaining certification for implementation.

By way of a postscript it is worth emphasising that AUDIT and DOCENTIA are both programmes that are designed to be complementary, both with each other and with other quality improvement programmes developed at the same time. Thus the activities that fall within the framework of the DOCENTIA programme for example have a clear role to play within the selfsame IQAS that are reviewed and assessed as part of the AUDIT programme. Similarly, for a large number of agencies, in the processes of evaluating degrees it is not necessary to review those aspects relating to IQAS that have already been favourably assessed within the framework of the AUDIT and DOCENTIA programmes; it is envisaged that this latter aspect will be developed further through the introduction of a future institutional accreditation regulation. In short, as is also evident in the context of qualifications, a clear effort is being made to secure a more efficient use of the time and resources devoted to quality improvement processes on the part of universities and agencies, without prejudice to securing an ongoing improvement in the results of such processes.

2. Improving the quality of official university degrees.

Undoubtedly one of the strands of university quality control that features most prominently in the regulatory framework focuses specifically on official degrees. This chapter provides information about three important topics in this regard.

First, there is an analysis of the way quality evaluation processes for official degrees evolve over the course of the design, authorisation, implementation and accreditation renewal phases of such degrees. Successfully passing these stages and their corresponding requirements determines the official certification of the degrees throughout Spanish national territory and, by extension, the European Higher Education Area.

These evaluation processes have as one of their fundamental goals that of providing society with a higher education that, without detracting from universities' autonomy, fulfils the minimum thresholds for quality standards and is recognised in its totality in the European and international context.

As a consequence of the above, all the quality agencies involved in the Spanish university system pay particular attention to orienting universities in their work and their efforts to fulfil the European Standards and Guidelines; there is also the clear intention to make this complementary with other assessment programmes, such as those that address the review and improvement of university institutions, such that the efforts of all the agents involved are harnessed in the most efficient way possible. Despite these shared features and the clear coordination efforts being made by the agencies through the common regulations and protocols for proceeding in the various phases, specific aspects of the work of some of the agencies make it necessary to place even greater emphasis on joint coordination to ensure, to a greater extent, the equivalence of their processes and results in this context.

As has already been noted in previous reports, getting the current verification processes up and running fired the starting gun for the major transformation that, in a short space of time, university degrees have been subjected to with the aim of securing their harmonisation with the European Higher Education Area.

As far as the development of such processes is concerned, most of the new bachelor's and master's degrees were reviewed prior to 2011, but the almost 5,000 qualifications that fall into this category were joined in the period up to 2014 by

new proposals, particularly master's degrees – with some 2,000 additional qualifications – and doctoral degrees, with more than 1,000 new courses. All this has meant that both universities and agencies have worked extremely hard in recent years to rise to this major challenge of transforming the degrees; the ongoing dialogue between these two institutional players has also meant that the great majority of the proposed degrees designed by the universities have satisfactorily passed this initial phase.

As a result, at the close of 2014, Spanish universities as a whole had more than 8,000 new degrees with a positive verification report; of these, more than half are master's degrees (53%), approximately a third are bachelor's degrees (36%) and the remainder are doctoral degrees (13%).

Once they passed the verification phase, the great majority of degrees were cleared for implementation by each of the autonomous communities and entered into the Register of Universities, Centres and Qualifications (RUCT).

In light of the remarkable number of degrees being offered and, by way of contrast, the striking figures revealing low demand on the part of students for certain degrees and centres, it is of great importance to provide a detailed analysis of specific cases so the conclusions that emerge may be put to use in deciding the configuration of the said offer.

In fact the follow-up assessment phase for these degrees provides clues regarding this and other aspects of great importance for the implemented degrees in the context of their future accreditation renewal. Thus, in the case of bachelor's degrees, nine out of 10 have already gone through some form of follow-up assessment; in the case of the master's degrees however – which are precisely the degrees that have most proliferated, far more so than the rest – the proportion at the time of writing is less than six out of 10.

That said, the universities as a whole have, among other issues, taken it upon themselves to provide a greater amount of up-to-date information that is more complete and accessible for the various stakeholders; they have also redoubled their efforts in encouraging a growing number of agents linked to the degrees to participate in the degrees' review and quality improvement, and in the implementation of internal quality assurance mechanisms, such that they serve to

stimulate reflection on the part of the people involved in running the degrees regarding the level of compliance with the objectives established and regarding the steps to be taken to secure their improvement in various facets.

As far as the aforementioned accreditation renewal processes go, although they are in an initial phase they represent the closure of the ongoing review and improvement cycle envisaged for official qualifications. Despite the fact that, relative to the number of degrees that have been run, there is still only a small portion that has gone through the assessment process for accreditation renewal, the previous work of earlier phases has undoubtedly had an impact in that virtually all the degrees submitted prior to 2014 obtained a positive assessment (98% of the degrees).

Secondly, in parallel with accreditation renewal, an initiative has been launched that enables certain degrees, so far in the fields of engineering and computing, to acquire an additional label of recognised prestige in the European and, by extension, international professional world. Thus, through the ACREDITA PLUS programme the EUR-ACE label has been granted to nine degrees and the EURO-INF label to five degrees. It is planned that this initiative, which incentivises universities to strengthen the quality of their degrees, will soon be extended to degrees in other branches of knowledge, given that it serves as a spur to universities in their enhancement efforts and the differentiation of their degrees beyond accreditation renewal.

And thirdly the chapter gives an account of an initiative that represents a major benefit for people who hold a degree from the former Catalogue of Official University Qualifications. This is the *Procedure for determining the equivalence with the levels of the Spanish higher education qualifications framework for the official degrees of Architect, Engineer, Graduate, Technical Architect, Technical Engineer and Diploma-holder*. This procedure provides support for the academic and professional recognition of graduates under the previous regulatory regime within and outside Spain, because it adds transparency to the correspondence between their education and the levels of the current Spanish Framework of Qualifications for Higher

Education and, therefore, with the European qualification frameworks⁵. As one of the steps needed in order to carry out this work on the former Catalogue's degrees, ANECA has embarked on a study and work to draw up a detailed report on each of the said degrees and their educational characteristics, with the aim of providing the grounds for a suitable judgement to determine the aforementioned correspondence. It is envisaged that this project, which began in November 2014, will conclude during the course of 2015.

3. Improvement of professional quality in teaching and research staff.

Along with the review and improvement of degrees, the second key element addressed by the legislation regulating university quality is teaching and research staff (TRS). The importance placed on such staff is also reflected in the European Higher Education Area's own agreements and announcements, as well as, taking a lead from these, in the conduct of universities and quality agencies.

The processes for assessing teaching staff that are carried out by these institutions are in general terms aimed at guiding the professional careers of the TRS and ensuring quality in the delivery of the service of university higher education to society. Thus the functions entrusted to the TRS are evaluated in the various aspects (research, teaching, etc.), all of them important to the appropriate performance of such personnel.

In this context it is worth mentioning, first, the processes of assessing achievements that precede entry to certain professional categories of TRS; the aim of these is mainly to reassure society that each candidate ultimately chosen by a university to occupy a post meets a certain threshold of prior professional capability. And secondly it is worth mentioning the assessment of TRS performance through the recognition of achievements and the awarding of remunerative complements.

In terms of processes relating to entry, it is well known that both in the case of assessments of contractual members of TRS and in the case of assessments of universities' tenured teaching staff, the number of applications submitted for assessment in recent years has been particularly high. This fact is in line with the

⁵ The Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA-QF) and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) of the European Union.

notable growth in recent years in the number of holders of doctoral degrees seeking a career in the university teaching profession in one of its various categories.

In the first case, over the course of 13 years the agencies have evaluated more than 177,000 applications; of which, 12,000 were dealt with in 2014. As a result of these evaluation processes, more than 108,000 positive evaluations (61%) have been issued since 2002 across the range of the various contractual roles.

These striking figures may be explained fundamentally by two factors. First, as has already been mentioned, by the large number of people who have sought to pursue a professional career by applying for these jobs, and secondly by the reasonably common phenomenon of one and the same person submitting an application for assessment for a particular role simultaneously to various quality agencies (typically to ANECA, whose accreditations are valid throughout Spanish national territory, and also to an autonomous agency, whose accreditations are valid for the universities of the autonomous community to which they report; although there are agencies that recognise different roles).

This latter consideration highlights the fact that there are occasional overlaps between agencies in these assessment processes; overlaps that, as well as entailing considerable inefficiency in terms of drain on the public purse, provide no improvement in either the professional quality of the TRS or the university system as a whole.

In addition, the fact that the agencies have different assessment models for the same role and sometimes highly disparate percentages of positive assessments raises serious questions about possible aspects for improvement in the coordination of the agencies and the harmonisation of their processes on this point.

In terms of processes relating to assessment for accreditation enabling candidates to apply for the tenured teaching posts of *Profesor Titular de Universidad* (TU) and *Catedrático de Universidad* (CU)², there have been more than 27,000 applications for assessment through the ordinary procedure after seven years of operation. As a result of this procedure, by the end of 2014, more than 7,000

² Translator's note: Spanish academic job titles resist ready translation into English, since some of them have no direct equivalents in English-speaking countries. *Profesor Titular de Universidad* is similar to Associate Professor and *Catedrático de Universidad* is similar to Full Professor. They are both tenured posts and, importantly, confer the status of civil servant.

people had secured accreditation for role of CU and 10,000 for the role of TU.

Here it is worth returning to an issue that has been mentioned in previous reports, which is the unequal number of women in the ranks of university teaching. Although among both the TU and CU categories the percentage of positive assessments secured by applicants is similar for men and women in all branches of knowledge, the fact that in general terms there are many more men than women among those applying for accreditation to compete for posts in these professions – and in particular in that of CU – is in itself decisive. Thus, although it is possible to talk about the increasing incorporation of women into the various university levels, the fact is that this is taking place very slowly in the case of the highest TRS positions. It is striking that at the time of writing only one out of 10 people occupying the post of full tenured professor in the engineering and architecture branch in Spanish universities is a woman.

In light of the results of these evaluation and accreditation processes enabling candidates to compete for the posts available at any given time for the contractual and tenured teaching roles in the TRS it is possible to conclude, first, that they have served to guide the professional careers of numerous people interested in accessing such posts; and secondly that, regardless of the circumstances governing the offer of university posts, a significant number of candidates of proven professional pedigree have been placed at the disposal of these of institutions, a pool from which the universities have been able to select their teaching and research staff.

As a complement to the aforementioned TRS assessment processes, the agencies deploy other processes to guide and recognise the efforts of such professionals. Thus, both at the level of the national government and the regional autonomous communities, there are initiatives ensuring that individual positive assessments of TRS performance in a range of relevant respects are accompanied by the granting of particular remunerative complements. Hence, in addition to the aforementioned recognition, this system is incentivising the improvement of the work concerned.

Lastly it is important to remember the considerable effort that the universities, backed by the agencies, have been making – for example within the framework of the DOCENTIA programme and their own teaching review and improvement processes – to secure the decisive involvement of their TRS in the ongoing enhancement of quality in the various functions that such universities discharge.



AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

1. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS.

15 years after the Bologna Process got underway and five years after the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), Spanish universities have, by dint of good deal of hard work, become fully incorporated into this new educational setting that is acknowledged across the world.

Within the framework of the Bologna Process, and subsequently that of the EHEA, a series of objectives was laid down for higher education and the institutions responsible for it. These objectives, shared by the signatory countries, while respecting the principles of independence and autonomy that European universities jointly affirmed in 1988⁶ – and that were recognised by the ministers present at the Declaration of Bologna (1999)⁷ – represent fundamental guidelines in the task of the universities comprising the EHEA.

For this reason it is worth remembering that the efforts made in the field of ensuring and improving quality in higher education within this framework – as well as the very definition of “quality” – are geared towards fulfilling the entirety of the aforementioned objectives.

As well as seeking to consolidate the participation of social stakeholders in educational processes, accountability to society and orientation towards ongoing improvement, the “quality assurance” processes that universities have directly and governments have indirectly assimilated, play a major part in strengthening mutual recognition between the educational institutions that make up the common Area.

Quality assurance is essential for building trust and to reinforce the attractiveness of the EHEA's offerings, including in the provision of cross-border education. We commit to both maintaining the public responsibility for quality assurance and to actively involve a wide range of stakeholders in this development (European ministers for higher education, 2012).

⁶ Chancellors of European universities, 1988.

⁷ European ministers for higher education, 1999.

Therefore the quality assurance processes, bearing in mind the goals of higher education in general, and those of the institution and the educational programme in particular, need to observe various key aspects (and their relationships) of the universities in fulfilment of their mission, such as the processes followed, the resources used, the results obtained, etc.

In more operational terms, the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*⁸ provide universities and quality assurance agencies with certain benchmarks to guide and order their activities in this field.

In this context and in line with the aforementioned benchmarks, the Spanish university system's quality agencies have implemented various quality assessment programmes focused on a range of levels.

One such level is the assessment of institutions and their centres. Although no governmental standard has been established in Spain relating specifically to institutional assessment in the strictest sense, it is envisaged that it will exist from 2015. That said, this does not mean that work has not been carried out on such aspects over the course of a number of years. It has been done, fundamentally, using the AUDIT and DOCENTIA voluntary assessment programmes.

The first of these programmes, AUDIT, which assesses and recognises university institutions' internal quality assurance systems (IQAS), has the goal of fostering and underpinning such systems in universities and their centres. The aim is therefore to orient such institutions in designing their own IQAS and carry out evaluation processes in the design and implementation of the systems that lead to a recognition of their quality. This initiative, as noted in previous reports, is not exclusive to the Spanish university system, but has been widely adopted in other European countries, some with a long record of institutional assessment processes for ensuring quality.

The second of the programmes, DOCENTIA, which assesses systems of teaching quality, has the goal, complementary to the one above, of supporting universities in the design and application of their own procedures in assessing the teaching quality

⁸ ENQA, 2009 and previous editions.

among their teaching and research staff, with the aim of ensuring such quality and demonstrating it through its recognition.

It is evident from all the above that these two programmes, in line with the quality assessment guidelines of the EHEA, have a clear impact, not only on key aspects of the universities' functions, but also on fostering improvement, on the universities' part, in such aspects. This is why the programmes make a detailed enquiry into, among other issues, the operational and self-review systems and instruments that universities equip themselves with, because it is important in terms of seeing what the results reported by the universities and the actions arising from such results are founded upon.

In addition, these programmes give visibility to the recognition of those universities that demonstrate best practice and a clear commitment to improving the quality of specific facets relevant to the fulfilment of their own objectives.

1.1 UNIVERSITIES' INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS: THE AUDIT PROGRAMME.

Since its creation the AUDIT programme has had the following fundamental goals:

- Aiding the development and implementation of IQAS for reviewing and improving education at university centres, in such a way as to favour the integration of all related activities with the quality assurance of the courses being offered.
- Putting into practice a programme that contributes to the recognition of the IQAS, by assessing the appropriateness of their design and the subsequent certification of their operation.

This programme currently enjoys the participation of a substantial group of Spanish universities and the ACSUG, ANECA, AQU Catalunya and Unibasq assessment agencies.

As noted above, the AUDIT initiative follows European guidelines and coexists with similar initiatives in other EHEA countries. The quality assessment agencies of various of these countries, aware of the similarity of their activities in this field, agreed to form the Quality Audit Network⁹; this network encompasses a substantial group of initiatives that, although not strictly equal, are all geared towards developing an external assessment process of the quality assurance procedures established by the educational institutions linked to the monitoring and ongoing improvement of the results they attain (AQ Austria, 2014).

⁹ Agencies participating in QAN (AQ Austria, 2014):

- National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA)
- Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (AQ Austria)
- Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU Catalunya)
- Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS)
- The Danish Accreditation Institution
- Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC)
- German Accreditation Council (GAC)
- Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)
- Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO)
- Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (OAQ)
- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) (QAA)
- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Scotland (QAA Scotland).

Thus the goal being pursued is not the assessment of the level of the institutions' (or degrees') compliance with various points of a predefined model, so much as confirming that the institutions' own systems or processes of quality assurance are being developed and put in operation. In the majority of cases, although with their own particular circumstances in terms of the content and scope of each institutional assessment programme, the agencies, often following similar procedures, typically seek concordance with European Standards and Guidelines (ENQA, 2009), fostering universities' attention towards the stakeholders concerned and facilitating universities' accountability to social agents.

In terms of the interactions of the IQAS with other areas, such as the assessment of qualifications, it is noteworthy that some countries, including Spain, work with assessment models capable of harnessing the synergies between complementary areas such as those mentioned.

In addition, the implications of obtaining a favourable assessment are also different in accordance with each country (access to public funding, greater autonomy and ability to self-regulate, etc.), but in all cases it represents valuable public recognition.

In the case of Spain, the AUDIT programme is geared towards university centres and universities with the aim of guiding them in the design of their own IQAS, such that these systems succeed in integrating related activities with the quality assurance of the courses, as well as cross-cutting elements aimed at the university or its centres (such as elements related to the academic staff, material resources and services, etc.).

The programme is run over two main phases; both of these are shaped by the guidelines set out in the published assessment model that seeks, among other things, to integrate all those actions that ensure the quality of its educational programmes with the participation of the various parties involved. The first phase is when the design of the IQAS is evaluated and, if applicable, certified; and in the second phase the implementation of the said IQAS is evaluated and, if applicable, certified. Obtaining a favourable assessment in the programme in either of the aforementioned phases thus requires the demonstration, on the part of the

institution, of appropriate observation of a set of fundamental aspects shown in the guidelines of the assessment model (Table 1.1.):

Table 1.1. AUDIT programme guidelines.

1.0	Quality policy and objectives	The Centre should consolidate a culture of quality based on a known and publicly-accessible quality policy and objectives.
1.1	Quality assurance of the educational programmes.	The Centre should have mechanisms that enable it to maintain and renew its educational offer, developing methodologies for the approval, monitoring and periodic review of its programmes.
1.2	Development of educational programmes to foster student learning.	The Centre should equip itself with procedures enabling it to check that the activities it carries out have the fundamental end result of fostering student learning.
1.3	Assurance and improvement of the quality of academic and teaching support staff.	The Centre/University should possess mechanisms that ensure that the recruitment, management and training of its academic and teaching support staff is carried out with due safeguards to ensure it fulfils its appropriate functions.
1.4	Management and improvement of material resources and services.	The Centre/University should equip itself with mechanisms that enable it to design, manage and improve its services and material resources for the appropriate development of its students' learning.
1.5	Analysis and use of results.	The Centre/University should equip itself with procedures that enable it to ensure that the results (in terms of learning, finding employment and the satisfaction among the various stakeholders) are measured, analysed and used for decision making and improving the quality of its courses.
1.6	Publication of information about qualifications.	The Centre should equip itself with mechanisms enabling it to ensure the periodic publication of updated information about its qualifications and programmes.

The AUDIT programme is structured in a number of guidelines that varies according to the agencies that participate in the programme (seven in the case of ANECA and Unibasq, eight in the AQU Catalunya¹⁰ model and 10 in the ACSUG¹¹ model), but generally speaking with shared content.

As a continuation of the process begun in 2007 to assess the designs of the IQAS, in 2013 the ANECA, ACSUG and Unibasq agencies created a model for the Certification of the implementation of Internal Quality Assurance Systems at the university centres where higher education institutions teach their official qualifications. This second phase of the programme represents a form of public recognition of the maturity attained in the implementation of centres' and universities' IQAS.

Just as in the design evaluation phase, the assessment of the implementation of these systems is carried out in accordance with the standards and guidelines set out in the AUDIT Programme; this second phase is differentiated from its predecessor by the fact that, among other things, in-person hearings are held to check that the design of the system continues to be valid and moreover that the operational commitments established in the system are being fulfilled.

With all this, the granting of certification in this phase means that it has been demonstrated that the implemented IQAS enables the cycle of ongoing improvement to be effective, sustainable and oriented towards meeting the needs of the various stakeholders with an interest in the matter. The implementation of an IQAS at a higher education institution, which includes, among other things, key processes of planning the educational offer, the assessment and review of its development, and the taking of decisions to improve the education, requires systemising and structuring the various processes that affect internal quality assurance.

¹⁰ In the specific case of AQU Catalunya, a new guideline called General Aspects of the Internal Quality Assurance System was added, which requires the identification of the interrelationship between the definitive processes, an account of the person responsible for each process, indicators, management of the IQAS documentation and global oversight of the implementation of the IQAS improvements.

¹¹ In the case of ACSUG, the AUDIT programme falls under a wider programme called FIDES-AUDIT, in which the aforementioned 10 guidelines are set out.

It is also worth highlighting two points in this section that, as will be seen, are of major importance both in the case of this programme and in the case of others that are run by the agencies.

The first is the evident determination to ensure that the AUDIT programme serves to help universities and agencies to adhere in a fundamental way to the European Standards and Guidelines in their quality assurance activities in the institutions.

And the second is the continuous effort of each agency to ensure that its assessment activities are complementary and coordinated, such that they result in assessment models (of institutions, of degrees, etc.) without unnecessary overlaps and that are more efficient, ensuring better harnessing of the efforts of all the agents involved.

With regard to the first of these points, it is important to stress that the AUDIT programme, in accordance with its guidelines, fundamentally rests on the European Standards and Guidelines – particularly on those relating to the European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance in higher education institutions (see Table 1.2).

It is also worth mentioning that, within the EHEA framework, the Bucharest Communiqué issued after the 2012 Education Ministers' meeting set a schedule for revising the European Standards and Guidelines document; on the basis of the revised 2015 version it is thus envisaged that the AUDIT programme will take the changes into account and, as a consequence, update its own guidelines.

Table 1.2. The relationship between the standards of Chapter 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines¹² and the AUDIT programme guidelines.

European Standards and Guidelines	AUDIT programme guidelines
1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance	Guideline 1.0. How the Centre defines its quality policy and objectives <i>Definition of quality policy and objectives.</i>
1.2. Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards	Guideline 1.1. How the Centre ensures the quality of its educational programmes <i>Design of the educational offer: Definition and approval of the educational programmes; Admission criteria for students; Planning the educational offer; Criteria for possible suspension of the degree</i>
1.3. Assessment of students	Guideline 1.2. How the Centre orients its courses towards students <i>Development of the course and other activities oriented towards students: Induction and learning support activities; Development of the educational offer (teaching-learning methodology and assessment of learning); External internships and student mobility; Vocational guidance; Assessment and improvement of the educational offer (Deployment of improvement initiatives detected); Management of complaints and appeals; Management of records and processing of degrees.</i>
1.4. Quality assurance of teaching staff	Guideline 1.3. How the Centre ensures and improves the quality of its academic staff <i>Academic and teaching support staff: Recruitment, evaluation, promotion, training, recognition and teaching support.</i>
1.5. Learning resources and student support	Guideline 1.2. How the Centre orients its courses towards students <i>Development of the course and other activities oriented towards students (ibid)</i> Guideline 1.4. How the Centre manages and improves its material resources and services <i>Material resources and services: Design, management and improvement of classrooms, work spaces, laboratories and experimental stations, libraries and bibliographical reserves; Student support and learning resources and services</i>
1.6. Information systems	Guideline 1.5. How the Centre analyses and takes results into account <i>Educational outcomes: Measuring, analysis and use of results (employment rate, academics, satisfaction among the various stakeholders)</i>
1.7. Public information	Guideline 1.6. How the Centre publishes information about its qualifications <i>Public information: Dissemination of up-to-date information about university education.</i>

Source: ENQA (2009) and participating agencies in the AUDIT programme. Authors' own compilation.

And with regard to the second of the aforementioned points, there is a clear intention for this programme to be complementary to those other assessment programmes that are used to obtain the quality assurance of official degrees in their various phases: verification, authorisation, monitoring and accreditation renewal.

AUDIT's focus is institutional and therefore the certification refers in general to higher education institutions' centres and not specifically to their qualifications; thus

¹² ENQA, 2009.

it focuses its attention on the general management and improvement characteristics of the processes included in each centre's or institution's IQAS. By contrast, the assessment programmes for qualifications focus especially on compliance with the specifications of the degrees' statements. That said, in the general principles for the design of new degrees it is stated that the universities, in their aim of ensuring fulfilment of the goals associated with the courses that they offer and securing their ongoing improvement, will need to provide formally established and publicly available policies and internal quality assurance systems (IQAS).

More specifically, the relationship between assessment processes for qualifications and for institutions – via, in this case, the AUDIT programme – translates into the following:

- In the case of the verification of degrees – founded on the assessment of degree design – those that are taught at a centre or university already possessing a favourable IQAS assessment automatically obtain a positive evaluation for the criteria contained in *Section 9. Quality assurance system*¹³ of degree verification.
- With regard to the assessment programme for monitoring the implementation of each degree, emphasis is also placed on the appropriateness of the IQAS to the needs of both the qualification and the university. In addition, the maturity and efficiency of the implemented IQAS is reflected in an appropriate review procedure (for example, using appropriate indicators) and putting suitable improvement initiatives into practice.
- And in the case of the accreditation renewal process there are aspects of the assessment of qualification that will be subject to recognition in the event that they have obtained certification for AUDIT implementation. The participating agencies have deemed it appropriate to set a clear framework of action for

¹³ Bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees pertaining to centres with a positive report in the AUDIT programme have also had a positive assessment in the Quality Assurance System criterion of the statement, which must be drawn up in order to request the verification of official degrees, within the Verifica Programme and in accordance with Royal Decree 1393/2007, amended by Royal Decree 861/2010, and Royal Decree 99/2011. As an exception, this link was not applied in the assessment of degrees at Andalusian universities.

higher education institutions whereby certification of the IQAS frees them of the obligation of having to resubmit evidence in their reports and/or site visits with regard to certain specified aspects, given that their appropriate compliance would have been clear from the certification process of the IQAS, in line with AUDIT¹⁴. Thus, once the centre's IQAS has been audited and certified, any official degrees taught at that centre due for accreditation renewal, during the time the AUDIT certification remains valid, will be exempt from submitting documentation relating to the specified criteria (see Table 1.3.). In other words, a university centre's possession of a certificate showing implementation of AUDIT enables degrees taught at such a centre to be treated such that, for example, in the case of ANECA, the assessment agency immediately recognises compliance with various sections of those that are reviewed in carrying out assessment for the accreditation renewal of each of the qualifications.

For its part AQU Catalunya¹⁵, with the aim of rationalising the processes and making them viable, proposes that the external assessments are carried out simultaneously on all the official qualifications that a centre offers, with the goal of:

a) integrating the assessment of the qualifications with the institutional assessment; b) fostering consistency between bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees; c) facilitating an overview and strengthening the strategic vision of each centre; d) simplifying the process of external assessment; e) finding economies of scale that reduce the costs of external assessment.

In short, certification of their IQAS means that universities can save time and resources in the assessment of their degrees.

Staying on the same theme, it is envisaged that the new regulations due to be approved concerning institutional accreditation will take precisely the approach of

¹⁴ Notwithstanding the above, if on the basis of various sources of information the agencies find anomalies in the degrees taught at a centre, they may assess the criteria established in the accreditation model that are deemed to be affected.

¹⁵ This agency's AUDIT programme operates over three phases: first phase, the orientation of the IQAS design; second phase, assessment of the IQAS; and third phase, certification of the implemented IQAS.

normalising and strengthening the relationship between the accreditation of degrees and the accreditation of institutions in this context.

Table 1.3. Assessment programme guidelines for the accreditation renewal of degrees recognised by ANECA in the case of official degrees taught at university centres that have had the implementation of their IQAS certified.

AUDIT GUIDELINES	ACREDITA GUIDELINES
1.0. How the Centre defines its quality policy and objectives	3.2. The implemented IQAS facilitates the process of monitoring, modification and accreditation of the degree and ensures its ongoing improvement based on analysis of objective and verifiable data.
1.1. How the Centre ensures the quality of its educational programmes	3.3. The implemented IQAS has procedures that facilitate the assessment and improvement of the quality of the teaching-learning process.
<i>1.1.1. Identify the entities, stakeholders and procedures involved in the design, monitoring, planning, development and periodic revision of the degrees, their goals and associated competences.</i>	1.2. The graduate profile defined (and its deployment in the plan of studies) maintains its relevance and is updated in line with the needs of its academic, scientific and professional context.
<i>1.1.3. Have mechanisms that regulate the taking of decisions relating to the educational offer and the design of the degrees and their objectives.</i>	
<i>1.1.4. Ensure that the mechanisms needed to implement improvements stemming from the periodic review of degrees are developed.</i>	
1.2. How the Centre orients its courses towards students	
	3.2. The implemented IQAS facilitates the process of monitoring, modification and accreditation of the degree and ensures its ongoing improvement based on analysis of objective and verifiable data.
	3.3. The implemented IQAS has procedures that facilitate the assessment and improvement of the quality of the teaching-learning process.
<i>1.2.1. Have information systems that enable the identification and evaluation of the Centre's needs in terms of:</i>	1.2. The graduate profile defined (and its deployment in the plan of studies) maintains its relevance and is updated in line with the needs of its academic, scientific and professional context.
<i>1.2.2. Have mechanisms that enable information to be obtained, evaluated and checked on the current development of the aforementioned processes.</i>	5.4. The support and academic, vocational and mobility guidance services offered to students once matriculated match the competences and modality of the degree and facilitate the teaching-learning process.
<i>1.2.3. Establish mechanisms that regulate guidelines affecting students: regulations (exams, sanctions, requests for certificates, validations, etc.), rules of use (for facilities), calendars, timetables and benefits offered by the university.</i>	1.5. The various academic norms (permanence, recognition, etc.) are applied in an appropriate way and enable the values of the academic performance indicators to be improved.
<i>1.2.4. Define how the monitoring, periodic review and improvement of processes and actions related to students are carried out.</i>	5.4. The support and academic, vocational and mobility guidance services offered to students once matriculated match the competences and modality of the degree and facilitate the teaching-learning process.

