



AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

**2007 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INSTITUTIONAL
ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME**

1. Introduction

Assessment processes were first developed in Spanish universities in 1992 with the *Programa experimental de Evaluación de la Calidad del Sistema Universitario* (an experimental quality assessment programme applied to the university system). The aim was to try out an institutional assessment methodology inspired by international schemes. The setting in motion in 1994 of a European pilot project for evaluating quality in Higher Education in Europe brought together seventeen participating countries centred around a common assessment methodology in a collaborative experience.

As a result of the abovementioned European pilot project, the first National Universities Quality Assessment Plan was set up in 1995, which was followed in 2001 by the Second University Quality Plan.

The *Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación* (ANECA, National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain) was set up at the end of 2002 in compliance with article 32 of the Spanish Universities Act (Organic Law 6/2001 on Universities, of 21 December). It was within this context that the Agency began the *Institutional Assessment Programme*, the intention being to press on with the philosophy behind the Plans carried out by the Coordinating Council of Spanish Universities, namely, to *promote the quality of Spanish universities at both the national and international levels*. The Institutional Assessment Programme has so far been carried out on three separate occasions.

Quality assessment in Spanish universities has become widespread as a result of these programmes, and a common methodology has been developed for processes involving the assessment of degree programmes. The ultimate purpose of assessment is twofold: continuous improvement and accountability to society, the latter being carried out through the publication of assessment reports.

The experience gained in these programmes offers a greater guarantee of success for tackling with the new challenges that stem from the globalisation of higher education and the goals deriving from the Bologna process.

The Ministers of Education in Europe signed a declaration in Bologna in 1999 that established the goal of generating a European Higher Education Area by around 2010. In order to provide constant support, supervision and adaptation to needs as they arise, further meetings by the Ministers were resolved in Prague (2001), Berlin (2003) and Bergen (2005). The next meeting will take place in London in 2007.

In the Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers responsible for Higher Education in Bergen (May 2005), the importance was underlined of putting into practice the following mid-term priorities along the path towards the EHEA in 2007: 1- implementation of the standards and guidelines for quality assurance as proposed in the ENQA report; 2- implementation of the national frameworks for qualifications; 3- the award and recognition of joint degrees, including at the doctorate level; 4- creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, including procedures for the recognition of prior learning.

In the report by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), which was approved by the Ministers' meeting in Bergen, it was laid down that the universities must set up and develop a culture that recognises the importance of quality and quality assurance in everyday work. The report further adds that, in order to achieve this, the universities must develop and implement a strategy for continuous improvement.

As a way of helping the universities to carry out this recommendation, the ANECA decided to implement a *special call for applications for the Institutional Assessment Programme* to complete the consolidation of the assessment culture in Spanish universities and to prepare them to successfully deal with the *new challenges existing within the European framework of Higher Education, including the design and implementation of stable quality assurance systems*.

2. Aims of the programme

The aims of the Institutional Assessment Programme that are intended to be covered by the 2006-2007 Call for Applications are as follows:

1. To provide support to the universities so they can fulfil planning and pending internal commitments regarding the institutional assessment of their degree programmes, with the aim of consolidating knowledge within the university in terms of the quality of these degree programmes through diagnosis and experience in assessment processes.
2. To provide information to students and their families, society as a whole, university governing bodies and public administration on the quality of university degree programmes and their plans for improvement.

3. Participants

This Call for Applications is for degree programmes leading to the award by Spanish universities of degrees officially recognised at the national level in Spain.

4. Applications procedure

Interested universities must send just one application per university to the e.mail address: evaluacion@aneca.es by 30 November 2006 at the latest, with a list of the degree programmes that they wish to be included in the Call.

The information to be included in the application is given in Annex 1 of this document. Submission of applications implies acceptance of the conditions of the Call.

5. Application assessment

Once the applications have been sent by the universities to the ANECA, the Agency must then carry out the assessment and selection within one week following the deadline for submission of the applications.

