

External review of the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA) by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

Annex I: TERMS OF REFERENCE

January 2017

1. Background and Context

The National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA), is an autonomous body of the Ministry of Education of Spain whose aim is to provide external quality assurance for the Spanish Higher Education System and to contribute to its constant improvement.

ANECA has developed several Procedures (for the evaluation of institutions and programmes, as well as for academic staff) in order to perform its activities (evaluation, certification and accreditation), with the purpose of integrating the Spanish system into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA):

Programme evaluation:

- VERIFICA Procedure: Evaluation of degree proposals designed according to the aims set for building the EHEA.
- MONITOR Procedure: Follow-up of an ex-ante accredited programme until it has to be submitted again in order to renew its accreditation.
- ACREDITA Procedure: checks that the degree has been carried out according to the initial project.
- ACREDITA PLUS Procedure: Assessment for national accreditation and for International seals.

Institutional evaluation:

- AUDIT Procedure: Guidance for Higher Education Institutions to establish their own internal quality assurance systems and certifies the design and implementation of those systems.
- DOCENTIA Procedure: Support for Universities wishing to establish their own mechanisms to evaluate the quality of the teaching activity of their academic staff.
- Academic staff evaluation Procedures:
- PEP Procedure: (non-civil servant academic staff hiring) Evaluation of the teaching and research activities as well as the academic backgrounds of future applicants to positions of non-civil servant academic staff (PhD Lecturer , PhD assistant Lecturer , Non PhD assistant Lecturer and private universities Lecturer) as defined by the LOMLOU.
- ACADEMIA Procedure: (national accreditation for civil servant academic staff): Evaluation of the applicants' qualification to access the civil-service positions as University academic staff (Senior Lecturer and Professor) at the national level.
- CNEAI. The evaluation of the individual research activity of academic staff of the Spanish higher education institutions, at the national level.

ANECA has been a full member of ENQA since 2007 and is applying for renewal of the ENQA membership.

Aneca was evaluated by ENQA in 2007 and in 2012.

This is the third time ENQA evaluates ANECA according to the ESG.

ANECA has been registered on EQAR since May 2013, after being registered for the first time in December 2008 and June 2012 for the second time. This review will also be used for applying for renewal.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

This review, will evaluate the way in which and to what extent ANECA fulfils the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*. Consequently, the review will provide information to the ENQA Board to aid its consideration of whether membership of ANECA should be reconfirmed and to EQAR to support ANECA application to the register.

The review panel is not expected, however, to make any judgements as regards granting membership.

2.1 Activities of ANECA within the scope of the ESG

In order for ANECA to apply for ENQA membership and for registration in EQAR, this review will analyse all activities ANECA that are within the scope of the ESG, i.e. reviews, audits, evaluations or accreditation of higher education institutions or programmes that relate to teaching and learning (and their relevant links to research and innovation). This is regardless of whether these activities are carried out within or outside the EHEA, and whether they are obligatory or voluntary.

The following activities of ANECA have to be addressed in the external review:

- Programme approach – ex-ante, ex-post and monitoring of study programmes:
 - ✓ VERIFICA
 - ✓ MONITOR
 - ✓ ACREDITA
 - ✓ ACREDITA PLUS (EUR-ACE and EURO-INF)
- Institutional approach - reviews at institutional level:
 - ✓ AUDIT
 - ✓ DOCENTIA
- Institutional and programme accreditation procedures carried out by ANECA in Latin America (AUDIT and joint programme accreditation procedures (i.e. the award of the EUR-ACE engineering label).
- In the application form, ANECA stated that it did not consider *other national and international assessments* to be within the scope of the ESG. EQAR considered the information provided and came to the conclusion that some of these activities might be within the scope of the ESG as far as they concerns the assessment of higher education institutions or study programmes (including joint programmes) in relation to teaching and learning in higher education, irrespective of whether these activities are carried out regularly or occasionally. The self-assessment report and the external panel's report should thus address whether that is the case and, if so, analyse compliance with the ESG in those assessments.

Therefore, the procedures dealing with the individual evaluation of academic staff candidates (ACADEMIA and PEP) as well as individual research activity (CNEAI procedure) will not be at the core of the activities subject to the review, and therefore explained in the self-assessment report. But they are mentioned in the ToRs and in the introduction of the self-assessment report because they are included in both the official activities of the Agency and the budget.

3. The Review Process

The process is designed in the light of the *Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews* and in line with the requirements of the *EQAR Procedures for Applications*.

