Universities as key Institutional partners for developing good governance practices in MENA

Seminar at the WB Marseille Center for Mediterranean Integration (MCMI)

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UNIVERSITY ACCOUNTABILITY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Case study: SPAIN

Gemma Rauret

Universitat de Barcelona
QA and Accountability at universities
European Standards and Guidelines for QA
QA at Spanish Universities
To sum up
QA and Accountability at universities

- How to assess quality in a mass system?
- How to assure efficacy and efficiency of investments in HE?
- How to assure that study programs fulfil international standards?
- How to assure that HEI produce the graduates needed by the society?
- How to assure the universities do what is required according to their mission?

With internal and external Quality Assurance processes and with Accountability procedures.
Accountability is not about control but about responsibility for the way in which control is exercised.

Accountability is not an administrative tool but a moral principle.

Accountability is the duty of those responsible for the development and implementation of a policy and resources to demonstrate how efficient and effective their policies are or have been over a period of time.

Accountability is the cost of autonomy.
QA and accountability at universities

- **Basic tools for QA at universities**
  - A set of indicators to check and follow-up the fulfilment of the goals and aims
  - **An Internal QA System**
    - Teaching activities
    - Research
    - Management

- **Basic tools for accountability**
  - A published set of Indicators
  - **An External Assessment process**
  - Rankings
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA is based on:

- Common standards and guidelines for:
  - Internal QA within HEI
  - External QA of HE
  - External QA agencies

- External QA agencies under cyclical review within 5 years on the fulfilment of ESG

- European Register of QA agencies for those fulfilling ESG

- An European Consultative Forum for QA in HE
EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: basic principles

- HEI have the primary responsibility of their provision and assurance.
- The quality of academic programmes need to be developed and improved for students and other beneficiaries of higher education.
- There should be encouragement of a culture of quality assurance within higher education institutions.
- Institutions should be able to demonstrate their quality at home and internationally.
European Standards for QA

THE STANDARDS FOR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM (teaching activities)

- Policy and procedures for QA and standards for their programmes
- Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards (mechanisms)
- Assessment of students (published criteria, regulation and procedures)
- QA of teaching staff
- Learning resources and students support
- Information systems. (collect, analyse and use relevant information for management)
- Public information. (up to date, impartial and objective information about programs)
European Standards for QA

THE STANDARDS FOR EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM (teaching activities)

- External assessment should take into account the internal QA procedures of HEI
- Transparent and published external QA processes (aims and procedures)
- Criteria for decisions (published and applied)
- Processes fit for purpose
- Reporting (accessible)
- Follow-up procedures (recommendations)
- Periodic reviews (cyclical basis)
- System wide analysis (summary of general findings)
QA at Spanish universities

Quality Assurance in the new programs

Ex ante Verification → Follow up → Accreditation
QA at Spanish universities

Ex-ante Program verification is oriented towards:

Subject:
- Academic or Professional interest of the program
- Aims and competences
- Curriculum Plan

Resources
- Academic staff
- Material resources and services

Quality Management
- Internal Quality System
Internal Quality Assurance

AUDIT programme
Recognition of Internal Quality Assurance System in Higher Education

The aim of the programme is to enhance and strengthen the development and implementation of Internal Quality Assurance Systems in HEI and to put in place an external recognizing procedure.

Voluntary bases
QA at Spanish universities

AUDIT programme

PLAN + Check

ACT

CHECK

DO
MILESTONES of the AUDIT programme: PLAN

1. To guide the PLAN of the Internal Quality Assurance Systems (IQAS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Design Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Guides, criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Internal organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Diagnosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Definition and documentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QA at Spanish universities

MILESTONES of the AUDIT programme: CHECK and DO

2. CHECK the IQAS PLAN and implement (DO) by the HEI

Agencies

- On the basis of the given documentation if verifies the fulfilment of the IQAS requirements
- Verification report and certificate

HEI

- Improvement of the design according to the external report
- Implementation of the IQAS
QA at Spanish universities

**MILESTONES** of the AUDIT programme. CHECK and ACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>HEI (ACT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Visit to the university</td>
<td>✓ Follow up of the implemented system (indicators)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ External Report including recommendations and certificate of the implemented IQAS</td>
<td>✓ Periodical Revision of the IQAS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QA at Spanish universities

**Bases of the AUDIT program**

- Oriented to teaching activities
- Focused towards stakeholders
- Fulfiling European Standards and guidelines for internal Quality Assurance within HEI
- According with the Spanish legal framework
- Oriented to “how” not to “what”
Focus on stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Examples of aspects considered in the development of quality assurance mechanisms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students</strong></td>
<td>Selection and admission of students, programme profile, organization and development of the studies, learning support systems, educational outcomes and response of the labour market...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>University</strong> (in its different levels, i.e. faculty, managers and support staff)</td>
<td>Selection and admission of students, programme profile, organization and development of the studies, learning support systems, faculty and support staff, resources, academic progress, educational outcomes and response of the labour market, information systems...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employers</strong></td>
<td>Educational offer, programme profile, information quality, response of the labour market...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public administrations</strong></td>
<td>Educational offer, programme profile, information on quality, response of the labour market, education quality and response of the labour market, costs...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Society in general</strong></td>
<td>Supply and demand of education, academic progress and results, response of the labour market...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.0. How the HEI defines its quality policy and goals.

The HEI must consolidate a quality culture supported by a policy and goals for quality that are known and publicly accessible.

1.1. How the HEI ensures the quality of its programmes.

HEI must have mechanisms to maintain and update its programmes and develop methodologies to approve, control, evaluate and periodically improve their quality.

1.2. How the HEI orientates its programmes towards the students.

HEI must be provided with procedures to check that the fundamental purpose of its actions is to encourage student learning.
1.3. How the HEI assures and enhances the quality of its academic staff.

HEI/university must have mechanisms to ensure that the recruitment, management and training of its academic staff and service and administration staff are carried out with appropriate safeguards in order for them to carry out their corresponding functions.

1.4. How the HEI manages and improves its material resources and services

HEI must be provided with mechanisms, so it can design, manage and improve its services, and material resources in order to develop appropriately student learning activities.
## 1.5. How the HEI analyses and takes into consideration the outcomes.

HEI must be provided with procedures to ensure that outcomes (learning, graduate employment and the satisfaction of the different interest groups) are measured, analysed and used\textsuperscript{[1]} for decision-making and to enhance the quality of degree programmes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.6. How the HEI publishes information on degree programmes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HEI must be equipped with mechanisms to ensure that updated information on degrees and programmes is published periodically.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General guidelines

1.0. How the HEI defines its quality policy and goals.

The HEI must consolidate a quality culture supported by a policy and goals for quality that are known and publicly accessible.

The HEI must:

1.0.1. Make a public statement in writing that sets out its quality policy, together with its scope and goals.
1.0.2. State the interest groups involved in defining the quality policy.
1.0.3. Integrate different elements (bodies, procedures, processes, etc.) to establish a system whereby this quality policy can be implemented.
1.0.4. Establish actions to define, approve, review and improve the quality policy and goals.
1.0.5. Determine the accountability procedure (how, who, when) with the interest groups in relation to compliance with the quality policy and fulfilment of the quality goals.
## QA at Spanish universities

### Results of the programme after two years

**2007 - 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant Universities</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities with their IQAS design certified</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculties with their IQAS certified</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To sum up

✓ Internal and External QA of teaching activities are fundamental:

✓ to improve education available to students in HEI.

✓ to help to justify HEI autonomy, as autonomy and accountability are complementary.

✓ Transparency and public information are key good governance practices.
Thank you very much for your attention