

**Report of the panel of the ENQA coordinated review of
ANECA**

against the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the
European Higher Education Area

June 2007

Executive summary

This report analyses the compliance of the National Agency for the Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain - ANECA- with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

ANECA contacted ENQA to request that ENQA organise a review of the agency for that purpose. ENQA appointed a panel of international experts to carry out the external review of ANECA. The site visit took place in Madrid on 14 and 15 June 2007.

In the light of the documentation and oral evidence, the Panel concluded that ANECA is in substantial compliance with the ENQA Membership Regulations and the ESG. The Panel consequently recommends the Board of ENQA that ANECA should have its Full membership confirmed for a further period of five years.

The Panel notes that the recent amendments to the Spanish Universities Acts of 2001 will affect ANECA's executive structures. The review of ANECA was carried out against the current structures.

ANECA offers eight external evaluation programmes that cover degree programmes and various institutional topics; and they promote the ESG good practices for higher education institutions. ANECA's processes for designing and developing evaluation programmes are commendable. Participation in the evaluation programmes are offered on a cyclical basis but until now participation in any of the evaluation programmes has not been compulsory. This will change however with the introduction of the AUDIT and VERIFICA programmes which will be compulsory.

ANECA is recognised as the national agency for quality assurance and accreditation and fully recognises its responsibilities in that regard. ANECA has taken initiatives to strengthen the cooperation and clarify the relationship with the regional quality assurance agencies.

The services provided by ANECA and the quality of the work of staff are highly regarded by evaluation committee members and institutions. Due to the wide scope of evaluation programmes, careful attention needs to be continuously paid to monitoring staff workload. ANECA has set up very rigorous procedures for the management of its evaluators but may want to consider taking institutional profiles into consideration when appointing panels. ANECA is allocated appropriate financial and material resources to effectively fulfil its objectives.

The 'Strategic Plan Horizon 2010' presents ANECA's mission and objectives. ANECA prepares annual action plans to support the achievements of these objectives.

The content of the review reports is not influenced by third parties and to date Board of Trustees have adhered to the Agency's statutes that emphasise that ANECA should act in an independent manner. There is a need however to strengthen the safeguarding of the autonomous responsibility of the agency.

ANECA's processes are pre-defined and well documented, including procedures for appeal. The evaluation programmes generally follow the stages which are expected as good practice in the ESG. The panel notes that only the results of ex post evaluations are made publicly available and there is a need to systematically apply this principle of disclosure. The panel endorses ANECA's view that it is necessary to focus on developing means for ensuring a more effective follow-up to the external evaluations

ANECA has developed a quality policy and rigorous quality assurance mechanisms. The implementation of the internal quality management system was recently initiated. Despite ANECA already applying a range of external and internal feedback mechanisms there is a potential for the further development and expansion of these.

The panel is of the view that the quality management system provides an appropriate framework for the follow-up of this review report.

1. Introduction

This is the report of the review of the National Agency for the Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación) –ANECA–, undertaken in June 2007 in Madrid for the purpose of determining whether the agency meets the criteria for Full membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). ANECA is a member of ENQA since 2003 and is a full member since January 2005.

The criteria are listed in Annex 1 to the report.

1.1 Background and outline of the review process

1.1.1 Background

ENQA's regulations require all full member agencies to undergo an external cyclical review, at least once every five years, in order to verify that they fulfil the membership criteria.

In November 2004, the General Assembly of ENQA agreed that the third part of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) should be incorporated into the membership provisions of its regulations. Substantial compliance with the ESG thus became the principal criterion for full membership of ENQA. The ESG were subsequently adopted at the Bergen ministerial meeting of the Bologna Process in 2005.

The third part of the ESG covers the cyclical external review of quality assurance and accreditation agencies. In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, external cyclical reviews for ENQA membership purposes are normally conducted on a national level and initiated by national authorities in an EHEA State, but carried out independently from them. However, external reviews can also be coordinated by ENQA if they cannot be nationally organised. This may be the case, for instance, when no suitable or willing national body can be found to coordinate the review. In that event, ENQA plays an active role in the organisation of the review, being directly involved as coordinator, whereas, in the case of national reviews, it is only kept informed of progress throughout the whole process.

In December 2005 the Board of Directors of ANECA decided to carry out the external evaluation of the processes and activities of the Agency. This decision was ratified by ANECA's Board of Trustees, whose president is the Spanish Minister of Education. In January 2006, ANECA's Director requested the ENQA to carry out the external evaluation of the Agency. After this decision, ANECA's Board invited AQU-Catalunya to jointly develop the international evaluation project.

In addition to fulfilling the periodic external review requirement of ENQA membership, the review of ANECA was also intended to demonstrate the Agency's credibility and professionalism to the stakeholders in the Spanish university system and society in general.

1.1.2 Review Process

The review process of ANECA was based on the ENQA policy on ENQA-organised external reviews of member agencies. The review was conducted in line with the process described in the Guidelines for national reviews of ENQA member agencies and in accordance with the timeline set out in the Terms of Reference.

The Terms of Reference are listed in Annex 2 to the report.

The review panel was composed of the following members:

- Dorte Kristoffersen (Panel Chairperson). Audit Director AUQA (Australian Universities Quality Agency), Secretary Asia Pacific Quality Network APQN;
- Hildegard Vermeiren (Panel Secretary). Professor University College Ghent, Belgium;
- Fiona Crozier (Panel member). Assistant Director. Development and Enhancement Group, QAA (Quality Assurance Agency), United Kingdom;
- Julio Pedrosa (Panel member). Former Rector, Professor University of Aveiro, Portugal;
- Michel Troquet (Panel member). Professor University Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand. Director of the Ecole Polytechnique Marseille France;
- Maher Tekaya (Panel member). Student University of Picardie Jules Verne, France;

These experts were nominated and appointed by ENQA and accepted by the Board of Directors of ANECA, once the president of the Board of Trustees (Spanish Minister of Education) was informed by the Director of ANECA.

ANECA produced a self-evaluation report which provided a substantial portion of the evidence that the panel used to form its conclusions. The panel received the self-evaluation report from ANECA on the 23 April 2007. The panel did not receive copies of the substantial evidence that ANECA refers to in the self-evaluation report in advance of the site visit. This evidence was made available to the panel at the site visit. The panel had access to the evidence which is publicly available on the ANECA website prior to the site visit.

The review panel was given access to all documents and people it wished to consult throughout the review.

According to the ENQA guidelines for reviews, the panel is responsible for preparing an outline of the groups it wishes to meet during the site visit no later than four weeks prior to the visit. A program outline was sent to ANECA on 4 May and ANECA was asked to comment on the appropriateness of the program and was invited to make suggestions for changes if needed. ANECA did not make any suggestions for changes. ANECA provided some additional information about their organisational set-up which enabled the panel to finalise the program.

The panel members read the self evaluation report and provided lines of enquiry which were sent to the Secretary and the Chair of the panel. The Secretary of the panel prepared a consolidated set of lines of enquiry based on the members' input. The consolidated lines of enquiry provided the background for the panel's

discussions when it met for the preparatory meeting, for the exploration of evidence, and for the interviews conducted during the site visit.

The panel conducted a site-visit to validate fully the self-evaluation and clarify any points of issue. When the panel met for its preparatory meeting it had an initial discussion about the self evaluation report and the lines of enquiry. This led to the formulation of the main issues to be pursued during the visit in order to be able to comment on ANECA's compliance with all the ESG. The panel also spent time during the preparatory meeting reading the evidence. This was continued throughout the visit. At the time of the preparatory visit the lines of enquiry had been organised according to relevance for the various interview groups. Before each interview session the panel discussed the lines of enquiry. The panel checked the continued importance of the issues to pursue, new issues were added and the division of labour between the panel members was decided.

The program included a number of periods for private panel meetings. The panel spent these periods discussing what had been learnt and the impact of this on their preliminary findings and on future interviews. The time was also spent preparing for the following interviews. The Secretary of the panel took substantive electronic notes of these discussions as well as of all interview sessions. These notes were circulated to the panel after the site visit and were an invaluable source of information in the preparation of the draft report.

Finally, the review panel produced its final report on the basis of the self-evaluation report, site-visit and its findings. In doing so it provided an opportunity for ANECA to comment on the factual accuracy of the draft report.

The following report presents the results of the evaluation process undertaken by the review panel. The level of conformity with the ESG that is expected is 'substantial compliance', not rigid adherence.

1.3 Timeline of the review

► *Prior to the site visit*

Action	Time
ANECA Director requests ENQA to carry out the external evaluation of ANECA.	6 January 2006
Terms of reference, protocol and preliminary timetable for the review are agreed between the ENQA secretariat and ANECA.	End January 2007
The Review Panel is appointed by ENQA.	Early February
Review secretary agrees the site visit schedule with Review Chair and ANECA.	Mid-April
ANECA produces its self-evaluation report and submits it to the ENQA secretariat; the report is distributed to the panel members.	2 nd half of April
Review Chair sends an outline to ANECA for the groups the panel wants to meet during the visit.	Beginning of May
Review Chair makes identification of lines of inquiry	Beginning of June
Review secretary produces a briefing paper –outlining	Beginning of June

the background, schedule and draft lines of inquiry for the review and circulates this to the Review panel.	
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► *During the site visit*

Action	Time
Brief meeting on the evening before the site visit. The chair and the panel members discuss the schedule of the visit and agree how the lines of inquiry will be dealt with.	13 June
Site visit of ANECA by the Review Panel.	14 and 15 June

► *After the site visit*

Action	Time
The Review Secretary produces the initial draft report and circulates it to the Chair and panel members.	Beginning of July
The panel members review the draft and suggest comments, amendments or additions and provide these to the Review Secretary.	End of July
The Review Secretary produces a revised draft, which, after agreement of the Chair, is submitted to ANECA for comment on factual accuracy.	Late August
The Review Secretary produces a final version of the Report; the Report is submitted to ENQA.	Beginning of September
Consideration of report by ENQA.	September-October 2007

1.4 Structure of the document

The first part provides an introduction, followed by the background, the outline and timeline of the review process.

The second part provides a presentation of ANECA and the Spanish accreditation system.

The third part provides an analysis and comment on compliance of ANECA with the ESG for external quality assurance.

The fourth part states the panel's conclusion.

