



AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN  
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

# **2019 ENQA Follow-up Report**

Introduction.....	3
BLOCK I. ANECA actions based on ENQA and EQAR recommendations.....	4
Standard 2.4. Peer-review experts .....	4
Standard 2.6. Reporting.....	6
Standard 2.7. Complaints and appeals .....	8
Standard 3.1. Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance.....	10
Standard 3.4. Thematic analysis .....	16
Standard 3.6. International quality assurance and professional conduct .....	18
BLOCK II. ENQA panel suggestions to further develop the agency.....	19
Suggestions for further development from the ENQA panel.....	19
BLOCK III. Additional improvements undertaken by ANECA .....	21
Additional improvement 1: Stakeholders .....	21

## Introduction

In June 2017, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) examined the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA) for the third time in keeping with the revised 2015 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher-Education Area (ESG). The ENQA Board presented a series of recommendations designed to improve ANECA's activities, requesting that it present a report within two years on the specific actions carried out by the Agency with regard to these recommendations.

After reading the external report prepared by a panel of international experts, ANECA carefully analysed the latter and, along with the reflections carried out when preparing the evaluation report, drafted its [2019-2023 Strategic Plan](#). ANECA's Governing Council duly approved the latter and a plan of improvement opportunities to respond to the recommendations detailed in ENQA's report, in addition to other aspects detected internally and recommendations from the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) Committee when requesting renovation from the latter.

Block I below details the actions carried out by ANECA as of 2017 to respond to ENQA's recommendations followed by actions in response to EQAR's. Block II includes the actions designed to further develop ANECA as suggested by ENQA. Lastly, Block III describes the improvement initiatives ANECA has launched to respond to the needs detected internally.

This Follow-up Report includes two types of links to reference documents:

- Underlined links: These include links to the ANECA website and the document or set of documents in question.
- *Underlined links and in cursive*: These include links to documents which, at times, may require a password due to the confidential nature of the data they contain.

## BLOCK I. ANECA actions based on ENQA and EQAR recommendations

### Standard 2.4. Peer-review experts

External quality assurance should be carried out by groups of external experts that include (a) student member(s).

**Panel conclusion (ENQA):** Fully compliant.

#### Panel recommendation ENQA

The panel would encourage the agency to continue and extend its efforts to include international experts in review panels.

**Register Committee conclusion (EQAR):** Compliance.

### Actions taken by ANECA

The work carried out by external experts is essential for ANECA. Consequently, their selection is vitally important to ensure that ANECA provides the appropriate service.

Since initiating the call for these experts, ANECA has received a total of 4,961 applications, distributed as follows by procedure:

- Programme experts (*VERIFICA*, *MONITOR* and *ACREDITA*): 2,357
- Institution experts for the *DOCENTIA* procedure: 782.
- Institution experts for the *AUDIT* procedure: 513
- Experts for official education and mobility calls from the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (MECD): (currently Ministerio de Education y Formación Profesional (Spanish Ministry of Education and Vocational Education) 963
- Experts for the *INTERNATIONAL QUALITY LABELS* procedure (previously "Acredita+"): 346

Despite the number of responses, no more than 2% corresponds to applications from international experts and experts, leading ANECA to issue a specific call for international experts to give this aspect greater visibility and relevance.

Consequently, ANECA has modified its 2017 call to feature a new section for [international experts](#), the aim being to include international profiles on its evaluation committees. These profiles should correspond to experts who meet the established requirements and wish to serve on the evaluation committees for the

Agency's procedures, concretely, for the programme evaluation procedures (VERIFICA, ACREDITA and INTERNATIONAL QUALITY LABELS) and for the AUDIT institutional evaluation procedure (national and international).

To further promote this call for international profiles, ANECA publishes it simultaneously on the [English and Spanish versions of its website](#). ANECA is responsible for selecting these experts and applies a clear and transparent selection process in keeping with criteria it has defined a priori for each procedure.

## Standard 2.6. Reporting

Full reports by the experts should be published, clear and accessible to the academic community, external partners and other interested individuals. If the agency takes any formal decision based on the reports, the decision should be published together with the report.