The assessment of applications will be carried out by experts in the ANECA's degree programme and institutional assessment unit (*unidad de evaluación de enseñanzas e instituciones*) in accordance with the following criteria:

1. Degree programmes must have run a minimum of two full cycles with the current curriculum.
2. A maximum number of 200 assessment units shall be admitted (the assessment unit corresponds to just one External Assessment Committee and one self-assessment report).
3. In the case where there are more than 200 assessment units, priority shall be given to degree programmes that have never undergone an assessment process or that were previously assessed more than five years ago.

6. Notification of acceptance

The ANECA shall publish details of the degree programmes that will finally participate in this Call on its website, and it shall inform the quality unit at each university that submits an application of selection by e.mail.

Once the participating degree programmes have been selected, an ANECA-model collaboration agreement will be sent to the University to be signed by the Rector (annex II).

These agreements are to be signed in the period between the second week in December and 31 December.

7. Dates of the assessment process

The timetable for the various stages of the institutional assessment programme is as follows:

1. The publication of guides and tools is envisaged during November.
2. The self-assessment stage will be carried out between January and May 2007.
3. Visits to the degree programmes by external assessors will begin at the beginning of October 2007 and finish in November.
4. The plan for improvements must be submitted to the ANECA before 28 February 2008.

8. Programme monitoring and coordination

The monitoring and coordination of the project will be carried out by the ANECA's degree programme and institutional assessment unit. As a consequence of this process, and in order for the proposed aims to be achieved, the deadlines and organisation planned initially may be adjusted.

The final reports on the external assessment of degree programmes will be published on the ANECA website (www.aneca.es), and their content used to prepare reports that the Agency is called to prepare.

9. Programme funding

The ANECA shall cover the external assessors' fees and expenses incurred in arrangements, including travel allowance, accommodation and subsistence allowance, with an estimated financial contribution by the ANECA of a total of six thousand euros for each assessment unit.

The university itself must finance all internal expenses for the self-assessment stage.

ANNEX I: Application form.

UNIVERSITY.....

NB: *One application form must be completed for each degree programmes to be assessed.*

APPLICATION FORM FOR THE INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME
2007 Call for applications

Name of the degree programme

Year in which the current curriculum was approved

Faculty, School or University College

Head of the Degree Programme

Position

Address Postcode

e.mail

Telephone

Has any assessment process been carried out on this degree programme?

Date when the assessment was carried out ___/___/_____

Order of priority given to the degree programme in the various applications being made by the university for the 2007 Call for Applications:.....

¿Do you want international assessors to be involved as members of the External Assessment Committee of this degree programme?

ANNEX II: Agreement model

In Madrid, on (date)

GATHERED

For the first party, Dr. Gemma Rauret Dalmau, in the name and on behalf of the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA), a trust set up as figures in public document protocol number 2981, granted on 31 July 2002 before Inocencio Figaredo de la Mora, Notary, whose official address is c. Orense nº 11-7º, Madrid, C.I.F. G-83381822. Registered with the Ministry of Education and Science's Register of Trusts under number 750.

Who intervenes in her capacity as Director of the Trust and exercises the power granted to her in the public document authorised on 22 June 2006 by Miguel Navarro Tárraga, Notary, Madrid.

For the second party _____ as Rector of the University _____, at the address _____, Fiscal ID no. _____, who exercises the powers entrusted to him/her under current legislation and, in particular, the University's statutes.

Both representatives, who mutually recognise their sufficient capacity, sign this document in the name of their respective entities and, for this purpose,

DECLARE

FIRST.-

That the University _____, in carrying out the public service of higher education through teaching and research, has the goal, amongst others, of the continuous improvement of university quality, as well as cooperation with institutions associated with this.

SECOND.-

That the ANECA, which is a public trust set up under article 32 of the Spanish Universities Act (Organic Law on Universities, Law 6/2001 of 21 December) and has the following functions, amongst others:

- To evaluate and make public the performance of higher education through assessment and other actions that lead to certification and accreditation, according to objective and transparent procedures.
- To reinforce the transparency and comparability of the Spanish university system as a means to promote and assure university quality, as well as to establish criteria for accountability to society.

That it carries out these functions, amongst others, through the Institutional Assessment Programme, which provides for a public Call for Applications to be held, which is aimed, through the universities, at degree programmes officially recognised at the national level in Spain.

