Quality Assurance in University of Alicante

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Content

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• Spanish Model
• ANECA
• University of Alicante: Quality Standards & European Harmonization Office
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Europe Background

• 1995: European Pilot Project for Evaluating Quality in Higher Education

... ...

• 2010: European Higher Education Area
Europe Background

• 25 May 1998: Sorbonne Declaration
  - Stressed the Universities' central role in developing European cultural dimensions
  - Emphasised the creation of the European area of higher education as a key way to promote citizens' mobility and employability and the Continent's overall development

Europe Background

  - Suggests that member states establish transparent quality assurance systems for higher education
  - The systems should be based on certain characteristics identified as common to quality assurance systems, including:
    • The creation of an autonomous body for quality assurance
    • Targeted utilisation of internal and/or external aspects of quality assurance
    • The involvement of various stakeholders
    • The publication of results
Europe Background

• 19 June 1999: Bologna Declaration
  – “Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies”

Europe Background

• European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
  – 2000: European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
  – 2004: The General Assembly transformed the Network into ENQA
  – Disseminates information, experiences and good practices in the field of QA in higher education to European QA agencies, public authorities and higher education institutions
Europe Background

- **Prague Communiqué of 19 May 2001:**
  - European Ministers of Education
  - What? To collaborate in establishing a common framework of QA reference, and to disseminate good practice
  - Who? The universities, other higher education institutions, national agencies and ENQA
Europe Background

• 19 September 2003: Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education in Berlin “Realising the European Higher Education Area”
  - “The quality of higher education has proven to be at the heart of the setting up of a European Higher Education Area. Ministers commit themselves to supporting further development of quality assurance at institutional, national and European level. They stress the need to develop mutually shared criteria and methodologies on quality assurance”.

Europe Background

“They also stress that consistent with the principle of institutional autonomy, the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself and this provides the basis for real accountability of the academic system within the national quality framework”.
Europe Background

“Therefore, they agree that by 2005 national quality assurance systems should include:

- A definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.
- Evaluation of programmes or institutions, including internal assessment, external review, participation of students and the publication of results.
- A system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.
- International participation, co-operation and networking”.

Europe Background

“At the European level, Ministers call upon ENQA through its members, in co-operation with the EUA, EURASHE and ESIB, to develop an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance, to explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies, and to report back through the Follow-up Group to Ministers in 2005. Due account will be taken of the expertise of other quality assurance associations and networks”.

EUA: European University Association
EURASHE: European Association of Institutions in Higher Education
ESIB: National Unions of Students in Europe
Europe Background

- Peter Williams, President, ENQA:
  - **Standards** in this context are not meant to imply **standardisation** or **requirements**
  - **Standards** are statements of basic good practice; they are short and general
  - **Guidelines** are meant as illustrations of the standards in action; they provide additional information and explain why the standards are important

Europe Background

- **Quality procedures in European Higher Education** (ENQA Occasional Papers 5, 2003)
- A diversity of methods used in QA at the national level in Europe
- Type of evaluation is defined as a method:
  - Evaluation
  - Accreditation
  - Auditing
  - Benchmarking
- **Categories of focus:**
  - Subject
  - Programme
  - Institution
  - Theme
Europe Background

- **Evaluation (assessment or review):**
  - The evaluation of a **subject** focuses on the quality of one specific subject, typically in all the programmes in which this subject is taught.
  - The evaluation of a **programme** focuses on the activities within a study programme, which in this context is defined as studies leading to a formal degree.
  - The evaluation of an **institution** examines the quality of all activities within an institution, i.e. organization, financial matters, management, facilities, teaching and research.
  - The evaluation of a **theme** examines the quality or practice of a specific theme within education e.g. ICT or student counseling.