**Panel conclusion (ENQA):** Substantially compliant.

### Panel recommendations ENQA

The panel recommends that the agency consider how best to include all the valuable information contained in the 'long' reports in the published reports.

**Register Committee conclusion (EQAR):** Partial compliance.

### Register Committee recommendations (EQAR)

While the Register Committee understands the usefulness of providing summary reports, the Committee saw no reasons why ANECA would not be able to also publish the full results for all its external quality assurance procedures.

The Register Committee concluded that ANECA's practice of publishing summary reports does not meet the requirement of the standard, and therefore could not follow the panel's conclusion of compliance. As the Register Committee could verify the publication of a number of full reports (in the case of the AUDIT procedure), the Register Committee was able to conclude that the agency complies at least partially with ESG 2.6.

### Actions taken by ANECA

ANECA has strived to define and draft more complete and extensive reports that provide greater details on the information suggested by the ENQA panel during its external assessment visit given that, currently, universities do not receive the report from the accreditation panel's visit.

After consulting with ANECA stakeholders, it is clear that preparing a report which satisfies all of them equally is difficult. On the one hand, students indicate that they prefer the reports not be overly long. On the other, universities have asked that the reports be duly justified and clear, referring to concrete evidence should they have to present any corresponding appeals. The remaining stakeholders have expressed a need for reports with an administrative focus to facilitate their decision-making processes.

Bearing in mind ENQA's requirements and requests from ANECA stakeholders, the agency's [Accreditation Committee](#) has decided to prepare more extensive reports that reconcile the needs of the different target groups. The challenges faced by the Accreditation Committee thus imply drafting [reports](#) which, first, provide concrete

evidence for universities to be able to understand the reasons behind the different evaluations (in particular, the negative ones) and, second, adopt a style which is understandable for stakeholders other than universities. These other stakeholders, such as students, want simpler reports that are not too long.

The different committees in charge of preparing these reports have received the training needed and the corresponding guidelines for these new reports.

With respect to the AUDIT procedure, ANECA has applied EQAR's recommendation that it publish full reports. Currently, the full certification and visit reports, both [national](#) and [international](#), can be accessed via the website.

### Standard 2.7. Complaints and appeals

Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.

**Panel conclusion (ENQA):** Full compliance.

**Register Committee conclusion (EQAR):** Compliance.

#### Register Committee recommendations (EQAR)

Register Committee nevertheless noted that higher education institution should be provided with the possibility to appeal the results of an external quality assurance procedure, no matter whether these include a formal accreditation decision or merely a published assessment report.

Having considered the functioning of the appeals and complaints procedure, the Register Committee concurred with the panel that ANECA complies with standard 2.7

#### Actions taken by ANECA

ANECA still believes that a formal appeals phase is not necessary given the nature and objectives of the MONITOR procedure which focuses exclusively on improvements and does not have any administrative consequences (the corresponding reports do not make favourable or unfavourable determinations).

In addition, other procedural-related reasons support its decision to not include an appeals phase in the process of assessing the implementation of new official university degrees: MONITOR issues various calls every year. In other words, universities have the flexibility to decide in which of the year's calls they want to present each of their degrees.

This flexibility is necessary given that, oftentimes, the ex-ante accreditation date and the effective degree implementation date do not coincide, though the ex-ante accreditation date is always the one to be considered in keeping with applicable norms to carry out external evaluation processes after the first ex-ante accreditation (follow-up and accreditation).

In this respect, cases may arise in which a degree is implemented the same year it has to undergo the MONITOR procedure and it may not participate in the first call of the year (February) but do so in the annual call in the autumn (October), representing that it has been implemented for an academic year. This is especially important in terms of Master's degrees. These have to be accredited within 4 years and, given that the follow-up phase to assess their implementation cannot be postponed and even if there were time for this evaluation, universities would not



have enough time to make the most of any possible report. This implies that the follow-up evaluation would not fulfil one of its key aims: prepare the universities to successfully renew their degrees' accreditation.