The evaluation procedure consists of the following steps:

- Formulation of the Terms of Reference and protocol for the review;
- Nomination and appointment of the review panel;
- Self-assessment by ANECA including the preparation of a self-assessment report;
- A site visit by the review panel to ANECA ;
- Preparation and completion of the final evaluation report by the review panel;
- Scrutiny of the final evaluation report by the ENQA Review Committee;
- Analysis of the scrutiny by the ENQA Board and their decision regarding ENQA membership;
- Follow-up of the panel's and/or ENQA Board's recommendations by the agency, including a voluntary follow-up visit.

3.1 Nomination and appointment of the review team members

The review panel consists of four members: one or two quality assurance experts, an academic employed by a higher education institution, student member, and eventually a labour market representative (if requested). One of the members will serve as the chair of the review panel, and another member as a review secretary. For ENQA Agency Reviews at least one of the reviewers is an ENQA nominee (most often the QA professional[s]). At least one of the reviewers is appointed from the nominees of either the European University Association (EUA) or the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), and the student member is always selected from among the ESU-nominated reviewers. If requested, the labour market representative may come from the Business Europe nominees or from ENQA. An additional panel member may be included in the panel at the request of the agency under review. In this case an additional fee to cover the reviewer's fee and travel expenses is applied.

In addition to the four members, the panel will be supported by the ENQA Secretariat review coordinator who will monitor the integrity of the process and ensure that ENQA expectations are met throughout the process. The ENQA staff member will not be the Secretary of the review and will not participate in the discussions during the site visit interviews.

Current members of the ENQA Board are not eligible to serve as reviewers.

ENQA will provide ANECA with the list of suggested experts with their respective curriculum vitae to establish that there are no known conflicts of interest. The experts will have to sign a non-conflict of interest statement as regards ANECA review.

3.2 Self-assessment by ANECA, including the preparation of a self-assessment report

ANECA is responsible for the execution and organisation of its own self-assessment process and shall take into account the following guidance:

- Self-assessment is organised as a project with a clearly defined schedule and includes all relevant internal and external stakeholders;
- The self-assessment report is broken down by the topics of the evaluation and is expected to contain, among others: a brief description of the national HE and QA system; background description of the current situation of the Agency; an analysis and appraisal of the current situation; proposals for improvement and measures already planned; a SWOT analysis; each criterion (ESG part II and III) addressed individually. All agency's QA activities (whether within their national jurisdiction or outside of it, and whether obligatory or voluntary) will be described and their compliance with the ESG analysed.
- The report is well-structured, concise and comprehensively prepared. It clearly demonstrates the extent to which ANECA fulfils its tasks of external quality assurance and meets the ESG and thus the requirements of ENQA membership.
- The self-assessment report is submitted to the ENQA Secretariat who has 4 weeks to pre-scrutinise it before forwarding the report to the panel of experts. The purpose of the pre-scrutiny is to ensure that the self-assessment report is satisfactory for the consideration of the panel. The Secretariat will not judge the content of information itself but whether the necessary information, as stated in the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews, is present. For the second and subsequent reviews, the agency is expected to enlist the recommendations provided in the previous review and to outline actions taken to meet these recommendations. In case the self-assessment report does not contain the necessary information and fails to respect the requested form and content, the ENQA Secretariat reserves the right to reject the report and ask for a revised version within 4 weeks. In such cases, an additional fee of 1000 € will be charged to the agency.
- The report is submitted to the review panel a minimum of six weeks prior to the site visit.

3.3 A Site Visit by the Review Panel

ANECA will draw up a draft proposal of the schedule for the site visit to be submitted to the review panel at least two months before the planned dates of the visit. The schedule includes an indicative timetable of the meetings and other exercises to be undertaken by the review panel during the site visit, the duration of which is 2,5 days. The approved schedule shall be given to ANECA at least one month before the site visit, in order to properly organise the requested interviews.

The review panel will be assisted by ANECA in arriving in Madrid, Spain.

The site visit will close with an oral presentation and discussion of the major issues of the evaluation between the review panel and ANECA.

3.4 Preparation and completion of the final evaluation report

On the basis of the review panel's findings, the review secretary will draft the report in consultation with the review panel. The report will take into account the purpose and scope of the evaluation as defined under articles 2 and 2.1. It will also provide a clear rationale for its findings with regards to each ESG. A draft will be first submitted to the ENQA review coordinator who will check the report for consistency, clarity and language and it will be then submitted to ANECA within 11 weeks of the site visit for comment on factual accuracy. If ANECA chooses to provide a statement in reference to the draft report it will be submitted to the chair of the review panel within two weeks after the receipt of the draft report. Thereafter the review panel will take into account the statement by ANECA, finalise the document and submit it to ENQA.