AUDIT GUIDELINES	ACREDITA GUIDELINES
1.3. How the Centre ensures and improves the quality of its academic staff	<p>3.2. The implemented IQAS facilitates the process of monitoring, modification and accreditation of the degree and ensures its ongoing improvement based on analysis of objective and verifiable data.</p> <p>3.3. The implemented IQAS has procedures that facilitate the assessment and improvement of the quality of the teaching-learning process.</p> <p>4.3. The teaching staff is updated such that it can address, in view of the characteristics of the degree, the teaching-learning process in an appropriate way.</p>
1.4. How the Centre manages and improves its material resources and services	<p>3.2. The implemented IQAS facilitates the process of monitoring, modification and accreditation of the degree and ensures its ongoing improvement based on analysis of objective and verifiable data.</p> <p>3.1. The implemented and periodically-reviewed IQAS ensures the ongoing gathering and analysis of information and results relevant to the efficient management of the degree, especially the learning outcomes and satisfaction among stakeholders.</p>
1.5. How the Centre analyses and takes results into account	
1.5.1. <i>Obtaining information about stakeholders' needs regarding teaching quality.</i>	
1.5.2. <i>Collecting information about learning outcomes, employment rates and satisfaction among stakeholders.</i>	
1.5.3. <i>Ongoing improvement of the results and the reliability of the data used.</i>	
1.5.4. <i>Strategies and systems for incorporating improvements into the results.</i>	
1.5.5. <i>Decision-making processes related to the results.</i>	
1.5.6. <i>Stakeholders' involvement in measuring, analysing and improving the results.</i>	<p>2.1. Those responsible for the degree publish appropriate and up-to-date information about the characteristics of the educational programme, its progress and results, including information about monitoring and accreditation processes.</p>
1.5.7. <i>Accountability procedure for the results.</i>	
1.6. How the Centre publishes information about its qualifications	<p>3.2. The implemented IQAS facilitates the process of monitoring, modification and accreditation of the degree and ensures its ongoing improvement based on analysis of objective and verifiable data.</p>
1.6.1. <i>Have mechanisms that enable information to be obtained about the development of the degrees and programmes.</i>	<p>2.1. Those responsible for the degree publish appropriate and up-to-date information about the characteristics of the educational programme, its progress and results, including information about monitoring and accreditation processes.</p>
	<p>2.2. The information needed to enable students and other stakeholders in the university system to take decisions in the national and international context is readily accessible.</p>
	<p>2.3. Students have access at an appropriate time to relevant information about the programme of studies and the envisaged learning outcomes.</p>
1.6.2. <i>Determine what is the established procedure for informing stakeholders about: the educational offer, objectives and planning of degrees, the results of teaching, etc.</i>	<p>2.1. Those responsible for the degree publish appropriate and up-to-date information about the characteristics of the educational programme, its progress and results, including information about monitoring and accreditation processes.</p>
	<p>2.2. The information needed to enable students and other stakeholders in the university system to take decisions in the national and international context is readily accessible.</p>

AUDIT GUIDELINES	ACREDITA GUIDELINES
	2.3. Students have access at an appropriate time to relevant information about the programme of studies and the envisaged learning outcomes.
1.6.3. Define how the monitoring, periodic review and ongoing improvement of the public information provided to the stakeholders are carried out.	2.2. The information needed to enable students and other stakeholders in the university system to take decisions in the national and international context is readily accessible. 2.3. Students have access at an appropriate time to relevant information about the programme of studies and the envisaged learning outcomes.
1.6.4. Decision-making procedures are applied related to the publication of information about programmes and degrees.	2.2. The information needed to enable students and other stakeholders in the university system to take decisions in the national and international context is readily accessible. 2.3. Students have access at an appropriate time to relevant information about the programme of studies and the envisaged learning outcomes.

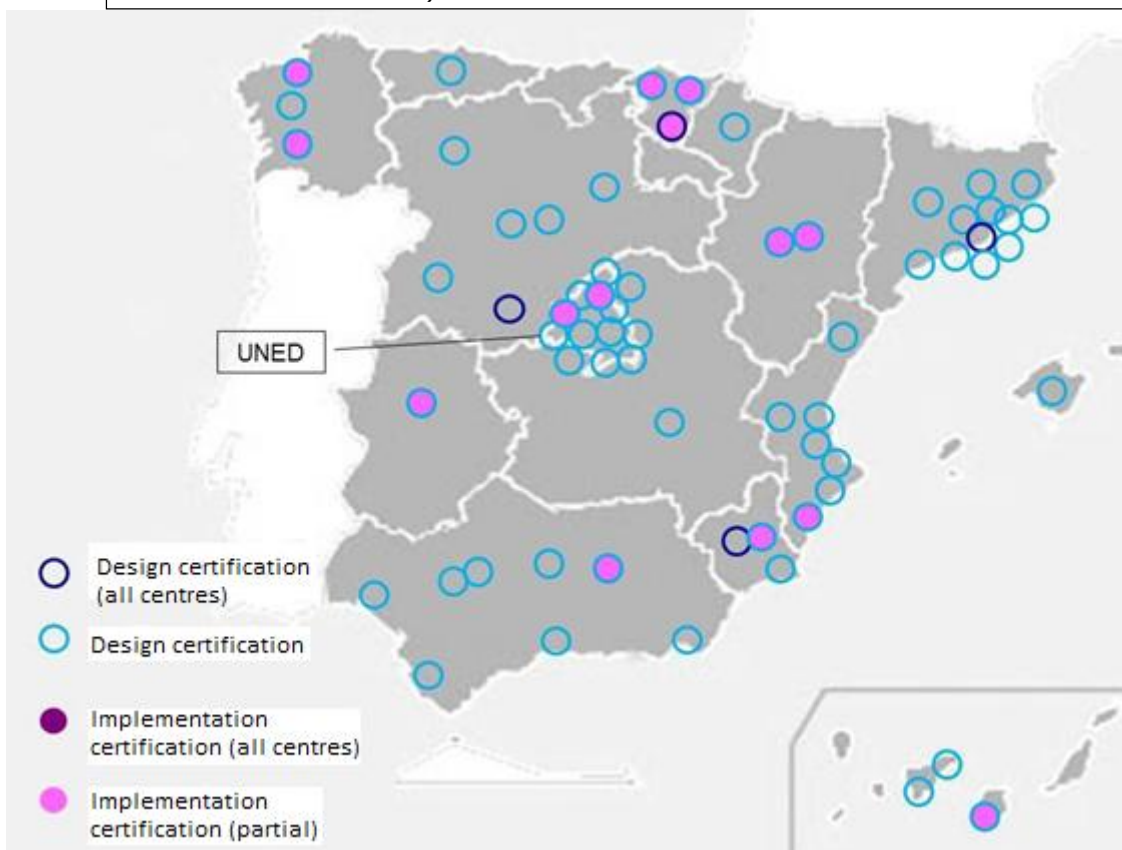
Source: ANECA

Results obtained

A striking fact about universities' participation in the AUDIT programme is that four fifths of them have signed up to the programme to some extent (see Figure 1.1. and Table A.1. in the results annex). That said, the level of their centres' participation in the programme is highly variable: whereas at some universities all the centres are involved, others have participated in the programme with only a minority of centres.

Figure 1.1. Geographical distribution of the universities participating in the AUDIT programme, classified by the status of the programme in their official centres.

65 universities have at least one centre with a certified IQAS design and 14 of these have at least one centre with a certification of an implemented IQAS (80% and 17%, respectively, of the 81 universities with degrees that are already implemented or submitted for verification)



Sources: Education Ministry. Official Register of Universities, Centres and Qualifications. ACSUG, ANECA, AQU Catalunya and Unibasq. Authors' own compilation.

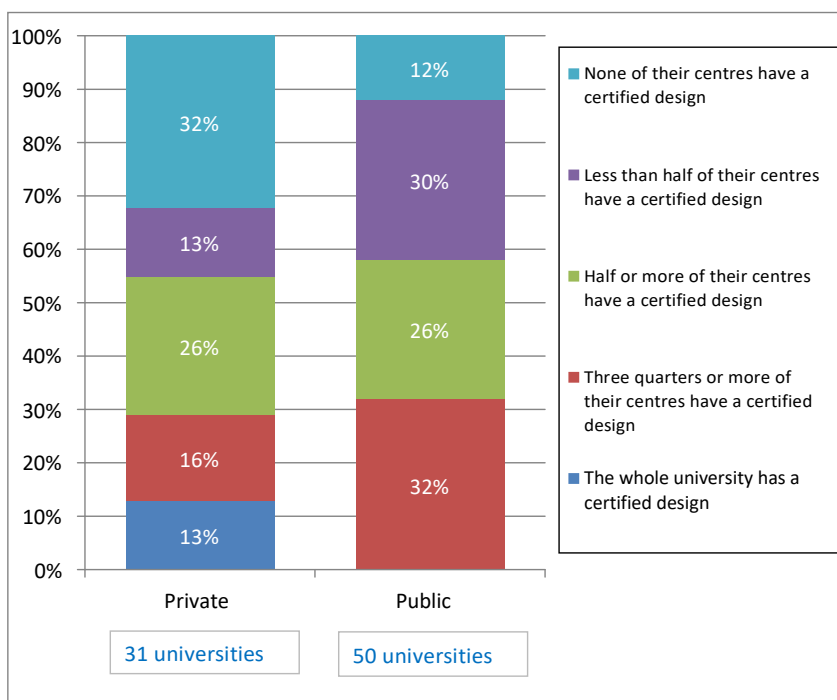
In line with the above, approximately half of the 1,280 university centres in Spain that, according to the Register of Universities, Centres and Qualifications (RUCT), satisfy the conditions for participating in the programme, have had the design of their internal quality assurance system (IQAS) certified.

From the outset both public and private university centres have applied to have their designs certified. Although the latter have a lower percentage of centres with certified designs than public universities, it should be noted that, in proportionate

terms, private universities with IQAS certificates tend to include the totality of their centres to a greater extent than public universities. Thus the four universities that have managed to certify the designs of all their centres are private (see Figure 1.2.). The fact that there is not a single public university in this situation is due to two main reasons. First, although there are various public universities where all their own centres hold IQAS certification, this is not the case with their affiliated centres. The second factor is the greater number of centres that public universities in Spain typically encompass and their greater degree of heterogeneity, which makes it more complicated to obtain the appropriate certification for all of them.

Whatever the case may be, taking both the public and the private universities in their entireties, more than half have succeeded in ensuring that at least 50% of their centres have an IQAS design certified by AUDIT.

Figure 1.2. Degree of universities' participation in the AUDIT programme in the IQAS design assessment phase.



Note: Those universities with already-implemented degrees or submitted for verification have been included.

Sources: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport –MECD, (Register of Universities, Centres and Qualifications, RUCT), ACSUG, ANECA, AQU Catalunya and Unibasq. Authors' own compilation.

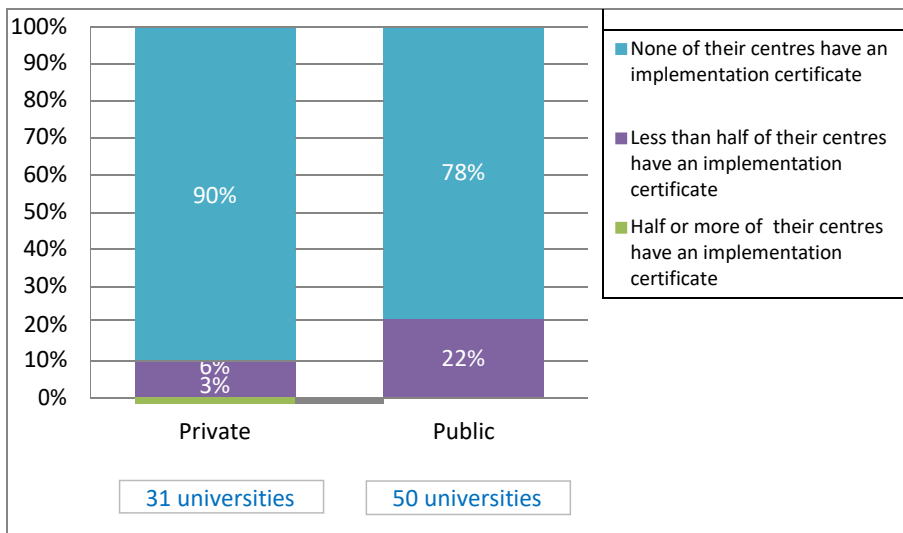
In the next phase, in which universities' and centres' IQAS implementation is assessed, it is evident that universities' involvement has been somewhat piecemeal. Thus, 17% of universities now have at least one centre with implementation certification under the AUDIT programme. These however represent only 2% of all the centres that could be in this situation. To this it should be added that at the time of writing only one university has managed to obtain implementation certification for half of its centres.

The granting of implementation certificates is more notable among public than among private universities or those belonging to the church; so much so that in the case of the former, 22% of universities have at least one certificate, while the figure for the latter category is just 9% (see Figure 1.3.).

In general however, it is noticeable that there has been a gradual improvement in the IQAS submitted, which have become more robust and sustainable. Furthermore, greater clarity in the description of their processes and wider participation among stakeholders is in evidence. On the other hand, it is necessary to continue placing particular stress on such areas for improvement as the collection and analysis of information and evidence and accountability.

Finally it is worth noting that the legislative change that is envisaged regarding the accreditation of institutions will entail a boost for these institutional assessment processes, as well as a major spur for the universities and centres to increase their interest in securing recognition for implementing their IQAS.

Figure 1.3. Degree of universities' participation in the AUDIT programme in the certification of IQAS implementation phase.



Note: Those universities with already-implemented degrees or submitted for verification have been included.

Sources: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport – MECD, (Register of Universities, Centres and Qualifications, RUCT), ACSUG, ANECA and Unibasq. Authors' own compilation.

1.2. REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEMS FOR TEACHING QUALITY: THE DOCENTIA PROGRAMME.

The DOCENTIA programme, the goal of which is to support universities in the design and implementation of procedures to review and improve the teaching activity of their academic staff, is a clear example of collaboration between all the quality assessment agencies operating in Spain.

This programme gives universities access to a set of guidelines enabling them, within the context of their autonomy, to develop assessment procedures adapted to their needs that contribute to improving their teaching quality and fostering the development and recognition of university teaching staff.

As in the case of the AUDIT programme, this programme is squarely based on the European Standards and Guidelines, as well as the legislation in force. The aforementioned standards state that institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students are qualified and competent to do so¹⁶; this statement mirrors the centrality of the goals pursued by the DOCENTIA programme. Taking a similar approach, the legislation¹⁷ alludes to the necessary assessment of teaching and research activities and the management of the TRS, so as to favour improvement in university education.

Although most international classifications of the quality of higher education institutions place the emphasis on the merits of those members of staff fundamentally engaged in research, and either overlook the teaching aspect or demote it to secondary status, a large number of universities, aware of the importance of improving the quality of their teaching to improve their students' learning, invest considerable effort in their educational labours.

As was noted in the previous edition of this report (ANECA, 2014), in the European and broader international context there are other initiatives geared towards

¹⁶ Criterion 1.4. of ENQA (2009).

¹⁷ See article 31, section 26 and article 43.3 of Organic Law 4/2007.

improving the quality of teaching activity in higher education institutions¹⁸; such initiatives have been mainly related to the accreditation of academics who provide high-quality teaching and with the identification of training needs relative to the academics' professional competences in order to design training plans. These initiatives have notable effects in terms of guiding the professional career of the TRS as well as recognising and incentivising teaching quality and appropriate performance among such staff.

In light of all this, there appears to be a growing commitment on the part of higher education institutions and assessment agencies to improving the quality of teaching activity; this commitment is underpinned by specific mechanisms that enable such activity to be analysed with the goal of taking whatever improvement measures may be necessary.

The DOCENTIA assessment model involves reviewing a diverse range of aspects related to the planning of teaching, the delivery of courses and the results of teaching activity (see Table 1.4.). Thus, in a context of respect for universities' institutional autonomy, the universities themselves, aware of their responsibilities, strive to improve teaching quality by implementing policies that, among other things, result in TRS training, stimulation, performance evaluation and recruitment procedures.

¹⁸ Relevant initiatives in this context include the EU High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education (2013 and 2014) and the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ).

Table 1.4. DOCENTIA assessment model

DIMENSIONS	ELEMENTS	
I. PLANNING OF TEACHING	1. Organisation and coordination of teaching staff.	Modalities of organisation
		Coordination with other teaching activities.
	2. Planning of the course and learning in relation to the subject matter taught.	Learning outcomes envisaged.
		Learning activities envisaged.
		Assessment criteria and methods.
II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE COURSE	3. Development of the course and assessment of learning.	Teaching and learning activities carried out.
		Assessment procedures applied.
III. RESULTS	4. Results in terms of educational goals.	
	5. Review and improvement of teaching activity: training and	

Source: ANECA (2007). DOCENTIA. Guidelines for drawing up the assessment procedure.

The DOCENTIA programme unfolds fundamentally over three phases: 1) Design of the assessment models by the universities; 2) Implementation of the assessment models at the university over at least two years or convocations; and 3) Certification of the implementation of the assessment models once compliance with a series of requirements has been confirmed.

An important aspect that DOCENTIA shares with the AUDIT programme is the intention that it will be complementary to – and not duplicate – other assessment programmes run by quality agencies.

For example, the evaluation of the various aspects of the Teaching Quality Assessment System will be taken into account in the process renewing the accreditation of degrees¹⁹.

Meanwhile, assessing the teaching activity of academic staff is a way of ensuring the quality of the courses; and at the same time the university's internal quality assurance system (IQAS) is an instrument used by the institution to identify

¹⁹ Annex 3 of ANECA's *Framework document: Assessment for accreditation renewal of official bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees* includes an explicit mention of the dialogue between the DOCENTIA and Acredita programmes.

potential improvements. Thus the universities are using the results obtained within the DOCENTIA programme framework to fulfil a variety of their responsibilities in the field of teaching quality that are reviewed by other assessment programmes. The results of the programme are used to stimulate and recognise teaching activity through the granting of remunerative complements to teaching staff, the awarding of budgetary allocations to departments, making the final selection of TRS candidates from a pool of previously-accredited candidates, etc.

Dialogue between DOCENTIA and the TRS assessment programmes.

Since the DOCENTIA programme was first introduced, a number of improvement proposals and suggestions have been put forward by the universities, institutions, quality agencies, etc. Included among such comments are those referring to the present and future of teaching assessment and its importance in the processes of accreditation and selection of the TRS.

From this perspective, it is necessary to ask how the DOCENTIA programme is contributing or will contribute in terms of guiding and incentivising universities in improvement of the TRS, and whether the programme is providing or will provide useful components in improving the teacher recruitment that universities, in discharging their autonomy, engage in. Under these headings it is essential to start by referring to the norms, standards and guidelines that affirm the need to ensure the quality of university teaching.

The *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, published by the *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)* and approved by the ministers who signed the Bologna Process at their meeting in Bergen in 2005, includes a standard relating to the quality assurance of teaching staff (1.4), according to which university institutions should have the means to ensure that teaching staff are qualified and competent for their work: *"Institutions should ensure that their staff recruitment and appointment procedures include a means of making certain that all new staff have at least the minimum necessary level of competence. Teaching staff should be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching capacity and should be encouraged to value their skills. Institutions should provide poor teachers with opportunities to improve their skills to an acceptable level"*. Universities should also have the means to respond appropriately in exceptional cases of teachers with extremely poor ongoing performance, enabling them to remove such teachers from their teaching duties if they continue to be demonstrably ineffective.

Royal Decree 1312/2007, dated 5 October, establishing national accreditation for access to university teaching posts, sets out the assessment criteria and their appraisal, including the quality of teaching, with the first indicator given as the positive assessments granted to the teaching activity of the person applying for accreditation. According to the *Support guide for the ACADEMIA programme* drawn up by ANECA, "positive assessments of the applicant's teaching activity are valued especially highly when they have been objectively carried out or supervised by state or autonomous community assessment agencies that are independent of the university in question and include a rating for the activity"; however, as chapter 7 of the aforementioned document states, "in the event that the university has not implemented a specific programme for assessing the quality of its academic staff's teaching activity, for the time being similar certificates to those that are currently being issued to a similar end will be accepted".

Royal Decree 1393/2007, dated 29 October, which sets out regulations for official university courses, establishes, as a prior requirement for the verification and accreditation of new official degrees, a quality assurance system that includes specification of the procedures for the assessment and quality enhancement of teaching staff.

Hence ANECA and the autonomous community agencies have fostered assessment processes throughout the university system. The DOCENTIA programme has thus been created, taking into account the standards established by organisations that are internationally recognised in terms of assessing the teaching activity of universities' academic staff. The programme encompasses a set of activities aimed at constructing a scenario that propitiates the principles of quality, mobility, diversity and competitiveness between European universities with the aim of creating a more homogeneous and equal EHEA.

In light of the above, universities, as institutions charged with the task of training future professionals, should assume more and more responsibility in the procedures for rating the performance of their academic staff, as well as in their training and encouragement, ensuring their teaching qualifications and competence are appropriate.

The assessment of teaching activity is particularly important for universities to the extent that the quality assurance of their courses involves ensuring the qualifications of their teaching staff and the quality of the teaching used to deliver them. Such assessment thus acquires significant value within university institutions, and is in keeping with the fact that adapting degrees to the new EHEA framework requires universities to improve the quality

of their activities through the introduction of systematic external and internal assessment mechanisms.

The importance of these assessment mechanisms has prompted discussion on the future of the DOCENTIA programme for the assessment of university teaching staff, the way the programme is applied in universities and its link with the TRS recruitment processes.

It is evident from the annual monitoring reports drawn up by universities to present the results of this programme that improvement proposals are being put forward and measures aimed at strengthening the quality of university teaching staff and recognising their activity (for example through their remuneration and recruitment) are being introduced; in keeping with this, one priority of the assessment of teaching activity is to contribute to the consolidation of ongoing quality improvement processes in training programmes and the continuous improvement of the professional development of the TRS – recognising their dedication and the results obtained and, in this respect, reflecting such recognition in terms of promotion and obtaining salary incentives.

Thus the universities involved in the DOCENTIA programme are on the way to obtaining assessment systems and mechanisms enabling them to incentivise the improvement of their academics' teaching quality by means of recognising the quality of their work and their participation in activities geared towards teaching improvement, as well as having confirmed, reliable and comparable information for the processes of recruiting and promoting academic staff.

From this it may be appreciated how the universities are establishing a dialogue between the DOCENTIA programme and the TRS assessment programmes, and how the aforementioned programme is serving to certify performances that exceed the teaching quality thresholds set out in the programme, with the aim of confirming and accrediting the quality and qualifications of teaching staff at Spanish universities; and, on the basis of DOCENTIA, a number of initiatives are also being proposed and established using the assessment results, among which may be found, for example, the evaluation of teaching activity and its certification as a compulsory requirement for national accreditation to the university workforce and exams to access the tenured teaching staff, and its inclusion in appraisal for recruitment and promotion in teaching, as well as in obtaining incentives for teaching achievements.

ACCUEE

In connection to the above, in order to achieve more “parsimonious” assessment models and greater efficiency in the effort expended by the participating actors, there may be scope for exploring the possibility of more thorough coordination between the AUDIT and DOCENTIA programmes.

In light of all this, as well as achieving harmonious and sustainable assessment models without overlaps that contribute to the entirety of institutional activity related to quality assurance, renewed impetus to the visibility of the DOCENTIA programme is called for. In short, this would enable the following: 1) reducing the number of assessment processes that universities are subjected to and providing them with more overall coherence; 2) incentivising the strengthening of certain important aspects, such as teaching, placing at the institutions’ disposal the channels needed for differentiation through excellence and recognition; 3) providing the space needed to encourage the diverse characters of different universities.

Teaching quality assessment processes (DOCENTIA) and assessment of the IQAS (AUDIT).

The adaptation of degrees to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) framework requires the quality of the activities undertaken by the teaching staff to be optimised. In this context of changes, the need to undertake the assessment of teaching in an integrated way has become one of the most urgent priorities for Spanish universities. The assessment of teaching activity has thus become a fundamental cornerstone in the field of quality assurance systems (IQAS).

While taking into account the importance of placing assessment into context, the use of specific indicators enables educational issues to be detected and ongoing improvement measures to be implemented. In addition, it allows the use of a common language among academic institutions, strengthening the sense of the assessment of teaching within the framework of an integrated quality system.

The European Standards and Guidelines (ENQA, 2009) recommend that the quality of teaching should be ensured as one of the norms governing the conduct of university institutions.

In Spain, Royal Decree 1393/2007 dated 29 October, establishing the regulations for official courses, also states the need, in section 9.2 – Annex I – to include a quality assurance

system for degrees (beyond the said norm, usually assessed by the AUDIT programme²⁰) that contains “assessment and quality improvement procedures for teaching and teaching staff” in which promotion mechanisms and recognition of teaching staff linked to teaching assessment are envisaged. For this it is necessary to carry out a global assessment of teaching activity; this is a task in which the DOCENTIA programme, providing support for the assessment of the teaching activity of university staff, is fully involved.

Therefore discussion of improving teaching quality at the institutional level in Spain these days involves analysing the degree of implementation of the AUDIT and DOCENTIA programmes, which universities participate in voluntarily; universities have acquired great importance in the processes of quality improvement, precisely because of the high level of participation and involvement on the part of the institutions and the centres that comprise them.

Within the framework of the EHEA and Spanish legislation it is established that universities should ensure fulfilment of the goals linked to the courses that they teach, furthermore striving for their ongoing improvement; to which end universities possess formally established and publicly available policies and internal quality assurance systems (IQAS). Such quality assurance systems, designed by the university centres and subject to evaluation by the AUDIT programme, include in turn procedures for assessing and improving the quality of the academic staff who teach at the said centres.

Meanwhile the DOCENTIA programme has the goal of supporting universities in the design and implementation of procedures to assess teaching activity, so that in this sense it can be viewed as being encompassed within the AUDIT programme as one of its procedures; and, indeed, both programmes pursue the improvement of the quality of the courses taught at centres/universities.

Even if DOCENTIA can be thought of as a procedure that is integrated into AUDIT however, both programmes are currently run independently, because in the case of the former the decision-making responsibility regarding implementation exceeds the competence of centres, being exclusively a matter for the university (at the institutional level); whereas the implementation and development of the IQAS in the context of the AUDIT model depends more directly on the decision and commitment of each centre – although it is true that there are certain cases in which an IQAS is established for the university as a whole.

That said it is sometimes observed that the teaching staff at centres that have obtained certification for the implementation of their IQAS play little part in the DOCENTIA programme, and have other systems of teaching assessment, such as surveys of satisfaction among students.

In some cases, instances of non-compliance in the IQAS have been observed due to the

²⁰ In the autonomous community of Galicia this programme is called FIDES-AUDIT

partial or non-application of procedures related to the management of staff; these are included in the centres' improvement plans in such a way as to link responsibility for execution to the strategic planning of the university itself.

In other cases, centres with a high degree of participation in DOCENTIA lack a sufficiently well-implemented IQAS. Analysis of the way IQAS are implemented also reveals that, despite the centre, in the form of its quality committee, having access to the teaching assessment results for its academic staff from the DOCENTIA programme, there is sometimes no evidence of such information being picked up. Even more common is the lack of evidence at the IQAS level of decisions taken by the academics responsible after analysing the results of the teaching evaluation.

It would be interesting to gather more information on whether greater participation by teaching staff in the DOCENTIA programme has a positive impact on improving the quality of courses, as reflected for example in an improvement in the academic results and an increase in student satisfaction with the teaching received.

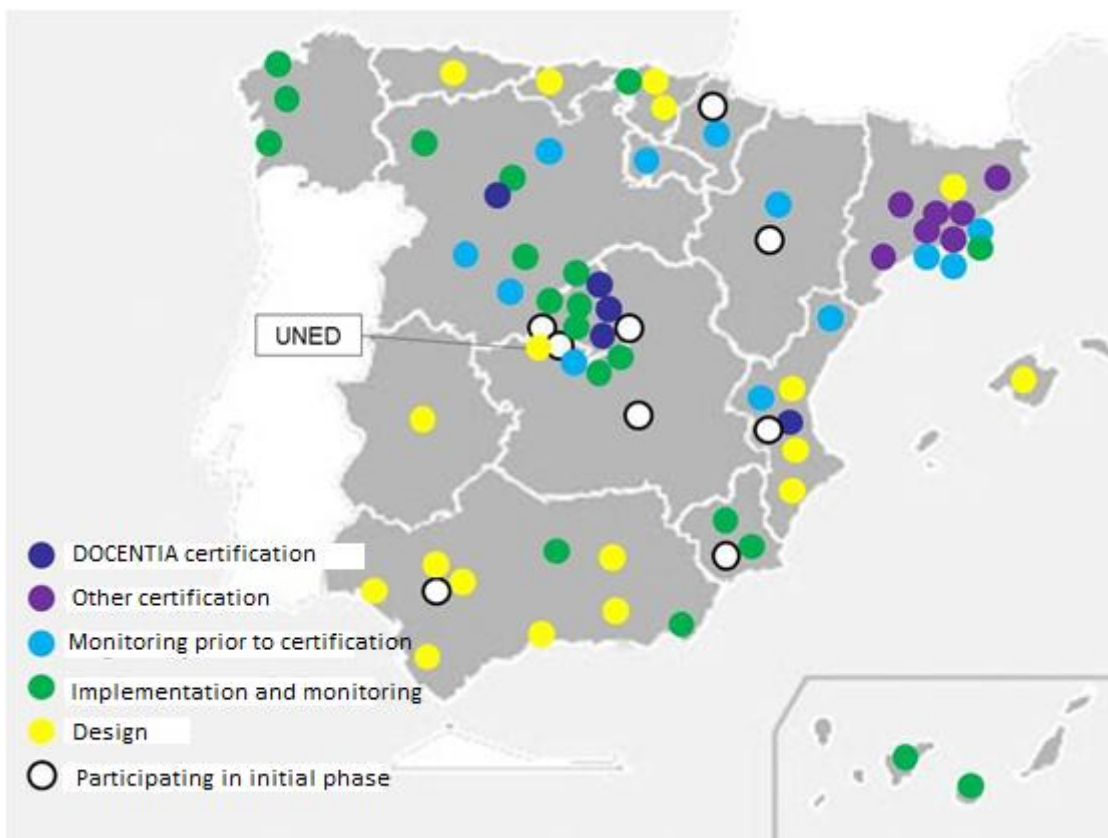
ACSUG

Results obtained

Currently nine out of 10 qualifying universities participate in the DOCENTIA programme, which demonstrates a remarkable level of interest on the part of the great majority of institutions to put their own mechanisms into operation with the aim of having a decisive impact on improving the quality of teaching (see Figure 1.4. and Table A.1. in the Results Annex). The assessment programme has thus received an enthusiastic response from universities in all the autonomous communities.

