

## Arts and Humanities

Unibasq issued 126 reports in different programmes of the Basque University System in 2017, of which 8.7% are on degrees of the Arts and Humanities branch, 37.7% Law and Social Sciences, 4% Sciences, 8.7% Health Sciences and 41.3% Engineering and Architecture. According to Education Cycles, 54% of the reports regard Bachelor's Degrees, 38.9% Master's Degrees and 7.1% Doctorate programmes.

12 reports were issued in the field of Arts and Humanities, 8.3% of which concerning ex-ante accreditation programmes, 50% monitoring, and the remaining 41.6% renovation of the accreditation.

From the Institutional perspective, 25% of the reports belong to Universidad de Deusto and 75% UPV/EHU.

The only degree under evaluation for ex-ante accreditation in 2017 was the Biblical Studies Master's Degree: History and Influence of the Bible, from Deusto. Unibasq recommended observation of the items regarding planning of the contents, that combines attendance-based learning and non-attendance-based learning. It was also recommended to implement a close observation of the procedures to verify the identity of the on-line students. The Agency reminds that related research activities will be monitored, considering that projects provided so far do not assure validity in the mid-term.

The monitoring programme aims to, on the one hand point out weaknesses in the implementation of teaching programmes and provide suggestions for improvement, and on the other hand, identify good practices to be disseminated throughout the frame of the Basque University System.

Regarding organisation and implementation, Unibasq recommends that the number of places offered in the ex-ante accreditation report of the degrees is maintained, and in the event of lack of demand, increase in the appeal of the degrees through economic support and more internationalisation.

Unibasq also recommends that in order to improve information exchange and transparency, the webpage of the degree be relevant for the adequate communication of its features and results of the programme, and easily accessible. Paths of access to the degree and the admission criteria are considered of high interest, together with others such as the teaching guide, teaching resources including the CV of the teaching and researching staff, conditions for mobility and external practicum, procedures for the allocation of mentors/advisors when necessary and indicators of the degree, particularly those relating graduate labour integration.

From the perspective of human resources, professional experience, teaching experience and researching experience are not homogeneous; consequently, Unibasq recommends external evaluation of the teaching staff to match potentials in teaching and researching activities to the

high quality indicators desired, on the one hand increasing numbers of the teaching staff accredited in DOCENTIAZ, and on the other hand, increasing the incentives to boost the research productivity of the academic staff and raise the number of six-year periods (sexennia). Given the importance of mobility in the teaching-learning processes, responsible centres are encouraged to implement actions to increase mobility of both teachers and students.

Indicator analysis is a key point in the follow up processes of the degrees; therefore, Unibasq deems it necessary to have access to the information related to the degree of satisfaction and labour insertion of the graduate students, which is a reiterated and necessary request to provide stakeholders with the information pertinent to the implementation of the degree, and in the light of the competitive advantages, make the most convenient decisions.

Together with the recommendations, another one of the objectives of the programme is to identify good practices to be disseminated in the Basque University System. With this in mind, it is relevant to highlight the level of the teaching and researching staff of the UPV/EHU in certain studies offered, such as the Master's Degree in Classical Studies, the Degree in Philology (the percentage of non-doctorates is lower than 20%) and the Degree in Arts (high percentage of teaching staff certified in non-official languages). Additionally, the University has supporting plans to enable teaching and researching staff to obtain their doctorates. Mobility programmes and external internships, were also highly regarded.

In 2017, Unibasq evaluated 5 applications for accreditation renewal for Bachelor's and Master's degrees in the field of Arts and Humanities; the results for the Basque University System were overall satisfactory, showing that the fulfilment of the guidelines is achieved by an average 66.9 % of the renovated degrees. It is remarkable that 8.8% exceed the basic requirements, with low level of aspects to be improved in a 10.4%, 0.5% relating guidelines in which the minimum requirements are not met, and finally the items "NA" reach a 21.6%.