The last point in the previous paragraph is worth underscoring. There is a real risk of having two overlapping external evaluation processes, namely, the follow-up and accreditation procedures. Consequently, the MONITOR procedure would not make any sense. In addition, this circumstance, the overlap of two procedures, would be worsened if an appeals phase were added, invariably extending the entire assessment procedure for the improvements implemented through the MONITOR procedure. The related costs for universities to work on two procedures simultaneously without feedback between them would be enormous and would lead many to decide to not participate in the MONITOR procedure if the reaccreditation process dates for their degrees were close at hand.

As mentioned above, including an appeals phase in the MONITOR procedure would extend the evaluation process, overlapping the procedure not only with other external procedures but also with the following year's calls for the MONITOR procedure. To avoid this, ANECA would have to eliminate the procedure's current flexibility which allows for several calls per year, leaving only the call in February. This would imply that degrees whose implementation were delayed would not be able to apply and would not have a follow-up report available, as detailed above.

For all of the above, ANECA is in favour of not including an appeals phase as EQAR suggests and only having a material errors phase. These material errors refer to mistakes regarding names, dates, mathematical operations, document transcriptions, etc., included in the follow-up reports and detected solely bearing in mind the data provided during the follow-up procedure. In addition, we have to bear in mind that the MONITOR report is a part of the requested documentation when renewing accreditation, enabling universities to clarify any points in their self-evaluation reports as part of the ACREDITA procedure regarding the status of the degrees in question.

### Standard 3.1. Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities as defined in Part 2 of the ESG on a regular basis. They should have clear and explicit goals and objectives that are part of their publicly available mission statement. These should translate into the daily work of the agency. Agencies should ensure the involvement of stakeholders in their governance and work.

**Panel conclusion (ENQA):** Full compliance.

**Register Committee conclusion (EQAR):** Partial compliance.

#### Register Committee recommendations (EQAR)

The Committee acknowledged the steps taken by ANECA to clarify the nature of its international activities, but noted that these activities were not considered by an external review panel (in particular in considering compliance with ESG Part 2). The Register Committee further noted that it could not analyse with full certainty how the agency separates its external QA activities within the scope of the ESG from the consultancy projects it carries out.

The Register Committee therefore remained unable to concur with the review panel's conclusion (full compliance) and considered, after taking into account the clarification received, that ANECA only partially complies with standard 3.1.

#### Actions taken by ANECA

To clarify the nature of ANECA's international activities, two different scenarios have to be considered depending on the procedure:

1. **International AUDIT procedure:** ANECA can sign [agreements with universities](#) or with different [professional bodies/associations/colleges](#). In the latter case, ANECA only provides support to these organisations.

ANECA's commitment to evaluating universities' internal quality assurance systems (IQAS) is clear, as well as, when warranted, its support and technical training for their staff to familiarise them with the reference model and to ensure that they interpret the latter correctly and adapt it to their respective organisations' realities. Consulting activities are not included within any of the Agency's activities, given that its mission is to evaluate and certify different university activities.

ANECA reviews and certifies the IQAS designed and implemented by the universities. To this end, the Agency applies the same standards as those of

the AUDIT procedure in Spain though adapted to the local context and legislation to facilitate its use and always bearing in mind the 2015 ESG.

In addition to its work to spread the use of the AUDIT reference model, as mentioned, ANECA can also provide training to universities' technical staff, if needed, to familiarise them with the model and ensure that they interpret it correctly and adapt it to their respective organisations' realities.

ANECA does not carry out any activity which implies its direct involvement in the design and/or implementation of universities' IQAS; nor does it participate in any other activity which might be considered "consulting" as this would represent a clear conflict of interest with respect to the parties it would later have to review.

The AUDIT procedure comprises two clearly differentiated phases:

- **IQAS design phase**

During this first phase, the universities design their IQAS and prepare the corresponding documentation based on the reference model established for the International AUDIT procedure.

During this phase, the Agency may provide training to university staff in charge of designing, implementing and maintaining the schools' IQAS. This training aims to familiarise said staff with the reference model and ensure they understand the different steps included within the review phase.