The report includes three annexes:

ANNEX 1 : ESG (part 2 and part 3);

ANNEX 2: Terms of reference for the external review of ANECA;

ANNEX 3: Glossary of acronyms;

2. ANECA and the Spanish accreditation system

2.1 Brief history and current situation of the agency

2.1.1 Legislative status

The promulgation of the democratic Spanish Constitution of 1978 ushered a new age in Spain. The Constitution included two fundamental changes with an impact on higher education. One was the creation of 17 Autonomous Communities, which meant a distribution of jurisdiction between the parties i.e. the state, the regions and the universities; and the other was the guarantee of autonomy and freedom to the universities to teach, study and carry out research.

The major reform of the Spanish university system began in 1983, with the approval of the University Reform Act (Ley Orgánica de Reforma Universitaria, LRU) by Parliament. This law was founded on the idea that the University is set up for general interests of the whole State and its respective Autonomous Communities. Concern was focused on democratisation of university studies and setting out the distribution of jurisdiction over university education between the three stakeholders: the State, the Autonomous Communities and the universities themselves. The powers of the State guarantee the homogeneity and fundamental unity and equality of the system, in addition to the general planning of investment in education. The 17 Autonomous Communities have jurisdiction over degree programmes as well as over the general funding of the public universities.

This legislation was reformed in 2001 with the passing of the Spanish Universities Act (Ley Orgánica 6/2001 de 21 de diciembre de Universidades, LOU) by Parliament. This Act aimed at structuring and bringing together the university system, strengthening relations between university and society and improving the quality of teaching, research and management. Article 31 "On the Evaluation and Accreditation" of this Act formulated aims, mechanisms and bodies involved in evaluation and quality assurance at national and autonomous (regional) level. This legislation authorised the establishment of the Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación (ANECA). ANECA was established by Article 32 of Organic Law 6/2001 of 21 December on Universities, and was set up as a public Trust by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science on 19 July 2002. However, this legislation omitted any regulation of the processes of evaluation of quality agencies. The lack of specification in the Act of the approaches to be applied for the evaluation of higher education determined the commitment by ANECA's governing bodies to organise its evaluation processes in accordance with Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (see self-evaluation report p.5).

Currently Spain has three national agencies for quality assurance of Higher Education. ANECA is a state sector trust whose task is to monitor by way of evaluation the promotion and quality of both private and public universities and their integration into the European Higher Education Area. The National Research Assessment Commission (Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Investigación, CNEAI) is a body under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and evaluates the research work of university teaching staff and scientific personnel with the

Higher Council for Scientific Research (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, CSIC). In addition, the National Evaluation and Planning Agency (Agencia Nacional de Evaluación y Planificación, ANEP), is also a body under the Ministry of Education and carries out the scientific and technical evaluation of research proposals, teams of researchers and units requesting funding, and follows up the results. This evaluation report covers only evaluations carried out by ANECA.

Furthermore, Spain has 11 regional agencies for quality evaluation (see section 3.2 ►Official Status). Six of the autonomous regions do not have their own quality agency. In their case, ANECA has powers to act as the competent agency for quality assurance.

2.1.2 Legal framework

The responsibilities of ANECA are based on the following Acts:

- Spanish Constitution of 1978;
- Organic Law 6/2001, December 21, on Universities;
- Agreement of the Committee of Ministers, July 19th 2002 creating the ANECA;
- Statutes of ANECA;
- Royal Decree 1052/2002, October 11th, about evaluation and certification of teaching staff and researchers;
- Royal Decree 49/2004, January 19th, about homologation of study programmes and degrees of official nature and validity in the entire country;
- Royal Decree 55/2005, January 21st, regulating the structure of university degrees and regulating university degree studies;
- Royal Decree 56/2007, January 21st, regulating official university post graduate studies;
- On 14 December 2006 the Spanish Parliament passed the bill that amended the Spanish Universities Act of 2001;
- Organic Law 4/2007, April 12th, modifying Organic Law 6/2001, December 21, on Universities;

2.2 Brief History of Spanish Quality Assurance

The first initiatives with regard to quality assurance in Spain emerged in 1992. The Experimental Programme for Quality Evaluation of the university system was launched by the Coordinating Council of Spanish Universities (Consejo de Coordinación Universitaria, CCU), the supreme authority of the Spanish Higher Education system, and predecessor of ANECA. The objective of this programme was to validate a methodology for institutional assessment. Seventeen Spanish universities participated in it.

In 1994-1995 four Spanish universities participated in a Europe-wide pilot project funded by the European Commission on Evaluation of Quality in Higher Education. This project involved around fifty universities in Europe, including four Spanish universities. This project demonstrated the value of sharing and developing experience in the area of quality assurance.

As a result of the previous experiences, through the enactment of Royal Decree 1947/95, the National Evaluation Plan for Quality in the Universities (Plan Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad, PNCU) was set in motion by the Coordinating Council of Spanish Universities (CCU) and developed between 1996 and 2000. The aims of this plan were to promote institutional assessment, to provide a homogenous and compatible methodology within the context of the European Union and to provide objective information for decision-making by the different organisations within their scope of action.

In the Bologna Declaration (1999) the European Ministers of Education committed themselves to establish the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010. At the same time the early European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA) was established to promote and support the quality and competitiveness of the EHEA. The year 2010 became a horizon and a challenge for the 45 signatories of the declaration, Spain being one of the first of them.

In 2000 the Second Universities Quality Plan (II Plan de Calidad Universitaria, PCU) was implemented by the Coordinating Council of Universities through enactment of Royal Decree 408/2001.

This plan was in force from 2001 until 2003, when it was integrated into the responsibilities of ANECA and the regional agencies. This Plan continued to develop institutional assessment, methodologies that were homogenous with existing ones in the European Union, and greater participation by the Autonomous Communities in developing and managing the Plan by helping to set up regional evaluation agencies.

The CCU, through its Secretariat General, was the authority responsible for managing the abovementioned quality plans. It had the assistance of a Technical Coordinating Committee in this, and the collaboration of the regional agencies that carried out evaluation processes within their respective areas of jurisdiction.

The Spanish Universities Act of 2001 confirmed in Art. 29 the general authority of the above mentioned CCU, but authorised in Art. 32 the constitution of a national agency for quality assessment and accreditation. This body, ANECA, came into effect on 19 July 2002. In 2003 ANECA and the regional agencies became responsible for the work of evaluation, certification and accreditation of degree programmes, research, teaching, teaching staff management activities and the services and management of the universities.

Since its establishment in 2002, ANECA has been working on the design of evaluation methods and has carried out evaluations, accreditations and assessments in universities.

In 2005 ANECA published its Strategic Plan Horizon 2010. This plan reiterates the mission of the agency, and defines the strategic priorities for the agency until 2010.

2.3 Profile of ANECA

2.3.1 Mission and Vision of ANECA

The Strategic Plan Horizon 2010 defines ANECA's mission in the following words:

"To contribute to the quality improvement of the higher education system through the assessment, certification and accreditation of university degrees, programmes, teaching staff and institutions" (p.8).

As stated in The Strategic Plan Horizon 2010 (p. 9), ANECA achieves its mission by means of the following strategic and general objectives:

- To implement the accreditation of degree programmes leading to recognised degrees (undergraduate and postgraduate) and to offer a catalogue of programmes that supports the agency's mission;
- To serve as the main source of information to society on the quality of the university system;
- To build trust and credibility with the stakeholders;
- To consolidate the organisation;

Concerning ANECA in 2010, the agency states the following vision: "The ANECA is recognised both nationally and internationally as a point of reference for quality assurance in higher education, and for building credibility and trust as a result of the usefulness, transparency and effectiveness" (p. 8).

2.3.2 Role of ANECA

ANECA is a state quality assurance agency; consequently its role is to cover the whole Spanish territory with its activities and initiatives. The role of ANECA fundamentally is to design, implement and steer evaluation processes in Spanish Higher Education. Stakeholders of ANECA's evaluation processes are society, the state, universities, teaching staff and students. ANECA's role is to carry out these evaluation activities independently, transparently and objectively, so as to provide relevant feedback and offer a solid basis for improvement of universities and teaching staff.

In order to carry out this role, ANECA has the objective to act in accordance with the principles of coordination and cooperation with the national and regional external evaluation bodies established for similar purposes, within their respective sphere of jurisdiction.

ANECA aims to take into consideration internationally agreed general principles for good practice in external quality assurance. Membership of international networks and the establishment of appropriate mechanisms for cooperation with other agencies are important means to fulfil this aim.

The following evaluation programmes¹ are currently being implemented by ANECA:

- Institutional assessment programme;
- Quality label recognition programme for Ph.D. studies;
- Recognised postgraduate programmes evaluation programme;
- Library services evaluation programme;
- Library services quality certification programme;
- University services evaluation programme;
- Teaching staff assessment programme for recruitment purposes;
- Teaching activity assessment support programme (DOCENTIA);

The evaluation programmes are presented in more detail under Section 3.2 ► Activities.

The reform of the Spanish Universities Act (2007) led to a register where new official degrees must be included after being evaluated. ANECA's quality assurance activities only cover the official degrees. The same principle applies for postgraduate and Ph. D. programmes.

2.3.3 Organisation of ANECA

ANECA is a not-for-profit organisation. The governing, advisory, evaluation and coordinating bodies of ANECA are the following:

- Board of Trustees
- Board of Directors
- Advisory Board
- Technical Committee
- Internal Coordination Committee
- Evaluation Committees
- International Committee

The **Board of Trustees** is the governing and representative body of ANECA. The government authority exercising legal control over the ANECA Trust is the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science.

The functions of the Board of Trustees are the following: approval of the action plan (which includes the activities to be carried out and the budget), approval and statement of the financial reports (including the economic balance sheet and the final annual accounts), the appointment of the Director and confirmation, at the Director's proposal, of appointments to the management team. Decisions of the Board can be taken by vote.

The Trust is a permanent body.

¹ The panel has decided to use ANECA's terminology throughout the report. *Programme* is the term used by ANECA to refer to the various types of evaluations that it is responsible for. *Evaluation* is the generic term used by ANECA for what can be a verification, certification, accreditation or assessment programme.

The **Board of Directors** is the Agency's collegial decision-making body. It is the body that approves all of the executive decisions in relation to the Agency's programmes as actions, as well as policy for human resources.

The ANECA Director is responsible for the management, direction and administration of the Trust. The ANECA Director is appointed by the Board of Trustees for a period of four years. ANECA has had three Directors between 2002 and till now.