It is worth mentioning the good results obtained by the Quality Assurance System, whose guidelines are met with excellent outcomes in an average 40% of the degrees evaluated, although there is no data about the remaining 60%. The higher percentages of partial fulfilment of the guidelines are those regarding information and transparency, and learning results – 20% for each case- followed by organisation, implementation and satisfaction indicators with a 12% each. Amongst the most frequent causes for this, we can point out lack of exhaustive information. As a particular example, in the Master of Linguistic Policies and Planning, the deficiencies and low score in some of the criteria are due to the difficulty of the implementation and development of the degree, which is taught abroad.

## Social and Legal Sciences

Unibasq issued 126 reports for different programmes in the Basque University System in 2017, of which 8.7% are for degrees in the field of Arts and Humanities, 37.3% in Social and Legal Sciences, 4% in Sciences, 8.7% in Health Sciences and 41.3% in Engineering and Architecture. According to Educational Cycles, 54% correspond to Bachelor's degrees, 38.9% Master's degrees and 7.1% Doctorates.

In the field of Legal and Social Sciences, 47 reports were issued, of which 2% correspond to Ex-ante Accreditation and Modification, 45% Monitoring, and the remaining 51% Accreditation Renewal. By institution, 36% of the reports are for Official Degrees of Universidad de Deusto, 23% Mondragon Unibertsitatea, and the remaining 40% UPV/EHU.

The only degree evaluated for Verification in 2017 received a suggestion from Unibasq to strictly observe that the contents match MECES 3 corresponding Master's degree level. The Agency points out that to boost demand, the degree is open to a diverse range of students, risking thus lowering competences and contents in the study plan to the level of a Bachelor's degree.

The monitoring programme has as objectives, on the one hand, the detection of deficiencies in the development of the teaching contents and provide recommendations for improvement, and on the other hand, the identification of good practices for their dissemination within the frame of the Basque University System.

In terms of organisation and implementation, Unibasq recommends that the centres maintain the number of seats offered in the authenticated memories of the degrees, and in the event of a lack of demand, increase the appeal of the degrees through economical aid and increase in internationalisation. In Higher cycles, it is also desirable that institutions implement measures to support publishing of the contributions derived from Doctoral Theses in relevant magazines.

Concerning information and transparency, Unibasq suggests that the website of the degree be relevant for the appropriate communication of the characteristics and results of the programme and easily accessible. Access paths to the degree and admission criteria, teaching guide that includes a study plan and learning resources, teaching and researching staff CVs, conditions for mobility, options for external internships, procedures for the assignment of a mentor/director when deemed necessary, and indicators – particularly those regarding labour integration of graduate students - are considered aspects of great interest.

Regarding Human Resources, there is no homogeneity in the professional experience of the teaching and researching staff; consequently, Unibasq recommends external evaluation of the academic staff, in order to reach high scores in the indicators of quality. One way to achieve this would be increasing the number of teachers accredited in DOCENTIAZ, and another one would be increasing the allowances to boost research productivity of the academic staff and raising the

number of six-year terms. Given the importance of mobility in the teaching-learning process, it is recommendable that centres take steps to boost mobility of both teaching staff and students.

Indicator analysis is a keystone in the follow up process of the degrees; therefore, Unibasq recommends to first, analyse indicators of results related to the applicant's profile and evaluate the need for "0 term" courses that may improve the outcome of students in the subjects that offered the worst results. Second, collect information about the satisfaction of the stakeholders of the implementation of the degree, and specifically, information about the degree of satisfaction and labour integration of the graduate students; this is an iterated demand, pertinent for the creation of an opinion on the implementation of the degree for those interested stakeholders, and in the light of the competitive advantages, make the corresponding decisions.

Identification of good practices and dissemination of them in Basque University System is another objective of the follow up programme of the degrees, together with recommendations. Thus, from UPV/EHU the high profile of the teaching and researching staff in the Business and Economy Faculty is remarkable, as also are the mobility of ERASMUS students in some degrees and the presence in Social Media, as a communication and information providing tool. From Universidad de Deusto we can underline the implementation of training activities shared by inter-university doctorate programmes, and research forums where teachers and students discuss hot topics, that – if they include international experts – provide an international experience for students. From Mondragon Unibertsitatea we can praise its close relationship with the work market that enables students to have external internships from the very first school year, the high level of scholarships and the rate of graduate employability. The result provided positive feedback on the graduation profile of its degrees, and therefore, its students and graduates.