After designing their respective IQAS, universities can request ANECA certify the system designs they have approved. A panel of experts chosen by ANECA is then in charge of evaluating the system design, at all times guaranteeing the independence of these experts and making every effort possible to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest. ANECA also carries out significant efforts to train its experts. The Agency provides this training in person to provide experts with all the guides and tools they need to ensure the review process proceeds correctly.

The panel reviews the IQAS design not in situ but, rather, through an online platform developed ad hoc by ANECA. The panel of experts then includes its conclusions in a report on its evaluation.

After these evaluations, the Agency's Certification Committees is in charge of deciding whether or not to certify the different IQAS designs.

- **IQAS implementation phase**

During this phase, the universities begin implementing all the documentation for their systems which have been certified in the previous phase, that is, the defined procedures and manuals.

Correctly implementing the IQAS results in an overall improvement of the activities universities undertake.

Universities will work to correctly implement their systems, tracking and improving all the processes. Six months after the start of IQAS implementation, universities, at their discretion, may request ANECA certify their systems' implementation. For this, the Agency provides the necessary training to its panel of auditors for them to visit the institutions and carry out the certification audit on IQAS implementation.

A team comprising two auditors, selected and trained by ANECA, will then carry out the external certification audit which includes visits to all the schools within the scope of the IQAS.

After the audit, the corresponding team of auditors prepares a report on the status and maturity of the system's implementation.

Later, the Certification Committee will assess if it should award certification for the system's implementation.

2. **With respect to International Quality Labels (IQL):** ANECA signs [agreements](#) with different professional bodies/associations/colleges.

ANECA only carries out external quality assurance activities in this area. It does not provide consulting services as can be verified on its [website](#).

The award of the European Accreditation of Engineering Programmes (EUR-ACE) label in Latin America is within the scope of the ESG because it is based on the latter. The specific relationships between criteria/guidelines used by the Agency in its procedures and the criteria established in the ESG can be consulted in the documentation referring to the procedures and included in the [guides](#) published on the ANECA website.

ANECA and Spanish Engineering Institute (IIE) use the same assessment procedure in Spain and Latin America to evaluate the EUR-ACE® label, because all EUR-ACE graduates must obtain the same learning outcomes

and these degrees have to comply with ESG. Currently, only 6 degrees have obtained the label after successfully completing the following procedure:

1. The procedure begins with the submission of the self-evaluation report (SR) by the institution applying for the EUR-ACE® label for each of its degree programmes. In this report, the institution must explain how the degree programme complies with each of the criteria established in the EUR-ACE® label evaluation procedure ([Self-evaluation reports of the 6 Latin America degree programmes](#)).
2. The procedure includes a visit by a panel of experts to the university offering the degree programme subject to evaluation. Prior to this visit, panel members organise preliminary meetings –in person and/or online– to identify the information they need to obtain during the visit. The specific visit timetable is agreed upon with the higher-education institution in question. The visit includes interviews with: the faculty responsible for the degree programme, academic staff, administrative and service staff, students, graduates and employers/representatives of professional engineering organisations. The panel also visits the institution’s facilities (libraries, laboratories, etc.) and then reviews all evidence collected. The visit ends with a meeting between the panel of experts and the faculty responsible for the programme at the higher-education institution. A second visit to the university may be conducted for degree programmes that have been awarded the label with additional recommendations if the EUR-ACE® ANECA-IIE Accreditation Committee deems it necessary to verify their compliance ([Agendas of visits to the 6 Latin American degree programme universities](#)).
3. The panel chairperson coordinates the preparation of a specific visit report for each of the degree programmes subject to evaluation. All the panel of expert members (chairperson, academic expert, professional expert, student expert and technical expert) agree on the report which assesses each of the criteria established for the EUR-ACE® label evaluation outlined in the guides published on the ANECA website based on ESG (Evidence). The ex-ante accreditation dates are set to determine if the recommendations issued in the monitoring evaluations performed prior to the establishment of the degree programme have been observed ([Panel composition for the 6 Latin American degrees](#)). Note regarding the panel of experts: as indicated, the panel of experts is responsible for the initial assessment and the visit to the university where the degree programme is offered. The selection of experts for this panel with an academic profile and the student is made by ANECA. The selection of experts with a professional profile is made in collaboration with IIE. All experts are selected bearing in mind transparency, the suitability of the individuals for the duties to be performed during the evaluation and their

specific training in the methodology for this evaluation process ([Selection criteria for experts](#)).