The **Technical Committee** is the collegial, technical and advisory body made up of the Director, the members of the Board of directors, one technical expert from ANECA and experts named by the Board according to the work to be carried out by the committee. Its mission is to provide advice and to approve the methodology of ANECA'S evaluation programmes, prior to them being sent to the Board of Directors for approval and then made public.

The members of the Technical Committee are appointed by the Board of Directors. The duration of membership depends on the duration of the evaluation programme each member is involved in.

The **Advisory Board's** main functions are to prepare reports about the actions and procedures carried out by the agency and advise the Director on appropriate matters on the basis of suggestions made by other agencies, universities and public and private institutions in relation to ANECA's actions and procedures. The Advisory Board is dependent on the Director of the ANECA for its structure and composition, but it is independent in its function and decision-making.

Members are appointed by the Board of Trustees for a four year period, on a proposal from the Director of ANECA. Decisions are taken by consensus.

The **Internal Coordination Committee** is the body through which the Board of Directors, the unit heads and technical personnel in charge of the Agency's different projects and programmes discuss and coordinate technical and/or specific information relative to issues concerning the internal running of the agency.

The **Evaluation Committees** are set up by ANECA to be responsible for ANECA's evaluation programmes. Members of the evaluation committees are Spanish and international academics who are selected by public procedure and appointed by ANECA's Board of Directors.

The **International Committee** was set up specifically to adapt ANECA's executive structure to the new law.

3. Review report: ANECA's compliance with the ESG for external quality assurance

3.1 Introductory remarks

ANECA is still a relatively young organisation having been in existence for only five years. Since its inception it has undergone a range of important developments. It has had three managing directors, it has developed and introduced its current evaluation programmes and it has grown to its current size of 59 staff.

The Panel recognises the important progress that ANECA has made in this period of time and is convinced that ANECA has established a solid basis for its future activities, i.e. its organisational structures, policies, procedures. ANECA is well prepared for the challenges ahead both in terms of the introduction of the latest legislative changes (see below) and the developments needed as an effect of the Bologna Process.

In December 2006 a series of amendments were introduced into the Spanish Universities Act. In April 2007, Spanish Parliament passed Organic Law 4/2007 on Universities. The preliminaries of this Law mention that ANECA's status will change from an institution being subject to private law to an institution subject to administrative law in accordance with Law 28/2006 of 18 July which covers state agencies and the improvement of the public service.

This transformation will require an adaptation of ANECA's executive structure. Early in 2007 ANECA established an international committee with the remit to prepare a proposal for the new structure. The report will be used by ANECA to formulate a revised set of Statutes. The report from the International Committee was in draft form at the time of the visit and was therefore not available to the panel.

The organisational changes are envisioned to come into effect from late 2007.

The review took place when ANECA was in a period of change. It is therefore necessary to note that the review has been carried out against the current Spanish Universities Act and ANECA Statutes and the organisational structures and formal requirements that follow from these. The Panel is not in a position to comment on the impact of the changes on ANECA's compliance with the requirements for quality assurance in the EHEA.

In addition to commenting on the above, the panel has presented its observations on various aspects of ANECA's current structures and operations throughout the report. The Panel hopes that these observations and suggestions for improvement will feed into the considerations of ANECA's future work.

3.2 ANECA's compliance with the ESG for external quality assurance

► External quality assurance procedures for higher education (ESG 3.1 and 2.1)

The external quality assurance of agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance processes described in Part 2 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

Since 2003, ANECA has developed a series of external evaluation programmes. Eight are currently operational. ANECA has developed a set of standards for each evaluation programme. These standards form the basis for ANECA's evaluation programmes and enable ANECA to analyse to what extent the institutions are in compliance with the 'European Standards and Guidelines for internal Quality Assurance' (ESG) within Higher Education Institutions. They cover the following topics:

- Policy and procedures for Quality Assurance (standard 1.1);
- Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards (standard 1.2);
- Assessment of students (standard 1.3);
- Quality Assurance of teaching staff (standard 1.4);
- Learning resources and student support (standard 1.5);
- Information systems (standard 1.6);
- Public information (standard 1.7);

In the self-evaluation report ANECA provided the following table that shows the correlation between the ESG for institutions and the standards of ANECA's external evaluation programmes.

ANECA's external evaluation programmes /Standards for quality assurance in the EHEA (part 1)	Institutional assessment Programme	Quality Label Ph.D. Programme	Evaluation programme - Recognised postgraduate programmes	Evaluation programme - Services	Evaluation programme - Teaching staff / Support programme for teaching activity assessment (DOCENTIA)
	Standards numbered according to the corresponding ANECA programme				
1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance	2	8	5	*	*
1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	1, 4, 7 and 8	1, 2, 3 and 5		
1.3 Assessment of students	1 and 5	1	2		
1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff	3 and 6	2 and 3	5		All standards
1.5 Learning resources and student support	3, 4 and 5		4 and 5	All standards	

1.6 Information systems	2 and 6	4 and 5	5		
1.7. Public information	1 and 2		5		

Table 1: Correlation between the criteria of the different external evaluation programmes carried out by ANECA and the ESG part 1. (* Standard 1.1 is also provided for in the support programme for the assessment of teaching activity (DOCENTIA) and the university services assessment programme).

ANECA is currently developing additional evaluation programmes that will comply with certain standards referred to below:

- In relation to policy and procedures for quality assurance (standard 1.1):
 - Undergraduate, Master’s and Ph.D. degrees verification programme (VERIFICA);
 - Quality assurance recognition of university institutions programme (AUDIT);
- In relation to the quality assurance of teaching staff (standard 1.4):
 - Support programme for the evaluation of teacher training plans (TRAINING);
- In relation to the learning resources and student support (standard 1.5):
 - Evaluation programme of university services;

None of ANECA’s evaluation programmes cover all the ESG for higher education institutions, but together all the programmes take into account the ESG as documented in the table above.

ANECA is currently developing the University Studies Quality Assurance Systems Recognition Programme AUDIT. The purpose of the AUDIT programme is to provide Spanish higher education institutions with support and inspiration through an evaluation process as how to better comply with the ESG for higher education institutions. AUDIT is an external quality assurance procedure that takes into account the internal quality assurance processes of a higher education institution.

The AUDIT programme is integrated into the VERIFICA programme. Participation in the VERIFICA programme, which will be launched early 2008, will be compulsory and cyclical, and so will be the participation in the AUDIT component (see also 3.3).

The panel considers the compulsory participation in a cyclical evaluation programme to be an important parameter for ensuring that ANECA’s work promotes the use and the development of the ESG for higher education institutions.

► Official status (ESG 3.2)

Agencies should be formally recognised by competent authorities in the European Higher Education Area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdictions within which they operate.

ANECA is recognised by the Spanish State under article 32 of the Spanish Universities Act (2001). This law is the main framework for recognition of ANECA's official status as the national agency with responsibilities in the external quality assurance of the Spanish university system.

The methods to be applied by the quality assurance agencies are not explicitly stated in the abovementioned Law, and ANECA has therefore worked with the requirements deriving from the functions established in article 32 of the Spanish Universities Act and currently included in the draft amendment of this Law in article 32.2. These requirements are stated in the Agency's Statutes.

In December 2006 a series of amendments were introduced into the Spanish Universities Act. In April 2007, Spanish Parliament passed Organic Law 4/2007 on Universities. The preliminaries mention that ANECA's status will change from an institution being subject to private law to an institution subject to administrative law in accordance with Law 28/2006 of 18 July which covers state agencies and the improvement of the public service. This transformation will require an adaptation of ANECA's executive structure (see introductory remarks section 3). It does not change ANECA's formal status, however.

The Statutes of ANECA state that 'The Agency has a nationwide scope of action, without prejudice to any functions it may carry out in the evaluation programmes leading to the award of recognised university degrees from institutions abroad that are dependent on Spanish universities'. Since the Spanish Constitution of 1978 reintroduced the political-territorial division into 17 autonomous regions, the regional governments are also competent authorities for education and science in their own territory. This is the case in 11 of the 17 regions. In the 6 remaining regions, ANECA substitutes the regional quality agencies. Relations between ANECA and the regional agencies are determined by Spanish state structure and subsequent jurisdiction.

Name of the Agency	Year set up	Functions
Agency for Quality Assurance in the Catalan University System (AQU)	1996	Quality evaluation, process certification and accreditation of degree programmes in the Catalan university system
Quality Unit of Andalusian Universities (UCUA) Andalusian Agency for the Evaluation of University Quality and Accreditation (AGAE)	1998 2003	Evaluation of quality in the public university service Inform on the running and quality of the Andalusian university system
Agency for Quality Assurance in the University System in Castilla/León (ACUCyL)	2001	Evaluation of the university system, analysis of its results and proposals for measures to improve the quality of the services
Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System (ACSUG)	2001	Evaluation of the university system in Galicia, analysis of its results, and proposals to improve quality
Canary Islands Agency of Evaluation of University Quality and Accreditation (ACECAU)	2002	Systematic and independent evaluation of the university system and of the impact of policies carried out by the universities and the administration
Balearic Islands Agency of University Quality (AQUIB)	2002	Planning and management of evaluation plans in the university concerning teaching, research, cultural extension and services.
Commission for Accreditation and Quality Evaluation in the University System in Valencia (CVAEC)	2002	Propose the goals regarding quality for the university system in Valencia. Quality evaluation in the Valencia university system.

Quality, Accreditation and Planning Agency for the Universities in Madrid (ACAP)	2004	Promote improvements in the quality of teaching, research and management, as well as the increased efficiency of the universities in Madrid
Agency for the Evaluation of Quality and Accreditation in the Basque University System (UNIQUAL)	2004	Evaluation, accreditation and certification of quality in the Basque university system, within the European and international frameworks.
Agency for University Quality in Castilla-La Mancha (ACUM)	2005	Evaluation, accreditation and certification of the university system, analysis of its results and proposals for measures to improve the quality of the services
Agency for University Quality and Planning in Aragon	2005	Promote and spread the culture of quality in the university by contributing to reflection on the role of the university in relation to society, and encouraging exchanges with other university systems.

Table 2: List of the 11 regional agencies, the year when they were set up, and their functions.