Figure 1.4. Geographical distribution of the universities participating in the DOCENTIA programme, in accordance with the status of the programme.

71 participating universities (88% of the universities with degrees that are already implemented or submitted for verification)



Note: "Other certification" refers to the certification awarded by a programme similar to DOCENTIA at Catalan universities.

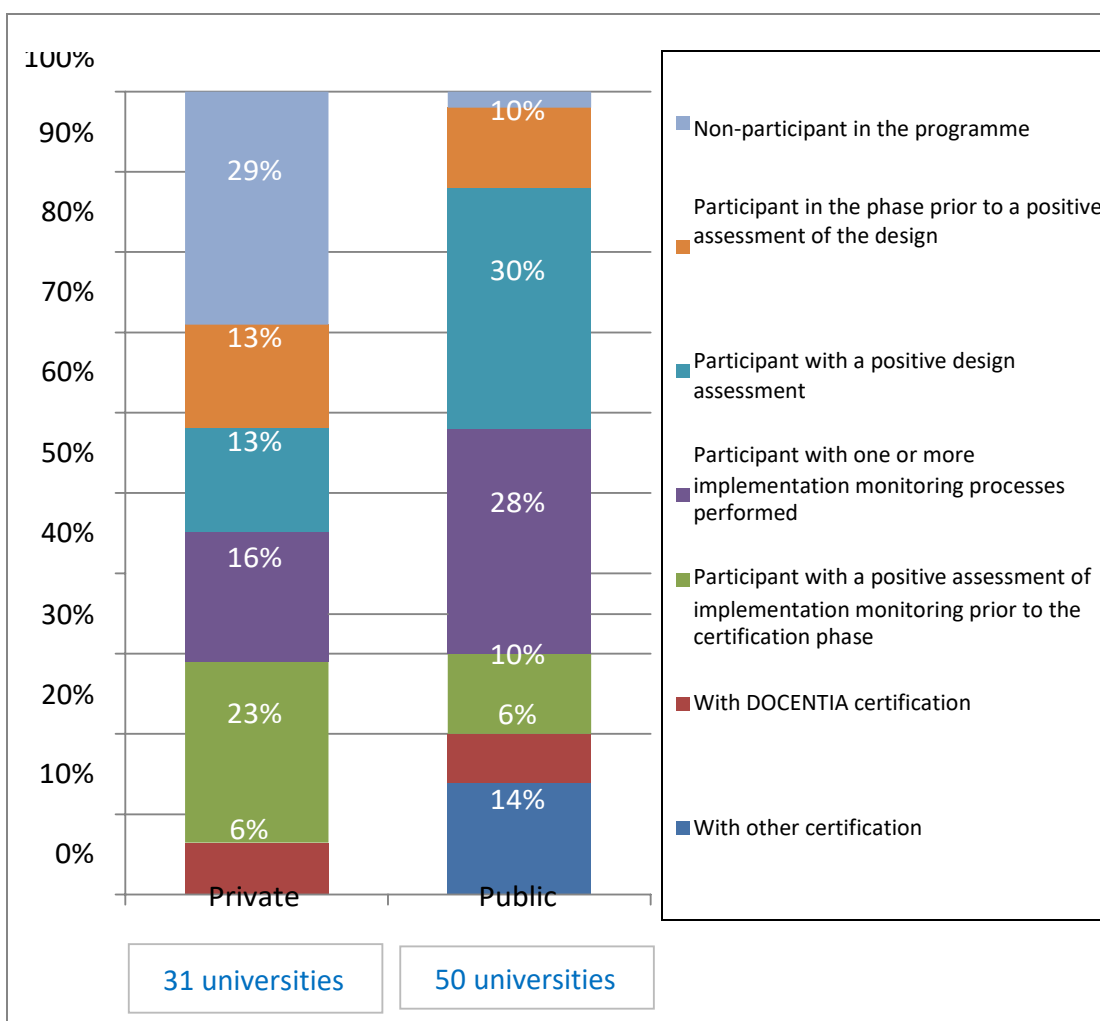
Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

This high level of participation is particularly notable in the case of public universities, where nearly all are involved in one or other phase of the programme. In the case of private and church universities, although participation is somewhat lower it is by no means negligible, with seven out of 10 involved in DOCENTIA to some extent or other.

Turning next to the results, more than half the universities with an approved design have moved on to at least one or more monitoring processes in the implementation of their models.

At a more advanced stage, 20% of public universities have been awarded certification for the implementation of a system in accordance with the requirements of the programme – or similar certification, in the case of Catalan universities; the figure falls to 6% in the case of private universities. Such certification represents public recognition of the efforts made by these universities to adopt appropriate mechanisms to improve teaching quality (see Figure 1.5.).

Figure 1.5. Implementation of DOCENTIA at all Spanish universities, by type of university



Note 1: Those universities with already-implemented degrees or degrees submitted for verification were included.

Note 2: "Other certification" refers to the certification awarded by a programme similar to DOCENTIA at Catalan universities.

Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

As was pointed out at the DOCENTIA programme best practice workshops held in 2013, the participating universities' commitment to improvement has been expressed first by greater involvement and participation on the part of the people responsible for the institutions, the TRS and students themselves through the channels provided by the systems implemented by the universities; and secondly, in the effect of the results of the assessments that universities have carried out, both in terms of recognising the efforts of the TRS, and of bringing about an improvement in teaching at the institution. Notable among the major improvements in the performance of the universities involved is the link between participation in the DOCENTIA programme and the university's strategic programme and the teaching staff policy; the increased efforts to foster the communication and dissemination of the assessment processes envisaged; the application of measures arising from the results of teaching assessment; etc.

Even with the progress achieved, areas capable of improvement remain. Among these it is worth mentioning the increase in the capacity of the universities' assessment processes enabling their results to serve effectively to create a more accurate diagnosis of the situation in terms of what remains to be done, and to incentivise, through their recognition, a more appropriate performance on the part of teaching staff.

In this respect, recommendations to have emerged from the assessment processes run by the universities participating in the DOCENTIA programme have included: a) ensure that the universities' processes remain sustainable over time; b) strengthen the participation of the agents involved; c) increase the "discriminative" capacity of the universities' models for assessing teaching activity to reflect the results of such activity; d) take greater advantage of the results of the assessment processes to form the basis of improvement initiatives and to make the application of the favourable and unfavourable consequences effective as envisaged in the assessment models; e) improve the information given to all stakeholders about the process, the results and the initiatives stemming from these.

And in addition to the above, here with the full participation of the assessment agencies, it will continue to be necessary to make progress in securing greater integration between the complementary assessment programmes, seeking more streamlined models that better harness the efforts of all the agents involved in these programmes.

To sum up, it may be stated that the DOCENTIA programme is serving as a spur to increase the involvement of universities and their TRS in improving teaching quality, to channel the universities' responsibilities in their role of reviewing and improving teaching quality (and the recognition of such quality), and to disseminate best institutional practice by making it a matter of public record. Thus by means of its certification activities, this programme aspires, first, to guide and recognise the work of universities in the area of improving teaching quality and secondly to serve as a point of reference for the various stakeholders in terms of the involvement of the university institutions in the improvement of teaching quality and the achievements secured in this respect.



AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

2. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT OF OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY DEGREES.

The first part of this chapter addresses the quality improvement processes for official degrees over the course of their design, implementation and accreditation renewal phases. The second part of the chapter offers information of relevance concerning the results obtained from the assessment of degrees that have applied for European recognition through participation in the ACREDITA PLUS programme. And finally a third section offers information about the new procedure that has been approved to determine the correspondence between the levels of the Spanish framework of higher education qualifications and the official university degrees of the former catalogue of qualifications.

2.1. THE ASSESSMENT OF OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY DEGREES

The assessment of official degrees is, together with the assessment of TRS, one of the interventions to which the Spanish regulatory framework has given priority as far as quality assurance in the university context is concerned.

The overriding objective to which the processes of assessing official university degrees are oriented is ensuring an appropriate design and implementation of such processes throughout Spanish national territory, such that it is possible to provide society with a higher education that, without undermining the autonomy of universities, meets certain minimum thresholds of essential quality and is recognised in its entirety in a European and international context. Such assessment processes, channelled through programmes that are run in a coordinated way by the agencies comprising the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU), are fundamentally shaped by, first, the legislation in the field and secondly the European Standards and Guidelines (ENQA, 2009); in addition they take into consideration aspects such as the degrees' competences and programmes of study, the quality assurance policy and procedures for such degrees; the approval, monitoring and periodic review of the programmes; the assessment of students; the quality assurance of the teaching staff; the learning resources and support for students; the information systems; etc.

Process and models of assessment

The set of interventions envisaged in the assessment process for official degrees basically breaks down into various cumulative phases that observe the European Standards and Guidelines²¹ at all times and therefore in each phase they require

²¹ ENQA (2009). Standard 3.7. EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CRITERIA. The processes, criteria and procedures used by agencies should be pre-defined and publicly available.

These processes will normally be expected to include:

- A self-assessment or equivalent procedure by the subject of the quality assurance process.
- An external assessment by a group of experts, including, as appropriate, (a) student member(s), and site visits decided by the agency.

both reflection and self-assessment on the part of those responsible for the degrees as well as external assessment:

- In the first phase, the design of each degree, drawn up by one or more universities, is subjected to an external assessment of its quality – carried out by the assessment agencies – prior to **verification**, the goal of which is to determine the *a priori* academic viability of the degree in question. Moreover and almost in parallel, before the **authorisation and implementation** of the degrees, some agencies, at the request of the relevant autonomous community, issue an additional evaluation report.
- In the second phase, each implemented degree needs to submit itself to a process of periodic **monitoring** with the goal of confirming that the implementation is consistent with the provisions of the design established at the time of accreditation.
- In the third phase, after a certain number of years of implementation – during which the aforementioned monitoring is carried out – all degrees need to submit themselves to assessment for **accreditation renewal**. This renewal is granted once it is confirmed that the implementation and results of the degree are consistent with the commitments acquired in verification and comply with the requisite quality criteria.

-
- Publication of a report, including any decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes.
 - A follow-up procedure to review actions taken by the subject of the quality assurance process in the light of any recommendations contained in the report.

Table 2.1. Phases in the assessment process of official degrees²².

Phases of the process				
	Verification of the design of the degree	Authorisation	Monitoring of the implementation of the degrees	Accreditation renewal of the implemented degree
Self-assessment	University ²³			
External assessment	ANECA (2007-2009) ANECA coordinates autonomous community ENQA members (2009-2010)	Particular agencies commissioned by their autonomous communities ²⁴	ANECA and autonomous community agencies ²⁵	ANECA and autonomous community agencies competent for such purposes ²⁶
	ANECA and agencies ENQA & EQAR (2010-)			
Approval	Council of Universities	Autonomous communities	---	Council of Universities Autonomous communities

Source: Authors' own compilation.

Verification

As indicated above, the initial phase that gets the process of launching an official degree underway consists fundamentally in the verification of its design. If a degree passes the assessment process of this phase, it means that its design exhibits suitable compliance with the established criteria in accordance with the European guidelines and the applicable legislative framework.

In more specific terms, in the case of bachelor's and master's degrees, which share the same reference criteria in their assessment, the criteria focus on aspects relating to the description and justification of the degree; the competences that

²² The regulation and verification of official university courses is set out in Royal Decree 1393/2007, dated 29 October (amended by Royal Decree 861/2010, dated 2 July) and in Royal Decree 99/2011, dated 28 January, regulating official doctorates, in accordance with the provisions of Section VI of LOMLOU 4/2007, dated 12 April.

²³ In the case of the verification and authorisation phases, strictly speaking more than one phase of self-assessment, a proposed design for a degree is given, duly debated and revised, by the university or universities that submit such a proposal.

²⁴ ACCUEE, ACPUA, ACSUCYL, ACSUG, AVAP and Unibasq.

²⁵ ANECA carries out the assessment in the phases of monitoring and accreditation renewal at those universities belonging to autonomous communities that lack a quality agency (or equivalent entity) with the competences that are legally established in this respect.

²⁶ As set out in the provisions of Royal Decree 1393/2007, dated 29 October, establishing the regulation of official university courses (consolidated version of 17 June 2015).

students are expected to acquire; students' access and admission; the planning of the courses; the human and material resources to be used; the results envisaged; the quality assurance system and the implementation timetable (see Table 2.2).

In the case of doctoral courses, although the aforementioned shared aspects are dealt with to a large extent, there is no strict correspondence with the points that are evaluated in the assessment model due to the differences in such courses compared to those of bachelor's and master's degrees (see Table 2.2.). Thus the third cycle courses also observe the new bases of the Revised Lisbon Agenda, as well as the construction of the European Research Area (ERA) and the goals mapped out for the latter in the green paper of 2007²⁷.

²⁷ European Commission, 2007.

Table 2.2. Summary of the aspects assessed in the verification of official degrees.

VERIFICATION STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR OFFICIAL DEGREES	
BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S	DOCTORATES
<u>Description of the degree.</u> The degree includes an appropriate description that is consistent with its level or academic purposes, such that it does not cause confusion about its content, scope or, if applicable, professional effects.	<u>Description of the doctoral programme.</u> The doctoral programme should include a description that is consistent with its level or academic purposes, such that it does not cause confusion about its characteristics. The existence of international networks or agreements, involvement in the university's R&D&i strategy and participation in the other participating institutions' programmes are also desirable.
<u>Justification of the degree.</u> The degree should be relevant, appropriate to the educational and research experiences, consistent with the academic context to which it refers and/or in line with similar existing courses.	
<u>Competences.</u> The competences to be acquired by the students should be assessable and in accordance with those required to award the degree and with the qualifications established in the European Higher Education Area.	<u>Competences.</u> The competences to be acquired by the doctoral students should be in accordance with those required to award the doctoral degree and with the qualifications established in the European Higher Education Area.
<u>Student access and admission.</u> The degree should possess accessible systems that clearly regulate and inform students about the various paths of access, admission and orientation at the start of their studies.	<u>Doctoral students' access and admission.</u> The doctoral programme should possess an access and admission system that clearly regulates and informs students about the admission criteria.
<u>Planning of courses.</u> The programme of studies should constitute a cohesive educational proposal designed in a coordinated way and taking into consideration the students' efforts over a defined period of time.	<u>Educational activities.</u> The educational activities included in the doctoral programme, the organisation of the education that is provided to the doctoral students and its planning over the course of the doctoral programme should constitute a cohesive educational proposal designed in a coordinated way and taking into consideration the doctoral students' efforts over a defined period of time.
	<u>Organisation of the programme.</u> The monitoring procedures for the doctoral degree, the supervision of doctoral theses and the presence of international experts should ensure that students acquire the competences set out in the doctoral programme.
<u>Human resources.</u> The teaching staff and the human resources supporting the degree should be appropriate for ensuring the acquisition of the competences envisaged in the programme of studies.	<u>Human resources.</u> The doctoral programme should be backed by a group of researchers who ensure <i>a priori</i> the viability of the programme in terms of the education of its students. There should be sufficient academic staff involved and their qualifications and experience should be suitable for carrying the doctoral programme through.
<u>Material resources and services.</u> The material resources and services needed to undertake the activities envisaged in the programme of studies should be appropriate for ensuring the acquisition of the competences.	<u>Material resources and support available for doctoral students.</u> The material resources and services needed to undertake the educational activities envisaged in the doctoral programme and for the integral education of doctoral students should ensure the acquisition of the competences envisaged.
<u>Envisaged results.</u> The degree should include a forecast of results and a general procedure for assessing the students' learning outcomes.	<u>Review, improvement and results of the doctoral programme.</u> The doctoral programme should possess mechanisms that enable its progress and results to be analysed, ensuring its review and ongoing improvement.
<u>Quality assurance system.</u> The degree should include an Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) that ensures the monitoring, review and ongoing improvement of the degree.	
<u>Implementation timetable.</u> The process of implementing the degree should be timetabled and include a mechanism for accommodating, if applicable, students originating from already-existing programmes of study.	

Source: DEVA-AAC, ACSUCYL, ACSUG, ANECA and AQU Catalunya. Authors' own compilation.

Authorisation

In a way that complements the aforementioned verification process, the autonomous communities play a leading role in authorising degrees for their implementation²⁸. Thus the autonomous communities of Aragon, the Canary Islands, Valencia, Galicia and the Basque Country²⁹, prior to the issuing of authorisation, commission an assessment report from their respective quality agencies for each of the degrees to be implemented.

In this respect, there is no scope for overlap between assessment for verification and the process of issuing reports prior to authorisation, because while assessment for verification focuses on analysing the programme of studies and an appropriate relationship between the places being offered, the material and human resources available, and mechanisms for quality assurance, the power of regulating the educational offer resides with the autonomous communities, and therefore the authorisation reports essentially take into account geographical factors, such as the coherence of the overall offering of courses in the territory concerned, the existence of available human resources for meeting the teaching requirements, and seeking a balance with the demands of the socio-productive fabric.

Along these lines, each quality agency devises its own assessment processes in accordance with the needs of its autonomous community and depending upon certain criteria normally focused on strategic issues, regarding academic regulation and the pertinence of each degree being analysed (see Table 2.3.).

²⁸ In accordance with the provisions of article 35.2 of Organic Law 6/2001, amended by Law 4/2007, concerning universities.

²⁹ The Quality Assurance Agency for the University System in Castilla y León (ACSUCYL) issues authorisation reports that do not provide additional aspects to those of verification.

Table 2.3. Aspects reviewed in assessment for the authorisation of official degrees prior to the application for verification, by assessment agency.

ACCUEE³⁰	ACPUA³¹	ACSUG³²	AVAP³³	Unibasq³⁴
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Planning - Social demand and social integration - Human and material resources. - Knowledge in a second language. - Quality assurance system. - Connection between bachelor's and master's - Joint and coordinated programming. - Research. - Specialisation and diversity - Territorial balance - Impact abroad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Planning - Social demand and integration into employment. - Research. - Human and material resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Planning. - Social demand and integration into employment - Economic viability. - Teaching innovation and research - Quality assurance system - Connection between bachelor's and master's - Multiplicity of degrees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Planning - Human resources - Socio-economic demand and integration into employment - Territorial balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Justification of the programme of studies leading to an official degree. - Programme of education. - Academic organisation. - Resources available. - Quality assurance system. - Economic statement

³⁰Decree 168/2008, dated 22 July

³¹Order dated 19 December 2011

³²Decree 222/2011, dated 2 December

³³Order 86/2010, dated 15 November

³⁴Decree 11/2009, dated 20 January

Monitoring

Once it has been implemented, a monitoring phase of the degree is established as an intermediate phase between implementation and its accreditation renewal, which takes the form of external assessment of the degree by a quality agency.

This phase, although it does not determine the future renewal of accreditation, is of great importance because it is where for the first time, once the degree is up and running, an evaluation is made of the extent to which its deployment corresponds to the initially verified design.

The monitoring stage assessment carried out by the assessment agencies takes as its framework of references the protocol approved by the University Commission for the Regulation of Monitoring and Accreditation (CURSA); this protocol encompasses the following aspects:

Table 2.4. Shared aspects assessed by the agencies in the monitoring of official degrees.

<p>1. Pertinent and relevant information for students and society at large that the university should publish about each of its degrees.</p> <p>a. The most important characteristics of the accredited degree's statement.</p> <p>b. The operational deployment of the programme of studies in each academic year, specifying the planning of teaching staff and specific guidelines for the work and assessment of students.</p>
<p>2. Information relating to a core of minimum indicators facilitating the creation of the annual monitoring report.</p> <p>I- Performance rate of the degree.</p> <p>II- Drop-out rate of the degree.</p> <p>III- Efficiency rate of the degree.</p> <p>IV- Graduation rate of the degree.</p>
<p>3. Information stemming from assessing the application of the internal quality assurance system, with identification of issues encountered and the decisions taken to resolve them.</p>
<p>4. Action carried out in response to the recommendations established both in the verification reports and in successive monitoring reports.</p>

While the processes followed by the various agencies may, in general, be considered as similar, there are also certain dissimilarities affecting, for example, the inclusion of specific additional aspects – which occasionally have a particular relationship with those inspected in the authorisation phase of the degree³⁵ – the

³⁵ For example, agencies have analysed the operation and results of the teaching coordination mechanisms that have been implemented (ACAP), the provision of human resources and infrastructure compared to those indicated in the design of the degree (ACPUA), etc. Attention has also been focused

scope of the assessed degrees or the intensity with which certain aspects are assessed.

Accreditation renewal

The phase established for closing the cycle of the verification and accreditation of official degrees is known as accreditation renewal. Taking the cycle as a whole (which consists of the prior assessment or verification phase, the monitoring phase and the post facto assessment or accreditation renewal phase), the aim is to ensure that the system in its entirety provides a balance between, on the one hand, a greater capability on the part of universities to design degrees and, on the other, accountability aimed at ensuring quality and improving the information given to society regarding the characteristics of the university offering.

Accreditation renewal, which encompasses all official university bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees registered with the RUCT, requires a prior external assessment process in which it must be shown that, after various years of running the degree³⁶ under review, there is an effective match between such

on indicators that are in addition to those established in the shared protocol; thus, aspects related to the demand, supply and matriculation of newly-enrolled students have been observed in various agencies, the average access marks and the cut-off marks in university admission tests (ACPUA and Unibasq), the appropriateness and dedication of the TRS (AVAP), the mode of attendance and the linguistic mode of students' matriculation, students' mobility and integration into the labour market (Unibasq) and others.

³⁶ Accreditation renewal for official degrees must be carried out in accordance with the following timetable:

- Official university bachelor's degrees of 240 credits must renew their accreditation no later than six years after the date of their verification or from the date of their last accreditation.
- Official university bachelor's degrees of 300 credits must renew their accreditation no later than seven years after the date of their verification or from the date of their last accreditation.
- Official university bachelor's degrees of 360 credits must renew their accreditation no later than eight years after the date of their verification or from the date of their last accreditation.
- Official university master's degrees must renew their accreditation no later than four years after the date of their verification or from the date of their last accreditation.

implementation and the design submitted in the verified statement; and in addition an account is given of the results obtained.

As in the case of assessment processes pertaining to the monitoring phase, the REACU assessment agencies with competences to carry out assessments for the accreditation renewal phase³⁷ possess a common protocol that provides a framework of fundamental shared criteria to underpin their activities in this matter: the “Protocol for the accreditation renewal of official bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees”. The aim is thus to use these assessment processes to ensure that the intervening agencies are coordinated and operate in accordance with international quality standards – such as the European Standards and Guidelines³⁸ – and the regulations in force in the Spanish university system³⁹.

Some of the goals pursued by the accreditation renewal process – a process with a clear aim of increasing transparency and accountability to society in terms of the results obtained for official university courses – are, according to REACU (2014):

- *To ensure the quality of the educational programme offered in accordance with the levels of qualification established and the criteria set out in the prevailing legal regulations.*
- *To guarantee that the quality of the results obtained in the deployment of official university courses matches the commitments acquired and verified by the assessment entity concerned.*
- *To check that the degree has been subjected to an appropriate monitoring process and that the available quantitative and qualitative information has*

-
- Official university doctoral degrees credits must renew their accreditation no later than six years after the date of their verification or from the date of their last accreditation.

³⁷ As set out in Royal Decree 1393/2007, dated 29 October, establishing the regulation of official university courses (consolidated version of 17 June 2015).

³⁸ ENQA (2009).

³⁹ Royal Decree 1393/2007, establishing the regulation of official university courses; amended by Royal Decree 861/2010 and Royal Decree 99/2011.

been used to analyse its development, to generate and implement the improvement proposals arising.

- *To ensure the availability and accessibility of information that is public, valid, reliable, pertinent and relevant, and aids the decision making of students and other stakeholders in the university system on the domestic and international stage.*
- *To provide recommendations and/or improvement suggestions for the degree that support the internal quality improvement processes of the educational programme and its development, and that will have to be taken into account in future monitoring and accreditation renewal processes.*

A set of criteria grouped into three main headings are reviewed in the assessment process:

- *MANAGEMENT OF THE DEGREE. The following are subjected to analysis: the quality, management and organisation of the programme of studies (including access, teaching coordination mechanisms and systems for transferring and recognising credits); the transparency and visibility of the degree in terms of the information provided about it to the various stakeholders and the efficacy of the internal quality assurance system as an instrument for collecting and analysing information and implementing improvement initiatives and appropriately monitoring them.*
- *RESOURCES. The appropriateness and sufficiency of the academic and support staff will be analysed, as well as the material resources, infrastructure and services available to ensure the achievement of the results set out by the degree.*
- *RESULTS. Aspects related to the results of the degree will be assessed and the way these have evolved over the course of its development. In this context the mechanisms established by the university to check the students' appropriate acquisition of the competences initially listed by the degree will be analysed, in other words the fulfilment of the learning outcomes that define the profile of graduation. The evolution of the various indicators of academic, vocational and personal results will also be analysed.*

Meanwhile, as has already been pointed out in the preceding chapter, it is worth stressing the fact that the accreditation renewal process for degrees emphasises aspects that are also important in the processes of assessing institutions that have signed up to the AUDIT programme – which focuses on university centres’ internal quality assurance systems – and in the DOCENTIA programme – which examines the universities’ mechanisms for managing the quality of the university teaching and academic staff and fostering its development and recognition. In this respect, given that the AUDIT certificate comes with an report that specifies the assessment of various aspects of the internal quality assurance system implemented at the centre, some quality agencies take the content of such reports into consideration in the accreditation renewal process for the centre’s degrees, such that, as a general rule, any standards of the accreditation renewal programmes that have already been favourably evaluated in the institutional assessment process are not subjected to a new assessment by the committees that visit university centres for accreditation renewal purposes during the lifetime of the IQAS certification granted by the AUDIT programme⁴⁰ (see Table 2.5).

⁴⁰ Notwithstanding this, if the various sources of information reveal issues in the degrees being taught at a centre, those criteria established in the accreditation renewal model that are affected may be assessed.

Table 2.5. Relationship between the standards of the accreditation renewal programme and the AUDIT standards.

ACCREDITATION RENEWAL STANDARDS	AUDIT STANDARDS
<p>1.2. The specified graduate profile (and its deployment in the programme of studies) maintains its relevance and is updated in accordance with the requirements of its academic, scientific and professional context.</p>	<p>1.1.1. Identify the entities, stakeholders and procedures involved in the design, monitoring, planning, development and periodic review of the degrees, their goals and associated competences.</p> <p>1.1.3. Have mechanisms that regulate the decision making process regarding the educational offer and the design of the degrees and their goals.</p> <p>1.1.4. Ensure that the necessary mechanisms are developed to implement the improvements stemming from the periodic review of the qualifications.</p> <p>1.2.1. Have information systems that enable the needs of the centre to be known and assessed in terms of: definition of intake/graduate profiles...</p>
<p>1.5. The application of the various academic regulations (permanence, recognition, etc.) is undertaken appropriately and enables the values of the academic performance indicators to be improved.</p>	<p>1.2.3. Establish mechanisms that regulate guidelines that affect students: regulations (exams, penalties, certification requests, validations, etc.), usage rules (of facilities), timetables, and benefits offered by the university.</p> <p>1.2.4. Stipulate how the monitoring, periodic review and improvement of the processes and initiatives related to the students are carried out.</p>
<p>2.1. Those responsible for the degree publish appropriate and up-to-date information about the characteristics of the educational programme, its development and results, including information about the processes of monitoring and accreditation.</p>	<p>1.5.7. Procedure for reporting results.</p> <p>1.6.1. Have mechanisms that enable information about the development of the qualifications and programmes to be obtained.</p> <p>1.6.2. Determine what is the established procedure to notify stakeholders about: the educational offer, the goals and planning of qualifications, the learning outcomes, etc.</p>
<p>2.2. The information needed for decision-making on the part of students and other stakeholders in the university system in the domestic and international context is easily accessible.</p>	<p>1.6.1. Have mechanisms that enable information about the development of the qualifications and programmes to be obtained.</p> <p>1.6.2. Determine what is the established procedure to notify stakeholders about: the educational offer, the goals and planning of qualifications, the learning outcomes, etc.</p> <p>1.6.3. Define how the monitoring, periodic review and ongoing improvement of the public information are provided to stakeholders.</p> <p>1.6.4. Decision-making procedures are applied related to the publication of information about the programmes and degrees.</p>
<p>2.3. Students have timely access to the relevant information about the programme of studies and the learning outcomes envisaged.</p>	<p>1.6.1. Have mechanisms that enable information about the development of the qualifications and programmes to be obtained.</p> <p>1.6.2. Determine what is the established procedure to notify stakeholders about: the educational offer, the goals and planning of qualifications, the learning outcomes, etc.</p> <p>1.6.3. Initiatives are implemented for the ongoing improvement of the public information provided to the stakeholders.</p> <p>1.6.4. Decision-making procedures are applied related to the publication of information about the programmes and degrees.</p>
<p>3.1. The implemented and periodically reviewed IQAS ensures the ongoing gathering and analysis of the relevant information and results for the effective management of the degree, especially the learning outcomes and the stakeholders' satisfaction.</p>	<p>1.5.1. Acquisition of information about stakeholders' needs regarding the quality of teaching.</p> <p>1.5.2. Collection of information about learning outcomes, employment rates and stakeholders' satisfaction.</p> <p>1.5.3. Ongoing improvement of the results and the reliability of the data used.</p> <p>1.5.4. Strategies and systems for improving the results.</p> <p>1.5.5. Decision-making processes related to the results.</p> <p>1.5.6. Involvement of stakeholders in the measurement, analysis and improvement of the results.</p>

ACCREDITATION RENEWAL STANDARDS	AUDIT STANDARDS
3.2. The implemented IQAS facilitates the process of monitoring, modification and accreditation of the degree and ensures its ongoing improvement on the basis of analysis of objective and verifiable data.	<p>1.0. How the centre defines its quality policy and goals</p> <p>1.1. How the centre ensures the quality of its educational programmes</p> <p>1.2. How the centre orients its courses to the students</p> <p>1.3. How the centre ensures and improves the quality of its academic staff</p> <p>1.4. How the centre manages and improves its resources and services</p> <p>1.5. How the centre analyses and takes its results into account</p> <p>1.6. How the centre publishes information about its qualifications</p>
3.3. The implemented IQAS has procedures that facilitate the assessment and improvement of the quality of the teaching-learning process.	<p>1.1. How the centre ensures the quality of its educational programmes.</p> <p>1.2. How the centre orients its courses to the students</p> <p>1.3. How the centre ensures and improves the quality of its academic staff.</p>
4.3. The teaching staff are updated such that they can address, taking into account the characteristics of the degree, the teaching-learning process in an appropriate manner.	<p>1.3. How the centre ensures and improves the quality of its academic staff.</p>
5.4. The support and academic, vocational, professional and mobility guidance services offered to students once matriculated match the competences and modality of the degree and facilitate the teaching-learning process.	<p>1.2.1. Have information systems that enable the needs of the centre to be identified and evaluated in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Support and guidance for students on the development of the course -External internships and mobility of students -Vocational guidance <p>1.2.2 Is equipped with mechanisms that enable it to obtain, evaluate and check information about the current state of the aforementioned processes.</p> <p>1.2.4. Define how the monitoring, periodic review and improvement of the processes and initiatives related to students are carried out.</p>

Sources: ANECA (2014b). Authors' own compilation.