Unibasq evaluated 24 applications for accreditation renewal for the bachelor's and master's degrees in the field of Legal and Social Sciences in the year 2017. Results for the Basque University System are satisfactory, showing that the average fulfilment of the guidelines is met in 66.9% of the renovated degrees, closely followed by cases that exceed the basic requirements with an 11.7% and the minimum requirement fulfilment with some areas for improvement with a 4.6%. Last, items labelled "NA" amount to 16.8%.

It is highly remarkable that Quality Assurance System has achieved very favourable results, with guidelines being reached with excellence in 62.5% of degrees evaluated on average. On a less satisfying note, there are some guidelines that are not met, particularly, those corresponding organisation and implementation, the causes for this being mostly discrepancies in the implementation of study plans and the organisation of programmes, deficiencies in the teaching coordination mechanisms and discrepancy between the number of offered places and the real enrolment figures.

## Sciences

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Ex-Ante accreditation programme assures that contents meet level MECES 3 corresponding to a Master's degree. In order to increment demand, the Agency observes that the degree is open to a wide range of students, what entails a risk of lowering the competences and contents of the study plans to a Bachelor's degree level.

Monitoring programmes are set to detect deficiencies in the implementation of teaching contents and provide suggestions for improvement and also identify good practices that should widespread throughout the Basque University System.

For organisation and implementation, Unibasq recommends that the number of seats offered in the memories of authorised degrees are kept and in the event of lack of demand, increase the economic help offered and the internationalisation, to raise interest. For higher cycles, it is recommendable to implement measures to support the publication of contributions from doctoral theses in relevant magazines.

Unibasq recommends for information and transparency purposes that the website of the degree be relevant for the adequate transmission of the characteristics and results of the programme, and easily accessible. Access paths and admittance criteria are considered aspects of interest, as so are the teaching guide containing the study plan and learning resources and the CV of the teaching and research staff, the conditions for mobility and options for external internships, procedures for the assignation of a mentor/director when deemed necessary, and the indicators of the degree, particularly, those corresponding labour integration of graduate students.

From the perspective of human resources, professional experience, teaching experience and researching experience are not homogeneous; consequently, Unibasq recommends external evaluation of the teaching staff to match potentials in teaching and researching activities to the high quality indicators desired, on the one hand increasing the teaching staff accredited in DOCENTIAZ, and on the other hand, increasing the incentives to boost the research productivity of the academic staff and raise the number of six-year periods (sexennia). Given the importance of mobility in the teaching-learning processes, responsible centres are encouraged to implement actions to increase mobility of both teachers and students.

Indicator analysis is a keystone in the follow up process of the degrees; therefore, Unibasq recommends to first, analyse indicators of results related to the applicant's profile and evaluate

the need for “0 term” courses that may improve the outcome of students in the subjects that offered the worst results. Second, collect information about the satisfaction of the stakeholders of the implementation of the degree, and specifically, information about the degree of satisfaction and labour integration of the graduate students; this is an iterated demand, pertinent for the creation of an opinion on the implementation of the degree for those interested stakeholders, and in the light of the competitive advantages, make the corresponding decisions.

Another objective of the Monitoring programme, together with making recommendations, is to identify good practices for the dissemination in the Basque University System. In the Master’s degree on Biodiversity, Functioning and Management of Ecosystems, it is remarkable that the majority of the teaching staff in UPV/EHU are prestigious researchers with a vast career accredited by a high number of six-year-terms in research in comparison to the number of five-year-terms in teaching activities. The percentage of teachers who are Doctors is very high. Additionally, the ratio sexennial/credit is large, and moreover, has increased throughout the years. Premises, equipment and adequate personnel for the implementation of the master’s degree are well provided. It can be highlighted that the Master in Chemistry and Polymers is endowed with outstanding quality in the teaching and researching staff, who are in possession of 5 or more five-year-terms in 62% of the members, and 4 six-year-terms in 46% of the cases. The percentage of teachers who have a Doctor’s degrees is also remarkably high. It is also worth mentioning that teaching typologies have been modified in two of the subjects in the master, and the evaluation system of another five, in order to better adapt to the learning results desired, with very positive outcomes.