According to the self evaluation report in its capacity as the national quality assurance body ANECA has sole responsibility for a range of evaluation programmes (see section 3.3 ► Activities). They are the following:

- Accreditation of degree programmes leading to the award of recognised undergraduate degrees;
- The Quality Label for Ph.D. programmes: due to the grants resulting from the acquisition of this label being provided by the state Ministry of Education and Science;

In some fields, however, there is a double competence of both state and regional agencies:

- Teaching staff assessment for recruitment purposes;
- Teaching staff assessment;
- Evaluation of university services (libraries, etc.);

After the reform of the Universities Act (2007) a set of Royal Decrees will follow where the definitions of the competencies concerning accreditation between ANECA and the regional agencies will be clearly established.

The Spanish Network of University Quality Assurance (Red Española de Agencias de la Calidad Universitaria, REACU) was set up in 2006 as a formal result of previous informal meetings carried out by the regional agencies. ANECA joined the group when REACU was created. This network carries out the work relevant to undergraduate, doctoral and postgraduate programmes. ANECA specifically initiated cooperation with regional agencies to develop the DOCENTIA programme. ANECA's role in this cooperation has been to confirm initiatives, to develop methodologies and to support evaluation processes initiated at the level of the regional agencies.

It was apparent from the panel's discussions with the stakeholders that the division of labour between ANECA and the regional agencies needs attention with a view to clarifying their respective roles. The panel noted that ANECA understands this challenge and has developed a strategy for how to both clarify and strengthen the cooperation between the regions and ANECA to the benefit of

the Spanish quality assurance system. The panel endorses ANECA's willingness and vision to find ways of cooperating with the regional agencies and for taking the lead in this process.

► **Activities (ESG 3.3)**

Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institutional or programme level) on a regular basis.

Introductory remarks

ANECA's activities are set out in Art 31 and 35 of the Spanish Universities Act, and in the regulations that provide further details. The Agency's activities are also set out in Art.6 of the Trust's Statutes that state that the Agency shall carry out evaluation, certification and accreditation activities.

In order to comply with the Statutes, ANECA developed a Strategic Plan, Strategic Plan Horizon 2010, at the beginning of 2005 that defines the Agency's priorities over the next five years. ANECA also develops annual action plans, which stems from the Strategic Plan, and include the programmes and projects in external quality assurance that ANECA will concentrate on throughout the year.

ANECA offers eight types of evaluation programmes. All of these programmes are carried out on a regular basis by ANECA. The eight operational programmes are the following:

► ***Institutional assessment programme (Programa de Evaluación Institucional, PEI)***

The programme was introduced in 2003 and covers individual degree programmes leading to the award of nationally recognised undergraduate degrees. Despite its name, the programme assesses degrees rather than institutions.

The purpose of the Institutional Assessment Programme is to improve the quality of the degree programmes through the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of these programmes. Each degree programme that is assessed is provided with an improvement plan as a result of the assessment of the programme which is aimed at facilitating improvements being made to the quality of the programme.

ANECA issues an annual call for applications to participate in the programme. The total number of evaluations carried out by ANECA based on calls for applications made since 2003 including those planned for 2007 (139 degree programmes within 30 universities) comes to a total of 519 programmes.

Participation in the programme is not compulsory.

► ***Quality Label recognition programme for Ph.D. studies (Programa de Mención de Calidad en estudios de Doctorado, PDC)***

This programme was launched in 2003. The Quality Label is aimed at recognising the scientific, technical and educational credibility of doctoral programmes, and of the groups and departments that carry out doctoral studies. The process

includes an annual call for applications, led by the Ministry of Education and Sciences, that provides for the award (or renewal) of the Quality Label to doctoral programmes. Universities participate voluntarily. ANECA is responsible for evaluation processes leading to both the award of the quality Label for doctoral programmes and renewal of the award. The Label is valid for four years, after which a programme has to undergo the evaluation process again in order to obtain renewed approval. All information is available on the ANECA website.

The following table shows the results of the calls for applications for the Quality Label during the last four years.

Quality label/Ph.D. studies	2003	2004	2005	2006
No. of evaluations applied for	911	680	800	834
No. of new QLs awarded	239	166	184	113
No. of QLs renewed	0	232	381	499
Total no. of Quality Labels	239	398	565	612

Table 3: Calls for application 2003-2006, numbers of applicants for each and results.

Participation in the programme is not compulsory.

► **Recognised postgraduate programmes evaluation programme (Programa de Evaluación de los programas oficiales de postgrado, POP)**

The programme became operational in 2006 in response to the Royal Order 56/2005 that introduced the evaluation of proposals for recognised postgraduate degrees for subsequent authorisation. It is aimed at evaluating proposals for postgraduate degrees in universities in the Autonomous Communities that have no evaluation agency and universities that come under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Science.

In 2006, 18 proposals were evaluated within the framework of this programme. In the latter half of the year, actions were undertaken to review and improve the evaluation procedure in accordance with the ESG for quality assurance in the EHEA. The evaluation method was improved and brought more in line with the recommended standards of transparency and independence. Following the incorporation of these improvements, a total of 73 new proposals have been evaluated in the first half of 2007. The programme is offered through an annual call for applications. Participation in the programme is not compulsory.

► **Library services evaluation programme (Programa de Evaluación de Bibliotecas, PEB)**

The programme was initiated in 2005. It focuses on identifying strengths and weaknesses of university library service and concludes with an improvement plan. Eight evaluations of university library services have been carried out so far within the framework of this programme. ANECA administers an annual call for applications; however there will be no call in 2007. Participation in the programme is not compulsory.

► **Library services quality certification programme**

The programme has been offered since 2003. It confers recognition of university library services through an evaluation of services, structure, management and goals of university library services in Spain.

The following table gives an account of the results for the calls ANECA launched since 2003. Participation in this programme is not compulsory.

Library services quality certification	2003	2004	2005
No. of evaluations carried out	16	16	9
No. of positive evaluations	7	12	6

Table 4: Calls for application 2003-2005, number of evaluations carried out and number of positive evaluations.

► **University services evaluation programme**

The programme was launched in 2006 in collaboration with the Club Excellence for Management (CEG), the Spanish partner of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). The programme seeks to provide the universities with an instrument to improve university services and management units based on the EFQM model (European Foundation for Quality Management), which will help the Spanish universities to reach a level comparable to the level of other organisations of international standing. ANECA is responsible for evaluation processes leading to the award of a Quality Label. CEQ issues a certification called 'Seal of European Excellency'. This model has been adopted by the Ministry of Public Administration as a means to evaluate public administrations.

Participation is not compulsory. Universities can apply for participation in the programme throughout the year. Universities pay a fee for participation in the programme. This fee goes to the CEG.

► **Teaching staff assessment programme for recruitment purposes (Programa de Evaluación del profesorado para la contratación, PEP)**

The programme was launched in 2003. Its aim is to ensure that minimum standards are fulfilled by applicants for positions as contracted (non-civil servant) teaching staff at a public or private university. Positions that seek this type of assessment are regulated by the Spanish Universities Act. The methodology consists of an evaluation of the applicant's curriculum vitae and merits, and assesses all aspects associated with his/her research, teaching and professional experience and academic training.

The evaluation is carried out by one of five evaluation committees according to the field of knowledge (Humanities, Social Sciences and Law, Experimental Sciences, Health Sciences and Technical subject degree programmes).

Between 1 January and 31 December 2006, 8,802 evaluations were made through ANECA, of which 5,738 (65%) obtained a positive mark. Between 2003 and 2006, 32,061 applications were evaluated. Candidates can apply at any time and applications are assessed monthly. In case of a negative outcome,

candidates can not re-apply for a period of six months. Positive assessment is a requirement for contract positions within the public as well as private institutions.

Participation in this programme is not compulsory, but is a requirement for candidates who want to be eligible for a position as university teaching staff in the whole country rather than just one region.

► ***Teaching activity assessment support programme (DOCENTIA)***

DOCENTIA was launched in March 2007. The programme is carried out in coordination with the regional agencies and with the universities. DOCENTIA is a response to the requirements under prevailing legislation of the compulsory assessment of teaching activities of university teaching staff.

The aim of the DOCENTIA programme is to provide a model and guidance for the universities to design their own models and procedures for evaluating teaching activity and teaching staff. ANECA and the corresponding regional agency subsequently verify in a first stage that the procedures designed by the universities conform to the standards established by the DOCENTIA model. In further stages, the universities implement the validated procedures and ultimately the regional agencies certify together with ANECA the application of this procedure.

The first call for applications was launched in March 2007; the first certifications are expected to be issued in 2010. Participation in the programme is voluntary.

ANECA has four programmes that are still in the design stage. These programmes are the following:

► ***University studies quality assurance systems recognition programme (AUDIT)***

AUDIT is the evaluation programme of ANECA with the highest degree of institutional coverage. On the one hand AUDIT seeks to provide guidance to institutions in designing quality assurance systems for university studies and, on the other hand, to implement an evaluation procedure that leads to the recognition of the design. The programme provides support to universities to comply with the ESG for higher education institutions.

AUDIT is integrated into the VERIFICA programme (see below). The AUDIT component will be compulsory and cyclical. The programme is expected to be launched in 2007.

► ***Undergraduate, Master's and Ph.D. degrees verification programme (VERIFICA)***

The aim of this programme is to verify conformity of proposals for new curricula with the guidelines that structure new undergraduate and Master's degrees. VERIFICA is the ex ante evaluation that seeks to support universities by providing guidelines to prepare new proposals in accordance with ESG.

Participation in the VERIFICA programme will be cyclical and compulsory. The programme will be launched early 2008.

► **Accreditation programme (ACREDITA)**

The aim of this programme is to establish standards and guidelines for the accreditation of recognised undergraduate and Master's degrees. ACREDITA is the ex-post evaluation process whereby ANECA guarantees that teaching programmes leading to the award of nationally recognised degrees, when introduced, comply with the prerequisites for quality, i.e. 9 quality criteria and 46 guidelines.

► **Support programme for the evaluation of teacher training plans (TRAINING)**

The aim of this programme is to provide a series of instruments and evaluation indicators for units in charge of teacher training plans that wish to be evaluated as a stimulus for improvement. TRAINING provides the universities with information to improve the management of their activities thereby complying with ESG for internal quality assurance. Three teacher training pilot projects were carried out in 2006 in order to validate the design.