4. ANECA provides the applicant higher-education institution with a list of people on the panel of experts and offers a brief CV of each of the members. The institution communicates its acceptance of said members or their rejection of any of them with justification to ANECA. In the latter case, ANECA, in collaboration with IIE (if the rejection is related to an expert with a professional profile), studies the reasons alleged by the institution and proceeds, as applicable, to modify the composition of the panel of experts that will conduct the degree programme visit. All members of the panel receive the appropriate and specific training needed to evaluate the request to award the EUR-ACE® label. This training is defined by ANECA and IIE, and receiving it is an essential requirement for all panel members ([Training of the experts who assessed these 6 Latin American degrees](#)).
5. The visit report, the self-evaluation report and all of the information available on the degree programme applying for the label are analysed by the EUR-ACE® ANECA-IIE Accreditation Committee, which produces the grounded provisional evaluation report. The EUR-ACE® Accreditation Committee follows up this recommendation by analysing the audit report prepared by the audit panel, together with all of the information on the degree that is required for EUR-ACE® accreditation. This report is then forwarded to the higher-education institution which may submit any [appeals](#) deemed appropriate as well as an action plan, if appropriate, within twenty days. This action plan (improvement plan) aims to identify the actions, responsible parties and phases to be implemented by the higher-education institution to correct or improve any aspects considered in the provisional report received. After receipt of the appeals and the [action plan](#), the EUR-ACE® ANECA-IIE Accreditation Committee reviews them and prepares a grounded final evaluation report and makes its decision as concerns the awarding of the EUR-ACE® label. This decision will then be communicated to the corresponding higher-education institution. This report will include all of the recommendations for improvement of the degree programme detected by the ANECA-IIE EUR-ACE® Accreditation Committee ([Visit reports of the 6 Latin American degrees](#) and [Provisional and final reports of these degrees by the Accreditation Committee with the final decision on awarding the label](#)).
6. The EUR-ACE® Accreditation Committee comprises faculty, professionals and foreign experts ([Composition of the EUR-ACE® Accreditation Committee](#)).
7. The [final reports](#) are published on the ANECA website.

8. The ANECA-IIE evaluation procedure provides institutions the possibility of appealing EUR-ACE® label decisions. The university may appeal the decision regarding the awarding of the EUR-ACE® label within thirty days. After receipt of the appeal, the ANECA - IIE Appeal Committee reviews and debates on the appeal before issuing its final decision ([EUR-ACE® Appeal Committee](#)).
9. The evaluation of the EUR-ACE® label is done jointly between ANECA-IIE and with the participation of faculty and professionals for all the external evaluation panels (including students and quality specialists as well) in addition to committees such as the EUR-ACE® label evaluation process decision-making committee (EUR-ACE® ANECA-IIE Mixed Committee) and the committee that designs and updates the documentation and procedures applied during these processes ([EUR-ACE® ANECA-IIE Technical Committee](#)). ANECA analyses all the proposals for improvement received from universities, collaborating institutions, academic experts, professional experts and student representatives. In 2018, 34 improvement proposals were implemented after completing the EUR-ACE assessment procedure ([Implemented improvements in 2019](#)).

### Standard 3.4. Thematic analysis

Agencies should regularly publish reports that describe and analyse the general findings of their external quality assurance activities.

**Panel conclusion (ENQA):** Substantially compliant.

#### Panel recommendation ENQA

The panel recommends that ANECA continues to analyse the data and information emerging from evaluations conducted and in particular the evaluation of programmes, and to expand the range of thematic reports published on the Spanish quality assurance system.