And similarly, in the case of degrees taught at universities that have obtained certification for the implementation of their mechanisms for improving teaching quality within the framework of the DOCENTIA programme, the assessment panels for accreditation renewal will take into consideration the report that accompanies such certification and will not assess certain criteria that have already been reviewed as part of the programme⁴¹ (see Table 2.6.).

⁴¹ See Annex 3 in ANECA, 2014b.

Table 2.6. Relationship between ACREDITA standards and DOCENTIA requirements.

ACC. RENEWAL STANDARDS	DOCENTIA REQUIREMENTS
<p>3.3. The implemented IQAS has procedures that facilitate the assessment and improvement of the quality of the teaching-learning process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procedures exist that ensure the quality of teaching. - The university compiles and publishes the aggregated results of the quality of the degrees' teaching activities in an easily accessible place on the website and, moreover, they may be easily understood by the whole university community (including prospective students and their families) and by society in general. (3.1. Transparency). - Activities that are undertaken in response to the educational goals and competences being nurtured in students (organisation, coordination, planning and teaching students, as well as evaluating learning) are evaluated, analysed and their results reported to academic staff individually and to various institution managers. The individual reports include improvement initiatives when the assessment results require them (3.4. Individual reports). - The results of teaching activity are presented in terms of the progress achieved in the students' learning and in an evaluation expressed in the form of the perceptions or opinions of students, graduates, academics in charge and the teaching staff. - The results of teaching activity are also the basis for reviewing and improving the programme of studies. -The university applies procedures to determine the impact and consequence in centres and departments of assessing teaching activity and provides evidence of the application of the corresponding consequences envisaged (E.g.: promotion, training, economic incentivising, etc.) (3.5. Consequences).
<p>4.3. The teaching staff are updated such that they can address, taking into account the characteristics of the degree, the teaching-learning process in an appropriate manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The university compiles and publishes the aggregated results of the quality of the degrees' teaching activities in an easily accessible place on the website and, moreover, they may be easily understood by the whole university community (including prospective students and their families) and by society in general. (3.1. Transparency). - The individual reports include improvement initiatives when the assessment results require them (3.4. Individual reports). - Moreover, to facilitate improvement of the quality of the process, a certified DOCENTIA model requires the university to design an improvement plan of the teaching activity of its academic staff in accordance with the defects found in assessing such activity. Thus, the information compiled by the university in presenting the results of the assessment and the analysis regarding improving teaching quality in the institutional report (3.4. Institutional report), as well as the consequences of assessing the teaching activity in the centres and departments are key to the design of the aforementioned plan, which the university must implement (3.5. Consequences). -The teaching activity improvement plan may include, by way of example, training courses, attendance of teaching innovation conferences, organisation of on-campus workshops for presenting and disseminating best teaching practice, institutional recognition for carrying out best practice, publication of outstanding examples of best practice. - The existence of procedures to monitor the improvement initiatives, whether individual or institutional, is essential as well as the identification of the entity or entities responsible for carrying them out (3.5. Consequences).

Source: ANECA (2014b). Authors' own compilation.

Ensuring the quality of learning outcomes in university degrees

The adaptation of the Spanish university system to the process of constructing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) has made it possible for universities, in the context of their autonomy, to design their educational offerings on the basis of various strategies. As a result, the educational offer provided by universities has undergone considerable growth, not only in terms of the number of degrees offered, but also in terms of the number of universities and centres that offer them, as well as the modalities of attendance (in-person, distance learning, semi in-person, virtual).

When universities initiate an official degree they take as their starting point a “statement”, which is assessed by a quality agency (a process known as verification). The statement establishes a series of *envisaged learning outcomes*⁴² that students are expected to attain on finishing the educational programme. The statement should be the university’s visible guarantee and commitment to the students who matriculate in that degree.

In terms of quality assurance, it is worth highlighting that over the last decade Spanish universities have been increasing their assessment processes (generally of a voluntary nature) in which mainly institutional aspects, specific units, services, etc. are evaluated; this serves first as a means of making the unit or service accountable and secondly as an opportunity to improve the activity undertaken.

During 2014, as a consequence of applying the legislation in force regarding the regulation of university courses, a new assessment process has come to the fore: the accreditation renewal of official degrees previously verified and registered in the Register of Universities, Centres and Degrees (RUCT).

This process, which is carried out by the university assessment agencies and whose standards and guidelines have been approved by the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU, 2014), focuses on a series of specific aspects that the institutional assessment processes referred to above do not normally touch on. The unit of evaluation is the degree taken individually and particular attention is focused on the attainment of the

⁴² The Support Guide for drawing up and assessing Learning Outcomes published by ANECA (2013) refers to the various international definitions used for the term Learning Outcomes.

envisaged learning outcomes on the part of the students for the degree in question⁴³.

Specifically, accreditation renewal aims to evaluate the following aspects related to learning outcomes:

=> The learning outcomes established by the degree have been attained by the degree's graduates, regardless of the centre or the modality in which the degree is taught (it should be remembered that the degree is unique to the university and the university is responsible for it).

=> The university or universities that offer the degree have developed a series of processes that facilitate the acquisition of such learning outcomes. Such processes relate to:

The appropriateness of the human and material resources to facilitating the acquisition of the learning outcomes:

- Awareness of the learning outcomes to be attained by students of the degree on the part of all those involved in the educational process (beyond the context of a specific subject).
- Attention to the students' acquisition of not only the specific competences of the degree but also competences of a cross-cutting nature.
- The appropriateness of the educational activities undertaken in the programme of studies to facilitate the acquisition of such learning outcomes by the students.
- The appropriateness of the assessment systems established enabling the acquisition of the learning outcomes by the students to be evaluated.
- The coordination of teaching and the student workload to facilitate the acquisition of the learning outcomes in the time allotted.
- The appropriateness of the academic and support staff that serve as the basis for the programme of studies.
- The updating of such staff, taking into account the teaching methodologies involved as well as the teaching-learning modality in which the educational activities will be delivered.

⁴³ Here it should be pointed out that some degrees have been submitted to an assessment leading to the acquisition of a specific "quality label" awarded by private entities in the context of a particular discipline (for example, assessments leading to the award of the ABET seal in the field of engineering), where attention has been paid to the learning outcomes pertaining to a branch of study.

- Appropriate material resources, taking into account the teaching-learning modality and the number of students matriculated in the degree.

The measurement, analysis, review and improvement of the learning outcomes:

Procedures are being carried out that enable the measurement and analysis of the acquisition of the learning outcomes envisaged for the students of the degree, the satisfaction of the groups involved, the employment rates of graduates and the various indicators associated with the degree. The results of such measurements must be known and analysed by those responsible for the educational programme and other parties involved. Moreover such analyses will impact the review, updating and improvement of the degree.

The information that is provided about the results of the educational programme:

Each university conducts an information and transparency exercise regarding the degree, its characteristics and its results.

Assessment of the aforementioned aspects undoubtedly enables an in-depth analysis of the degree in question to be carried out. It is important to stress that the accreditation renewal process aims not only to determine whether the degree is fit to continue bearing this “seal of confidence” that enables it to keep its status as an official degree, but also to serve as a basis of reflection for those involved in the degree, such that it facilitates the improvement of the degree.

The accreditation renewal process represents a major effort for all the agents involved (universities, assessment agencies and educational administrations) because of its size and novelty, and, like all new processes, some of its phases may be perceived as “bureaucratic”. A suitable process will however be key to ensuring that an appropriate attainment of the learning outcomes on the part of the students is secured, that the adaptation to the EHEA has been carried out successfully and that the contract between the university and society, which places its faith in official degrees, has been honoured.

ANECA

Relationships between institutional assessment processes and assessment processes for degrees

The construction of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is a fundamental landmark in the development of higher education in Spain. A central element of this project is ensuring the quality of university activity, an aspect that has been the focus of attention for universities and quality assessment and accreditation agencies for many years.

The commitment to quality assurance is one of the cornerstones of the Bologna process, as is evident from the various references made to this aspect in the declarations and statements released by the ministers of education⁴⁴.

Thanks to initiatives that emerged in the 1990s, such as the 1994-95 European Pilot Programme for assessing university quality and, at the national level, the Experimental Programme of Quality Assessment in the University System, which gave rise to the methodology of the National Universities Quality Assessment Plan (PNECU), experiences were gained that facilitated the development of the current assessment programmes for institutions and qualifications.

An important foundation for such programmes is provided by the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), approved in 2005 and under review until May 2015.

These programmes, in line with the ESG, share such common features as some of the phases of assessment. Both in the case of the assessment of institutions and the assessment of degrees, there is an initial design (of the IQAS and of the degree – statement of verification – respectively) which is the basis of carrying out the assessment and seeing whether what was initially promised has been fulfilled. Subsequently there is an implementation of the system (with a periodic review of the same) or of the degree (in the latter case with an annual follow-up by the universities themselves) and finally an assessment is carried out that includes a visit by external experts to the university; in the case of IQAS certification these are mainly experts in quality assurance at the university level, and in the case of accreditation renewal they are mainly academic experts with experience in assessment, and all cases involve the participation of students.

The greatest differences between the two types of process originate from the level at which the assessment is carried out. On the one hand, AUDIT – which focuses on institutional assessment – carries out processes at a global level, and does not concern itself with the specific assessment of each degree, but rather checks that the necessary mechanisms exist to ensure the quality of the qualifications that fall under the scope of the IQAS. In other

⁴⁴European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015.

words, checks are made to ensure that the procedures have been implemented, that there are people in charge of each of them and that records/evidence exist for all the initiatives established. On the other hand, the accreditation renewal – based on the assessment of degrees – is carried out with the purpose of checking whether each degree is being offered in accordance with the goals set out in the verification statement (or in any subsequent modifications that may have arisen) and whether the results obtained and the way they have evolved match what was envisaged in terms of their specific context. Such results will focus on, among other aspects, checking the acquisition of competences on the part of students and the mechanisms for evaluating the acquisition of those competences that the university has prioritised for each degree, as well as on the analysis of the way such results have evolved.

It should be pointed out however that the qualifications have shared aspects that are inherent to the centre, so that they can be assessed just once within the scope of the IQAS, thereby facilitating the work of both the agencies and universities. In turn, the certification of the system may generate an atmosphere of mutual trust, leading to less intense assessments of the degrees within its scope. Rather than recognising specific sections such as those already assessed, there may be a tendency in the future to ease the pressure of assessments, giving greater autonomy and responsibility over the quality assurance of their own qualifications to the universities themselves.

Unibasq

Results obtained

The reform of the structure and organisation of university bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees, enacted by Organic Law 4/2007, with the aim of harmonising university education with the provisions of the European Higher Education Area, triggered, from 2008, the start of the transformation of official degrees throughout the Spanish university system. In that year the first bachelor's and master's degrees registered within the new regulatory framework were assessed for their **verification**. In 2009 and 2010 the universities submitted almost 5,000 bachelor's and master's degrees for assessment, which represented a clear commitment to the renewal of official courses (see Figure 2.1.). The speed of this change meant that, in some cases, the number of modifications to the designs of bachelor's and

master's degrees was also considerable, and therefore there was a notable increase in the number of new assessments to be done of the redesign of the affected degrees.

Although the majority of the new bachelor's and master's degrees were reviewed before 2011, in that and subsequent years new proposals for degrees continued to be put forward, especially in the case of master's degrees where 2,000 new proposals, in addition to the preceding cases, were assessed up to 2014.

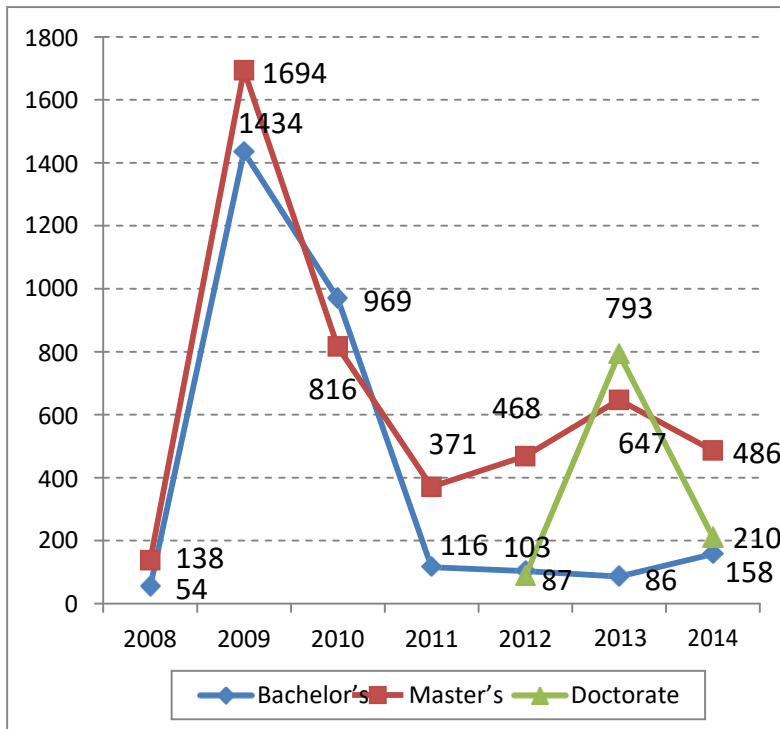
A similar situation, although with a smaller number of degrees, may be observed in the case of doctoral degrees. In this case, the regulations approved in 2011 marked a turning point for doctoral courses, representing a major overhaul of such courses between 2012 and 2014. More than 1,000 doctoral degrees were assessed in this period; and almost three quarters of that number went through the process in 2013.

As will be recalled, the major change of perspective that, in the European context, has also been introduced for doctoral degrees has placed the latter in the confluence between the EHEA and the ERA, and linked them directly with the socioeconomic development of society – via the production, transfer and dissemination of cutting-edge knowledge⁴⁵. Thus by virtue of their autonomy and responsibility the universities have been able to create the design of these new courses, paying attention to best practice and international paradigms.

In short, both in the case of bachelor's and master's degrees and subsequently in the case of doctoral courses, the considerable number of proposals subjected to assessment for verification in a short period of time has involved the universities and assessment agencies working extremely hard in order to get a wide range of new degrees up and running in accordance with the EHEA.

⁴⁵*The process of changing the productive model towards a sustainable economy requires doctoral students to play a leading role in society in the generation, transfer and adaptation of R&D&i. Holders of doctorates have to play an essential part in all the institutions involved in innovation and research, so that they lead the transfer from knowledge to the welfare of society (see Royal Decree 99/2011, dated 28 January, regulating official doctoral courses).*

Figure 2.1. Evolution of the number of assessments for verification, by degree level.

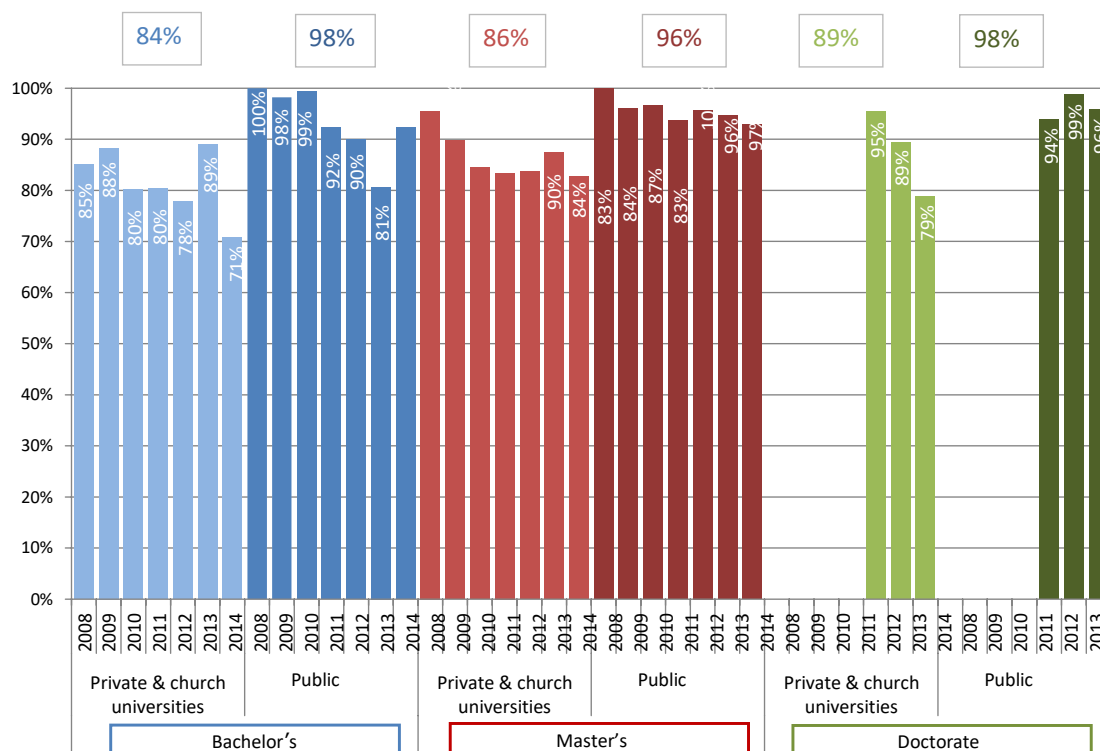


Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

Over the course of the period being analysed and for the three levels (bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees), the percentage of assessments with a positive outcome has been high, most notably in the case of public universities' degrees in the early years of the period in question (see Figure 2.2.).

The fact that the results of the majority of assessments prior to verification of the degrees have been favourable is another demonstration of the hard work carried by the universities in recent years, as well as the prior guidance processes offered to universities by the participating assessment agencies.

Figure 2.2. Evolution of the percentage of favourable assessments, by level of degree and type of university.



Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

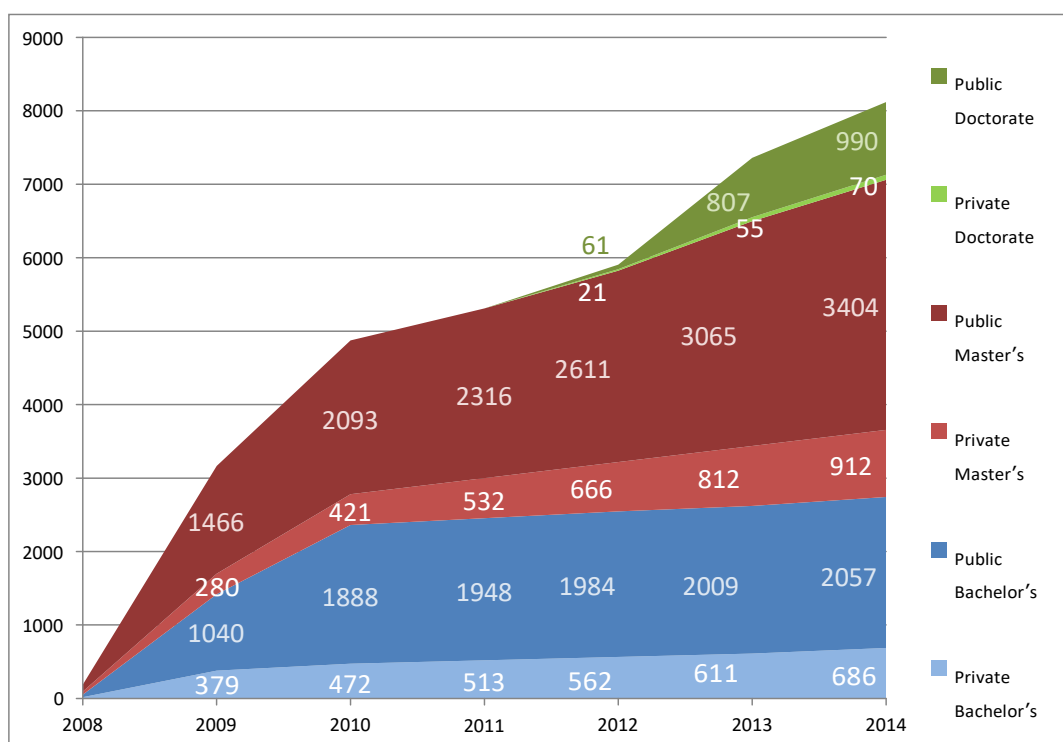
As observed above, almost 5,000 new bachelor's and master's degrees were granted a favourable verification report between 2008 and 2010, shared in almost equal parts between the two levels (see Figure 2.3.). In later years however, in the case of bachelor's degrees there was a clear levelling off as far as new degrees were concerned, whereas in the case of master's the number of newly verified degrees has continued increasing in a highly significant way both at public universities and at private or church universities; thus they climbed from approximately 1,500 degrees in 2010 to more than 4,300 by the end of 2014.

A tendency similar to the one observed in the case of bachelor's degrees, albeit transposed in time, has arisen in the last two years with new doctoral courses, which, having undergone a substantial increase in 2013, seemed to stabilise – with a minor increase – in the following year.

In short, at the close of 2014, Spanish universities as a whole have more than 8,000 new degrees – whether bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral degrees – with a favourable verification report. Of these, more than half are master’s degrees (53%), a third are bachelor’s degrees (36%) and the remainder are doctoral degrees (13%).

In terms of the distribution of these degrees by type of university, 75% of bachelor’s degrees are taught at public universities; the proportion rises to 79% in the case of master’s and 93% for doctoral courses.

Figure 2.3. Evolution of the cumulative number of degrees with a favourable verification report, by degree level and type of university.



Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

Significant progress on various fronts has been achieved with this verification process. Outstanding among these, as has been noted in previous editions, are: the improvements in the planning of teaching compared to earlier degrees; the methodological enrichment of the educational activities; an increased diversification in the assessment activities better suited to the goals being pursued; the introduction of a greater number of activities specifically aimed at the students’ acquisition of well-identified competences; the planning of resources in a more

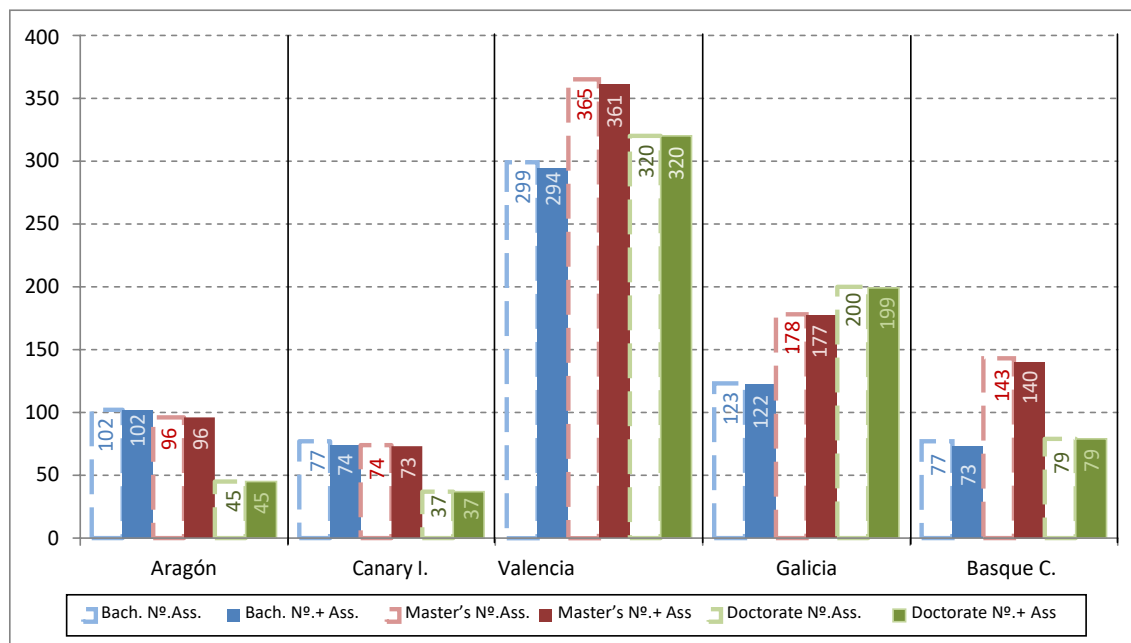
appropriate way; and the systematic incorporation of processes that contribute to ensuring the quality of various facets of the degrees.

Although the awarding of a favourable verification report does not automatically entail that the degree is authorised by the autonomous community concerned, there is a high correlation between the degrees that pass through both phases.

It is worth pointing out that certain autonomous communities, before issuing their **authorisation**, ask their respective quality agencies for an assessment report on specific aspects that complement those observed in the phase of assessment for verification. This is the case of Aragon, the Canary Islands, Valencia, Galicia and the Basque Country. Here, as a result of this process, almost all the degrees submitted obtained a favourable report for their authorisation (see Figure 2.4.).

The fact that this authorisation phase normally comes after the verification phase, whose assessment processes focus on aspects that are complementary but do not coincide, can mean that the work previously carried out on a certain number of verified and then not authorised degrees is wasted. Thus in autonomous communities such as Catalonia and the Basque Country, where the prior report required for authorisation is carried out before verification, degrees are only assessed if they have already been authorised.

Figure 2.4. Results for the authorisation of degrees between 2008 and 2014, by type of degree and assessment agency.



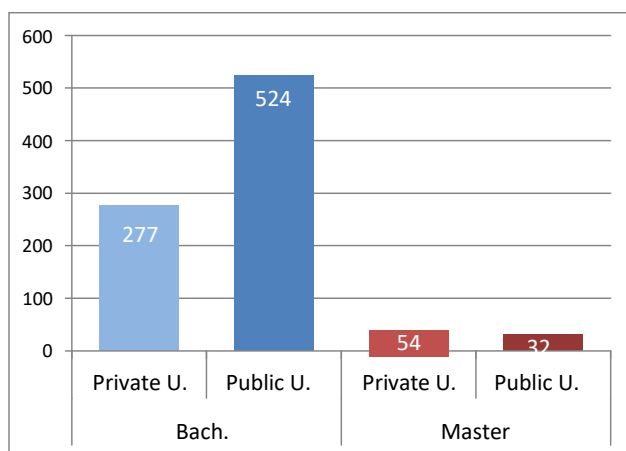
Source: ACCUEE, ACPUA, ACSUG, AVAP, Madri+d and Unibasq

The evolution of degrees with favourable verification runs virtually in parallel, albeit with a difference of some months, with the offer of degrees in force – degrees that have been published in the official state gazette or passed by the Council of Ministers (see Figures 2.7., 2.9., 2.11. and 2.15.). The gap is somewhat greater only in the case of master’s degrees, due to their volume and the fact that their numbers have relentlessly and significantly grown.