External Quality Assurance Activities

As the evidence shows, ANECA is responsible for a considerable range of external evaluation activities, either at the programme level or covering specific parts of the university activities, e.g. library services and teaching and learning. ANECA is currently adding evaluation programmes to its work plan. Most of the evaluation programmes are offered on a regular basis through annual calls for applications. Currently participation in most of the programmes is voluntary and there are in most cases no requirements for institutions to undergo evaluation more than once. Participation is required for the right to teach on contract in the whole country (Teaching Staff Assessment Programme for recruitment purposes). It is currently not required for the right to offer degrees. However, in the future, positive evaluation of degrees by ANECA will be required, as well ex ante (VERIFICA) as ex post (ACREDITA).

The interview confirmed that the participation level in the programmes is generally high for a number of reasons. The universities appreciate that ANECA's evaluation programmes include the quality assurance principles promoted for the higher education institutions in the ESG, participation is in some cases a requirement for funding and last but not least participation in an evaluation programme is considered an invaluable opportunity for improvement.

The panel learned at the site visit that participation in the VERIFICA and thus in the AUDIT programme will be compulsory. The Panel endorses this decision which is likely to strengthen the continuous improvement of the universities' activities.

Evaluation scope

Compared to many of its sister organisations in Europe, the scope of ANECA's evaluation activities is quite wide. The panel is in no doubt that this is due to the history and current structures of Spanish higher education. The panel is of the view however that the wide range of separate evaluations not only impact on ANECA's workload but also on the time and effort committed to external evaluation by the universities at any given time. The Panel formed the view therefore that it could be valuable for ANECA to introduce as part of its internal

quality assurance procedures a mechanism to review the added value of the totality of its evaluation programmes at regular intervals to inform not only the need for new programmes to be developed but also on which programmes to possibly phase out.

Teacher assessments

ANECA has a special position with respect to teacher assessment for recruiting purposes as it can approve teachers for contract positions in any Spanish university. This is a broader responsibility than the regional agencies which can only approve applicants within a university of the region. The Panel formed the opinion that ANECA implements this evaluation effectively and efficiently. This is in particular due to the establishment of five assessment committees (in Humanities, Social Sciences and Law, Experimental Sciences, Health Sciences and Technical Subjects). Each committee is headed by a chair person who is responsible for coordinating the process and assuring the quality of assessments. The process is supported by an electronic platform which enables applicants and assessors alike to complete the applications and assessments on line. This means that there is a quick turn-around time on replies and this should furthermore be seen in the light of the applications being assessed on a monthly basis.

Evaluation Programme Design and Development

Technical staff in the Degree Programme and Institutional Evaluation Unit are responsible for the development of evaluation programmes. The design is a joint responsibility of Technical Staff and the Innovation Project Unit. Furthermore, ANECA has established a Technical Committee, which is an advisory body made up of experts, who give advice on the methodology used in programmes prior to being sent to the Board of Directors for approval and then made public.

Although each type of evaluation programme has its own special technical staff it is also important for ANECA that all its programmes have a consistent level of quality. This is achieved through the preparation of manuals, templates and procedures for the programmes and a considerable amount of energy and time are invested in aligning the work of the units to obtain the greatest possible methodological coherence between programmes. The establishment of the special 'Innovation Projects Unit' with representatives of each programme team is an example of this priority. ANECA also consults universities e.g. vice-rectors and quality unit members as a means to develop appropriate evaluation programmes. The establishment of the Technical Committee is another proof of the importance given by ANECA to the development of rigorous and appropriate evaluation procedures.

The panel commends ANECA for its rigorous mechanisms for the development and design of evaluation programmes.

Given the importance that ANECA gives to developing and designing the evaluation programmes and where relevant adapting them as appropriate to the particular institution or department involved there could be value in testing some of the programmes in pilot projects. That would give staff, evaluation committee members and institutions a level of familiarity with the process that could feed into the final process before it is finally launched.

► Resources (ESG 3.4)

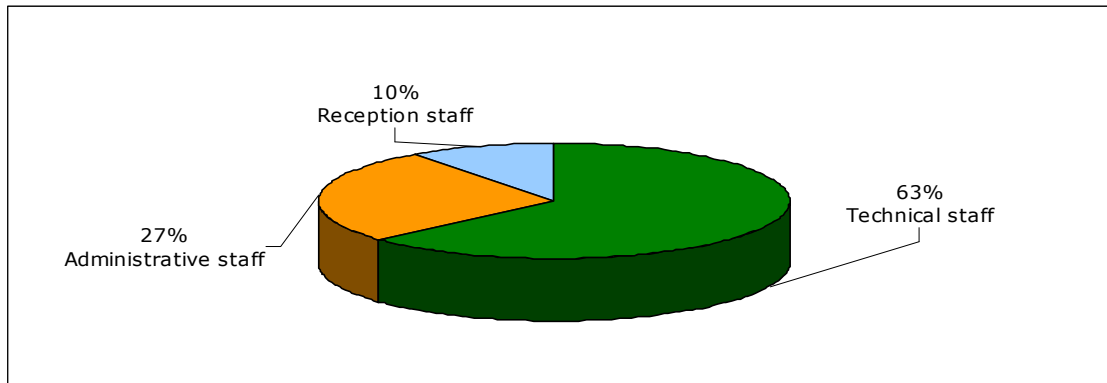
Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources, both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process or processes in an effective and efficient manner, with appropriate provision for the development of their processes and procedures.

Human resources

► **Internal staff**

ANECA has 59 staff. According to the self-evaluation report, ANECA considers that this number of staff is adequate in terms of number and technical capability to efficiently and effectively carry out the Agency's external evaluation activities (p. p.39).

The Agency is currently adapting to the new organisational structure and changes still have to be made.



Graph 1. Staff distribution at ANECA, December 2006. Technical staff includes both unit heads and technical specialists.

During the last 2 years, the agency has developed a professional classification system that sets out the Agency's different posts and professional categories, together with the abilities and skills required for each. This system includes a professional development model that detects likely training requirements for the correct development of activities and fosters employee promotion.

ANECA has put considerable efforts into improving the capabilities of the technical staff. Since 2006 all staff have undergone performance reviews and personalised training plans are being implemented. The outcome of this initiative will be visible at the end of 2007. The development of staff is being supported by the professional qualification and development system in place.

ANECA has a young staff and hopes to limit turn-over by offering promotion opportunities within the organisation. The panel was presented with several examples of this already happening.

Staff generally have a heavy workload. As mentioned under criteria 3.3 this is in part due to the number of evaluation programmes offered and the rigorous approach through which the ANECA programmes are developed. The interviews during the site visit satisfied the panel, however, that there are highs and lows throughout the year which generally make the workload more manageable.

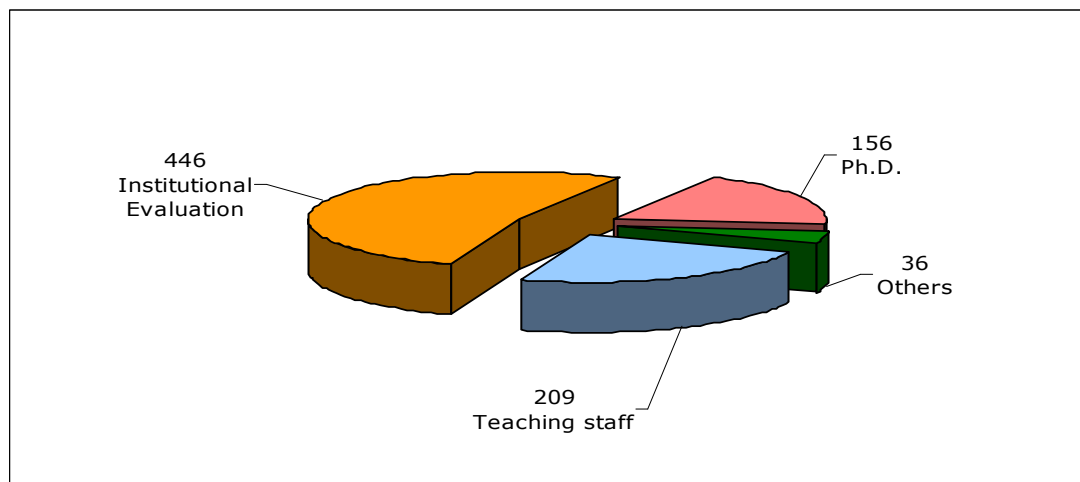
The support provided by staff is highly appreciated by stakeholders. Both universities and experts interviewed by the panel praised the work of staff and characterised staff as professional, committed and service-oriented.

Staff are one of ANECA's most important resources. The panel formed the opinion that the staff are managed professionally and that there is a proper concern regarding staff as a resource and the continuous development of staff in order to provide services of the highest quality. It is important however that ANECA closely monitors the workload to avoid overload and allows for staff training as intended in its policies.

All categories of staff make a contribution to ANECA's core activity, i.e. the external evaluation programmes. It is therefore important that all staff members are well informed about ANECA's Strategic Plan, strategic priorities and developments in ANECA's external environment. All staff members were generally well informed at the formal level about ANECA's activities. It is clear to the panel, however, that ANECA could focus more on providing information to all staff groups about the implications of ANECA's strategic priorities and developments in the agency's environment on their work and work conditions.

► **External staff**

ANECA works with a considerable number of Spanish evaluators with academic and professional experience. Since 2006 ANECA also works with international evaluators. All these evaluators collaborate with ANECA in the development of the external evaluation programmes, and provide support in the development of evaluation models and methodology guides. However, they are primarily responsible for carrying out external evaluations.



Graph 2. Number of evaluators per external evaluation programme (2005 and 2006). In the classification, "Others" includes the evaluators of the following programmes: recognised postgraduate programmes and services.

The types of evaluators who are needed for the various evaluation programmes are defined in ANECA's policies and there are procedures in place for their appointment. All evaluators are trained prior to being appointed as a member of a panel and they are regularly updated to the various parts of ANECA's activities and new developments with respect to the evaluation programmes they are involved in. The training provided is adapted to the type of evaluation

programmes the expert is to participate in. In addition to the initial training ANECA organises annual training sessions for evaluators on specific topics.

Members of evaluation committees interviewed by the panel stressed the thorough training evaluators receive before they participate in one of ANECA's evaluation programmes. The evaluators further emphasised that they receive clear instructions on their responsibilities, e.g. on report writing. Evaluators are also observed during their work and receive feedback on their performance. Evaluators are asked to provide feedback to ANECA after each evaluation.

