AGENCIA NACIONAL DE EVALUACIÓN
DE LA CALIDAD Y ACREDITACIÓN

DOCENTIA

(Support Programme for Teaching Activity Assessment)

Evaluation Model

INDEX

1. Introduction

ANECA expects to meet the demands of universities and the needs of the educational system with DOCENTIA (Support Programme for Teaching Activity Assessment), by providing a model and a set of procedures to ensure the quality of university academic staff and to encourage their development and recognition.

This programme has been designed so that, within their autonomy, it will guide the actions of universities while also promoting the increasingly important role that universities must play in evaluating teaching activities and developing training plans for their academic staff.

The programme acknowledges ANECA's commitment to participating in and supporting the various technical collaboration arrangements with universities, regional agencies and Education Authorities of the Autonomous Communities. In this sense, the programme will provide a framework that is open to the participation of these institutions.

The DOCENTIA Programme has been developed and implemented by ANECA from 2007, in collaboration with all of the regional quality assurance agencies. Its purpose is to support universities in the design and implementation of teaching quality assessment procedures with the aim of ensuring the teaching quality of their academic staff and encourage the development of academic staff and recognition of their expertise.

2. Programme reference framework

The DOCENTIA Programme is part of a range of actions aimed at creating a scenario that favours the principles of quality, mobility, diversity and competition between European universities, creating a **European Higher Education Area.**

Quality assurance criteria and guidelines in the European Higher Education Area sponsored by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) include **academic staff quality assurance** criteria, which state that

institutions must have the means to ensure that academic staff is qualified and competent for the job.

Therefore, the evaluation of newly recruited academic staff and of the teaching activities performed by them once they have been accepted are key aspects required to identify both the level of competence of academic staff and to adopt decisions regarding their professional development.

Moreover, the DOCENTIA programme is being developed in line with the contents of the document, **Criteria and guidelines for the accreditation of university courses leading to recognised Spanish degrees and Master's degrees,** prepared by ANECA. This document requires that the design and development of an official degree must be carried out under a quality assurance system.

The **quality assurance system** proposed requires the academic leaders of a study programme to consider student entry and guidance, objectives, structure and development of the study programme, the quality of human and material resources as well as the results obtained. Consequently, the evaluation of teaching activities is understood, in this Programme, as part of a system, developed by an institution, to ensure the quality of the study programmes it teaches (see Figure 1).
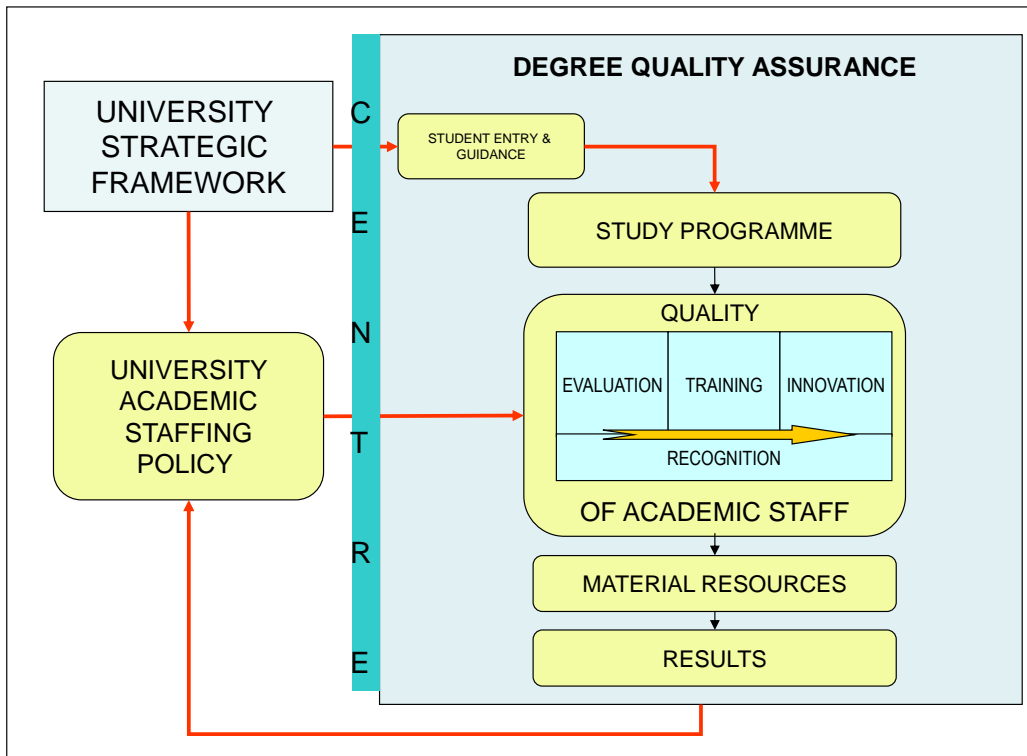
Figure 1. Evaluation of academic staff within the framework of a quality assurance system.