On the subject of the offer of degrees it is worth mentioning, first, that the difference in the number of students per bachelor’s degree and the number of students per master’s degree has increased, in part due to the development mentioned above as far as the number of degrees in the two categories are concerned – a particularly striking case is that of the public universities, where the number of students per bachelor’s degree exceeds 500, whereas in the case of master’s degrees it barely exceeds 30 (see Figure 2.5.); secondly, in the case of bachelor’s degrees, the differences in the number of students per degree when comparing branches of knowledge are highly striking, with the number of students per degree in the social and juridical sciences and health sciences being much higher than the other branches of knowledge – for example, in the case of the

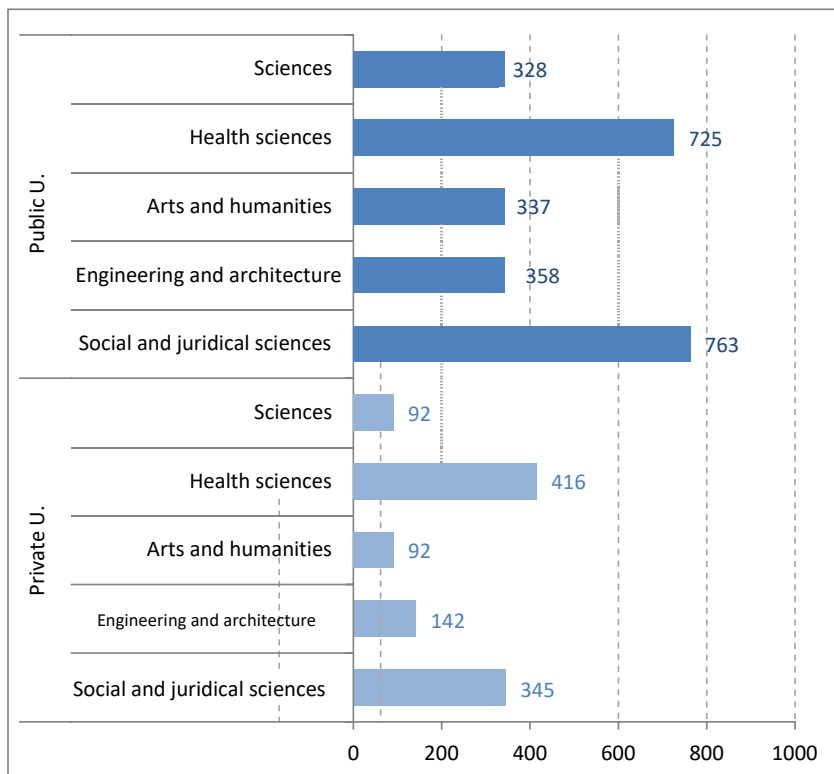
private universities, the number of students per degree in health sciences are four times the corresponding figure for science degrees (see Figure 2.6.); and thirdly, in contrast to what occurs in the case of bachelor's degrees – where the number of students per degree at private universities is practically half what it is at public universities – in the case of master's degrees, where the increase in the number of degrees being offered is largest – it is public universities that have a number of students per degree considerably lower than private universities (see Figure 2.5.).

Figure 2.5. Number of students per degree, in the 2013-14 academic year.



Source: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.

Figure 2.6. Number of students per bachelor's degree, by branch of knowledge and type of university in the 2013-14 academic year.



Source: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.

In any event, the data provided are only a first approximation in the study of the new university offer. In order to arrive at a clearer picture of the situation it would be necessary to investigate the current state of the offer in more depth, for each of the various types of degree, their characteristics and the associated demand.

These are precisely the aspects that are investigated, in the case of bachelor's degrees, in the *Report on the transition from the former Catalogue of Official University Degrees to the Register of Universities, Centres and Degrees, and the matching of supply and demand for places*, published by ANECA in 2014.

This report stressed that a significant number of centres belonging to public universities exhibited a suitable match between the supply and demand for places in the bachelor's degrees that they teach. However it was not uncommon to find centres where, for certain degrees, the number of students that had matriculated was much higher than that originally envisaged or, on the contrary, the number of students

that had matriculated was much lower than had been programmed.

These data, together with other indicators providing relevant information about the supply and demand for degrees, thus raise questions about the current configuration of the offer. The major impacts (in terms of resources, the organisation of teaching, the quality of the results achieved, etc.) that these and other imbalances may give rise to with respect to verified planning have not passed unnoticed in the university system. This is why, between the verification and the accreditation renewal phases, it has been planned to carry out the progressive **monitoring** of all the universities' degrees.

Monitoring of degrees involves an assessment, carried out by all the quality agencies in the Spanish university system on the basis of a general shared protocol⁴⁶, that consists of being in full harmony with the initial assessment for verification (and, if applicable, assessment for authorisation) and also with the necessary subsequent assessment for accreditation renewal.

This monitoring phase is important because, for one thing, it is the first occasion on which confirmation is made of the extent to which there is effective agreement between the public commitment acquired in the verified statement of the degree's design and the way the degree is being run in its initial stage; and for another thing, it serves as guidance to universities in order to undertake with greater assurance the assessment leading to the renewal of accreditation for their degrees.

Currently a considerable proportion of implemented degrees have undergone one or various follow-up assessments. The greatest amount of progress in this respect has been made among bachelor's degrees, whereas in the case of master's degrees, due in part to the incessant growth in numbers, there is a significant proportion of degrees still waiting to be reviewed in operation – especially in those autonomous communities where a particularly high number of master's is offered (see Figures 2.8., 2.10. and 2.12).

The fact that the rate of, and intervals between, monitoring assessments is uneven among autonomous communities – both in terms of the number of degrees that

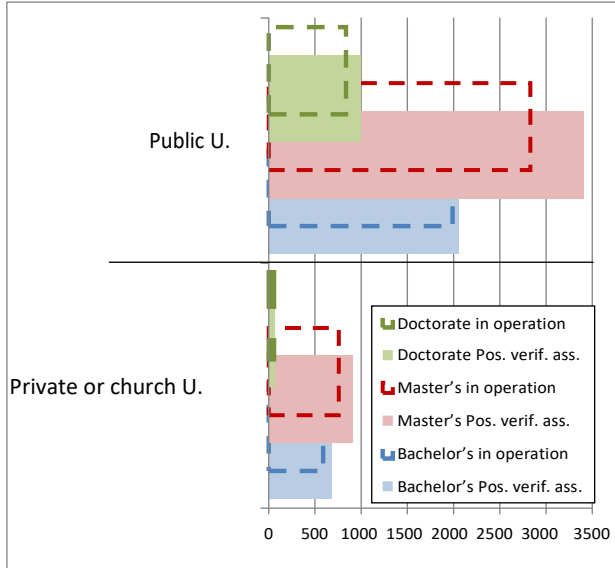
⁴⁶ CURSA Protocol

have been submitted for monitoring out of the total number in operation, and in terms of the number of times that the degrees submitted for monitoring have been reviewed⁴⁷ – mainly due to the different strategies devised by the agencies depending on the volume of degrees and the resources devoted to this end, while not hindering this phase from meeting its prime objective of offering guidance towards improvement, highlights the desirability of the joint coordination of the quality agencies to ensure greater harmony in terms of the accreditation renewal phase for degrees.

⁴⁷ In some contexts more than one review of certain degrees has taken place (for example, in DEVA-AAC, ACSUG, Unibasq and ACPUA). Moreover, while some agencies are issuing monitoring reports on an annual basis, others do so biennially and others on a selection of degrees.

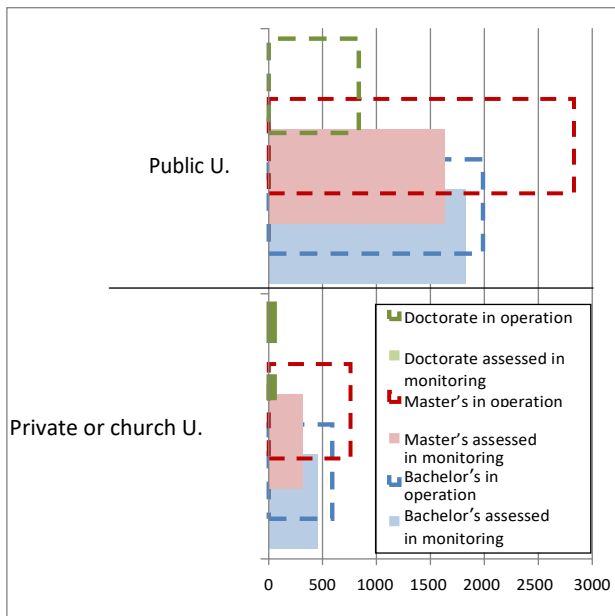
The number of degrees submitted for monitoring by universities in Catalonia is higher than the number of degrees actually assessed in this phase. From all the degrees submitted each year, AQU Catalunya chooses a sample of those that go on to be evaluated. Priority is given to reporting on those degrees that the universities themselves identify as requiring special attention, those that contain substantial modification proposals and those that are deemed appropriate according to analysis of indicators relating to the development of the educational programme.

Figure 2.7. Distribution of bachelor's and master's degrees with a positive assessment and in operation, by type of university.



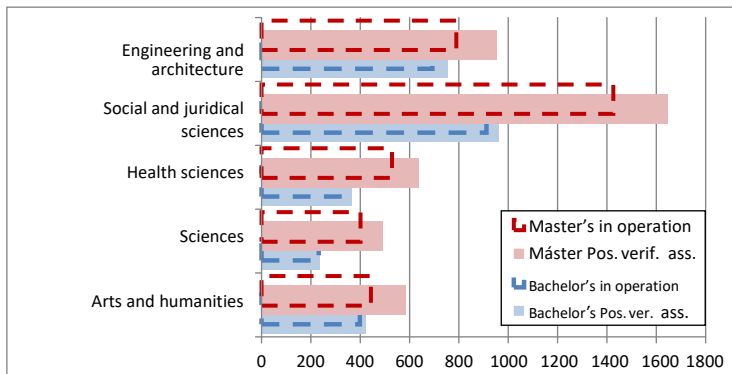
Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

Figure 2.8. Distribution of bachelor's and master's degrees in operation and degrees that have gone through monitoring assessment, by type of university.



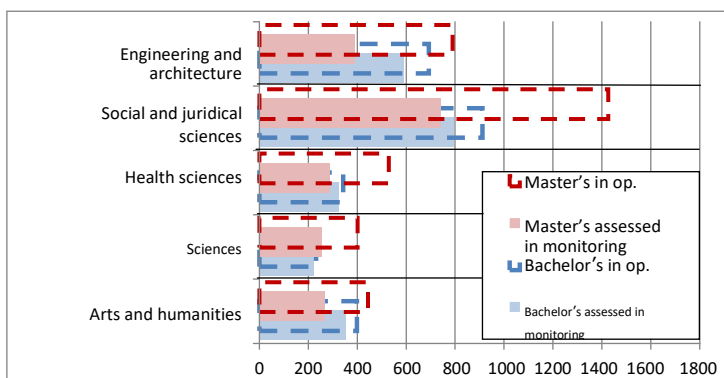
Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

Figure 2.9. Distribution of bachelor's and master's degrees with a positive assessment and degrees in operation, by branch of knowledge.



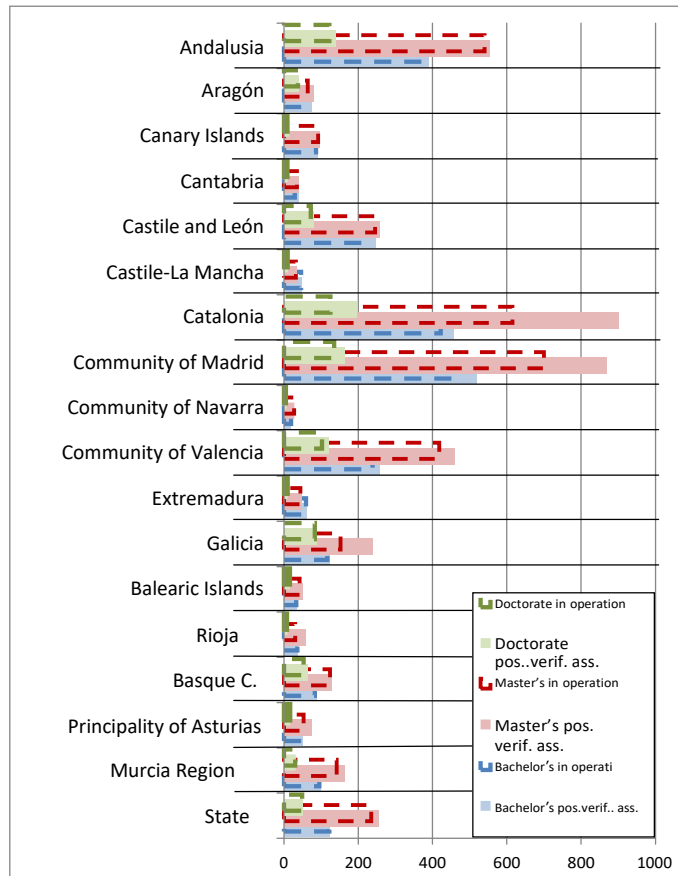
Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

Figure 2.10. Distribution of bachelor's and master's degrees in operation and degrees that have gone through monitoring assessment, by branch of knowledge.



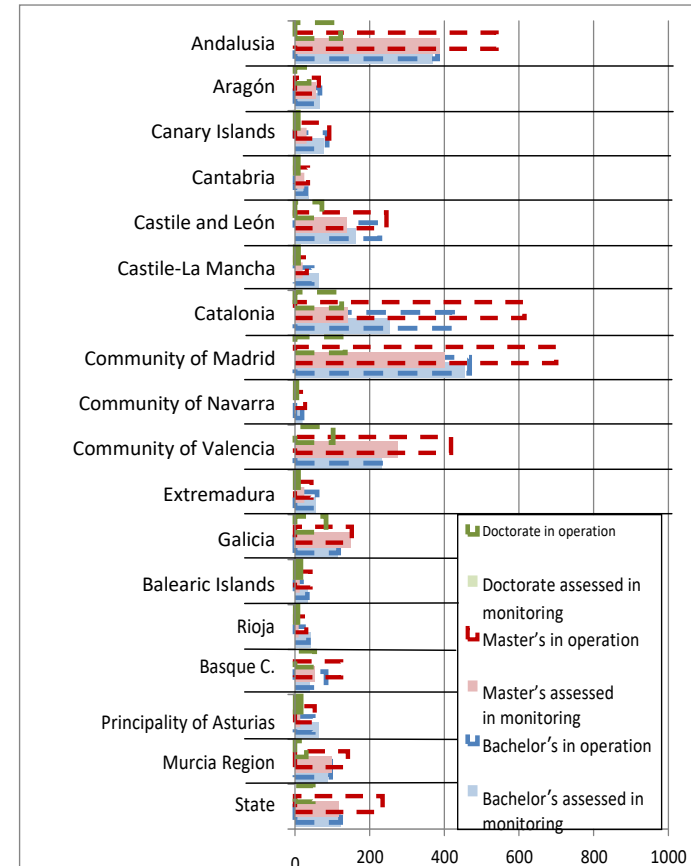
Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

Figure 2.11. Distribution of bachelor's and master's degrees with a positive assessment and degrees in operation, by education administration responsible.



Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

Figure 2.12. Distribution of bachelor's and master's degrees in operation and degrees that have gone through monitoring assessment, by education administration responsible.



In short it is clear that, on the basis of this process, the universities have engaged in a period of reflection regarding the extent of compliance with the objectives set for their degrees and the steps that need to be taken to secure improvements in the degrees' various facets. This has led to clear progress in such aspects as: the modification of the design of certain degrees to ensure that they meet, in a more realistic way, the goals that were envisaged; the public information about various details of the degrees provided to the different stakeholders; and the assiduous use of participating agents – internal and external – involved in enhancing the degrees' quality.

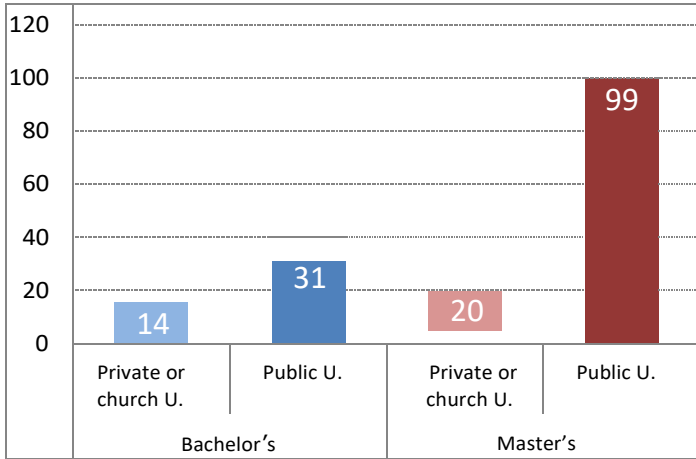
The gains noted above, in addition to others, have yielded, as shall be seen, a situation in which the vast majority of degrees submitted for assessment in the **accreditation renewal** phase have passed.

The assessment programme for accreditation renewal was launched in 2014. Thus the domestic quality agencies⁴⁸ and the autonomous communities, within the provisions of the applicable legislation, jointly constructed a framework in order to follow common guidelines and approaches.

43 universities took part in this first year of running the accreditation renewal programme, and between them they submitted a total of 164 degrees for assessment. Four out of five degrees were from public universities; and most of the degrees under review were master's degrees - 73% of the total- (see Figure 2.13).

⁴⁸ In this case, with a pilot project with assessments carried out in 2014, where the favourably assessed applications will have this decision recognised in the official 2015 programme.

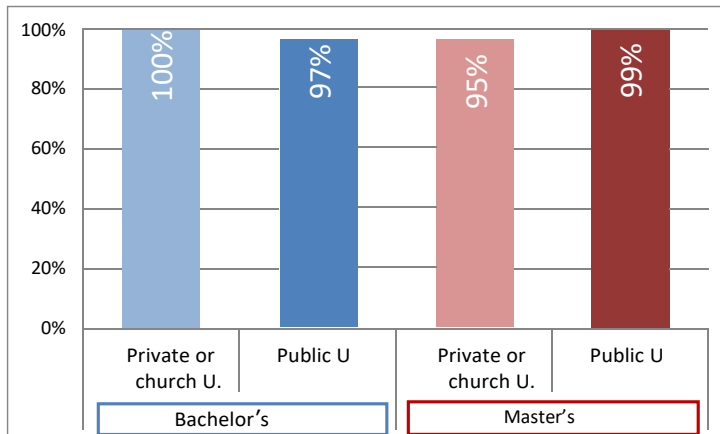
Figure 2.13. Distribution of bachelor's and master's degrees assessed in the accreditation renewal process, by type of university.



Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

More than 98% of the degrees submitted by universities were awarded a positive assessment. This finding underscores the maturity attained by the vast majority of degrees that, to date, have applied for accreditation renewal (see Figure 2.14.).

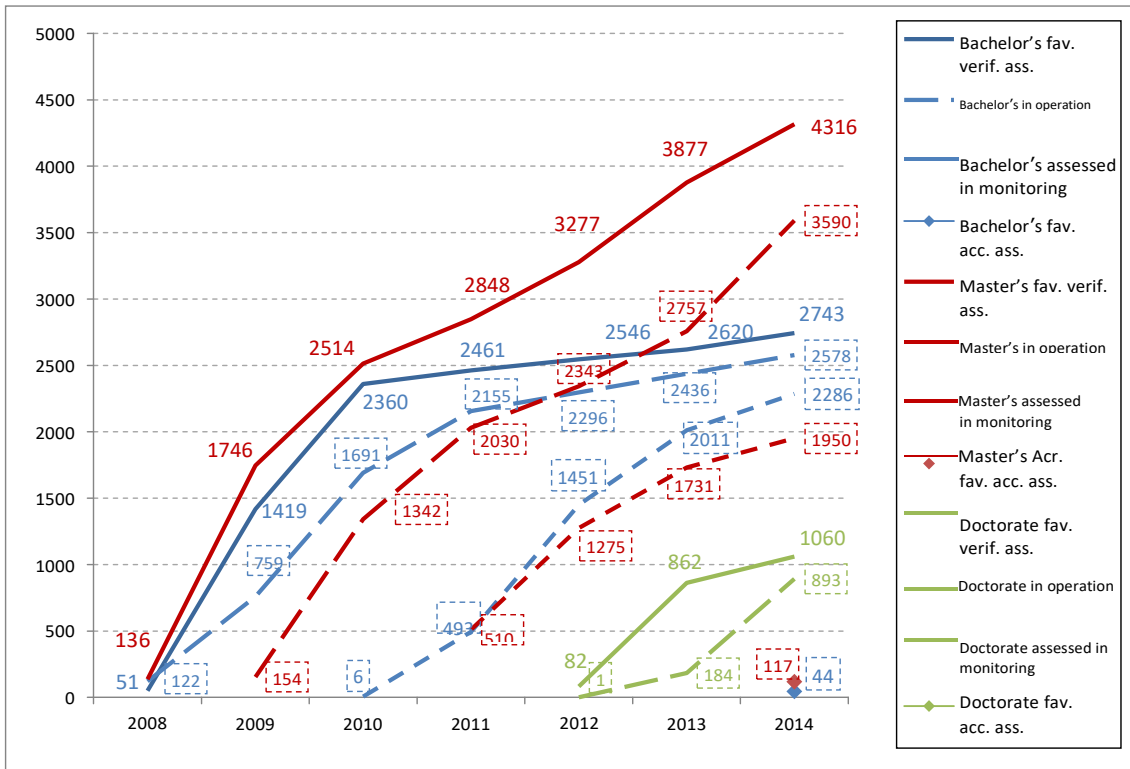
Figure 2.14. Percentage of positive accreditation renewal assessments, by level of degree and type of university.



Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

Despite this, the degrees submitted for accreditation renewal are only a fraction of those that, in accordance with the date of their implementation, are due to go through this process shortly (see Figures 2.15. and 2.16.).

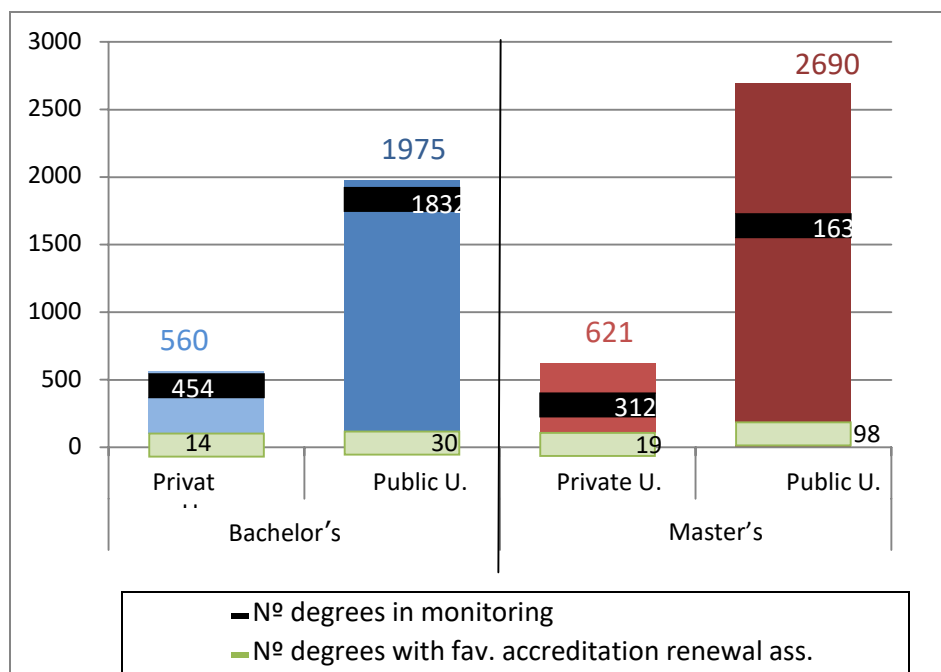
Figure 2.15. Evolution of the accumulated number of degrees with favourable verification and accreditation renewal assessments, of the accumulated number of degrees in operation and the accumulated number of degrees that have passed a monitoring assessment, by level of degree.



Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

Thus the accreditation renewal phase, which closes the cycle of reviewing the degrees, is still at a very early stage and the results so far obtained do not yet enable a pattern to be observed for a significant group of the degrees currently running at Spanish universities.

Figure 2.16. Number of degrees taught in the 2013-14 academic year*, number of degrees that have gone through monitoring and number of degrees that have obtained favourable accreditation renewal assessment up to December 2014, by type of university.**



Note 1: In the case of Catalan universities' degrees, a greater number of degrees has been submitted for monitoring than has actually been assessed in this phase by the agency concerned. Out of all the degrees submitted, AQU Catalunya chooses on an annual basis a sample of those that go on to be evaluated. Priority is given to reporting on those degrees that the universities themselves identify as requiring special attention, those that contain substantial modification proposals and those that are deemed appropriate according to analysis of indicators relating to the development of the educational programme.

Source: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (*) and agencies belonging to REACU (**).

2.2. EUROPEAN QUALITY LABELS FOR UNIVERSITY DEGREES AS RECOGNITION OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION: THE ACREDITA PLUS PROGRAMME.

In parallel with the assessment processes for accreditation renewal, bachelor's and master's degrees in specific disciplines have the possibility of voluntarily applying for a European label that confers recognised prestige. Thus when the degrees in question apply for accreditation renewal assessment they are simultaneously able to ask for assessment, via ANECA's ACREDITA PLUS programme, for the EUR-ACE®⁴⁹ and EURO-INF⁵⁰ labels, which are awarded to engineering and computing degrees respectively. The main aim of the programme therefore is to facilitate

⁴⁹ This is a certificate awarded by an agency authorised by the European Network for the Accreditation of Engineering Education (ENAE) to a university for a bachelor's or master's degree in engineering. The EUR-ACE® label is managed by ENAE in a decentralised way through national agencies. The label was created in 2000 with the initial backing of the European Commission and has been managed by ENAE in a decentralised way through national agencies since 2006. ENAE is the European entity responsible for authorising the power to issue the EUR-ACE® label to agencies and other organisations capable of ensuring that the quality of the engineering programmes obtaining the label corresponds to the generic European criteria and that their graduates acquire the competences specified.

Authorised agencies already exist in various European countries (such as Germany, Italy, France, the United Kingdom, Russia and Ireland) and hundreds of EUR-ACE® labels have been issued to engineering programmes in these countries. Prior to July 2014 however there were no agencies in Spain authorised by ENAE to issue the label.

The EUR-ACE® label is also promoted and supported by the European Society for Engineering Education (SEFI) and the European Federation of National Engineering Associations (FEANI), which are both members of ENAE.

⁵⁰ This is a certificate awarded to a university for a bachelor's or master's degree in computing. Since 2009 the European Quality Assurance Network for Informatics Education (EQANIE) has been the European association that oversees the issuing of the EURO-INF label. This label was created in 2006 with the initial backing of the European Commission. The European Quality Assurance Network for Informatics Education (EQANIE) is the European association that has been overseeing the issuing of the EURO-INF label since 2009, whether directly or through agencies and other entities that are able to ensure that the quality of computing programmes corresponds to the generic European criteria and that their graduates acquire the competences specified. Although there are currently various European institutions that are involved in issuing the EURO-INF label (such as the ASIIN agency in Germany and the British Computer Society, BCS, in the UK), there is no authorised agency in Spain, something that has limited its development in the country.

universities in obtaining accreditation renewal for the degree together with the European/international label, harnessing the synergies between both assessment procedures.

Degrees that apply for the programme are assessed in accordance with a series of standards defined on the basis of the European Higher Education Area's principles of quality, relevance, transparency, recognition and mobility.

In the case of the EUR-ACE® label, the Spanish Institute of Engineering (IIE), being one of the country's most representative institutions of the engineering profession, and ANECA, as a major player in the process of renewing the accreditation of degrees in Spain, agreed to collaborate to jointly promote the quality and international recognition enjoyed by Spanish bachelor's and master's degrees in engineering. Meanwhile, in the case of the EURO-INF label, the General Council of the Colleges of Engineering and Computing (CCII), the General Council of the Official Colleges of Technical Engineering in Computing (CONCITI) and ANECA agreed to joint collaboration in order to promote the quality and international recognition of Spanish bachelor's and master's degrees in computing.

These labels, focusing on specific scientific, technical and professional sectors, have the advantage of facilitating cross-border comparisons and offer universities and their graduates the possibility of demonstrating the quality of their qualifications on a European and worldwide stage; in other words, the labels are internationally recognised and facilitate both academic and professional mobility, given that they enable high quality programmes to be identified in Europe and beyond, incorporating the perspective of the main stakeholders involved (students, universities, employers, professional organisations and accreditation agencies).

More specifically, the benefits of a label of this type impact on various actors and may be summarised as follows:

- For the universities:
 - It offers an additional assessment of high-quality courses that fulfil the standards established by the profession.
 - It is an incentive for potential students to choose courses with the hallmark of excellence conferred by the label.

- It offers reliable information about the quality of degrees, which is useful for gaining access to both future master's and doctoral degrees.
- For students and graduates:
 - It ensures that the degree meets European and international standards recognised by employers in Europe.
 - It facilitates access to other master's degrees with the label and doctoral programmes at other universities.
 - It facilitates the mobility of graduates, as regulated by the European Union Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications.
- For employers:
 - It ensures that graduates' knowledge, understanding and practical competences conform to a series of international standards.
 - It offers reliable information about the degree.
 - It ensures that both academic and other important standards for engaging in the profession are confirmed.

These generic labels are applicable: in the broad range of European contexts that offer the education needed to embark upon the profession concerned; to the various competences acquired by the graduates of bachelor's and master's degrees, in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (whereby the acquisition of the label for the first and second cycles is distinguished); and to the diversity of national regulatory contexts for conducting professional activity in Europe⁵¹.

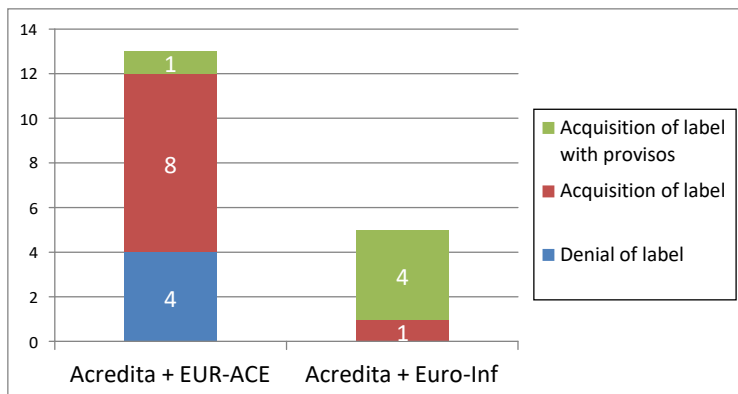
ACREDITA PLUS, which began as a pilot project in the autumn of 2013, ran its first standard programme in 2014.

Between the programme being launched and 2014, 18 degrees have been assessed, 13 for the EUR-ACE® label and the remainder for the EURO-INF label. In terms of the results of the assessments, nine of the engineering degrees received the EUR-ACE® label (one of them with provisos); and all the computing degrees

⁵¹ Referring here to title-holders only, focusing exclusively on aspects of higher education, and without entering into the ability of countries to decide whether a particular qualification, whether accredited or not, is sufficient to engage in the profession (giving the freedom to require a certain level of qualification, or the need to demonstrate a minimum of professional experience).

received the EURO-INF label (four of them with provisos).