ANECA is developing a database to allow for a more efficient use of its potential evaluators, i.e. to let them be involved in more than only in one type of evaluation programme. ANECA may also want to consider if different types of institutions have different needs in terms of the qualifications represented on a panel. It could be appropriate to add (more) representatives of employers on the panel for technical universities and professional degrees.

The panel received evidence that the evaluators are well-managed in terms of identification, appointment, training and provision of information on their responsibilities.

Financial and material resources

The Agency receives annual funding directly from the General State Budget. ANECA states in the self-evaluation report that the current budget enables it to carry out its activities in an efficient and effective way (p. 42). Other resources, e.g. from European Projects are very limited. The Trust's financial system is described in the ANECA Statutes. On the basis of this funding, the Agency prepares the overall annual budget that is itemised according to units for expenditure management to be more efficient. This division of the budget enables the cost of evaluation programmes and activities that are carried out to be controlled and also contributes to the concept of responsible expenditure. Given the public nature of ANECA's budget, there is an obligation of accountability to the State and to society through the auditing of accounts by the State Administration's Office of the Controller (Ministry of Economy and Finance).

ANECA does not charge a fee for participation in an evaluation. The fee payable for the University Services Evaluation Programme goes to the CEG, the Spanish partner of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), not to ANECA.

In 2007, 71% of the ANECA budget was spent on evaluations. This part of the budget was further subdivided into:

- Evaluation of degree programmes (46.6 %);
- Evaluation of services (1.2 %);
- Evaluation of teaching staff (32.9 %);
- Training and management of the evaluators (5 %);
- Studies and long-range planning/forecasting (14.1 %);

Between 2006 and 2007, there was a decrease in the budget by 3.3 % due to under-spending the previous year.

ANECA considers its material resources to be appropriate for the smooth development of its work. An inventory is carried out twice a year. This provides ANECA with exact information and knowledge about its operations.

Staff efficiency is increased through use of the Agency's intranet, which provides a highly effective way of accessing required information and services, as well as ensuring that information is updated and equally available to everybody. There is a library and various meeting rooms of different size with technical facilities for the Agency's various functions.

ANECA's financial and material resources are appropriate for the Agency to adequately and efficiently fulfil its objectives

► **Mission statement (ESG 3.5)**

Agencies should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, contained in a publicly available statement.

Since the promulgation of the Spanish Universities Act in 2001, ANECA has a mission statement which is made public on the agency's website (www.aneca.es) in Spanish and in English. The brief statement declares that '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 and institutions'.

In 2005 ANECA issued its 'Strategic Plan Horizon 2010' to set out the agency's goals in a clear and explicit way. This declaration of intent is also made public on the agency's website (www.aneca.es) in Spanish and English.

To complement the mission of ANECA, the 'Strategic Plan Horizon 2010' adds a comprehensive series of strategic and general objectives which cover four areas:

- To implement the accreditation of degree programmes leading to recognised degrees (undergraduate and postgraduate) and to offer a catalogue of programmes and services that supports the agency's mission: prioritise implementation of the programmes guided to the accreditation of recognised undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses as a key programme, offer a catalogue of programmes and services that support the agency's mission and adapt to the stakeholders' needs.
- To serve as the main source of information to society on the quality of the university system: provide useful information on the quality of the university system for decision-making purposes.
- To build trust and credibility with all stakeholders: establish and maintain a clear, transparent relationship with regulators, intensify cooperation with regional agencies and international networks of quality assurance in higher education, provide excellent feedback to society on its programmes and services.
- To consolidate the organisation: organise ANECA using flexible processes with IT-support, develop the in-house team of human resources and collaborators, implement a quality management system and obtain accreditation for ANECA.

Moreover, the Strategic Plan adds a vision about ANECA in the year 2010. This vision is formulated as follows: "ANECA is recognised both nationally and internationally as a point of reference for quality assurance in higher education, and for building credibility and trust as a result of the usefulness, transparency and effectiveness" (p. 8).

Every year a planning document –an annual action plan- is prepared including the activities to be carried out in relation to the achievement of the goals and objectives linked to the mission.

ANECA has a well-structured planning process. The Strategic Plan and annual action plans provide clear objectives and a direction for ANECA's activities. This information is accessible to the public in Spanish and English on the website of the agency. These documents state clearly that external quality assurance is a major activity of the Agency.

► Independence (ESG 3.6)

Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders.

Formally, ANECA's independence is mentioned in the legislation whereby the Agency was set up. Point 5 of the Spanish Universities Act states that "One of the main innovations of the Law is given by the introduction into the university system of external quality evaluation mechanisms, in conformity with objective criteria and clear procedures. To this end the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) is created, which, in an independent manner, will develop the assessment activity typical of advanced university systems ..".

This is translated in ANECA's Statutes. Art. 7 states that "In order to achieve its founding aims, the Trust shall carry out its activities independently and in a transparent and objective way...".

The Spanish Universities Act is a public document (for the English version see www.aneca.es/ingles/docs/lou_eng.pdf). ANECA's statutes are also publicly available (see www.aneca.es/ingles/docs/statutes_aneca_eng.pfd for the English version).

As mentioned in section 2.3.3. (Organisation of ANECA) the governing and representative body of ANECA is the Board of Trustees. Art. 9 of ANECA's Statutes mentions that the chairperson of the Board of Trustees is the Minister of Education and Science. Other members are the Secretary of State for Universities and Research from the Ministry of Education and Science, the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Director General for Universities of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Secretary General of the Universities Coordinating Council, the Coordinator General of the National Research Assessment Commission, the Secretary General for Science and Technology Policy of the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Department

Under Secretaries of the Ministries of Health and Consumer Affairs, Public Administrations and Economics and Finance.

Art. 12 and 13 about the powers and the obligations of the Board of Trustees state that "without prejudice to compulsory authorisation by the government authorities" the Board can act "conform to the stipulations of prevailing legislation and the wishes of the Ministry of Education and Science...".

As mentioned previously, in December 2006 a series of amendments were introduced into the Spanish Universities act. ANECA's status will change from an institution being subject to private law to an institution in accordance with law 28/2006 of 18 July which covers state agencies and the improvement of the public service.

ANECA's self-evaluation report states that the evaluation processes, the designation and appointment of experts, the internal management and the evaluation of programme results are carried out by the Agency according to strict technical standards and in an autonomous way. This means they cannot be influenced by stakeholders.

The panel was presented with evidence during the visit that the Board of Trustees fulfils its role in accordance with the formulation of ANECA's Statutes. The members of the Board of Trustees interviewed by the panel considered the Board's primary role to be to ensure that ANECA's activities are in accordance with prevailing political goals at any given time. Furthermore an important role of the Board is to provide a level of accountability between the Board of Directors and the public.

The interviews with staff, evaluation committee members and university representatives confirmed that the Board of Trustees cannot interfere with the work of the evaluation committees. The independence of the evaluation committees is ensured by procedures for the evaluation processes which are strictly enforced, that member of evaluation Committees are identified from different regions in Spain and through collective decision making within evaluation committees.

The panel is convinced that with the current membership of the Board of Trustees of ANECA enjoys autonomous responsibility for its operations and there is no third party interference in its reports.

There is no mechanism, however, in ANECA's Statutes to ensure that the Board of Trustees does not become overly involved in the Agency's operations. It should be mentioned there is not a mechanism for the Board to act either. A large number of members of the Board of Trustees are from the Ministry of Education and Science. There is a risk that the autonomous responsibility of ANECA can be challenged as ANECA is considered to be a tool for the Ministry of Education and Science to implement the necessary political initiatives in the field of quality assurance in higher education.

It is the panel's view that the safeguarding of a sufficient level of autonomous responsibility is further challenged by the Board being chaired by the Minister of Education and Science in his capacity as minister responsible for ANECA. A chair

independent of the Ministry of Education and Science would ensure that an indisputable level of autonomous responsibility is provided and it would furthermore enable the Minister to use the results of ANECA's activities for the implementation and development of policies without risk of criticism that ANECA's activities are not independent of the Ministry of Education and Science.

ANECA currently enjoys autonomous responsibility for its operations and the recommendations and conclusions in its reports are not influenced by third parties. The panel however recommends that the formal mechanisms to ensure that the necessary level of autonomous responsibility is continuously maintained be introduced.

► **External quality assurance criteria and processes used by the agencies (ESG 3.7, 2.2- 2.8)**

The processes, criteria and procedures used by the Agency 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 as decided by the agency; 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.

ANECA currently implements eight types of evaluation programmes. It is ANECA's general policy to design processes on basis of the ESG to ensure they are fit for purpose. The section below lists to what extent the eight evaluation programmes are or are not in compliance with the ESG.

► **Institutional assessment programme**

- The process, criteria and procedures are publicly available on the ANECA website.
- There is a self-assessment procedure by the subject of the quality assurance process.
- There is an external assessment by a group of experts, which reads the self-assessment report and visits the institution.
- There is a report including decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes.
- The (short) report is in principle made public in case of positive outcome and on the authorisation of the institution. Not all the reports prepared by ANECA are however available on the ANECA website. The reports seem to have been more consistently made public over the last couple of years.
- There is a follow-up procedure to review the action undertaken by the subject in the light of any recommendations in the report.
- There is an appeals procedure.

► **Quality Label recognition programme for Ph.D. studies**

- The process, criteria and procedures are publicly available on the ANECA website.
- There is a self-assessment procedure by the subject of quality assurance process based on the ESG criteria.

- There is an external assessment procedure by a group of experts, which reads the self-assessment report and reviews the programme.
- The (short) report is currently not available to the public; the Ministry only publishes a list of those Ph.D. studies that are awarded with the Quality Label.
- There is a follow-up procedure to review the action undertaken by the subject in the light of any recommendations in the report.
- There is a process for renewal of recognition every fourth year.
- There is an appeals procedure.

▷ ***Recognised postgraduate programmes evaluation programme***

- The process, criteria and procedures are publicly available on the ANECA website.
- There is a self-assessment procedure by the subject of quality assurance process based on a swot-analysis.
- There is an external assessment procedure by a group of experts, which reads the self-evaluation report.
- There is a report, but it is not publicly available. The Ministry publishes a list with the names of those postgraduate programmes that were successful.
- There is a follow-up procedure to review the action undertaken by the subject in the light of any recommendations in the report.
- There is an appeals procedure.