The evaluation of academic staff teaching activities must also comply within the **strategic framework defined by the university** where the study programme is taught, which is, ultimately, established by **academic staffing policy.**

A University's academic staffing policy does not only imply taking a position on the evaluation of teaching activities but also on other aspects such as **training, promotion or economic incentives.**

Similarly, the Programme meets the requirements of current legislation **on the mandatory evaluation of academic,** research and management activities performed by university academic staff.

Finally, to ensure the **rigor of the evaluation and its relevance to the planned objectives,** the standards set out in *The Joint Committee of Standards for Educational Evaluation* have been taken into account when designing the programme as a means of reference concerning the design, development and

assessment of academic staff evaluations. These standards provide guidance on the suitability, use, feasibility and accuracy of any staff evaluation process*.*

3. Programme objectives

The DOCENTIA Programme can be profiled by defining its mission, vision and objectives.

Mission: Facilitate and support the evaluation of the teaching activities of the academic staff in the university system.

Vision: Provide a valid academic staff teaching activity evaluation model that is appropriate, useful, feasible and accurate.

Programme Objectives:

Providing a benchmark framework, a model and a set of procedures to tackle the evaluation of university teaching activities, placing the said evaluation within the framework of internationally accepted practices and bringing the evaluation of teaching activities into line with quality assurance criteria applied to university degrees.

Encouraging the development of academic staff, their personal and professional promotion, with a view to provide society with better services, and support academic staff individually by providing them with contrasting evidence on their teaching activities.

Promoting further evaluation related decision making processes that affect different aspects regarding human resources policies and management.

Contributing to the necessary cultural changes in universities triggered by the evaluation of teaching activities and promotes the exchange of experiences between universities with a view to the continuous improvement of those activities.

Becoming an agent involved in promoting a quality culture aligning academic staff teaching activities with the institution's objectives.

4. A teaching activity assessment approach

In this programme, the **teaching activity assessment** is understood as the *systematic evaluation of the performance of academic staff considering their professional roles and their contribution to achieving the objectives of the degree in which they are involved, based on the institutional context in which the degrees are imparted.*

Moreover, academic staff teaching activities involve, apart from the assessment of learning, a number of different actions aimed at organising, coordinating, planning and teaching students. These actions are deployed with a view to encouraging the training objectives and competences students are intended to acquire (See Figure 2).
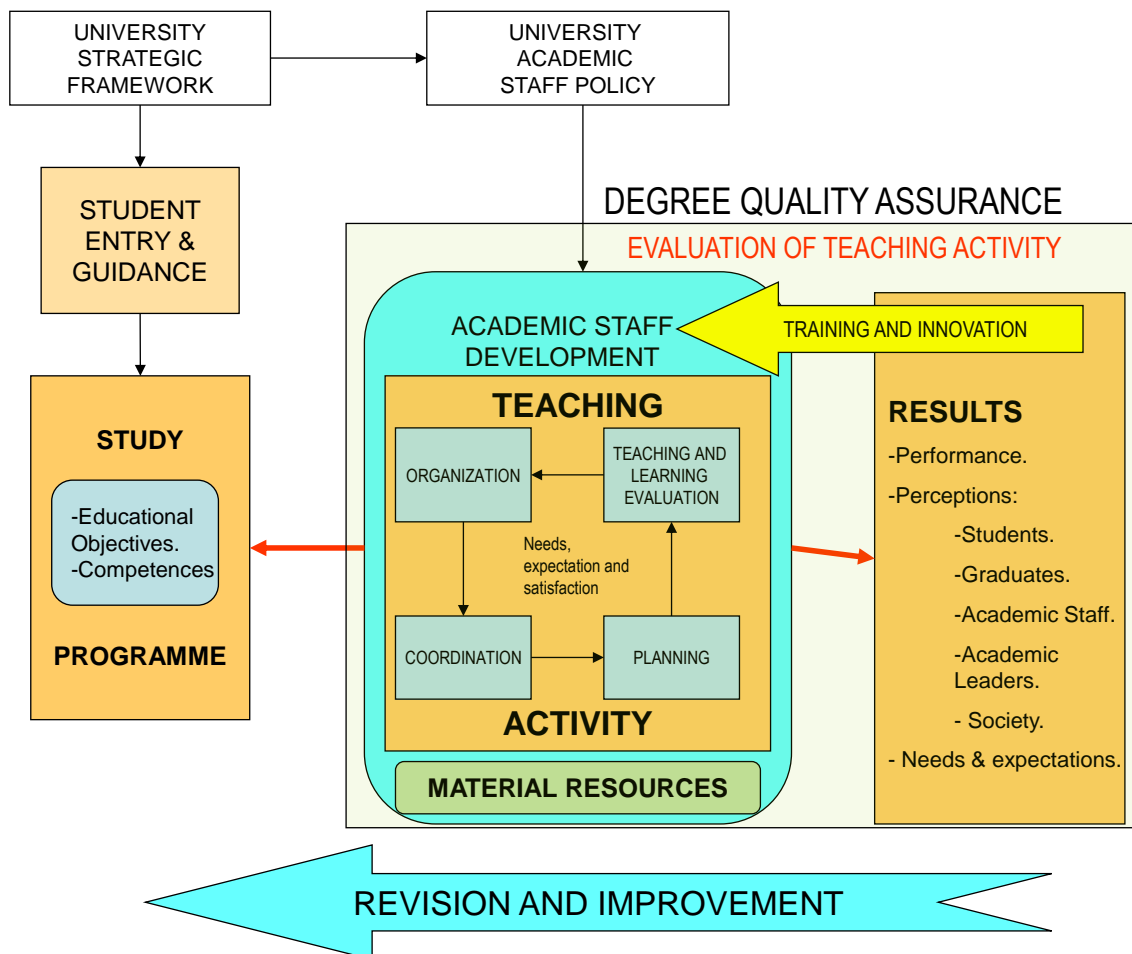
Figure 2. Study programme and teaching activity