Figure 2.17. Distribution of degrees with an assessment leading to acquisition of the EUR-ACE and EURO-INF labels, by type of result obtained.



Source: ANECA.

From 2016 it is planned that degrees wanting to request assessment for the aforementioned European labels may do so independently of their participation in the assessment process for accreditation renewal, the latter being a compulsory requirement for official degrees in the Spanish university system.

2.3 CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN COURSES OF THE FORMER CATALOGUE OF OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY DEGREES AND EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA LEVELS.

Organic Law 4/2007, dated 12 April, which amended Organic Law 6/2001, dated 21 December, on universities "(...) is fully committed to the harmonisation of higher education systems in the framework of the European Higher Education Area and accepts the need for a profound reform of the structure and organisation of courses, based on three cycles: Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees"; this represented a turning point in the academic regulation of official university degrees. The transition from the Catalogue of Official University Degrees to the current situation thus entailed a major reconfiguration of the courses offered by universities⁵² that involved significant changes, for example in terms of the assumption of responsibilities by the universities in configuring their educational offers, and in terms of the statistical methods of counting official degrees⁵³.

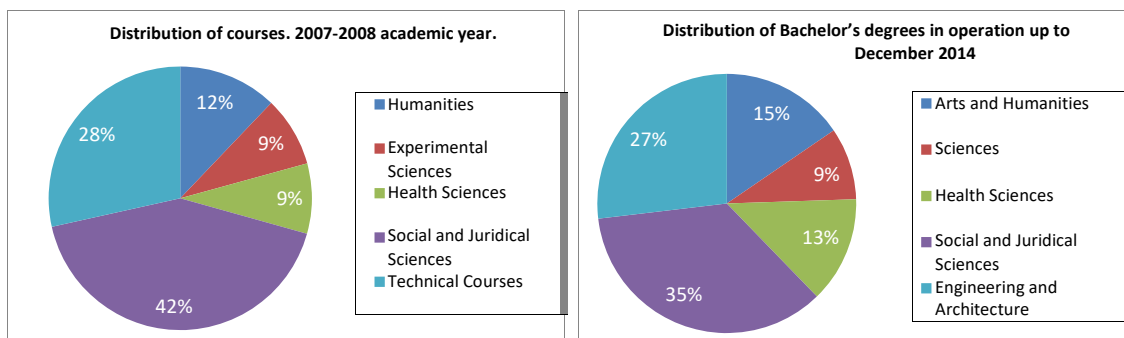
⁵² The *Report on the transition from the former Catalogue of Official University Degrees to the Register of Universities, Centres and Degrees, and the balance between the supply and demand for places*, published by ANECA offers information on some of the main patterns that have emerged in the transformation of first and second cycle official degrees to bachelor's degrees. And by means of various examples it sets out to contribute to the debate on the current state of bachelor's courses being offered throughout Spain.

⁵³ The former Catalogue of Official University Degrees (created as part of the regulations stemming from Organic Law 11/1983, dated 25 August, regarding university reform; in accordance with the First Additional Ruling of Royal Decree 1497/1987, dated 27 November, establishing general common guidelines for the programmes of study of official university degrees with validity throughout Spanish national territory) embodied the establishment by the government of the various official university degrees based on the proposal of the Council of Universities. Each degree contained in the Catalogue, whether taught at one or various universities, was counted for statistical purposes only once. The current regulatory framework establishes a different system for dealing with degrees however, whereby each university (or group of universities) by its own initiative, defines each degree and, as a consequence, once it is verified and authorised by the autonomous community in question, it is counted in an individual way. Thus, unlike under the former system, there may be degrees with identical names that are counted as many times as there are universities that teach them.

While taking the above on board, it is clear that a good number of the new bachelor's degrees have a direct forerunner in an official course from the former Catalogue at the same university. This points to the fact that, in the case of the majority of bachelor's courses, there has been a process of adapting the former official degrees to the new structure and verification requirements, rather than a process of complete overhaul; this is consistent with the limited amount of time in which the transition has been almost completed. Indeed, the distribution of official bachelor's degrees by branch of knowledge exhibits, in general terms, a profile that is largely similar to the official courses that existed in the former Catalogue (see Figures 2.18. and 2.19.). Thus the branches of Social and Juridical Sciences, and Engineering and Architecture (formerly Technical Courses), as in the previous scenario, account for the greater part of degrees. That said, these branches have lost some ground to Health Sciences – essentially due to the introduction of new bachelor's degrees at private universities – and Arts and Humanities.

Overall, there is a greater variety of degrees in the RUCT than there was in the former Catalogue in terms of the way they are defined (names, contents, etc.), and it is not evident that there has been a homogeneous evolution in the transition from the former Catalogue to the new bachelor's degrees; rather, that there are different patterns. Thus while some degrees exhibit considerable continuity with regard to their predecessors and are offered by a similar number of universities, others have given rise to a diverse range, including basing themselves on the first two cycles (bachelor's and master's).

Figures 2.18. and 2.19. Distribution of courses in the 2007-08 academic year and distribution of bachelor's degrees in operation up to 2014.



Source: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport

In light of this panorama, in order to accommodate the requirement that degrees in the former Catalogue⁵⁴ must have a clear reference in terms of the academic level of such degrees in the current Spanish Framework of Qualifications for Higher Education (MECES), the *Procedure for determining the equivalence with the levels of the Spanish higher education qualifications framework for the official degrees of Architect, Engineer, Graduate, Technical Architect, Technical Engineer and Diploma-holder* was established by Royal Decree 967/2014, dated 21 November⁵⁵. This regulation underpins the exercise of academic rights on the part of graduates of the previous system, within and outside Spain.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (MECD) will use this to determine the correspondence between the MECES levels and the qualifications in the aforementioned Catalogue of Official University Degrees. ANECA, exercising the competences the new Royal Decree bestows upon it, participates in this task in various phases of the procedure. Specifically, in order to determine the correspondence of the official degrees of Architect, Engineer, Graduate, Technical Architect, Technical Engineer and Diploma-holder, the General Directorate of University Policy has commissioned ANECA to report on each of the degrees in the

⁵⁴ University qualifications prior to the reform involving the creation of the new European Higher Education Area were regulated by Royal Decree 1497/1987, dated 27 November, establishing general common guidelines for the programmes of study of official university degrees with validity throughout Spanish national territory, the first additional provision of which set up the Catalogue of Official University Degrees.

⁵⁵ As is set out in the aforementioned Royal Decree, "Organic Law 6/2001, dated 21 December, pertaining to universities, regulated the structure and organisation of university courses arranged in three cycles, passing of which gave rise to the titles of University diploma-holder, Technical Architect, Technical Engineer, Lawyer, Architect, Engineer and Doctor. Organic Law 4/2007, dated 12 April, amending Organic Law 6/2001, dated 21 December, regulating universities, carried out a profound reform of the structure and organisation of university courses, based on three cycles: Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees, to converge towards harmonisation with the higher education systems within the framework of the European Higher Education Area. (...) In order to properly contextualise the first set of measures that this regulation addresses, it is necessary to emphasise the far-reaching impact of the disappearance of the Catalogue of Official University Degrees, which has governed our regulations up until the Bologna reforms enacted with the publication of Organic Law 4/2007, dated 12 April. From the time that it comes into force it shall be the universities themselves that create and put forward, in accordance with the rules established, the course and degrees to be taught and issued, without being subject to the existence of a Catalogue previously published by the government.

Catalogue, taking into account the education acquired in order to obtain the qualification, as well as its duration and temporal burden; these reports released by ANECA have a prescriptive and determinatory character.

More specifically, the task of determining the equivalence and correspondence of qualifications is carried out by a series of commissions structured in three levels:

- The first level consists of a single commission comprising the ANECA directorate, which presides over the commission, and five members, one in representation of each branch of knowledge⁵⁶. This commission is responsible for ensuring the consistency of the work carried out by the second tier commissions.
- The second level comprises five commissions, one for each branch of knowledge (Arts and Humanities, Sciences, Health Sciences, Social and Juridical Sciences and Engineering and Architecture). Each commission is made up of a president and a number of members that varies in accordance with the thematic groupings of degrees within each commission. There is a member for each thematic grouping. These five commissions are responsible for ensuring the consistency and coherence of the work carried out by the third tier.
- The third level comprises a total of 58 sub-commissions in which the 140 degrees that are the subject of the correspondence are grouped. Each commission is made up of a president (the member of the second tier branch commission), a representative of the professional association or associations and a representative of the association of deans/directors of the degree(s) in question. The people who make up these 58 sub-commissions are responsible for drawing up the reports regarding correspondence and homologation and the statement of equivalence.

Once ANECA has produced the reports, the General Directorate of University Policy requests a report from the Council of Universities (which is prescriptive, but not binding), for the resolution of the matter.

The task of issuing the ANECA reports, to be carried out between November 2014 and July 2015, will contribute to the possibility of having a normalisation of the

⁵⁶ These members are in turn the presidents of the second tier branch commissions.

qualifications contained in the former Catalogue with respect to the levels of the higher education courses established in the MECES and therefore in the EHEA.



AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

3. IMPROVEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL QUALITY IN TEACHING AND RESEARCH STAFF.

As has already been mentioned, current Spanish legislation regarding the quality of university education places great importance on teaching and research activity in the institutions of higher education and therefore gives the role of teaching and research staff (TRS) particular protagonism.

In line with this approach and following the guidelines laid down by the regulations, universities and assessment agencies in the Spanish university system have launched various initiatives aimed at strengthening the professional quality of the TRS.

In the case of the universities, they have found considerable assistance in their internal review and quality improvement systems in terms of establishing benchmarks for selecting, guiding and promoting their TRS.

The assessment agencies meanwhile have for some years been developing assessment processes aimed at recognising and guiding the academic careers of university TRS, as well as offering guarantees to society at large regarding their professional quality. Their main lines of approach in this respect consist of:

- I. Assessments prior to accessing certain professional categories of TRS, especially focusing on selection. Such assessments aim to ensure that potential candidates for important TRS posts in certain contractual roles or in the tenured university teaching staff, exceed, depending on the level of the role or teaching faculty in question, a certain threshold of capability for performing their job, above all in terms of the teaching and research facets, a capability shown by educational attainments, teaching and/or professional experience and research experience. In the assessment models used, while the research facet is given great importance, the evaluation of attainments linked to other activities is not overlooked – also important and in a sense

subsumed under the aforementioned research activity – such as the quality of teaching activity and others.

Given that it is the universities themselves that, by virtue of their autonomy, make the final selection of the people who, from all those who have acquired accreditation for a particular role, will actually be recruited for TRS posts, the responsibility for ensuring that all the commitments to society are fulfilled up to the time that the most ideal candidate is chosen for each TRS post is shared between all the institutions involved in the process (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, local education authorities, assessment agencies and universities).

- II. Assessments of TRS work for the recognition of attainments and the awarding of remunerative complements, especially focused on performance. The aim of these is to have criteria for the recognition of academic performance in aspects related fundamentally to research, teaching and management. This is recognition to which public administrations and the universities themselves are more and more likely to link economic or other types of incentives.

3.1. ASSESSMENT FOR THE RECOGNITION OF CONTRACTUAL TEACHING ROLES.

The current legislation states that in order to apply for a TRS post in a public university under regular employment regulations for the roles of *Profesor Ayudante Doctor*, *Profesor Contratado Doctor* and *Profesor Colaborador*³ or similar, the interested party must first fulfil a series of requirements that are common to the whole of Spain⁵⁷ - although, while respecting this framework, exceptions arise in certain autonomous communities in accordance with the scope of their powers.

In order to address this situation in 2001 a series of processes were established to certify the curricular suitability of the people interested in applying for such posts with the goal of ensuring a minimum level of academic attainments (in research, teaching, academic training, professional experience and other attainments capable of being evaluated) among the people who actually apply for the contractual TRS posts offered by universities. Thus accreditation for a particular contractual role is obtained through the issuing of a positive assessment report for the teaching role in question by ANECA or the external assessment organisation that the autonomous community law determines.

As far as the scope of the accreditations is concerned, the candidate can use the positive assessment issued by ANECA to gain access to the selection processes organised by any Spanish university; whereas a positive assessment from an agency belonging to a particular autonomous community enables the candidate to apply for selection processes offered by the universities of the autonomous community in question. It should also be noted that certain specific roles of particular autonomous communities are only assessed by the agency of the autonomous community concerned.

In the case of private universities, the regulations state that at least 50% of the teaching staff should be holders of doctoral degrees and, of this group, at least

⁵⁷ As established by Organic Law 6/2001, dated 21 December, on universities, and in its subsequent reformulation in Organic Law 4/2007, dated 12 April, amending Organic Law 6/2001, dated 21 December, on universities.

³ Translator's note: Spanish academic job titles resist ready translation into English, since some of them have no direct equivalents in English-speaking countries. *Profesor Ayudante Doctor* is a non-tenured, PhD-holding assistant professor, *Profesor Contratado Doctor* is a tenured, PhD-holding associate professor and *Profesor Colaborador* is a tenured lecturer. Importantly, none of them confers the status of civil servant.

60% should have obtained a positive assessment from one of the aforementioned agencies for the role of *Profesor de Universidad Privada*⁵⁸.

The quality agencies' assessment

In 2010 the quality agencies working in the Spanish university system focused their attention on defining a series of common principles to be adopted in the task of assessing the TRS:

- Objectivity: criteria adopted by the community, adapted to roles and branches, and applied uniformly by the evaluators. Procedural guarantees.
- Transparency: published criteria, committees and proceedings.
- Independence: "sovereignty" of the assessment committees in the taking of decisions.

Moreover, in general all the agencies adopt the European Standards and Guidelines (ENQA, 2009) as an essential guide in terms of carrying out assessment procedures.

For example, the agencies have clearly established processes for selecting and training evaluators and criteria for the conduct and operation of the assessment commissions. With regard to the way assessments are carried out, a collegiate decision is reached by the members of the assessment committee, based on criteria that are public and accessible through the agencies' websites. As a result of the assessments, reports are issued for the applicants and, in the case of negative assessments, they include a reasoned verdict containing recommendations.

Meanwhile, all the agencies' assessment models within the framework of assessing teaching staff for recognition prior to employment rest on the evaluation of the curricular attainments regarding the main aspects of TRS activity (teaching, professional, research and management experience and academic training). It is important to note therefore that all the models calibrate the weight of these aspects depending on the contractual role being applied for. Given that the assessment

⁵⁸ This role is equivalent in terms of criteria and scales to that of *Profesor Contratado Doctor*.

models also have the aim of guiding applicants in terms of the basic standards of the TRS academic career, normally the requirements for passing the assessment for the various contractual roles are internally consistent and, in general terms, aligned with the subsequent assessment processes for access to university teaching faculties.

Depending on the particular characteristics of each field of knowledge, it is common to find, for the same role, different weightings in accordance with the branch of knowledge to which the assessment application belongs to; moreover, within each branch, although the assessment criteria are uniform, they are often nuanced by the assessment committees to reflect the various specific fields, with the aim of providing fairer and more appropriate assessments.

On the basis of these points each of the agencies – with the exception of ACPUA, which does not operate a programme with this objective – has drawn up its own assessment scale, emphasising those aspects that in each case it considers to be most important (see Table 3.1.). Thus even with the aforementioned common areas, there are notable differences between some of the agencies' assessment models in terms of the weightings awarded to each criterion and, as will be seen in due course, in terms of the results obtained in the assessments of the various contractual roles.

It should be pointed out therefore that, given that different assessment agencies cover different geographical areas – barring the National Agency, which covers all of them – and have the power of establishing the assessment model that they deem most appropriate, it is not uncommon for the same person to submit an assessment application to various agencies simultaneously for the same role and, in some cases, for the results of the assessment to be different for each agency.

Table 3.1. Weightings of the various attainment sections in assessment for the employment of academic staff in 2014, by assessment agency and contractual role.

Role	Sections	DEVA-AAC ^a	ACCUEE	ACSUCYL ^b	ACSUG ^c	ANECA	AOU ^{d, e}	AQUIB	AVAP	Madri+d	Unibasq ^f
Profesor Ayudante Doctor (PAD)	Academic training	25% (includes 10% Study visits)	35%	20%	20% (plus 15% study visits in Centres)	21%	15% - 20%	27%	22%	20%	13.6%
	Research experience	55%	30%	40%	25%	60%	60% - 65%	60%	55	40% Teaching, research & professional experience. 35% Scientific & academic production	59.1%
	Teaching experience	10%	25%	25%	20%	9%	15% - 25%	10%	20%		22.8%
	Professional experience	5%	10%	15%	15%	5%		3%			
	Management				5%						4.5%
	Other attainments	5%			--	5%		2%	3%	5%	
Profesor Contratado Doctor (PCD)	Academic training	6%	15%(1) - 10%(2)	15%	10%	6%		10%	12%	15%	9.1%
	Research experience	50%	45%(1) - 70%(2)	40%	45%	60%	85%	55%	55%	40% Teaching, research & professional experience. 40% Scientific & academic production	59.1%
	Teaching experience	40%	30% (1) - 10% (2) with Prof. Exp.	30%	30%	30%	7,5%	30%	30%		27.3%
	Professional experience	2%	10% (1) with Other merits - 10% (2) with Academic training	15%	10%	2%		5%			
	Management				5%					4.5%	
	Other attainments	2%	10% Includes Prof. Exp. (1) - 10% (2)		--	2%	7,5%	2%	3%	5%	
Profesor Colaborador (PC)	Academic training		20%		20%		10%			50% Teaching, research & professional experience. 35% Scientific & academic production	
	Teaching experience		35%		25%		45%				
	Research experience				20%		10%				
	Professional experience		40%		30%		35%				
	Management				5%					5%	
	Other attainments		5%		--						
Profesor Universidad Privada (PUP)	Academic training	6%		15%	10%	6%			12%	15%	13.6%
	Research experience	50%		40%	45%	60%			55%	40% Teaching, research & professional experience. 40% Scientific & academic production	54.6%
	Teaching experience	40%		30%	30%	30%			30%		27.3%
	Professional experience	2%		15%	10%	2%					
	Management				5%					4.5%	
	Other attainments	2%			--	2%			3%	5%	

Key:

For AQU Catalunya the role of *ayudante doctor* is known as *lector* and for Unibasq as *adjunto*. Similarly, *Contratado Doctor* is equivalent to the Unibasq role of *Agregado* and in the case of AQU Catalunya it encompasses the roles of *Agregado* and *Catedrático Contratado*.

- (1): *Contratado Doctor* type 1
(2): *Contratado Doctor* type 2.

^a:DEVA-AAC also evaluates the role of *Profesor Contratado Doctor con vinculación clínica* (with clinical links).

The weighting is: 1) Research and knowledge transfer experience: 50; 2) Teaching and assistance experience: 40; 3) Academic training and professional experience: 8; 4) Others: 2.

^b: ACSUCYL also evaluates the role of *profesorado asociado*. The weighting for each section is as follows: Teaching objectives 25%, Teaching methodology 25%, Lesson evaluation 25%, Professional and academic activities 25%.

^c: The “other attainments” section no longer appeared as an individual attainment after 2009, because it was included as a subsection in the rest of the items evaluated.

^d: For Architecture, AQU Catalunya will apply the following weighting of attainments: Research experience: 60%; Teaching experience: 20%; Other attainments: 20%.

^e: Over the period 2003-2007, AQU Catalunya assessed the teaching staff at private universities in accordance with the provisions of the agreements signed with each and, since 2008, the assessment of teaching staff at private universities has been integrated into the processes of issuing reports for lecturing staff, research and advanced research accreditations, which are common to all public and private universities.

^f: Unibasq also evaluates the role of *Pleno* and *Personal Doctor Investigador*.

In the case of the *Pleno* role, the weighting for each attainment section in the assessment is: research experience 63.7%, teaching and professional experience 31.8% and management 4.5%.

In the case of *Personal Doctor Investigador* the weighting is: academic training 9.1%, research experience 77.3%, teaching and professional experience 9.1% and management 4.5%.

Note: It should be borne in mind that in order to obtain a positive assessment at some agencies it is necessary to exceed a minimum score established in particular sections as well as the overall score required.

Source: DEVA-AAC, ACCUEE, ACSUCYL, ACSUG, ANECA, AQU Catalunya, AQUIB, AVAP, Madri+d and Unibasq. Authors' own compilation.

Results obtained

The assessment programmes aimed at determining the curricular attainments of those people wishing to obtain accreditation to be hired as university TRS have contributed over the 13 years of their existence to guiding teaching and research careers at universities and ensuring the fulfilment of certain thresholds of preparedness on the part of the TRS.

Over the course of this period more than 177,000 records have been assessed by the quality agencies in the Spanish university system, of which 12,000 were assessed in 2014. The number of assessment applications has fallen considerably in the last two years. After a decade in which the annual figure never fell below 14,000, from 2013 the number of applications fell by some 2,000. The main causes of this fall were that Fundación Madri+d has not run an assessment programme since that year and that the role of *Profesor Colaborador* (PC) ceased to be the subject of assessment. There has also been an appreciable fall in the number of applications received by agencies in various autonomous communities (see Figure 3.1.).

Even with this fall however, the quantity of applications assessed each year by all the agencies combined continues to be considerable. This may be accounted for by the fact that there are a large number of people in Spain with doctorates who currently aspire to pursuing a TRS career in the Spanish university system.

But also, without wishing to understate the above, it has been observed that it is not uncommon for the same person to apply simultaneously to various agencies to be assessed for the same contractual role. The most likely reasons for this are, first, to increase the possibilities of obtaining a positive assessment and, secondly, to accumulate positive assessments from various agencies, which is considered as an additional curricular attainment in certain TRS selection processes.

As has been noted in previous reports, the average number of applications submitted by the same candidate simultaneously to more than one assessment

agency is not as yet known, and nor is the way this phenomenon has evolved over the course of recent years. The estimate that was made some years ago suggested that on average more than two out of every five applicants were submitting assessment applications simultaneously to more than one quality agency for the same contractual role⁵⁹.

This shows first that there is an overlap between agencies in these assessment processes and secondly that the assessment reports issued by different agencies for the same CV and the same contractual role may contradict each other – favourable and unfavourable – depending on the assessment model that the agencies have used for the contractual role in question. As well as involving significant and inefficient expenditure on the part of the agencies taken as a whole, this fails in any way to improve the professional quality or guidance of the TRS. The issue therefore needs to be looked at so that, while respecting the individual powers of each autonomous community to set its own TRS policy, an improvement in coordination and in the efficiency of the use of public resources in the university system may be achieved as far as is possible.

Although the assessment agencies have attempted in previous years to bring their stances on the quality assurance mechanisms in teaching assessment processes closer together, little progress has been made either to avoid the existing overlaps between agencies or to minimise the differences in assessment models that are currently making it difficult to achieve consistency in the results for contractual roles established in the common regulatory framework. None of which should be to the detriment of independent powers wielded in the context of autonomous communities.

Up until 2014 more than half the assessment applications (53%) were submitted to ANECA in order to obtain nationwide recognition, while the remaining 47%, submitted to autonomous communities' agencies, sought to obtain recognition in a particular geographical region (see Table 3.2., Figure 3.1. and Table A.2. in the Annex of results).

⁵⁹ Source: ANECA (2008). Results obtained from a satisfaction survey and analysis of employment circumstances carried out with participants in ANECA's Teaching Staff Assessment Programme.

As a consequence of the assessments carried out since 2002, more than 108,000 favourable accreditations have been issued; of these, 53% were valid throughout the country (see Figure 3.2.).

The percentage of favourable assessments compared to the total applications varies between assessment agencies and between the various TRS roles and the branches of knowledge. For example, while the proportion of assessments for the *Profesor Contratado Doctor* (PCD) role was 83% at ACCUEE in the period since 2007, it was 42% in the case of Unibasq (see Figure 3.3.).

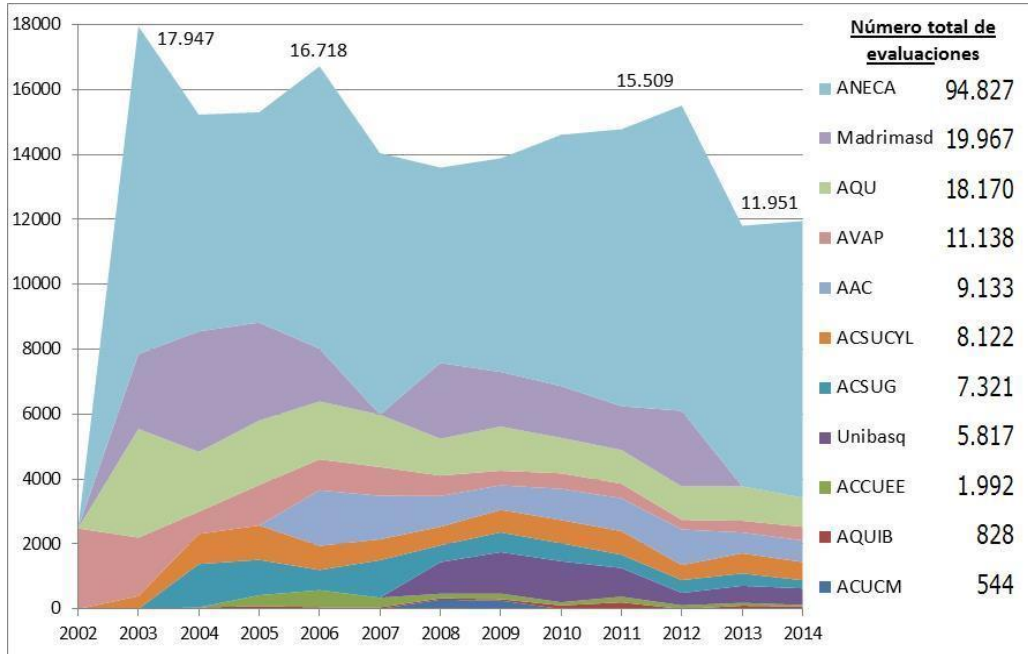
The main factor explaining the sometimes striking differences in results between agencies may reside in the fact that they have different models of assessment, models that, even for the same (or equivalent) roles, give unequal weightings to the aspects that serve as guidelines in TRS careers.

Table 3.2. Geographical scope of the validity of the assessments and assessment agency:

Andalusia	DEVA-AAC
Community of Madrid	Madri+d
Canary Islands	ACCUEE
Castile and Leon	ACSUCYL
Galicia	ACSUG
Castile-La Mancha	ACUCM
Catalonia	AQU Catalunya
Balearic Islands	AQUIB
Valencian Community	AVAP
Basque Country	Unibasq
Nationwide	ANECA

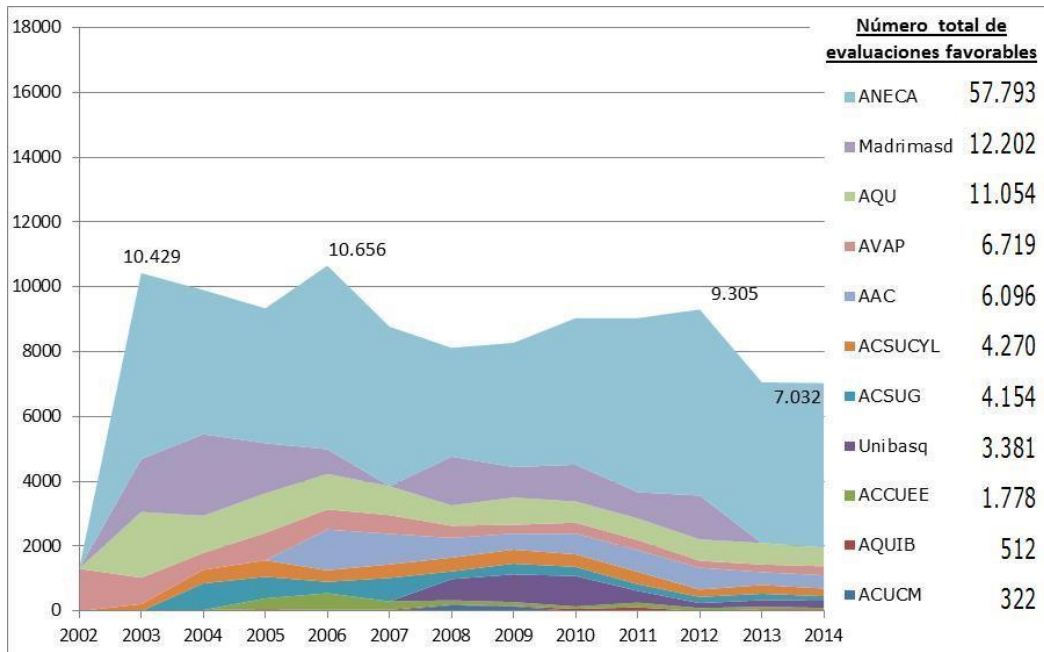
Agencies belonging to REACU

Figure 3.1. Applications assessed between 2002 and 2014 for contractual TRS roles, by assessment year and quality agency.



Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

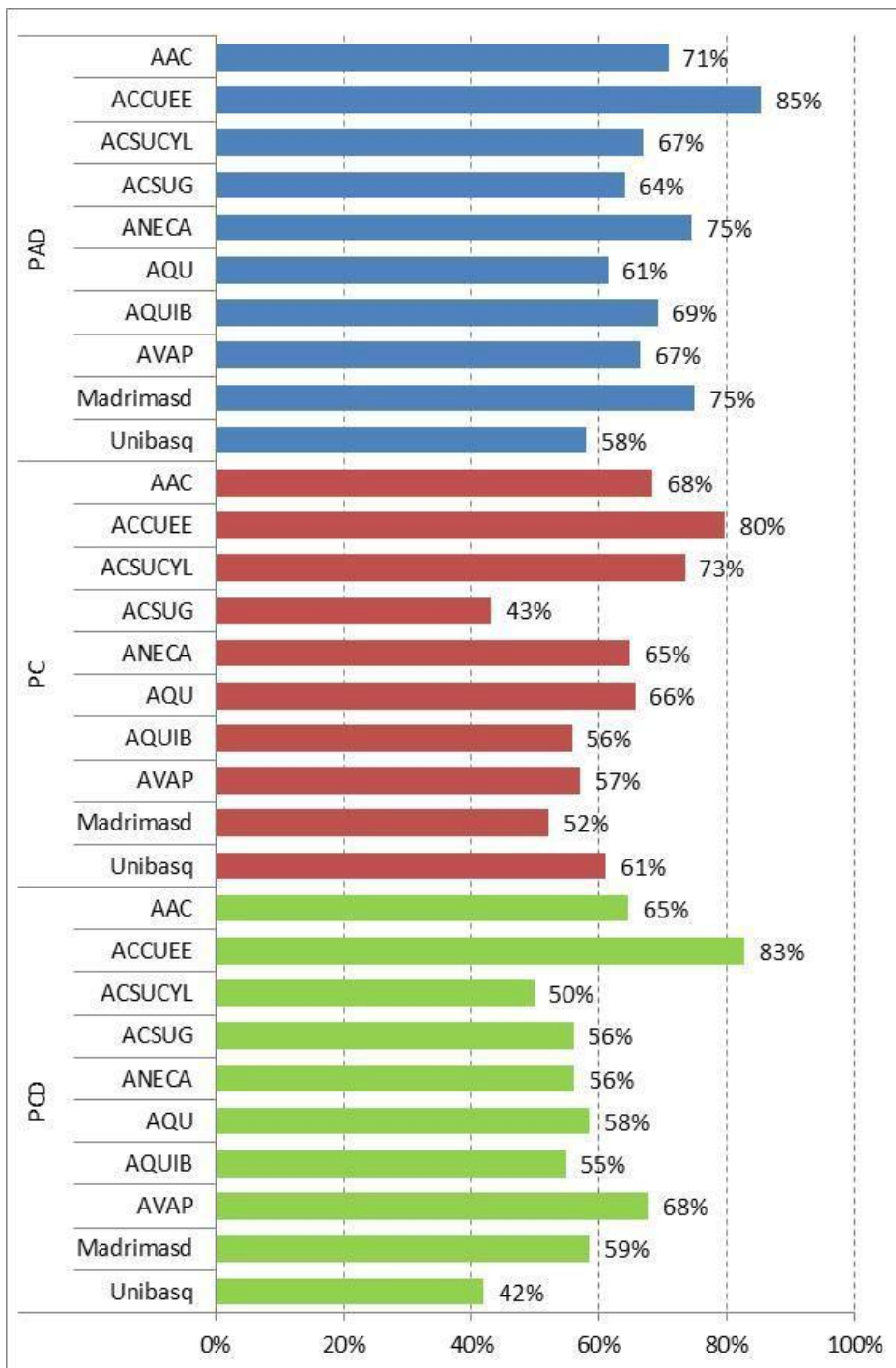
Figure 3.2. Applications with a favourable assessment between 2002 and 2014 for contractual TRS roles, by assessment year and quality agency.



Note: includes data from the defunct Castile-La Mancha agency (ACUCM).

Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

Figure 3.3. Percentage of favourable assessments from all applications for the contractual roles of PAD, PC and PCD, between 2007 and 2014, by agency.

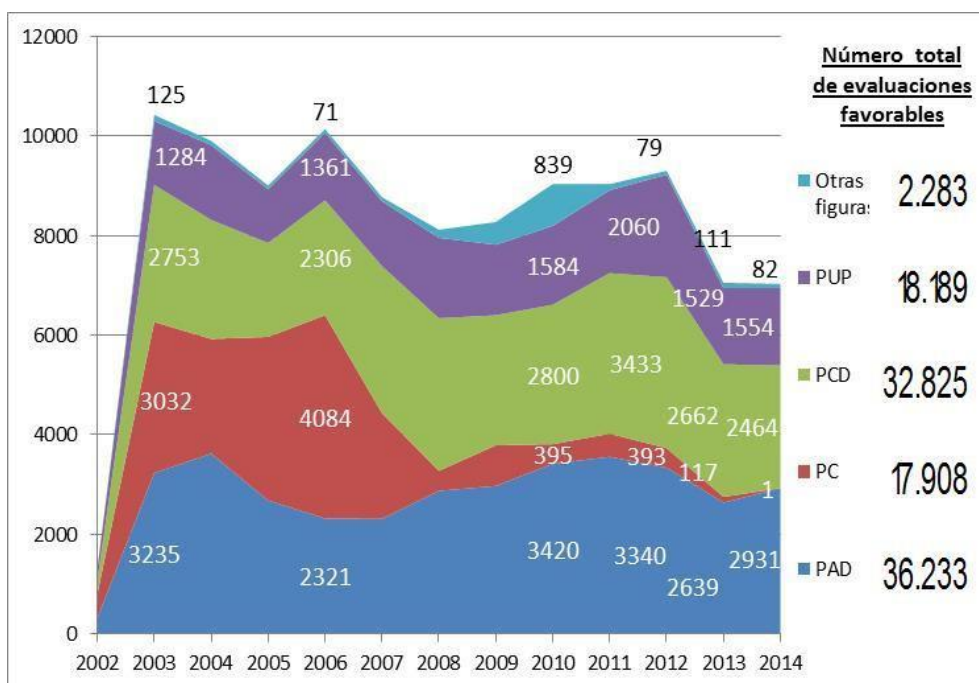


Note: does not include data from the defunct Castile-La Mancha agency (ACUCM).

Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

With the disappearance of the *Profesor Colaborador* (PC) role for new TRS posts as set out in the regulations⁶⁰, the applications in 2014 that had a favourable assessment were mainly shared between the roles of *Profesor Ayudante Doctor* (PAD), which accounted for 42% of the applications, and *Profesor Contratado Doctor* (PCD), which accounted for 35% (see Figure 3.4.). Virtually all of the remainder were accounted for by the *Profesor de Universidad Privada* (PUP) role (22%), which, as is evident from the chart, tracks a parallel path with the ups and downs of PCD remarkably closely; indeed it is not uncommon for the same person to apply simultaneously for assessment in both roles.

Figure 3.4. Change between 2002 and 2014 in the distribution of favourable assessments, by role.



Note: the 843 positive assessments from the Canary Islands' agency for 2005 and 2006 are not included, because the data were not available broken down by contractual role

Other roles: *Catedrático Contratado* (AQU Catalunya); *Asociado*, *Personal Doctor Investigador* and *Profesor Pleno* (Unibasq).

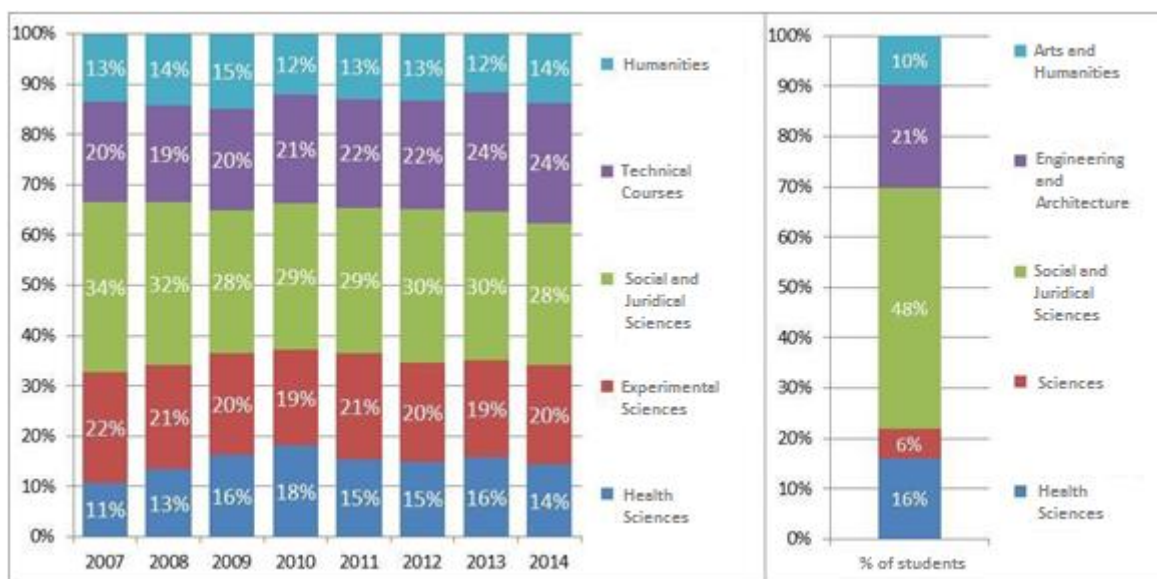
Source: Agencies belonging to REACU.

⁶⁰ Here it is worth drawing attention to the changes seen in the total positive assessments for the PC role; these came about because of the modifications that occurred in the legislation from 2007 onwards, introducing the requirement to have a diploma, technical engineer or technical architect qualification to be able to apply for an assessment for this role, a regulatory change that immediately cut the number of applicants. Moreover, the legislation subsequently established that universities would no longer be able to offer *Profesor Colaborador* posts from 3 May 2013.

In terms of the distribution of favourable assessments by branch of knowledge in 2014, the highest percentages were in Social and Juridical Sciences, Technical Courses and Experimental Sciences, with 28%, 24% and 20% respectively. The remainder were distributed equally between the branches of Health Sciences and Humanities (see Figure 3.5.).

There is a certain degree of consistency between this distribution and that observed for students matriculated in first- and second-cycle university courses in the 2013-14 academic year in the Arts and Humanities, Engineering and Architecture and Health Sciences branches. However there are two striking facts here. First, the percentage of students matriculated in Social and Juridical Science courses, no less than 48%, contrasts starkly with the proportion of favourable TRS applications for this branch as a proportion of all the favourable assessments; and secondly there is also an appreciable difference, albeit running the other way, between the proportion of students (6%) and the proportion of favourable TRS assessments in the Sciences – or Experimental Sciences – branch (20%).

Figure 3.5. Change in the distribution of favourable assessments by branch of knowledge, between 2007 and 2014; and the distribution of students in the 1st and 2nd cycles, bachelor’s and master’s degrees, by branch of knowledge, for the 2013-14 academic year.



Source: Agencies belonging to REACU and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport

In order to understand the circumstances in which these assessment programmes currently operate it is necessary to take several important considerations into account. First, given the fact that outside the universities there are scarcely any jobs in the Spanish labour market that require candidates to have doctoral degrees, offers that do have these characteristics are particularly concentrated in higher education. Secondly, despite the notable proliferation of new degrees and the not inconsiderable number of TRS approaching retirement age – two factors that might have led to a greater offer of TRS posts – the recent economic headwinds and the fact that the number of students matriculated at university has remained relatively stable – around 1.5 million in first- and second-cycle degrees since the 2009-10 academic year, and with few signs of significant growth in light of the demographic scenario – have curtailed the offer of new TRS posts. Thirdly, the number of people with a doctoral degree has increased at an incomparably higher rate than the number of TRS posts offered by universities for which such people may apply.

All these facts help to account for the large number of people who have been applying for these assessment programmes for contractual TRS roles since they began, which even so is considerably lower than the number of people with a recently obtained doctoral degree and presumably aspiring to pursue a professional university career; they also help to explain the significant gap between the number of people who obtain a positive assessment outcome and the number of these who actually secure a post in one of the contractual roles for which such certification is needed.

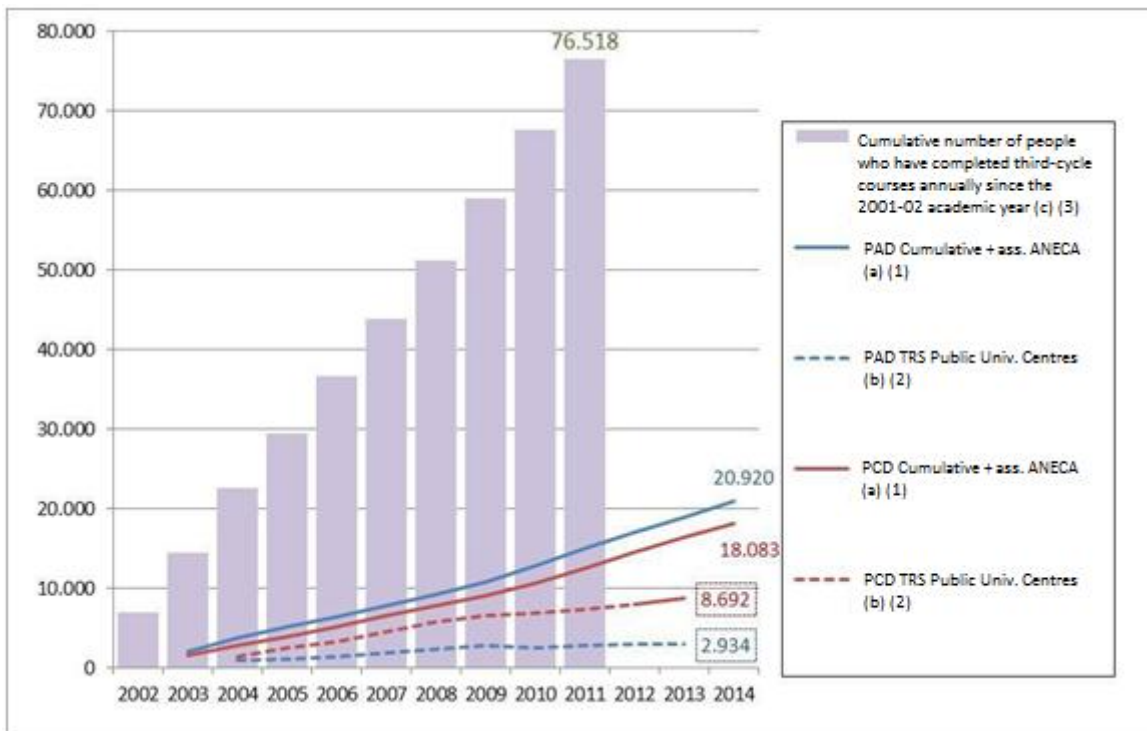
To illustrate this phenomenon it may be useful to focus on the change in the cumulative number of people who obtain accreditation for PAD and PCD, the number of people occupying PAD and PCD posts in centres belonging to public universities, and the cumulative number of people who have finished doctoral courses in recent years. As in the previous report, in order to eliminate the aforementioned effect of various accreditations being accumulated by a single person for the same role, it has been decided to focus only on favourable

assessments that are valid throughout the entire country⁶¹ for the roles of *Profesor Ayudante Doctor* (PAD) and *Profesor Contratado Doctor* (PCD); these two roles, due to their position in the teaching career ladder and the volume of people they affect, are the most critical in the TRS assessment process for recruitment purposes (see Figure 3.6.).

In addition to this, the fact that the number of candidates far exceeds the posts being offered for the PCD role (a permanent teaching role that marks the point of transition between the regularly-employed TRS and the university teaching staff with the status of civil servants), has caused an unknown number of candidates with positive PCD assessments, before securing posts in this role, to seek other ways of joining academia by applying to be assessed for the teaching staff role of *Profesor Titular de Universidad* (TU) via the national accreditation programme; this is a strategy that is foreign to the design envisaged for the TRS career in the Spanish university system. In fact, although the natural trajectory of the TRS career is to follow the PAD-PCD-TU sequence, because the three stages of this sequence share the same prerequisites to be able to submit an assessment application, as has already been mentioned, it is not uncommon for a significant number of people to submit applications simultaneously for PCD and TU.

⁶¹ Assessments carried out by ANECA.

Figure 3.6. Change in the cumulative number of people who obtain PAD and PCD accreditation, the number of people in PAD and PCD posts at public university centres and the cumulative number of people who complete third-cycle (doctoral) courses.



Key:

(a) Assessment year.

(b) Year in which the academic year started. TRS of public universities' own centres.

(c) Year of completing studies. Anyone who in the period concerned finished more than one third-cycle course is counted here as many times as they finished a third-cycle course.

Sources:

(1) ANECA

(2) Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport

(3) INE

Finally it may be concluded that the quality agencies, in the scenario described above and by evaluating the various contractual roles, have played their commissioned part of helping to guide the TRS career and place at universities' disposal a significant pool of candidates with corroborated CVs – in accordance with the requirements of the roles in question – from which, by virtue of the said universities' autonomy and responsibility, they are free to choose the people who

enter and form part of their contracted TRS.

In addition it would be advisable to bear all the foregoing in mind, not only in the planning of TRS selection policies in terms of, for example, the number of degrees and students, but also in assessing the competitive interest in future contractual TRS posts and the effects on the profession of the numerous people who decide to pursue this path.

3.2. ACCREDITATION FOR ACCESS TO THE TENURED TEACHING STAFF.

As is well known, the professional trajectory for the contractual roles described in the section above has its continuity in the tenured university teaching staff, comprising the roles of *Profesor Titular de Universidad* (TU) and *Catedrático de Universidad* (CU). Thus, in addition to the aforementioned roles, through its ACADEMIA programme the National Agency has pursued the twofold objective of guiding the TRS professional trajectory and offering an assurance to society that the people concerned fulfil certain thresholds of preparedness.

This programme assesses personal attainments in research, teaching, academic training and management, assigning to each one a particular weighting in the overall scheme of the model (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3. Maximum scores for criteria and minimum requirements for accreditation in the general scale established in RD 1312/2007.

	TU		CU	
	Maximum score	Minimum score for passing assessment	Maximum score	Minimum score for passing assessment
Total	100	65	100	80
Research activity	50	60 (between both sections)	55	-
Teaching or professional activity	40		35	20
Academic training	5	-	-	-
Experience in management and administration	5	-	10	-

Source: ANECA

By means of the accreditations awarded, the institutions of higher education have been provided with a pool of candidates that, having passed a process of assessment at a national level, have shown that they possess sufficient academic merit to compete for a post as *Profesor Titular de Universidad* or *Catedrático de Universidad*. Thus, as indicated above, it is these institutions that, exercising their autonomy and responsibility, make the final selection of those who actually assume the university teaching posts being offered.

Results obtained

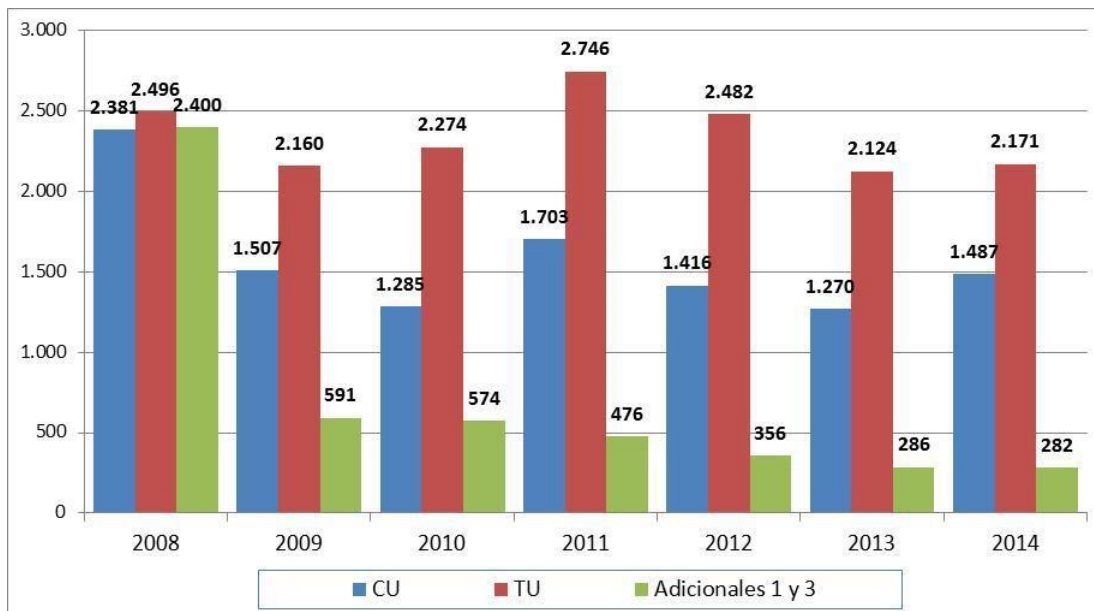
The assessment carried out by ANECA through the ACADEMIA programme is based upon Royal Decree 1312/2007⁶² and other legislation in the field regulating the essential procedures for accessing the university teaching staff posts of *Profesor Titular de Universidad* and *Catedrático de Universidad* at public universities in Spain⁶³.

Applications for assessment underwent a progressive decline between 2011 and 2013, but there was a recovery in the following year, with 2,171 applications for *Titular de Universidad* and 1,487 for *Catedrático de Universidad*, almost the same levels as in 2009 in terms of the number of applications submitted by the ordinary procedure (see Figure 3.7).

⁶² This Royal Decree establishes, among other things, the assessment criteria, the procedure for the composition, selection and renewal of the assessment commissions, the various aspects to be evaluated in the applicants' CVs and the importance to be assigned to these.

⁶³ Organic Law 4/2007 establishes that "access to the staff of university teacher-civil servants (...) will require the prior acquisition of national accreditation, evaluating the merits and competences of the candidates, ensuring quality in the recruitment of teaching staff". Complementing this, Royal Decree 1312/2007, dated 5 October, established the essential aspects of national accreditation for access to the staff of teacher-civil servants.

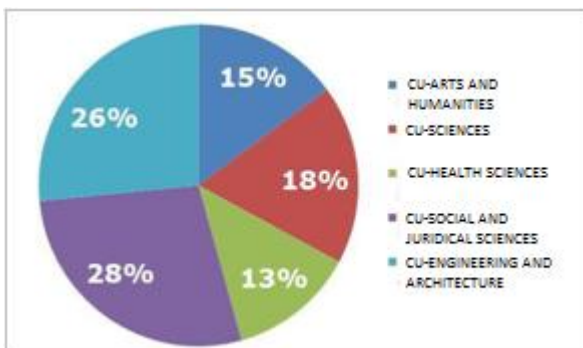
Figure 3.7. Annual change in the number of assessment applications submitted for accreditation between 2008 and 2014, by teaching role.



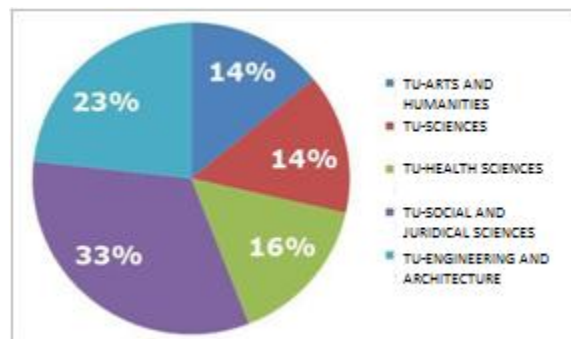
Source: ANECA

When classified by branch of knowledge the applications received in 2014 were distributed similarly in the case of both *Profesor Titular de Universidad* and *Catedrático de Universidad*. Thus more than half of the applications belonged to Social and Juridical Sciences and Engineering and Architecture, while the remaining applications were distributed fairly evenly between the other three branches of knowledge (see Figures 3.8. and 3.9.).

Figures 3.8 and 3.9. Distribution of the number of accreditation applications for *Catedrático de Universidad* and *Profesor Titular de Universidad* in 2014, by branch of knowledge.



Source: ANECA



Source: ANECA

By virtue of the assessments carried out within the framework of the programme since its launch to the end of 2014 more than 7,000 people have obtained accreditation for *Catedrático de Universidad* by the ordinary procedure and more than 10,000 for *Profesor Titular de Universidad* – to which some 4,000 people who obtained accreditation for the latter role by a different earlier procedure must also be added. In short, these are by no means insignificant figures taking into account the circumstances noted in the previous section regarding the offer of new university posts in recent years.

The more than seven years in which the ACADEMIA programme has been running have lent it considerable maturity in terms of the way the assessment model is applied. While there is a notable stability in the assessment results for each of the branches of knowledge, barring the first year, some downward trends appear in the percentages of positive assessments in 2013; these are probably related to the haste of some applicants in terms of submitting themselves for assessment, motivated by expectations of a change in the programme's assessment model –a change that did not however occur in 2014 (see Tables 3.4. and 3.5.).

Similarly, there is an appreciable stability in the results of assessments carried out within the framework of additional provisions 1 and 3 of Royal Decree 1312/2007⁶⁴; although there is a progressive decline in the numbers since the start of the programme, the tenor observed in previous years is maintained in the aforementioned results (see Table 3.6.).

Meanwhile, something that has remained constant since the start of the ACADEMIA programme and in a more striking way than in the case of assessment programmes for contractual TRS roles, are notable differences in the rates of positive assessments (in the ordinary procedure) when comparing branches of knowledge. Thus, for example, in 2014 the percentage of favourable assessments in the Arts and Humanities branch for the role of *Profesor Titular de Universidad* reached 80%,

⁶⁴ First additional provision. Accreditation of teaching staff at university schools and third additional provision. Of the accreditation of stable or permanent teaching staff at public higher education centres (INEF) that have recourse to the seventeenth additional provision of Organic Law 4/2007, dated 12 April.

whereas the figure for the Health Sciences branch was 46% (see Tables 3.4. and 3.5.).



AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

Table 3.4. Assessment results for accreditation of *Catedrático de Universidad* (via ordinary procedure) between 2008 and 2014, by branch of knowledge.

CATEDRÁTICO DE UNIVERSIDAD	Total 2008-current			Year of assessment																								
				2008				2009				2010				2011				2012				2013				2014
	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total				
	N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%	N	%
Arts & Hum.	1,083	71%	1,536	191	92%	207	248	66%	373	113	63%	180	135	72%	188	129	64%	203	132	61%	216	135	80%	169				
Sciences	2,047	77%	2,653	330	94%	351	547	82%	668	282	75%	378	256	74%	344	282	70%	405	174	65%	269	176	74%	238				
H. Sciences	1,132	73%	1,541	132	92%	144	270	71%	382	147	70%	211	189	86%	219	165	68%	243	110	59%	187	119	77%	155				
S. & J. Science	1,446	60%	2,403	158	89%	178	308	62%	496	142	50%	282	171	59%	289	262	61%	430	196	52%	378	209	60%	350				
Eng. & Arch.	1,392	69%	2,024	106	86%	123	270	69%	393	173	63%	276	165	61%	272	231	70%	329	225	71%	319	222	71%	312				
TOTAL	7,100	70%	10,157	917	91%	1,003	1,643	71%	2,312	857	65%	1,327	916	70%	1,312	1,069	66%	1,610	837	61%	1,369	861	70%	1,224				

Key:

Arts & Hum.: ARTS AND HUMANITIES

H. Sciences: HEALTH SCIENCES

S. & J. Science: SOCIAL AND JURIDICAL SCIENCES

Eng. & Arch.: ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURE

Source: ANECA

Table 3.5. Assessment results for accreditation of *Profesor Titular de Universidad* (via ordinary procedure) between 2008 and 2014, by branch of knowledge.

TITULAR DE UNIVERSIDAD	Total 2008-current		Year of assessment																									
			2008				2009				2010				2011				2012				2013				2014	
	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total				
	N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%	N	%
Arts & Hum.	1,553	69%	2,254	133	83%	160	320	74%	433	221	69%	318	226	63%	358	220	56%	391	249	69%	363	184	80%	231				
Sciences	2,199	77%	2,855	244	92%	265	501	76%	659	345	78%	444	345	79%	436	340	76%	448	257	72%	359	167	68%	244				
H. Sciences	1,489	57%	2,629	121	82%	147	329	63%	526	302	60%	505	245	60%	407	191	46%	416	162	50%	326	139	46%	302				
S. & J. Science	2,433	58%	4,162	195	77%	253	328	50%	661	306	55%	556	390	65%	602	464	61%	761	416	55%	752	334	58%	577				
Eng. & Arch.	2,412	76%	3,169	181	90%	201	349	67%	520	278	68%	406	345	74%	464	556	86%	643	444	76%	584	259	74%	351				
TOTAL	10,086	67%	15,069	874	85%	1,026	1,827	65%	2,799	1,452	65%	2,229	1,551	68%	2,267	1,771	67%	2,659	1,528	64%	2,384	1,083	64%	1,705				

Key:

Arts & Hum.: ARTS AND HUMANITIES

H. Sciences: HEALTH SCIENCES

S. & J. Science: SOCIAL AND JURIDICAL SCIENCES

Eng. & Arch.: ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURE

Source: ANECA

Table 3.6. Assessment results for accreditation of *Profesor Titular de Universidad* (via Additional Commission) between 2008 and 2014, by type of procedure.

ADDITIONAL	Total 2008-current		Year of assessment																									
			2008				2009				2010				2011				2012				2013				2014	
	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total	Positive assessment		Total				
	Nº	%		Nº	%		Nº	%		Nº	%		Nº	%		Nº	%		Nº	%		Nº	%		Nº	%	Nº	%
Automatic	3,415	92%	3,720	1,783	99%	1,806	397	94%	421	290	76%	381	326	87%	375	245	82%	297	189	85%	223	185	85%	217				
Non-automatic	532	54%	988	111	77%	144	191	51%	376	71	47%	151	50	54%	93	42	42%	99	32	49%	65	35	58%	60				
TOTAL	3,947	84%	4,708	1,894	97%	1,950	588	74%	797	361	68%	532	376	80%	468	287	72%	396	221	77%	288	220	79%	277				

Source: ANECA

Comparison between men and women in tenured university teaching staff.

The steady incorporation of women into higher education that has taken place in recent decades represents significant progress in terms of equality, but this does not mean that equality with men is a reality either in today's society, in general, or in universities in particular (European Parliament, 2012).