Europe Background

- **Accreditation:**
  - Accreditation recognizes (or not) that a higher education course, programme or institution meets a certain level, which may be either a minimum standard, or a standard of excellence.
  - Accreditation therefore always involves a benchmarking assessment.
  - Accreditation findings are based on quality criteria, never on political considerations.
  - Accreditation findings include a binary element, being always either **yes** or **no**.
Europe Background

• Accreditation:
  – **Ex-ante**: the accrediting process that precedes the launching of a new programme
  – **Ex-post**: the accreditation control applied to established programmes

Europe Background

• Auditing:
  – A method for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the quality assurance mechanisms, adopted by an institution for its own use in order to continuously monitor and improve the activities and services of a subject, a programme, the whole institution, or a theme
  – The fundamental issue in quality auditing is how does an institution know that the standards and objectives it has set for itself are being met
Europe Background

• Benchmarking:
  – A method, whereby a comparison of results between subjects, programmes, institutions or themes leads to an exchange of experiences of best practice

Europe Background

• 1 March 2005: European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) (a.k.a Bergen Report)
  – Three parts:
    • Internal quality assurance
    • External quality assurance
    • Peer review of quality assurance agencies
Europe Background

• Objectives of the European Standards and Guidelines:
  - to encourage the development of higher education institutions which foster vibrant intellectual and educational achievement;
  - to provide a source of assistance and guidance to higher education institutions and other relevant agencies in developing their own culture of quality assurance;
  - to inform and raise the expectations of higher education institutions, students, employers and other stakeholders about the processes and outcomes of higher education;
  - to contribute to a common frame of reference for the provision of higher education and the assurance of quality within the EHEA.

Europe Background

• What the ESG ARE
  - Generic, not specific, standards and guidelines
  - A view of what should be done, not how it should be done
  - A source of assistance and guidance
Europe Background

• What the ESG are NOT:
  – Prescriptive
  – A checklist
  – A compendium of detailed procedures
  – A European quality assurance system

Europe Background

• ESG Part 1: internal quality assurance
  1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance
  1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards
  1.3 Assessment of students
  1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff
  1.5 Learning resources and student support
  1.6 Information systems
  1.7 Public information
### Europe Background

**ESG Part 2: external quality assurance**
- 2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures
- 2.2 Development of external quality assurance processes
- 2.3 Criteria for decisions
- 2.4 Processes fit for purpose
- 2.5 Reporting
- 2.6 Follow-up procedures
- 2.7 Periodic reviews
- 2.8 System-wide analyses

### Europe Background

**ESG Part 3: external quality assurance agencies**
- 3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education
- 3.2 Official status
- 3.3 Activities
- 3.4 Resources
- 3.5 Mission statement
- 3.6 Independence
- 3.7 External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies
- 3.8 Accountability procedures
Europe Background

• Example: 1.3 Assessment of students
  • Standard:
    – Students should be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently.
  • Guidelines:
    – The assessment of students is one of the most important elements of higher education. The outcomes of assessment have a profound effect on students’ future careers. It is therefore important that assessment is carried out professionally at all times and takes into account the extensive knowledge which exists about testing and examination processes. Assessment also provides valuable information for institutions about the effectiveness of teaching and learners’ support.

  – Student assessment procedures are expected to:
    • be designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and other programme objectives;
    • be appropriate for their purpose, whether diagnostic, formative or summative;
    • have clear and published criteria for marking;
    • be undertaken by people who understand the role of assessment in the progression of students towards the achievement of the knowledge and skills associated with their intended qualification;
    • where possible, not rely on the judgements of single examiners;
Europe Background

- Student assessment procedures are expected to (continued):
  • where possible, not rely on the judgements of single examiners;
  • take account of all the possible consequences of examination regulations;
  • have clear regulations covering student absence, illness and other mitigating circumstances;
  • ensure that assessments are conducted securely in accordance with the institution’s stated procedures;
  • be subject to administrative verification checks to ensure the accuracy of the procedures.

- In addition, students should be clearly informed about the assessment strategy being used for their programme, what examinations or other assessment methods they will be subject to, what will be expected of them, and the criteria that will be applied to the assessment of their performance.