That, following the aforementioned Call for Applications to the Institutional Assessment Programme made by the ANECA in which the University _____ has taken part in, the projects described in Annex I have been selected.

That, as a result of the need to implement these projects, they formally agree to this collaboration agreement.

CLAUSES

FIRST. OBJECT.-

The University _____ agrees to participate in the ANECA's Institutional Assessment Programme by carrying out the projects included under Annex I of this contract, of which they form an inseparable part.

SECOND. ACCEPTANCE

The University _____ accepts that it will carry out the aforementioned projects in accordance with current statutory provisions, in addition to the technical standards (assessment manuals and tools) provided by the ANECA, and that it is the responsibility of the aforementioned university to directly undertake the matters that are incumbent on it, in accordance with the stipulations of the same provisions, and to cooperate with the External Committee for it to do the best it can in its work.

THIRD. DURATION

The projects are to be carried out according to the deadlines established by the ANECA in the technical standards provided.

All deadlines established in the technical standards, in addition to the period of validity of this document, may be extended if, on expiry, there are reasons that make this advisable.

FOURTH. MONITORING

The ANECA's degree programme and institutional assessment unit shall direct the development of the Institutional Assessment Programme, and it will be the channel through which the Agency communicates with the University. In specific terms, it will be the unit's responsibility to:

- Verify compliance of material performance by the University, including submission of self-assessment reports and compliance with information obligations.
- Notify the University of all ANECA actions and decisions that it must be informed of, including the appointment of the External Assessors.
- Propose the extension, suspension or, where applicable, the cancellation of the agreement to the competent bodies of the ANECA when the circumstances call for this.
- Certify compliance by the University of its due performance and instigate the payment of all financial commitments.
- Resolve any contingencies that occur.
- Authorise, at the request of the University, modifications to the project that are called for as a result of the progress of the project itself, provided that this does not involve any modification to the financial commitments nor imply any substantial alteration to its content.

FIFTH. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The ANECA shall cover the external assessors' fees and expenses incurred in arrangements, including travel allowances, accommodation and subsistence allowances, with an estimated financial contribution by the ANECA of a total of six thousand euros for each assessment unit.

The university itself must finance all internal expenses for the self-assessment stage.

SIXTH. CONTENT EXTENSION

The object of this agreement may be liable to extension according to the development of circumstances. For this purpose, it is established that the decision to extend the

agreement shall be determined by agreement to this effect by the Director of the ANECA and the University's Rector.

SEVENTH. PARTICIPATION OF FOREIGN ASSESSORS

Following the selection of degree programmes in which foreign assessors are to participate, in the case where it is necessary to translate the self-assessment report into English, the costs of translation will be met by the ANECA.

EIGHTH. DISSEMINATION OF THE RESULTS

The reports on the external assessment processes of the degree programmes will be published on the ANECA's website (www.aneca.es), and their content used to prepare reports that the Agency is called to prepare.

NINTH. INCOMPATIBILITIES

The object of this agreement and funding provided by the ANECA for its execution are incompatible with similar actions by other bodies with identical functions, unless there exists a collaboration agreement in this respect between the ANECA and the bodies concerned.

TENTH. CONFLICTS COMMISSION

In order to resolve any differences arising in the interpretation and execution of this agreement, a joint committee for resolving conflicts is set up, made up of the Head of the degree programme and institution assessment unit, as the ANECA representative, and _____, as the University's representative.

ELEVENTH. OTHER FORMALITIES

This document may be submitted as a public document at the request of either of the contracting parties, who will be responsible for any costs incurred.

TWELTH. JURISDICTION

This is a civil contract. Both parties undertake to amicably resolve any difference that may arise regarding the contract. In the case where an amicable solution is not possible and a lawsuit is the appropriate procedure, both parties agree, with the express waiver of any other jurisdiction that is their right, to be subject to the jurisdiction and competency of the courts in Madrid.

And as proof of conformity, both parties sign this document, in duplicate, at the place and on the date given at the top.

For the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA)

Signed: Gemma Rauret