The evaluation of teaching activities should be understood as an **internal evaluation** that universities conduct of their academic staff to ensure compliance with the objectives of the programmes.

The results of teaching activities are translated into terms of progress in student learning and in the assessment expressed as perceptions or opinions by students, graduates, academic leaders and the academic staff.

Innovations in education are based on the training and thoughts of academic staff as a result of their teaching activities.

Finally, the results of teaching activities are also the basis of the review and improvement of study programmes. Consequently, the said results are the beginning of a new academic cycle.

5. Teaching activity assessment model

The DOCENTIA Programme proposes a comprehensive model that will enable universities to develop evaluation proposals directed at different purposes. Consequently, the basis is a model that takes into consideration the actions performed by academic staff outside and inside the classroom, the results derived from them, and their subsequent review and improvement in terms of academic training and innovation.

The model that underpins this Programme considers three **dimensions** as the object of evaluating teaching activities: planning teaching activities, developing teaching and results. The connecting element of these three dimensions is dedication, which would be a zero dimension or prior condition, in such a way that if a professor did not develop the activities that define it, it would not be possible to establish the level of quality.
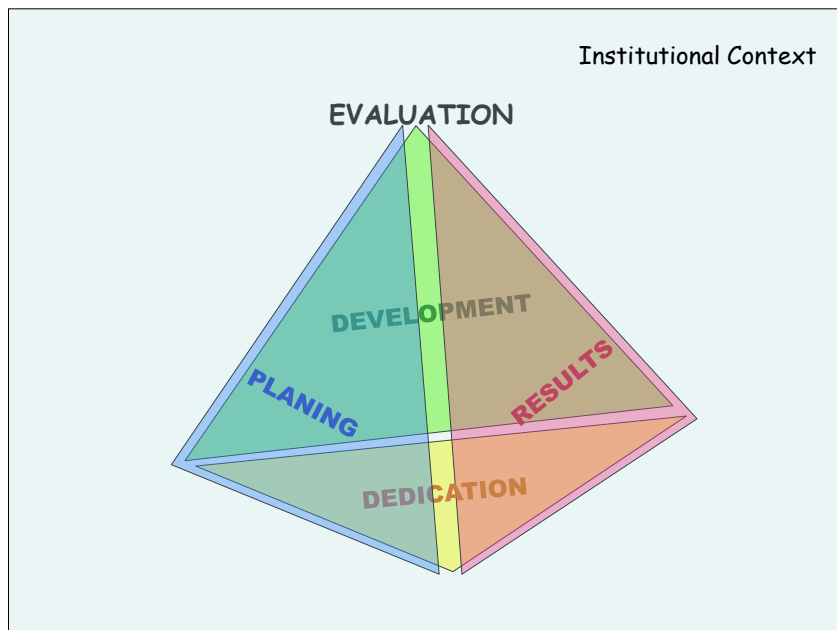
Figure 3. Teaching evaluation dimensions.