Europe Background

• Peter Williams, President, ENQA:

  “This is the beginning, not the end, of the job; quality assurance is a journey, not a destination”
Spanish Model

• Students enrolled in 2004-2005:
  - 1,462,897
    • Public universities (50): 1,328,154
    • Private universities (23): 134,743
Spanish Model

- Different QA agencies:
  - National: ANECA
  - Autonomous regions (17): 11 (more in the future)
  - Universities: 73
Spanish Model

**Spanish legal framework:**
- Universities Act: *Ley Orgánica* 6/2001, de 21 de diciembre, de Universidades (LOU) (under review)
- **Consejo de Coordinación Universitaria** (under review)
- Autonomous regions: own laws (17)

**ANECA**
- **Exclusive competences:**
  - Evaluation of:
    - Official degree courses (bachelor and master)

**Autonomous regions**
- **Shared competences**
  - Evaluation/accreditation/certification:
    - Own degree courses
    - Teaching staff
    - General staff and services
Spanish Model

- Challenges deriving from a segmented national system:
  - Different interpretation of the ESG
  - Different speed of implementing the ESG
  - How to set out the basic standards that guarantee all the agency’s decisions?
  - How to make external evaluation compatible with internal evaluation?

Spanish Model

- 2006: Red Española de Agencias de Calidad Universitaria (REACU) – Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies
  - Harmonize accreditation criteria
  - Compatible evaluations and mutual approval
ANECA: Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación – National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation

Origin:
- Article 32 of Organic Law 6/2001 of 20 December on Universities lays down that, by means of a Resolution by the Council of Ministers and subsequent to a report by the Universities Coordinating Council, the Government shall authorise the setting up of the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA)
- ANECA was set up as a public trust on 19 July 2002
ANECA

• Mission:
  - The ultimate goal of the Trust is to contribute to the quality improvement of the higher education system through the assessment, certification and accreditation of University:
    • Degrees
    • Programmes
    • Teaching staff
    • Institutions
  - At the request of the universities themselves or the requirement of education authorities
ANECA Publications

• 14 publications:
  - VI Foro. Consecuencias de las políticas de evaluación de la docencia y la investigación del PDI (October 2006)
  - ...  
Objectives:
- Design of indicators for quality assessment
- Evaluation of programmes
- Evaluation of teaching staff
- Evaluation of university services
- Proposal of improvement actions
Quality Standards & European Harmonization Office

- Developing a coherent TQM system
  - (work in progress)
**Plan**

**Act**

**Check**

**Do**

**Financing**

**Objectives**

**TQM**

**Indicators**

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**Quality Standards & European Harmonization Office**

- **Qualtiy Technical Unit**
  - Internal Evaluations
  - External Evaluations
  - Certifications
  - Accreditations
  - Dissemination
Quality Standards & European Harmonization Office

- Internal Evaluations:
  - Teaching activities
  - Teaching staff and service staff
  - Services
  - Graduate employment
3 - El ritmo de las explicaciones permite seguir el hilo de la asignatura
4 - La teoría se complementa adecuadamente con prácticas y/o sesiones de problemas
5 - Ella/El profesor/a sinéctica y subraya los aspectos y conceptos que considera más importantes de la asignatura
6 - Cuando responde a una pregunta, se cita a lo preguntado con precisión y claridad
7 - Ella/El profesor/a muestra buena disposición para atender consultas fuera del horario de clases
8 - Ella/El profesor/a es capaz de transmitir sus conocimientos adecuadamente
9 - Ella/El profesor/a establece conexiones con los contenidos de otras asignaturas
10 - Ella/El profesor/a avanza al ritmo de la clase y planifica claramente las sesiones
11 - Utiliza a menudo en clase diversos elementos y recursos docentes que ayudan al alumnado a comprender mejor sus explicaciones (p.ej. diagramas, transparencias, ordenador, videos, calibración, proyección, etc.)
12 - Fomenta el diálogo con el alumnado sometiendo la materia a la mirada del alumnado
13 - Tiene una actitud respetuosa y tiene en cuenta las opiniones del alumnado
14 - Ella/El profesor/a trae de ejemplo en el alumnado el interés por la materia
15 - Ella/El profesor/a relaciona los conocidos de la materia con aspectos del mundo real (referencias, técnicas, situaciones, avances tecnológicos, etc.)
16 - Se realizan suficientes prácticas, ejercicios, problemas, trabajos, etc., que muestran cómo aplicar adecuadamente la teoría
17 - Ella/El profesor/a da suficientes materiales que utiliza en sus explicaciones
18 - Los materiales recomendados por ella/él profesor/a (apuntes, bibliografía, transparencias, etc.) ayudan a comprender sus explicaciones
19 - Mi interés por la materia ha aumentado con el desarrollo de la asignatura