## Health Sciences

Within the standard guidelines provided by Unibasq, the Committee for Health Sciences should discuss at least two fundamental issues or challenges that may lead to two different courses of action. They come from other aspects derived from the evaluation function. This is:

### 1. The educational function

#### a). Inclusive in the society where it is set.

To assume that public bodies must compete among themselves and the private ones is an imposition of the characteristics of western society; currently, it is being addressed indirectly in the light of the positions taken by certain international entities regarding universities and research. In countries such as Japan, where private universities represent high percentages, competitiveness may escalate beyond belief.

Along these lines, the first challenge comes from the assumption of marketing and visibility that degrees must undergo to attract students, what must be reflected on the information on the website – among other possible courses of action that could be taken, such as improvement of the

teaching staff, national and international exchanges, and so on – to make the corresponding relevant authorities, teachers and administrative and services personnel assume these facts.

A number of the deficiencies detected in this report are related to lack of marketing, not only about the material aspects but also, the actors.

b). Inclusive in the requested functions.

This function springs from the Bologna process; the curricular transformation aimed to address the core matters in a different way from what they traditionally focused on; therefore, teaching – apart from being based on competences – must be student-focused and not teacher-oriented, learning-based and not teaching-based, in how students work and learn (learning is taught) and not in the methodology.

Reports contain no reference to what teachers do to facilitate learning, other than methodological innovations.

2. Change inducing/promoting functions.

Here we refer to considerations and functions of the committee, and therefore of Unibasq, not only as a controller, but as a facilitator of changes to achieve and reinforce the goals in mind, bearing in mind that control alone, in the long run, results coercive and slows the very controlled process.

This is possibly a challenge derived from the Bologna process that has not been discussed in depth or developed by universities. The mentioned process has been, or is proving to be, hard to implement, so academic authorities and teachers should get involved in certain tasks to materialise it. For instance; Methodology: inverted classes, question banks open to students, cross competences... basically, learning to learn.

As a conclusion, the Committee for Health Sciences should undertake the task of stepping forward in some cases, such as establishing enforceability of evaluation of different situations and opening debates to meet the challenges found defining strategic lines for short, medium and long-range terms.



## Engineering and Architecture

Out of the 126 reports issued by Unibasq in 2017, 3 were for the verification programme, 10 for modification, 68 for monitorisation and 45 for accreditation renewal. Low rate of new degrees to be ex-ante accredited (one bachelor's degree and two masters) may suggest a certain stability in the degrees offered by the universities in the Basque University System.

The committee for Engineering and Architecture issues 52 reports, what amounts to 41.3% of the total and makes it the committee with the highest amount of reports issued in 2017. It is also the first one for authorisation, modification and monitoring, coming second to the committee for Legal and Social Sciences in the programme of accreditation renovation.

In the field of training cycles, the committee for Engineering and Architecture has evaluated 31 bachelor's degrees, 19 master's degrees and 2 doctor's degrees, most of them (26) from UPV/EHU, 15 from Mondragon Unibertsitatea and 11 from Universidad de Deusto.

In the authorisation programme, only one bachelor's degree and one master's degree have been revised, with the particularity of both having received very few suggestions, what resulted from a thorough revision of the degrees in the ex-ante accreditation carried out by the committee of Engineering and Architecture. Thus, in comparison to the 18 modifications requested in the preliminary report of the bachelor's degree, there were just 3 in the final report. In the case of the master's degree, out of the 16 modifications and 3 recommendations, only one recommendation remained. The main conclusion of this programme is that the interaction between Universities and Unibasq has brought about a clear improvement in the proposals for new degrees.