The assessment **criteria** of teaching activities, in line with the above dimensions, are as follows:

Suitability: Teaching must meet the requirements established by the University and by the Centre in connection with the organisation, planning, development of teaching and evaluation of student learning. These requirements should be aligned with the learning objectives and competences included in the study programme and with the institution's objectives.

Satisfaction: Teaching activities should generate a favourable opinion among other stakeholders involved in education, especially students, colleagues and academic leaders.

Efficiency: Teaching, considering the resources available to the teacher, should encourage the development of the competences in students planned in the study programme; in short, achieve the expected results.

Guidance on teaching innovations: Teaching should be approached by reflecting on its practice with a view to favouring teacher learning through self-training or regulated training provided by their universities and other related institutions, and it should be undertaken from a willingness to make changes that affect the way teaching activities are planned and developed or how the results are assessed.

6. Sources and procedures to assess teaching activity

The sources and procedures selected should have the following characteristics:

1.- They must avoid possible *biases* in the data collected. With this in mind, together with procedures for measuring perceptions (opinions of students, graduates, self-reports...), other contrasting procedures should be applied (student achievement, peer assessment through observation, documentary evidence...).

2.- They must be *valid*. Therefore, they will use different sources of information regarding the same dimension, so that when collecting teaching satisfaction perceptions the views of different sources should be taken into account (students, graduates, academic leaders...).

3.- The evaluation must be based on *interaction with the people evaluated*. This would necessarily require selecting procedures that would enable teachers to reflect their own vision on teaching activities (self-assessment or teacher interviews).

4.- The sources and forms of evaluation must be *viable*. Both the sources and the methods for obtaining information on which to base the evaluation of teaching activities must be reduced.

Considering the features mentioned above, and taking into account the dimensions to be evaluated, information could be gathered based on three sources and assessment procedures as presented in the following table.

DIMENSIONS TO BE EVALUATED	EVALUATION SOURCES AND PROCEDURES		
	Professor	**Academic leaders**	**Students**
Planning	Self-report	Report	**Survey**
Development			
Results			

Table 1. Evaluation dimensions, sources and procedures

The **Programme planning** dimension would include information on: the choice of subjects, the course programme and teaching coordination.

The **Programme development** dimension would include information on teaching and learning activities and the evaluation procedures.

The **results** dimension would provide information on the extent to which students achieve educational objectives and on the review and improvement of teaching activities.

7. Programme development

In order to develop the Support Programme for the Evaluation of Teaching Activities, three agents should be considered: universities, regional evaluation agencies and ANECA.

The University, as the institution responsible for higher education, shall establish the targets to be met by the evaluation; if the targets specified include stimulating and acknowledging teaching activities by granting pay bonuses to teachers, the programme must also contemplate the involvement of the relevant Autonomous Community.