The report is to be finalised within three months of the site visit and will not exceed 40 pages in length.

When preparing the report, the review panel should also bear in mind the *EQAR Policy on the Use and Interpretation of the ESG*, so as to ensure that the report will contain sufficient information for the Register Committee for application to EQAR.

ANECA is also requested to provide a letter addressed to the ENQA Board outlining its motivation applying for membership and the ways in which ANECA expects to contribute to the work and objectives of ENQA during its membership. This letter will be discussed along with the final evaluation report.

4. Follow-up Process and Publication of the Report

ANECA will consider the expert panel’s report and will publish it on its website once the ENQA Board has made its decision. The report will also be published on the ENQA website, regardless of the review outcome and decision by the ENQA Board. ANECA commits to preparing a follow-up plan in which it addresses the recommendations of the review panel and to submitting a follow-up report to the ENQA Board. The follow-up report will be published on the ENQA website, in addition to the full review report and the Board’s decision.

The follow-up report will be complemented by a small-scale visit to the agency performed by two members of the original panel (whenever possible). This visit will be used to discuss issues, based on the ESG, considered as of particular importance or challenge by ANECA. Its purpose is entirely developmental and has no impact on the judgement of membership and/or compliance of the agency with the ESG. Should the agency not wish to take advantage of this opportunity, it may opt out by informing the ENQA Review Coordinator about this.

5. Use of the report

ENQA shall retain ownership of the report. The intellectual property of all works created by the expert panel in connection with the review contract, including specifically any written reports, shall be vested in ENQA.

The review report is used by the Board of ENQA for the purpose of reaching a conclusion on whether ANECA has met the ESG and can be thus admitted/reconfirmed as a member of ENQA. The report will also be used for registration on EQAR, and is designed so as to serve these two purposes. However, the review report is to be considered final only after being approved by the ENQA Board. Once submitted to ANECA and ENQA and until it is approved by the Board the report may not be used or relied upon by ANECA, the panel and any third party and may not be disclosed without the prior written consent of ENQA. ANECA may use the report at its discretion only after the Board has approved of the report. The approval of the report is independent of the decision on membership.

The Chair of the panel shall remain available to respond to questions of clarification or further information from the EQAR Register Committee provided that the ENQA Secretariat is copied in all such requests.

6. Budget

ANECA shall pay the following review related fees:

Fee of the Chair	4,500 EUR
Fee of the Secretary	4,500 EUR
Fee of the 2 other panel members	4,000 EUR (2,000 EUR each)

Fee of 2 panel members for follow-up visit	1,000 EUR (500 EUR each)
Administrative overhead for ENQA Secretariat	7,000 EUR
Experts Training fund	1,400 EUR
Approximate travel and subsistence expenses	6,000 EUR
Travel and subsistence expenses follow-up visit	1,600 EUR

This gives a total indicative cost of 30,000.00 EUR VAT excl. for a review team of 4 members. In the case that the allowance for travel and subsistence expenses is exceeded, ANECA will cover any additional costs after the completion of the review. However, the ENQA Secretariat will endeavour to keep the travel and subsistence expenses in the limits of the planned budget, and will refund the difference to ANECA if the travel and subsistence expenses go under budget.

The fee of the follow-up visit is included in the overall cost of the review and will not be reimbursed in case the agency does not wish to benefit from it.

In the event of a second site visit required by the Board and aiming at completing the assessment of compliance, and should the agency accept a second visit, an additional fee of 500 EUR per expert, as well as travel and subsistence costs are recoverable from the agency.

7. Indicative Schedule of the Review

Agreement on terms of reference	November/January 2017
Appointment of review panel members	February 2017
Self-assessment completed	February 2017
Pre-screening of SAR by ENQA coordinator	March 2017
Preparation of site visit schedule and indicative timetable	April 2017
Briefing of review panel members	April/May 2017
Review panel site visit	Late May/Early June 2017
Draft of evaluation report and submitting it to ENQA coordinator for pre-screening	By the end of July 2017
Draft of evaluation report to ANECA	August 2017
Statement of ANECA to review panel if necessary	August 2017
Submission of final report to ENQA	September 2017
Consideration of the report by ENQA Board and response of ANECA	October 2017
Publication of the report	October/November 2017