▷ ***Library service evaluation programme***

- The process, criteria and procedures are not publicly available (there is no information on the ANECA website).
- There is a self-assessment procedure by the subject of quality assurance process.
- There is an external assessment procedure by a group of experts, which reads the self-evaluation report and visits the institutions.
- There is a report including decisions, recommendations, or other formal outcome.
- Reports have been available on the website; but since ANECA is introducing changes, the web-pages are currently not accessible.
- There is a follow-up procedure to review the action undertaken by the subject in the light of any recommendations in the report.

▷ ***Library services quality certification programme***

- The processes, criteria and procedures are not publicly available (there is no information on the ANECA website).
- There is a self-assessment procedure by the subject of quality assurance process.
- There is an external assessment procedure by a group of experts, which reads the self-evaluation report and visits the institutions.
- There is a report including decisions, recommendations, or other formal outcome.
- Reports are not publicly available. The Ministry publishes only a list with the names of the libraries that obtained the certification.
- There is a follow-up procedure to review the action undertaken by the subject in the light of any recommendations in the report.

▷ **University services evaluation programme**

- The process, criteria and procedures used are publicly available on the ANECA website.
- There is a self-assessment procedure by the subject of the quality assurance process (swot-analysis, with remarks for improvement, and highlighting of strengths).
- There is an external assessment by a group of experts (supplied jointly by CEG and ANECA) which reads the self-assessment report and visits the institution.
- There is a report including decisions, recommendations or other formal outcomes.
- There are no reports yet.
- There is a follow-up procedure to review actions undertaken by the subject in the light of any recommendations contained in the report.
- The EFQM model is based on periodic reviews.

▷ **Teaching staff assessment for recruitment purposes**

- There is basic information available about the criteria and the procedure, but less on the process (see www.aneca.es).
- Applicants have to complete an application form which according to ANECA can be perceived as a self-assessment procedure by the subject of the quality assurance process. The applicant must provide additional information, e.g. degree parchments and curriculum vitae on paper and electronically.
- There is an external assessment procedure by a committee, which assesses the application and supporting materials.
- There is a report mentioning a positive or negative outcome
- The report is not made public, in the light of Organic Law 15/1999 on the protection of personal data.
- There is an appeals procedure.

▷ **Teaching activity assessment support programme (DOCENTIA)**

- The process, criteria and procedures are publicly available on the ANECA website.
- There is a self-assessment procedure by the subject of quality assurance, who makes a kind of swot-analysis of his/her performance as a teacher.
- There is an internal assessment procedure by a committee, which reads the self-evaluation report.
- There is a report including decisions, recommendations, or other formal outcome.
- The university decides which information is made available or not.
- There is a follow-up procedure to review the action undertaken by the subject in the light of any recommendations in the report.
- There are no reports yet.
- There is an appeals procedure.
- The university decides on the periodicity of teacher evaluation.

The DOCENTIA programme was launched jointly with the Spanish regional quality agencies.

Disclosure

The ANECA website provides information to the public about the eight evaluation programmes and the criteria for evaluation. The information provided about the evaluation programmes, the self-evaluation process and the role of the evaluation committee members is very structured, comprehensive and clear. This impression was confirmed in the interviews with university representatives and evaluation committee members.

All ANECA evaluation programmes in the main follow the processes outlined in the ESG. The first stage is a self-evaluation. All programmes furthermore have an external evaluation, with or without an external review. All programmes report on the outcomes, i.e. either on the decisions, and/or recommendations. Only in the case of the Institutional Assessments, however, is the full report in principle publicly available. In some cases ANECA publishes the outcome of an evaluation, i.e. if the programme has been successfully evaluated.

In the self-evaluation report ANECA has identified the reports as an issue for improvement. ANECA states that it aims to improve the features of information published on the website and its accessibility. The panel endorses this finding and recommends that ANECA ensures that the Institutional Assessment Programme reports are consistently published on the website and any gaps in the publication of past evaluations are filled.

Appeal

ANECA has clear processes for appeals for the evaluation programmes that lead to a decision. Given the importance of appeal processes for the evaluatee, the Agency has decided to set up a new unit, the Legal Security Unit, whose mission is to reinforce the handling of appeal processes.

Students' participation

Currently it is not a part of ANECA's practice to include students as members of evaluation committees. In 2006 ANECA established a special Working Group with the remit to discuss and suggest initiatives aimed at increasing student participation in the evaluation processes where appropriate. The IV ANECA Forum (October 2005) was dedicated to the role of students in quality assessment. Furthermore, ANECA organised a workshop (October 2006) on student involvement in the processes of quality assurance agencies. Prioritising student participation is a specific objective for 2007. The panel is of the view that ANECA is paying appropriate attention to this issue.

Follow up

Although ANECA has attempted to build a follow-up procedure into its evaluation programmes, except for teacher assessment, this is an area that warrants more attention. ANECA came to this conclusion in the self evaluation report and recommends that a systematic follow-up procedure that guarantees that institutions implement the actions for improvement identified in the evaluation report is established. This need to focus on ensuring that appropriate action is taken as a consequence of an evaluation was raised by the universities interviewed by the panel. The panel endorses ANECA recommendation to work on developing more systematic procedures to ensure the follow-up to the evaluation processes.

It is a specific strategic goal for ANECA to “provide useful information on the quality of the university system for decision-making purposes”. ANECA already produces reports containing the results of all its evaluation reports (see Strategic Plan Horizon 2010, p. 11).

The panel agrees that this is an area that could be given more attention time and human resources permitting. Given that participation in the evaluation programmes is not compulsory, and that the evaluations are not necessarily done cyclically, data about the Spanish higher education system is not gathered on a systematic basis. It is important that ANECA takes into consideration what types of summary reports the data collected enables it to produce.

► **Accountability Procedures (ESG 3.8)**

Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.

The frame of reference for ANECA’s quality management system is based of the following documents: UNE-IN ISO standard 9001:2000, the Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance in the EHEA, and the European Consortium for Accreditation’s (ECA) Code of Good Practices.

ANECA has developed a quality policy. An Internal Quality Unit was established in January 2007. Currently, ANECA is in the stage of finalising the documentation necessary to comply with the policy and is beginning to implement the quality management system. The system provides procedures for internal and external reflection on and feedback for the organisation’s continuous improvement.

With regard to mechanisms to ensure the quality of subcontracted services and materials, ANECA has:

- Procedures for the selection, evaluation and monitoring of experts that establish the actions to be carried out by ANECA to ensure that the service is provided according to the standards laid down by the Agency;
- A procedure for appointing foreign experts i.e. to carry out the Institutional Evaluation Programme;
- A procedure for the evaluation and monitoring of suppliers and subcontractors which defines the activities to be carried out by ANECA for selection and evaluation according to their capacity to supply products and provide services in accordance with the Agency’s requirements;
- Nomination of members from the various evaluation committees which initiates the relationship with ANECA’s experts;
- A code of ethics that governs the relationship between the evaluator and the work to be carried out for ANECA, as well as ensuring that there is no conflict of interests in their work. The evaluators sign this code before they start to provide the service;

With regard to the internal feedback and internal reflection mechanisms, ANECA has, amongst other things:

- Means for continuous improvement in the quality management system;
- Means for internal communication;
- Means to gather information on the programmes;

- Reports with the results of the programmes. With regard to internal feedback and internal reflection mechanisms, ANECA carries out activities that respond to the needs of society and provide information that helps it to carry out its activities, design activities and know more about the context in which it is involved;
- Meetings with the Board of Trustees where information is presented on the activities developed by the Agency and suggestions made by the members. Two meetings are celebrated during the year, where the Board of Trustees approves, at least: the action plan, the annual report of activities and the budget.

Meetings with:

- The Steering Committee of Rectors at Spanish Universities (CRUE);
- The stakeholders: Directors of the Agencies and/or Education Authorities in the Autonomous Communities, Social Councils and senior management of the Universities;
- Student organizations and representatives;
- ANECA has set into motion a discussion forum. The forum has been conceived of as an initiative to encourage information exchange and debate about strategic topics for the current and future situation of the University. This forum aims to conduct research on the future situation and provide information to those in charge of making decisions on the Spanish higher education field;
- E-mail accounts according to programmes;
- Questionnaires to gather information from the external evaluators, evaluates and other stakeholders in the higher education system;
- Reports prepared by the Advisory Board that analyse the activity carried out by ANECA throughout the year;

It is a part of ANECA's Quality Policy to undertake an external review of the Agency's activities at least once every five years following this evaluation.

Quality policy

ANECA's quality management system is well documented in its Quality Policy, which is available on the website and in process sheets for all its core processes. Given that ANECA has only recently implemented its quality management system, there was no evidence available to the panel about the changes which have taken place as an effect of the measures within the policy.

It is clear to the panel from the interviews with management and staff that there is a commitment to continuous improvement; both with respect to internal reflection on the outcomes of procedures and activities and to using feedback provided by the external stakeholders for improvement. There is no doubt, however, that there is not yet a culture of continuous improvement. Staff are still in a process of understanding of how the quality management procedures should be embedded throughout the work processes.

Feedback mechanisms

In the past ANECA seems to have focused more on engaging in a dialogue with the external constituency as a means of improving its processes rather than building on outcomes of internal reflections. ANECA states in the self-evaluation report that there is a need to focus the resources on implementing and consolidating the quality management system within the organisation. The panel agrees with this conclusion but is equally of the view that ANECA is very far advanced in establishing robust quality assurance mechanisms. This is also likely to provide a more equal balance between the external and the internal feedback mechanisms.

In addition to the formal means of providing feedback mentioned above, the Universities emphasised that ANECA is very open for dialogue and that it is always easy to provide feedback to ANECA on its activities and procedures when the need arises. However, the panel formed the view from the evidence that ANECA could more actively promote the existence of networks between quality units and representatives of universities involved in the various evaluation programmes. Various ways of creating networks are already being used by ANECA, such as the organisation of discussion forums where specialists from universities can meet without constraints to discuss quality issues and formulate informal recommendations to ANECA.

The panel gained the impression however that with respect to the specific evaluation programmes ANECA primarily obtains feedback from the university staff members who have been directly involved in an evaluation programme, for example, lecturers and department heads. The university management is not always asked to provide feedback on the specific evaluation activities.