**Register Committee conclusion (EQAR):** Compliance.

#### Actions taken by ANECA

As recommended by the ENQA panel, ANECA drafts reports on quality assurance within the Spanish higher-education area. Depending on their frequency, there are 2 types of reports:

1. **Systematic and periodic reports** on university quality. On the one hand, ANECA prepares annual reports in collaboration with Autonomous Community agencies to obtain a [holistic view of the Spanish university system](#) from the perspective of quality assurance agency activities. On the other, it prepares [annual reports on the results](#) of the evaluation procedures carried out by the Agency. It also published an [expert report on International Quality Labels \(IQL\) in 2018](#).
2. **Thematic reports** include occasional reports prepared by the different ANECA divisions. In keeping with the panel's recommendations, ANECA has made great efforts to increase the preparation, publication and communication of these reports at both the national and international levels. Thus far, it has published the following reports:
  - Bonilla-Calero, A.I., Carabantes-Alarcón, D. and Sastre-Castillo, M.A. "[La acreditación internacional de química por ANECA-RESQ](#)", *Anales de Química*, 115(3), 2019 (indexed in LATINDEX, ICYT and DIALNET).
  - Bonilla-Calero, A.I., Morales-González. E. and Sastre-Castillo, M.A. "[El ordenamiento jurídico europeo en el espacio de educación superior: cooperación internacional y los modelos de acreditación](#)", *Reencuentro: Análisis problemas universitarios*, (Mexico), 25(28), 2018 (indexed in IRISIE, LATINDEX, INFOURMEX, DOAJ, RedALyC).



In addition, ANECA has launched the following nationwide projects which will include thematic reports upon their conclusion:

- **Project** to create a self-evaluation framework for Spanish universities to **improve** their initiatives in the **employment and employability** areas. Currently, 65 universities from around Spain participate in this project in addition to different stakeholders (student representatives, employers, university social body, experts, etc.) and support from the competent Conference of Rectors (CRUE) body.
- **Project** to create a self-evaluation framework for Spanish universities to **improve** their initiatives aimed at **facilitating the inclusion of people with disabilities**. This project is still in the work group definition stage. Several dozen universities throughout Spain are expected to take part. The project currently receives support from different stakeholders (student representatives, nationwide organizations dedicated to helping people with disabilities, university social body, experts, etc.) and support from the competent CRUE body.

### Standard 3.6. International quality assurance and professional conduct

Agencies should have in place processes for internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of their activities.

**Panel conclusion (ENQA):** Fully compliant.

#### **Panel recommendation ENQA**

The panel recommends that an annual IQA report be published, primarily aimed at an internal readership and at developing an institutional memory of changes and developments.

**Register Committee conclusion (EQAR):** Compliance.

#### **Actions taken by ANECA**

In response to ENQA's recommendation, ANECA has worked on the following three areas of action:

- Preparation of an [annual system review report](#), identifying improvements and decision-making processes. ANECA's Board is in charge of drafting this report with participation from Quality Unit members.
- System implementation consolidation: ANECA is defining new procedures and reviewing and updating those that already exist. Essentially, the new procedures designed focus on the Economic Management Unit and, concretely, on economic questions related to managing the different procedure experts.
- Definition and creation of a Quality Committee to coordinate the implementation and follow-up of specific improvement initiatives for each division with transversal projects throughout the Agency as a whole. This committee includes a unit head and two Quality Unit officers. Depending on the topics to be addressed, staff from other divisions may be incorporated as warranted.

## BLOCK II. ENQA PANEL SUGGESTIONS TO FURTHER DEVELOP THE AGENCY

### Suggestions for further development from ENQA panel

1. The panel recommends that the agency consider the possibility of moving to an institutional evaluation based system for all procedures. The panel understands that this may require a change in legislation as well as other considerations, however the maturity of the present programme evaluation procedures is now well established and it may be appropriate to move to a more audit focused approach in the future.
2. The panel recommends that the AUDIT programme continues to be developed and expanded and institutions encouraged to participate in it.