- Globalmente estoy satisfecho/a con la labor de este/a profesor/a.

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**Universitat d'Alacant**  
**Universidad de Alicante**

**ENCUESTA AL PROFESORADO**

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1 - A lo largo de este curso académico imparto 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 asignaturas.
2 - El grado de preparación inicial de mis alumnos/as para abordar con éxito los objetivos de la asignatura (1 = mínimo a 6 = máximo)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 - El grado de preparación inicial de mis alumnos/as para abordar con éxito los objetivos de la asignatura (1 = mínimo a 6 = máximo).</td>
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<td>3 - El número de alumnos/as por grupo ha sido el apropiado para la impartición de la asignatura.</td>
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<td>4 - Existe una participación activa de los/as alumnos/as en clase (puntualizando dudas, debatiendo, contestando a las preguntas formuladas, etc.).</td>
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<td>5 - Se produce un elevado nivel de asistencia de los/as alumnos/as en mis clases.</td>
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<td>6 - Mis alumnos/as han utilizado las horas de tutorías.</td>
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<td>7 - Percebo el desinterés del alumnado por la asignatura.</td>
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<td>8 - Las infraestructuras y recursos de los que dispongo para la impartición de las clases son los adecuados.</td>
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<td>9 - Utilizo recursos didácticos adicionales a la clase magistral que refuerzan la comprensión de la asignatura (diapositivas, proyecciones, etc.).</td>
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<td>10 - He promovido la participación de los/as alumnos/as en clase, individualmente o en grupo.</td>
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</table>

II - Geralmente estoy satisfecho/a con el trabajo realizado por el alumnado en mis clases.

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Quality Standards & European Harmonization Office

- External Evaluations:
  - Teaching activities
Quality Standards &
European Harmonization Office

• Certifications:
  – ISO 9002: Library Service, Publication Service

Quality Standards &
European Harmonization Office

• Accreditations:
  – Programmes
• Dissemination:
  – Public dissemination of research and results
GLOSARIO

GLOSSARY
INICIATIVA DE CALIDAD CONJUNTA

Joint Quality Initiative

Red de desarrollo informal para la garantía de la calidad en los tres ciclos o programas universitarios: grado, máster y doctorado (bachelor, master and doctorate programmes). Ayuda la gestión a favor de la transparencia, la comparabilidad de criterios y la acreditación.

Referencias:

The Joint Quality Initiative en [http://www.jointquality.org](http://www.jointquality.org)
Problems

University Autonomy ⇔ Quality Evaluation
Problems

• Four main barriers:
  1. Authority to configure studies
  2. Authority to select teaching staff
  3. Authority to select students
  4. Financial autonomy

Problems

• Authority to configure studies:
  - Which bachelor and master degree programmes?
  - How long?
  - Which teaching methodology?
Problems

• Authority to select teaching staff:
  - Unknown in Spain

Problems

• Authority to select students:
  - In Spain:
    • Public and private universities
    • Unknown in public universities (general exams for all the students, no particular exams)
Problems

• Financial autonomy:
  – Basic to accomplish quality levels
  – Adequate and proportional human and financial resources
  – Long term financing

Problems

• Who evaluates the QA agencies?
  – Meta QA agency
• Future: How to achieve more visibility, transparency and comparability of quality in higher education?
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