The panel noted that ANECA could improve the communication and the value of the feedback obtained if ANECA requested feedback at various institutional levels, as a minimum directly from those subject to evaluation and the university management.

University representatives and evaluation committee members expressed a wish to be kept informed about the outcomes of ANECA's consultation processes. The panel recommends that ANECA develops mechanisms through which to provide information to institutions and evaluation committee members about follow-up and improvement of its processes.

4. Conclusion: ANECA's compliance with the ESG

In the light of the documentation and oral evidence considered by it, the Review Panel is satisfied that, in the performance of its functions, ANECA is in compliance with the ENQA Membership Regulations and in substantial compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. The Panel therefore recommends to the Board of ENQA that ANECA should have its Full Membership confirmed for a further period of five years.

Annex 1: European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the Higher Education Area

Part 2

2.1 Use of internal quality assurance procedures. External quality assurance procedures should take in account the effectiveness of the internal assurance processes described in part 1 of the ESG.

2.2 Development of external quality assurance procedures. The aims and objectives of quality assurance processes should be determined before the processes themselves are developed, by all those responsible (including higher education institutions) and should be published with a description of the procedures to be used.

2.3 Criteria for decisions. Any formal decisions made as a result of external quality assurance activity should be based on explicit criteria that are applied consistently.

2.4 Processes fit for purpose. All external quality assurance processes should be designed specifically to ensure their fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for them.

2.5 Reporting. Reports should be published and should be written in a style, which is clear and readily accessible to its intended readership. Any decisions, commendations contained in reports should be easy for a reader to find.

2.6 Follow-up procedures. Quality assurance processes which contain recommendations for action or which require a subsequent action plan, should have a predetermined follow-up procedure which is implemented consistently.

2.7 Periodic reviews. External quality assurance of institutions and/or programmes should be undertaken on a cyclical basis. The length of the cycle and the review procedures to be used should be clearly defined and published in advance.

2.8 System-wide analyses. Quality assurance agencies should produce from time to time summary reports describing and analysing the general findings of their review, evaluations, assessments, etc.

Part 3

3.1 Use of external quality assurance procedures for higher education. The external quality assurance of agencies should take into account the presence and effectiveness of the external quality assurance processes described in Part 2 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

3.2 Official status. Agencies should be formally recognised by competent authorities in the European Higher Education Area as agencies with responsibilities for external quality assurance and should have an established legal basis. They should comply with any requirements of the legislative jurisdictions within which they operate.

3.3 **Activities.** Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities (at institutional or programme level) on a regular basis.

3.4 **Resources.** Agencies should have adequate and proportional resources, both human and financial, to enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance process(es) in an effective and efficient manner, with appropriate provision for the development of their processes and procedures.

3.5 **Mission statement.** Agencies should have clear and explicit goals and objectives for their work, contained in a publicly available statement.

3.6 **Independence.** Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders.

3.7 **External quality assurance criteria and processes used by agencies.** The processes, criteria and procedures used by the Agency 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 as decided by the agency; 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.

3.8 **Accountability procedures.** Agencies should have in place procedures for their own accountability.

Annex 2: Terms of Reference for the external review of ANECA

2 March 2007

1. Background and Context

ANECA was set up as a public trust on 19 July 2002. It is independent from government and directed by the Board of Trustees. The Agency is officially funded by the State Budget Act which is annually passed by the Spanish Parliament. Its directive bodies are:

- the Board of Trustees chaired by the Ministry of Education which appoints the Director of ANECA; and
- ANECA's Board of Directors is a collegial body chaired by the Director of the Agency. It is currently consisting of two Deputy Directors of ANECA, referred as coordinators, as well as the General Manager and the Manager of the Director's Office who acts as secretary at meetings.

The Director acts independently from the Board of Trustees.

Currently, ANECA employs approximately 60 employees. The Board of Directors and the evaluation teams are members of the academic staff of Spanish universities.

The mission of the agency is to coordinate quality assurance policies in universities and to contribute to the quality improvement of the higher education system through the assessment, certification and accreditation of university degrees, programmes, teaching staff and institutions.

ANECA is involved in European and international cooperation through ENQA, ECA, RIACES and INQAAHE.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

The review will evaluate the way in which and to what extent ANECA fulfils the criteria for the ENQA membership and thus the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*. Consequently, the review will also provide information to the ENQA Board to aid its consideration of whether ANECA's Full Membership in ENQA should be reconfirmed.

In addition to the European context, the review aims at providing feedback on ANECA's role and tasks in the contexts of the Spanish national Higher Education system. ANECA's teaching staff evaluation programme is unparallel in Europe and is closely linked to the academic staff organisation of the universities. This particular dual hired and civil servant staff system is defined by the law. Therefore the review is expected also to evaluate and comment on how effectively the staff assessment procedure is managed by ANECA and whether it meets the set aims.

3. The Review Process

The process will be designed in the light of the ENQA policy on "ENQA-organised external reviews of member agencies".

The evaluation procedure will consist of the following steps:

- Nomination and appointment of the review team members;
- Self-evaluation by ANECA including the preparation of a self-evaluation report;
- A site visit by the panel of reviewers to ANECA;
- Preparation and completion of the final evaluation report.

3.1 Nomination and appointment of the review team members

The review panel will consist of six members: five external reviewers (three quality assurance experts, representative of higher education institutions and student member) and a review secretary. Three of the reviewers will be nominated by the ENQA Board on the basis of proposals submitted to ENQA by the national agencies, and will normally be drawn from senior serving members of staff of ENQA member agencies. The review secretary will be nominated by the ENQA Board. The fifth external reviewer will be drawn from nominations provided by the European University Association. The nomination of the student member will be asked of the National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB). Current members of the ENQA Board will not be eligible to serve as reviewers.

ENQA will provide to ANECA the list of suggested experts with their respective curricula vitae. The experts will have to sign a non-conflict of interest statement as regards the ANECA review.

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

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

- Self-evaluation is organised as a project with a clearly defined schedule and includes all relevant internal and external stakeholders;
- The self-evaluation report is broken down by the topics of the evaluation: background description of the current situation of the Agency; analysis and appraisal of the current situation; proposals for improvement and measures already planned; a summary of perceived strengths and weaknesses;
- 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 criteria for the ENQA membership and thus the *European Standards and Guidelines*. The report will be submitted to the review panel a minimum of four weeks prior to the site visit.

3.3 A Site Visit by the Review Panel

The review panel will draw up and publish a schedule of the site visit. ANECA shall be given at least one month's notice of the site visit schedule in order to properly organise the requested interviews. The schedule will include an indicative timetable of the meetings and other exercises to be undertaken by the review team during the site visit, the duration of which will be 2 days.

The site visit will close with an oral presentation and discussion of the main findings 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 expert panel. The report will take into account the purpose and scope of the evaluation as defined under article 2. It will also provide a clear rationale for its findings. A draft will be submitted for comment to ANECA within four 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 chairperson of the review panel within two weeks after the receipt of the draft report. Thereafter the expert panel will take into account the statement by ANECA, finalise the document and submit it to ANECA and ENQA.

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

4. Follow-up Process and Publication of the Report

ANECA will consider the expert panel's report and inform ENQA of its plans to implement any recommendations contained in the report. Subsequent to the discussion of the evaluation results and any planned implementation measures with ENQA, the review report and the follow-up plans agreed upon will be published on ANECA's website.

5. Budget

5.1 ANECA shall pay the following review related fees:

- Chair 5.000 EUR
- Review secretary 5.000 EUR
- Other panel members 3.000 EUR
- Administrative overhead for ENQA Secretariat 5.000 EUR
- Travel and subsistence expenses (approximate) 7.000 EUR

This gives a total indicative cost of 34.000 EUR for the review. In the case that allowances for travel and subsistence expenses are 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.

6. Indicative Schedule of the Review

The duration of the evaluation is scheduled to take about 9 months, from January 2007 to October 2007:

Agreement on terms of reference and protocol for review	End Jan 2007
Appointment of review team members by ENQA	Early Feb 2007
ANECA starts self-evaluation	Early Feb 2007
Preparation of site visit schedule and indicative timetable	Mid-Mar 2007
ANECA self-evaluation completed	End Apr 2007

Briefing of review team members	May 2007
Expert panel site visit	2 nd half of June 2007
Draft of evaluation report to ANECA	2 nd half of July 2007
Statement of ANECA to review team if necessary	Beginning of Aug 2007
Submission of final report to ANECA and ENQA	Mid-Aug 2007
Consideration of report by ANECA	Aug/Sept 2007
Consideration of the report and response of ANECA by ENQA	Sept 2007
Publication of report and implementation plan	Oct 2007

Annex 3: Glossary of Acronyms

ANECA: Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación, *(Spanish) National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation.*

ANEP: Agencia Nacional de Evaluación y Planificación, *(Spanish) National Evaluation and Planning Agency.*

CEG: *Club Excellence in Management.*

CCU: Consejo de Coordinación Universitaria, *Coordinating Council of Spanish Universities.*

CNEAI: Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Investigación, *(Spanish) National Research Assessment Commission.*

CSIC: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, *(Spanish) Higher Council for Scientific Research.*

ECA: *European Consortium for Accreditation.*

EFQM: *European Foundation for Quality Management.*

EHEA: *European Higher Education Area.*

ENQA: *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.*

ESG: *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.*

LOU: Ley Orgánica de Universidades, *(Spanish) Universities Act.*

LRU: Ley Orgánica de Reforma Universitaria, *(Spanish) University Reform Act.*

MEC: Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, *(Spanish) Ministry of Education and Science.*

PCU: Plan de Calidad Universitaria, *Universities Quality Plan*

PDC: Programa de Mención de Calidad en Estudios de Doctorado, *Quality Label Recognition Programme for Ph.D. Studies.*

PEB: Programa de Evaluación de Bibliotecas, *Library Services Evaluation Programme.*

PEP: Programa de Evaluación del Profesorado para la contratación, *Teaching staff assessment programme for recruitment purposes.*

POP: Programa de Evaluación de los Programas Oficiales de Postgrado, *Recognised postgraduate programmes Evaluation Programme.*

PEI: Programa de Evaluación Institucional, *Institutional Assessment Programme.*

PNECA: Plan Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad, *(Spanish) National Evaluation Plan for Quality in the Universities.*

REACU: Red Española de Agencias de Evaluación de la Calidad Universitaria, *Spanish Network of University Quality Assurance Agencies.*