### Actions taken by ANECA

ANECA launched its Institutional Accreditation procedure in keeping with current [Spanish Law](#) though as an alternative to the currently valid accreditation model for degrees in Spain. Royal Decree 420/2015, dated 29th May, establishes that the institutional accreditation of university centres is an alternative to the official university degree accreditation model.

To further develop this Institutional Accreditation, the General Secretariat for Universities published a resolution on March 7th, 2018, detailing the instructions for the Institutional Accreditation procedure for both public and private universities.

This procedure comprises two phases:

- During the **first phase** of the Institutional Accreditation procedure, ANECA evaluates schools requests for Institutional Accreditation. This procedure takes advantage of synergies with the undergraduate and Master's degrees accreditation (which ANECA evaluates through the [ACREDITA procedure](#)) and the certification procedure regarding the implementation of their IQAS. ANECA certifies the implementation of these systems through the AUDIT procedure.

ANECA undertook the following actions in 2018:

- a. Creation of the Advisory Committee for the Initial Institutional Accreditation procedure. This committee is in charge of evaluating applications from universities.
- b. Publication of the Institutional Accreditation Guide, a document which lists the procedure's primary traits as well as detailing the application process.

After publishing the above and as of the date of this report, ANECA has received a total of 23 Initial Institutional Accreditation applications from schools. Of these, 17 have received favourable decisions, and 6 unfavourable.

All the information regarding the first phase of the Institutional Accreditation procedure can be consulted on the [ANECA website](#).

- The **second or Institutional Accreditation renewal phase**: Over the next few months, ANECA will define the model and steps for this procedure. The dedicated Agency work group includes: the ANECA Director, the Director of the ANECA Programme and Institutional Evaluation Division, the Head of the ANECA Quality Unit, the Project Manager of the ANECA AUDIT procedure and the Project Manager of the ANECA procedure for undergraduate and Master's degrees.

The model will include the different guidelines to evaluate within the model to renew this Institutional Accreditation. These guidelines will include:

- A series of elements contained in the IQAS evaluations that ANECA includes in its AUDIT procedure,
- A series of elements included in the process to renew the accreditation of undergraduate and Master's degrees within ANECA's ACREDITA procedure,
- And, lastly, the evaluation procedure itself, from the moment the school receives the Initial Institutional Accreditation until it presents its application to renew said Institutional Accreditation.

## BLOCK III. ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENTS UNDERTAKEN BY ANECA

### Additional improvement 1: Stakeholders

ANECA's consultation with its stakeholders made clear the need to improve the information available on its activities. The aim of this measure is to provide more information about the Agency's activities, increase its visibility and foment its image as the national Agency.

#### Actions taken by ANECA

The actions by the Agency to improve its image will be undertaken at the national and international levels.

The activities at the **national level** comprise two different types of activities:

- Attending conferences, seminars and other events organised by Spanish universities: the Agency Director and those in charge of the management and evaluation divisions as well as the units and procedures will carry out [institutional representation](#) efforts and others to support the Spanish university community through [conferences](#), courses, seminars and workshops organised by the Spanish institutions and related to ANECA's area of competencies.
- Transversal activities with higher-education stakeholders: ANECA, along with The Spanish Network for Higher Education Quality Assurance Agencies (REACU), has organised a seminar at Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo (UIMP) entitled [Aseguramiento de la calidad y reforma de la ordenación de las enseñanzas universitarias](#) ("Quality assurance and the reform of regulations governing university programmes").

By contrast, ANECA's **international activities** have to be focused as a means to brace procedures designed and developed by the Agency to benefit the Spanish higher-education system. Consequently, ANECA's procedures will also contribute to reinforce ANECA's international position in the quality assurance field.

Over the last few years, the Agency has received an ever greater number of invitations to present at different conferences, workshops and seminars organised by key international organisations and networks. This is a clear indicator of the national and international recognition ANECA has received and its role as a

reference. This all stems from its expertise regarding the procedures it undertakes and the methodology it applies.

As can be seen, the Agency is making great efforts to reinforce its image at both the national and international levels within the higher-education framework.