Developing the Support Programme for the Evaluation of Teaching Activities includes the following deployment phases (see Figure 4)
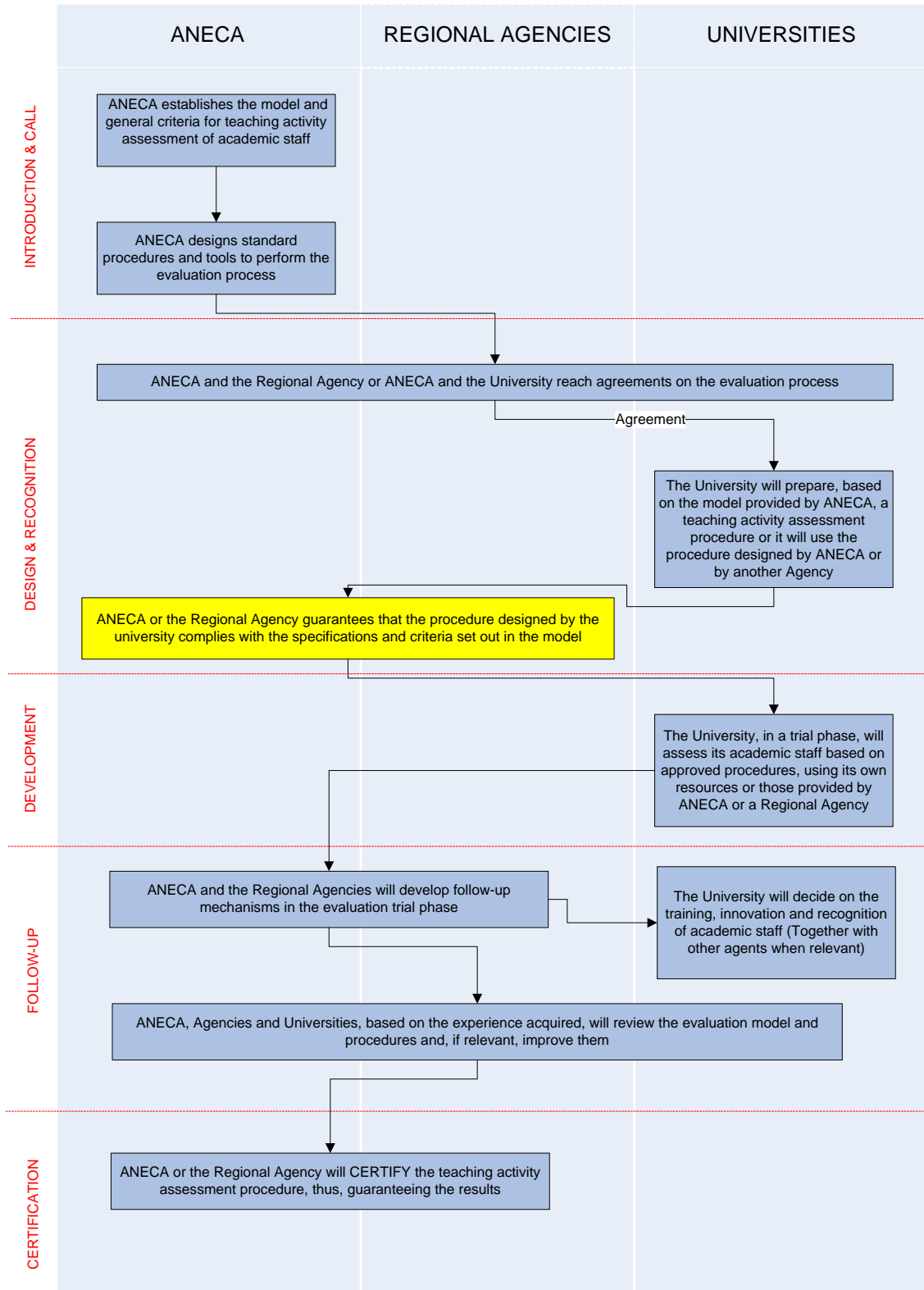
ANECA

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ANECA	REGIONAL AGENCIES	UNIVERSITIES

INTRODUCTION & CALL

ANECA establishes the model and general criteria for teaching activity assessment of academic staff

ANECA designs standard procedures and tools to perform the evaluation process

DESIGN & RECOGNITION

ANECA and the Regional Agency or ANECA and the University reach agreements on the evaluation process

Agreement

The University will prepare, based on the model provided by ANECA, a teaching activity assessment procedure or it will use the procedure designed by ANECA or by another Agency

ANECA or the Regional Agency guarantees that the procedure designed by the university complies with the specifications and criteria set out in the model

DEVELOPMENT

The University, in a trial phase, will assess its academic staff based on approved procedures, using its own resources or those provided by ANECA or a Regional Agency

FOLLOW-UP

ANECA and the Regional Agencies will develop follow-up mechanisms in the evaluation trial phase

The University will decide on the training, innovation and recognition of academic staff (Together with other agents when relevant)

ANECA, Agencies and Universities, based on the experience acquired, will review the evaluation model and procedures and, if relevant, improve them

CERTIFICATION

ANECA or the Regional Agency will CERTIFY the teaching activity assessment procedure, thus, guaranteeing the results

Figure 4. Programme development phases

DOCENTIA Programme development

State-of-the-art: December 2016

Currently, 73 universities in Spain (almost 90% of the total) are participating in the DOCENTIA Programme. This means that the programme has been widely accepted by universities, especially if we take into account that it is a voluntary programme.

Regarding the situation of universities in the different phases:

Phase I Design: design and acknowledgement of evaluation procedures. At present, the designs submitted by **65 universities** have been evaluated and passed.

Phase II Monitoring implementation: agencies and universities review the implementation of the designs that have passed Phase I. This phase takes a minimum of two years. It aims to follow-up the implementation and introduces changes and improvements required in each context. The evaluation agencies conduct external reviews of the follow-up performed by the Universities and provide recommendations to improve the said implementation process with the ultimate goal of progressing to the certification phase. At present, a total of **43 universities** have passed the first and second follow-up processes.

Phase III Certification: The agencies certify the implementation by the universities of the acknowledged assessment procedure, thus endorsing the results. This phase certifies that the university has achieved the objectives set out in the DOCENTIA model. In addition, a first glimpse of the teaching quality system is provided and lessons are learnt from the implementation of the system. Finally, progress is made with the evaluation systems and a first comprehensive view of all quality systems is obtained.

At this time, **17 universities** are certificated.