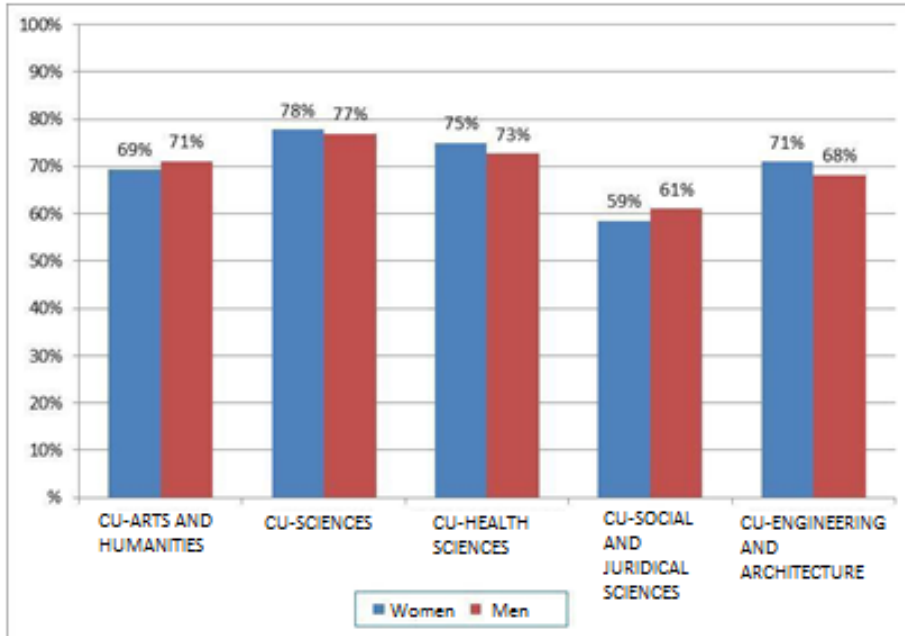
Figures from recent years show that the doctoral theses approved in Spain are distributed almost equally between men and women⁶⁵. This means that even in the third cycle there is evidence of solid progress being made – particularly in specific branches of knowledge.

The aforementioned equality however, as has been mentioned in previous reports, does not seem to have reached the TRS context.

Results of the accreditation assessments carried out for access to the tenured university teaching staff show that, for both roles and all of the branches of knowledge, the proportions of men and women achieving accreditation is very similar (see Figures 3.10. and 3.11.).

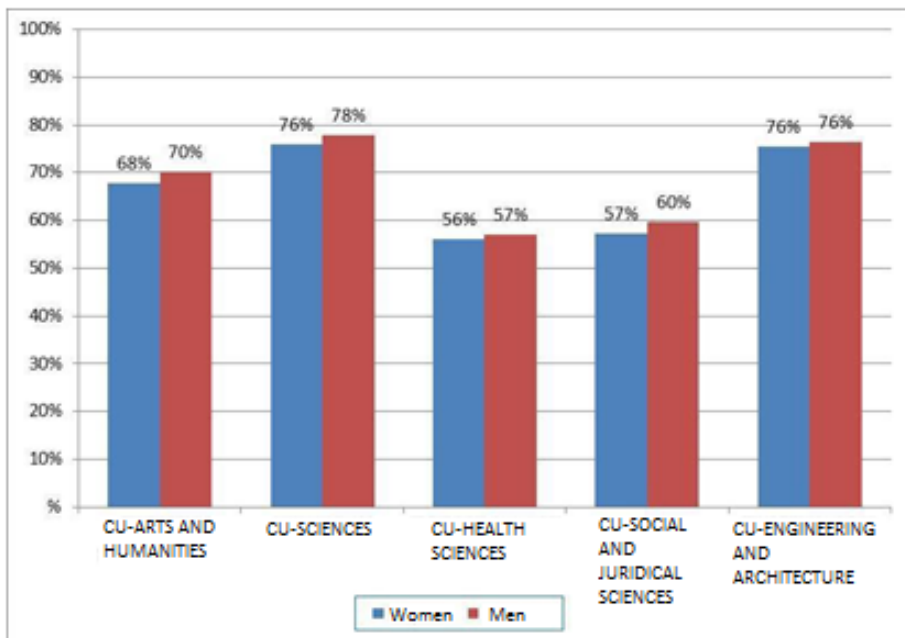
⁶⁵ Between 2009 and 2013, of all doctoral theses approved, the percentage submitted by women fluctuated between 47% and 50% (Source: TESEO –MECD).

Figure 3.10. Percentages of positive assessments, out of assessment applications submitted, between 2008 and 2014 for accreditation in CU, by sex and branch of knowledge.



Source: ANECA

Figure 3.11. Percentages of positive assessments, out of assessment applications submitted, between 2008 and 2014 for accreditation in TU, by sex and branch of knowledge.

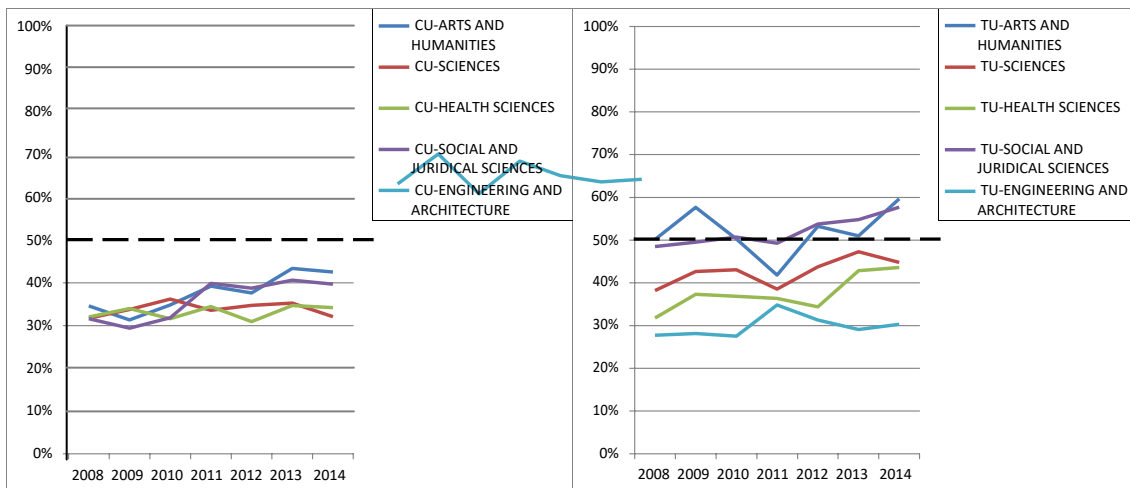


Source: ANECA

Even so, it is worth focusing on a fundamental prior aspect that highlights the need to persist in efforts to mitigate some of the inequalities that still exist – both in terms of gender and other variables – in gaining access to specific university strata.

The evolution in the percentage of applications submitted by women for accreditation assessment in university teaching staff between 2008 and 2014 reveals various significant elements. First, it is evident that, apart from the case of *Titular de Universidad* in the Social and Juridical Sciences and Arts and Humanities branches, the proportion of men who are actually applying for accreditation in either of the teaching staff is higher than the proportion of women – sometimes with extraordinarily large differences in such branches as Engineering and Architecture, where, in the case of *Catedrático de Universidad*, the applications from women account for only two out of every 10, and in the case of *Titular de Universidad*, three out of 10. Secondly, the situation in the case of *Titular de Universidad* is notably more equal than in the case of *Catedrático de Universidad*, something that suggests the progress mentioned above is still a long way from becoming widespread in the higher echelons of public universities' TRS. Thirdly, whereas there is a tendency for this type of inequality to diminish over the period in question in some branches, applications for *Catedrático de Universidad* accreditation in, for example, the branches of Engineering and Architecture, Sciences and Health Sciences show no such tendencies (see Figures 3.12. and 3.13.).

Figures 3.12. and 3.13. Percentage of applications submitted for assessment by women between 2008 and 2014 for accreditation in TU and CU, by branch of knowledge.



Source: ANECA

All the above means that, barring the exceptional case of *Titular de Universidad* in the Social and Juridical Sciences and Arts and Humanities branches, most of the accreditations for the CU and TU teaching staff are accounted for by men, with striking imbalances in the Engineering and Architecture branch (see Figures 3.14. and 3.15.).

Beyond the distribution of the accreditations, the imbalance becomes even more acute when one looks at the proportion of women with TRS posts in centres belonging to public universities, especially in the case of *Catedrático de Universidad*; a particularly revealing example is provided by the Engineering and Architecture branch, where only one out of every 10 *Catedrático de Universidad* posts is occupied by a woman (see Figures 3.14. and 3.15.).

Figure 3.14. Percentage of women compared to the total number of people with CU ACADEMIA accreditation, between 2008 and 2014, and the percentage of women compared to the total number of people occupying a CU post in the 2013-14 academic year, by branch of knowledge.

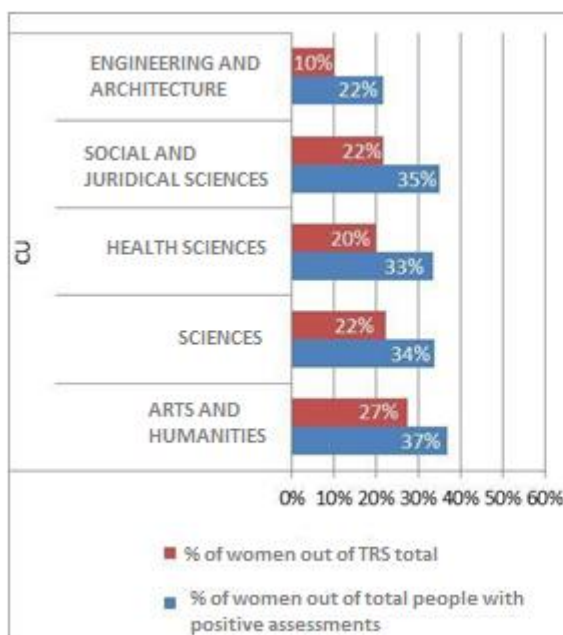
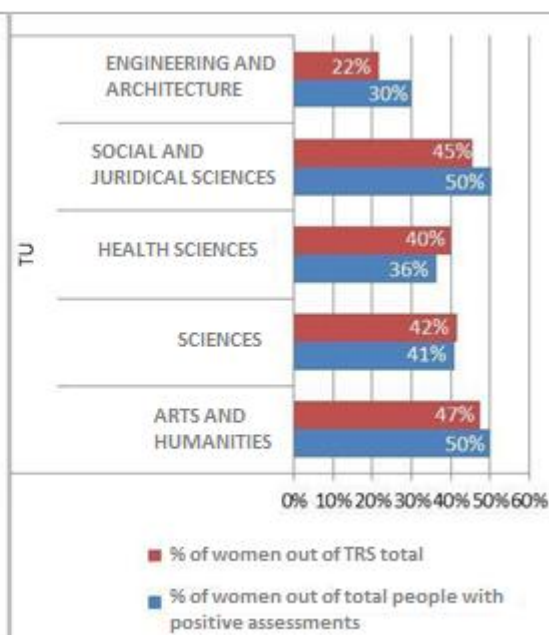


Figure 3.15. Percentage of women compared to the total number of people with TU ACADEMIA accreditation, between 2008 and 2014, and the percentage of women compared to the total number of people occupying a TU post in the 2013-14 academic year, by branch of knowledge.



Sources:

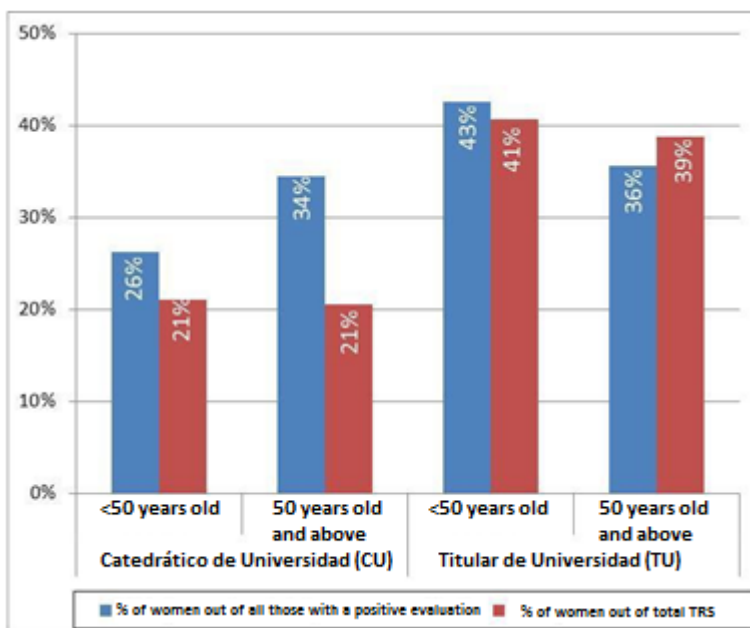
ANECA. ACADEMIA Programme

General Subdirectorate of Coordination and University Monitoring. Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport. Total number of tenured TRS in centres belonging to public universities by sex, teaching post and branch of knowledge

Although, as was seen in the previous report, the presence of women is steadily showing a more even balance in public universities' TRS as a whole, as younger generations are incorporated, in the highest ranks of the academic profession, in TU and especially in CU, a balanced situation is still far from evident.

Thus among those who occupy a *Catedrático de Universidad* post who are younger than 50⁶⁶, the proportion of women out all those who occupy a CU post is lower than the proportion of women out of all those obtaining accreditation for such a post (see Figure 3.16.).

Figure 3.16. Percentage of women compared to the total people with ACADEMIA CU or TU accreditation, between 2008 and 2014, and the percentage of women compared to the total people occupying a CU or TU post in the 2013-14 academic year, by age group.



Sources:

ANECA. ACADEMIA Programme
 General Subdirectorate of Coordination and University Monitoring. Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport. Total number of TRS in centres belonging to public universities by sex, age group and personnel category.

In light of the main results of the programme it is possible to conclude that, apart from the already stated fact that public universities have at their disposal a large pool of people with suitable CVs when it comes to appointing their tenured TRS, these assessment processes have succeeded in incentivising improvements in essential and complementary aspects of TRS labours, such as research activities

⁶⁶ A group that accounts for approximately one sixth of those occupying a *Catedrático de Universidad* post.

and teaching activities. In the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and European Research Area (ERA) guidelines, both present in the university context, clear emphasis is placed on the importance of focusing on the preparedness of university personnel to discharge their main functions, and without implying that one of these is of lesser importance or unnecessary, the fact of ensuring the quality of one of them does not entail attaining the level required in other, also important, functions.

3.3. OTHER RECOGNITION OF TRS ACTIVITY.

Other assessment processes, in addition to the ones already described, are used to guide and recognise the performance of university TRS, and are run by both assessment agencies and the universities themselves. Such processes, accompanied by an incentive in accordance with the teaching, research, management or other activities pertinent to the work of TRS, often contribute to improving the quality of service provided by university higher education.

Thus, in addition to the goals set out above, these assessment processes contribute to increasing transparency in recognition, with the ultimate aim of ensuring the quality of the higher education that is delivered to society.

The individual economic incentives established for Spanish university teaching staff, in the form of remunerative complements, are awarded fundamentally in two contexts:

- State context⁶⁷.

In the case of tenured personnel, as far as research activity is concerned, periods of six years (known as *sexenios*) are evaluated by National Research Evaluation Commission (CNEAI-ANECA); and as far as teaching activity is concerned, periods of five years (known as *quinquenios*) are evaluated or recognised by the universities themselves.

- Autonomous community context⁶⁸.

The granting of remunerative complements by the autonomous communities is linked to the assessment of the individual attainments of teaching staff in carrying out the following functions: teaching activity and dedication, teacher training, research, technological development, knowledge transfer and management. The agencies, which in many cases are responsible for these assessment processes, evaluate the attainments in accordance with the regulations in force in each autonomous community and the assessment criteria

⁶⁷ Regulated by Royal Decree 1086/1989. In addition, apart from the *sexenios* and *quinquenios* established within the framework of this Royal Decree, other types of *sexenios* and *quinquenios* for contracted TRS are assessed on the basis of different provisions.

⁶⁸ Regulated by article 55 of the LOMLOU.

set out in the programmes. While the way each autonomous community deals with remunerative complements differs widely from one geographical area to another, the agencies' assessment models share the same basic principles in terms of the elements of professional track records to be assessed (see Table 3.7.).

As far as the processes run by the universities themselves are concerned, one thing that stands out is the growing importance of their own systems for assessing teaching quality; with the aim of fulfilling their responsibility to society and incentivising and recognising the efforts of the TRS, they have made a commitment to internal systems of assessment and improvement, many of which have been designed under the umbrella of DOCENTIA, the results of which were set out in the chapter one of this report.

Table 3.7. Autonomous communities' remunerative complements assessed by quality agencies.

TRS role eligible for the complements and link to the granting of *quinquenios* and *sexenios*.

This table shows the types of remunerative complements that are assessed and the profile of the university teaching staff that can apply for them.

	Aspect to be assessed			
	Research and transference (and link to <i>sexenios</i>)	Teaching (and link to <i>quinquenios</i>)	Management	Others
Aragon -ACPUA-	<u>Research attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS. Full time. (<i>Sexenios</i>)	<u>Teaching attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff. Contracted TRS. Full time.		<u>Professional dedication attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff. Contracted TRS. Full time
Balearic Islands -AQIB-	<u>Remunerative complement to stimulate and recognise research activity</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS in regular (indefinite) employment. Full time. 6 years' employment record. (<i>Sexenios</i>)	<u>Remunerative complement to stimulate and recognise research excellence and knowledge transfer⁶⁹</u> Contracted TRS in regular (indefinite) employment. Full time. 12 years' employment record.	<u>Remunerative complement to stimulate and recognise teaching and ongoing training</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS in regular (indefinite) employment. Full time. 2 years' employment record. (<i>Quinquenios</i>)	
Canary Islands -ACCUEE-	<u>Research attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS. Link during the period subject to assessment. Full time	<u>Teaching attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS. Link during the period subject to assessment. Full or part time.	<u>Attainments in institutional services</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS. Link during the period subject to assessment. Full or part time	
Castile and Leon -ACSUCYL-	<u>Complement in recognition of research work for the doctoral level</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS (indefinite) Bearer of doctoral title. 1 year's employment record.	<u>Complement in recognition of teaching work</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS (indefinite) Full or part time. 1 year's employment record	<u>Complement in recognition of academic duties discharged in university management</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS (indefinite) Full or part time. 2 years' employment record in an academic role.	

⁶⁹ Has not been assessed since the publication of Decree 16/2013, dated 26 April, regarding the temporary suspension of the additional remunerative complement to stimulate and recognise the research experience and knowledge transfer of teaching and research staff at the University of the Balearic Islands.

(continuation)

	Aspect to be assessed			
	Research and transference (and link to <i>sexenios</i>)	Teaching (and link to <i>quinquenios</i>)	Management	Others
Community of Valencia -AVAP-	<u>Teaching and research attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff. (<i>Sexenios</i>) / (<i>Quinquenios</i>) <u>Teaching and research attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff <u>Teaching and research mobility attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff		<u>Attainments in university management</u> Tenured teaching staff	
	<u>Research productivity attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff			
Galicia -ACSUG-	<u>Remunerative complement for teaching and research work</u> Tenured teaching staff Doctoral contracted TRS	<u>Remunerative complement for teaching and research work</u> Tenured teaching staff Doctoral contracted TRS	<u>Remunerative complement for management duties</u> Tenured teaching staff Doctoral contracted TRS	<u>Remunerative complement for employment excellence</u> Tenured teaching staff Doctoral contracted TRS
(Community of) Madrid -madr+d-	<u>Attainments complement (research, external financing projects and teaching)</u> Tenured teaching staff. Contracted TRS			<u>Attainments complement (research, external financing projects and teaching)</u> Tenured teaching staff. Contracted TRS
				<u>Specific complement</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS. Full or part time

(continuation)

	Aspect to be assessed			
	Research and transference (and link to <i>sexenios</i>)	Teaching (and link to <i>quinquenios</i>)	Management	Others
Basque Country⁷⁰ -Unibasq-	<u>Additional remunerative complements for the TRS</u>			
	<u>Research attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff Permanently contracted TRS. Full or part time	<u>Teaching attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS. Full or part time	<u>Management attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS. Full or part time	<u>Linguistic attainments</u> Tenured teaching staff Contracted TRS. Full or part time
	<u>Teaching staff with permanent UPV/EHU employment</u> (Full and assistant teaching staff, permanent collaborators and permanent researchers). Full or part time. (<i>Sexenios</i>)			

Note: ANECA has also signed agreements to evaluate the individual attainments of teaching and research staff for the purpose of awarding remunerative complements at the following universities: University of Cantabria, University of Extremadura and Rey Juan Carlos University.

⁷⁰Unibasq carries out two types of assessment:

- 1.- Assessment for awarding additional remunerative complements for the TRS at the University of the Basque Country (UPV). This assessment reviews: teaching, research and management.
- 2.- Assessment of research activity for awarding *sexenios* to teaching staff with permanent employment contracts (full and assistant teaching staff, permanent collaborators and permanent researchers) at the University of the Basque Country. This assessment is carried out annually, coinciding with the assessment programme for the tenured teaching staff.



AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

4. ANNEX OF RESULTS

Table A.1. Synthesis of the results of universities' participation in the AUDIT and DOCENTIA programmes up to 31/12/2014, by autonomous community and university.

Education Authority responsible and University	AUDIT Certification	DOCENTIA Certification
Andalusia		
University of Almería	A	DD
University of Cádiz	AAA	D+
University of Córdoba	A	DD
University of Granada	---	D+
University of Huelva	AAA	D+
University of Jaén	CA	D+
University of Málaga	AAA	D+
University of Sevilla	A	D
International University of Andalusia	---	D+
Loyola University Andalusia	---	---
Pablo de Olavide University	AAA	D+
Aragón		
University of Zaragoza	C	+
San Jorge University	CAA	DD+
Canary Islands		
University of La Laguna	A	DD
University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria	CAA	DD
European University of the Canaries	AA	---
Fernando Pessoa-Canarias University (UFP-C)	n.p.	n.p.
Cantabria		
University of Cantabria	---	D+
European University of the Atlantic	---	---
Castile and León		
IE University	---	DD
Santa Teresa de Jesús de Ávila Catholic University	AAAA	DD+
University of Burgos	AA	DD+
University of León	AAA	DD
University of Salamanca	A	DD+
University of Valladolid	A	DD
Miguel de Cervantes European University	AA	DDD
Isabel I de Castilla International University	---	---
Pontifical University of Salamanca	---	---
Castile-La Mancha		
University of Castilla-La Mancha	A	+
Catalonia*		
Abat Oliba University CEU	AA	DD+
Autonomous University of Barcelona	A	DDD
University of Barcelona	AA	DDD
University of Girona	A	DDD
University of Lleida	AA	DDD
University of Vic	A	D+
International University of Catalonia	AAA	DD+
Open University of Catalunya	AAAA	DD
Polytechnic University of Catalunya	AAA	DDD
Pompeu Fabra University	A	DDD
Ramon Llull University	AA	DD+
Rovira i Virgili University	AA	DDD

Education Authority responsible and University	AUDIT Certification	DOCENTIA Certification
Community of Madrid		
Madrid Distance Learning University	---	DD
Alfonso X El Sabio University	AAA	+
Antonio de Nebrija University	AA	DD
Autonomous University of Madrid	A	DDD
Camilo José Cela University	AA	DD+
Carlos III de Madrid University	AA	DD
Complutense University Madrid	A	DD
University of Alcalá	AA	DD
European University of Madrid	AAA	---
Francisco de Vitoria University	A	DDD
Polytechnic University of Madrid	CA	DD
Comillas Pontifical University	AAA	+
Rey Juan Carlos University	CA	DDD
San Pablo-CEU University	---	D
Technology and Business University	n.p.	n.p.
Community of Navarra		
University of Navarra	A	D-
Public University of Navarra	---	DD+
Community of Valencia		
Cardenal Herrera-CEU University	AA	D+
Valencia San Vicente Mártir Catholic University	AA	DD+
University of Alicante	AA	D+
European University of Valencia	---	---
Jaume I University of Castellón	AAA	DD+
Miguel Hernández University of Elche	CA	D+
University of Valencia (General Studies)	A	+
International Valencian University	---	---
Polytechnic University of Valencia	AAA	DDD
Extremadura		
University of Extremadura	CAA	D+
Galicia		
University of A Coruña	CAA	DD
University of Santiago de Compostela	AAA	DD
University of Vigo	CAA	DD
Balearic Islands		
University of the Balearic Islands	A	D+
Rioja		
University of Rioja	---	DD+
International University of Rioja	---	---
Basque Country		
Mondragón University	CCAA	D+
University of Deusto	C	D+
University of the Basque Country/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea	CAA	DD
Principado de Asturias		
University of Oviedo	AA	D+
Región de Murcia		
San Antonio Catholic University	AAAA	DD
University of Murcia	CAA	DD
Polytechnic University of Cartagena	AA	D
State		
Menéndez Pelayo International University	---	---
National Distance Learning University	AAA	D+

AUDIT

---	Does not participate
A	Design certified in less than half of centres
AA	Design certified in at least half of centres
AAA	Design certified in at least three quarters of centres
AAAA	Design certified in all centres
C	Implementation certified in less than half of centres
CC	Implementation certified in at least half of centres
CCC	Implementation certified in at least three quarters of centres
CCCC	Implementation certified in all centres
n.p.	not applicable

DOCENTIA

---	Does not participate
+	Design not submitted
D-	Design submitted (unfavourable assessment)
D	Design submitted (favourable assessment with provisos)
D+	Design with favourable assessment
DD	Implementation: one or more follow-ups carried out
DD+	Implementation: follow-up prior to certification with favourable assessment
DDD	With DOCENTIA certification or certification from another programme similar to DOCENTIA
n.p.	not applicable

Sources:

- MECD. Official Register of Universities, Centres and Degrees. 2013.
- Agencies belonging to REACU. Authors' own compilation.

Table A.2. Results of the assessment agencies' teaching staff assessment programmes, by contractual roles and branches of knowledge. 2014.

	AAC		ACCUE		ACSUCYL		ACSUG		ANECA		AQU		AQUIB		AVAP		Unibasq		
	N. Apps	% + Ass.	N. Apps	% + Ass.	N. Apps	% + Ass.	N. Apps	% + Ass.	N. Apps	% + Ass.	N. Apps	% + Ass.	N. Apps	% + Ass.	N. Apps	% + Ass.	N. Apps	% + Ass.	
TOTAL																			
PAD	206	77%	23	100%	183	62%	97	65%	2.738	74%	414	69%	30	87%	169	65%	242	57%	
PC			2	50%															
PCD	263	58%	23	70%	206	35%	110	54%	3.146	55%	379	60%	46	72%	159	68%	178	32%	
PUP	197	49%			173	32%	45	38%	2.638	50%					89	65%	41	17%	
Others											105	62%					49	35%	
Total	666	61%	48	83%	562	43%	252	55%	8.522	60%	898	64%	76	78%	417	66%	510	43%	
BRANCH OF KNOWLEDGE																			
Social and Juridical Sciences																			
PAD	74	65%	7	100%	76	59%	39	72%	787	68%	142	53%	4	75%	61	43%	76	61%	
PC			1	0%															
PCD	88	55%	4	75%	84	31%	36	33%	902	54%	119	58%	12	67%	54	56%	61	25%	
PUP	72	47%			73	29%	18	33%	757	49%					32	50%	19	11%	
Others											38	58%					6	17%	
Total	234	56%	12	83%	233	39%	93	49%	2.446	57%	299	56%	16	69%	147	49%	162	40%	
Health Sciences																			
PAD	32	75%	3	100%	36	64%			382	75%	83	76%	7	100%	19	79%	28	68%	
PC																			
PCD	39	59%	7	71%	49	31%			440	50%	96	49%	12	75%	20	80%	22	36%	
PUP	25	40%			36	31%			382	46%					20	85%	2	50%	
Others											19	58%					9	67%	
Total	96	59%	10	80%	121	40%			1.204	56%	198	61%	19	84%	59	81%	61	56%	
Experimental Sciences																			
PAD	20	90%	4	100%	27	74%	25	60%	529	87%	33	97%	6	100%	20	70%	42	64%	
PC																			
PCD	26	62%	2	50%	23	39%	28	68%	603	59%	33	82%	7	86%	12	58%	19	32%	
PUP	23	52%			23	30%	10	40%	533	56%					10	70%	6	17%	
Others											11	91%					25	28%	
Total	69	67%	6	83%	73	49%	63	60%	1.665	67%	77	90%	13	92%	42	67%	92	45%	
Technical Courses																			
PAD	56	93%	5	100%	25	52%	24	67%	643	70%	82	83%	6	100%	35	74%	70	46%	
PC																			
PCD	72	60%	7	71%	23	30%	35	69%	755	59%	69	71%	11	82%	46	72%	50	24%	
PUP	53	57%			20	25%	11	55%	598	53%					16	56%	9	11%	
Others											27	63%					8	38%	
Total	181	69%	12	83%	68	37%	70	66%	1.996	61%	178	75%	17	88%	97	70%	137	35%	
Humanities																			
PAD	24	67%	4	100%	19	68%	9	44%	397	70%	74	65%	7	57%	34	85%	26	54%	
PC			1	1															
PCD	38	58%	3	67%	27	56%	11	36%	446	52%	62	55%	4	25%	27	81%	26	62%	
PUP	24	46%			21	52%	6	17%	368	44%					11	82%	5	40%	
Others											10	50%					1	0%	
Total	86	57%	8	88%	67	58%	26	35%	1211	55%	146	60%	11	45%	72	83%	58	55%	

Contractual roles:

- **PAD:** Profesor Ayudante Doctor.
- **PC:** Profesor Colaborador.
- **PCD:** Profesor Contratado Doctor.
- **PUP:** Profesor de University Privada.
- **Others:** Other contractual roles (AQU Catalunya: Catedrático -contratado-; Unibasq: Asociado, Personal Doctor Investigador and Profesor Pleno).

N. Apps. %: Number of applications assessed

% + Ass.: Percentage of applications positively assessed (including accepted appeals) out of all assessments carried out

Source: AAC, ACCUE, ACSUCYL, ACSUG, ANECA, AQU Catalunya, AQUIB, AVAP and Unibasq. Authors' own compilation

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