Modification programme evaluated one application for the modification of a low-impact master's degree in Universidad de Deusto, and 8 applications for bachelor's degrees in Mondragon Unibertsitatea corresponding to a common strategy that aims to re-organise and homogenise the structure of the different bachelor's degrees starting from the common core values. The evaluation of these 8 degrees has been very complex, requiring a number of changes in the original applications in order to guarantee meeting the established legal requirements and the quality and coherence of each and every degree. From this and other such experiences, we can conclude that complex cases in which modification significantly affects many aspects of the degree, a new authorisation memory that assures coherence in the degree as a whole and allows a global revision in a new authorisation process would be recommendable.

By far, the monitoring programme has issued the majority of the reports of the Engineering and Architecture committee, with a total amount of 30, of which 19 correspond to bachelor's degrees, 9 master's degrees and 2 doctor's degree.

The main recommendations for improvement in monitoring programmes for bachelor's degrees refer to the need for maintaining the number of places considered in the ex-ante verification



memories, or in a later modification with a favourable report, and the need in many cases for a promotion of the degree through actions for the dissemination and publicity of the existence of the degree in society. Another aspect that receives a vast number of recommendations is the necessity for completion in the information pertaining the degree in its website, which should be practical and easily accessible.

Regarding teaching staff, the most frequently found recommendation is the improvement in the quantity and quality of the research activities and in the transfer of technology from the teaching staff, and on a second scale, make evident which teachers have taught in the degree and the extent of their participation. It is also common to find recommendations for an increase in the percentage of the teaching staff evaluated in the DOCENTIAZ programme.

Attention to mobility programmes and their reinforcement in order to find balance between the number of students sent and received is another frequently found recommendation, as it is also the case in the need for implementation of indicators in the degree and their evolution throughout the years, and taking the necessary steps to improve those aspects that do not meet the expected results. Many degrees are lacking data on labour insertion of graduate students, and employee satisfaction.

Many of the recommendations in monitoring reports of master's degrees, such as setting strategies to make programmes more attractive, improving the mechanisms for student recruitment, dissemination actions, enhancing the information about degrees contained in the websites and displaying this information in an easily accessible manner, increasing the quantity and quality of the research activity and the technology transference of the academic staff, and enhancing mobility programmes, all similar to those found in the bachelor's degree examples. Amongst the most frequently found recommendations that appear in the master's degrees, we can mention internationalisation of the degrees, adding value to the relevant indicators, as Unibasq's protocol manifests, and improving the information pertaining supplementary training and external internships.

Monitoring reports for doctorate programmes include, in addition to the recommendations, areas of mandatory improvement with the intention of issuing a favourable report for the degree in the accreditation renewal phase. These aspects are setting a plan to increase scientific productivity of the teaching staff, publishing the CVs of the teaching staff on the websites, and indicators specified by Unibasq. Amongst the recommendations, we can find one for clarifying the procedures for the assignment of a mentor/director for theses and establishing internal mechanisms to assure the quality of the theses produced in terms of publications in relevant magazines, apart from the many other collected by the Bachelor's and Master's degrees.

An important aspect of the monitoring programmes is the identification of good practices in Universities in the implementation of degrees. The most relevant ones found in the evaluations of 2017 are the publication of former alumni's experiences on the webpages, and information about

the relationships with companies, the high rate of students enrolled as a first option, the offer of subjects in English, the high rate of Teaching and Researching staff evaluated in the DOCENTIAZ programme, the initiatives to support financing doctorate theses of the teaching staff, internships or end-of-degree projects in surrounding companies, active participation of a significant part of the teachers in research projects, and the implementation of procedures to assure a good pace in the development of the theses.

The committee for Engineering and Architecture issued 11 reports in the accreditation renewal programme, six of which are on bachelor's degrees and 5 on master's degrees. Out of the four levels of guidelines evaluated for each of the seven standards, the highest score achieved by the majority of the degrees is "It is met" (78.4%), and 11% achieves "It exceeds expectations". There are few cases that got "It is partially met" and no cases of "It is not met", what proves that the results achieved by the bulk of the accreditation renewal evaluations carried out by this Committee is satisfactory.