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# Verification of Compatibility of MECES (the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education) with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA)

*Report 3.11.14*



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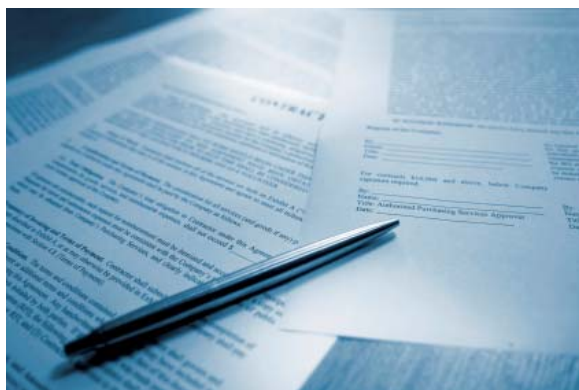
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# Verification of Compatibility of MECES (the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education) with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA)

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## Executive summary

The 'Marco Español de Cualificaciones de Educación Superior' (MECES) has been Self-Certified against the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA) as part of Spain's continuing commitment to the Bologna Process. The Self-Certification followed the procedures and criteria set down for such work within the Bologna Process, and involved a Committee of senior Spanish and international experts and stakeholders. First envisaged in 2004/5, MECES was formulated by a formal Committee established under Royal Decree (RD900/2007 of 6 July) and, after extensive consultations and application, the framework was formally enacted through a further Royal Decree (RD 1027/2011, of 15 July).



MECES has, for a number of years, already been used within the design, delivery and quality assurance of study programmes within Spanish universities. As a consequence of this, the framework has already been subject to formal modifications (RD 96/2014 of 14th February) and other clarifications.

The Committee for the Self-certification of el Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior (MECES), considered a Self-certification Report and found that in all cases the required Criteria and Procedures are being met.

Further, the Committee notes the importance it attaches to the fact that MECES has been self-certified as a framework that has already been, for a number of years, actively applied in all aspects of programme design and delivery in Spanish universities. Further application of MECES is an integral part of both the external and internal quality assurance mechanisms undertaken within Spanish higher education, both nationally and within the autonomous regions. MECES plays an important role within the recognition of foreign degrees carried out by the Spanish NARIC within the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, and is currently being used in the detail examination of the correspondence of Spain's degrees before and after its commitment to the Bologna Process. The Committee envisages an increasingly important role for MECES in the public dissemination of information about the attributes of Spanish graduates at all levels and their abilities to integrate into the work place, and continue with lifelong learning.

In conclusion the Committee endorses the Self Certification Report on the compatibility of MECES against the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, and through this to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), noting that level 1 of MECES is aligned with level 5 of the EQF, level 2 of MECES (for Grado) with level 6 of the EQF, level 3 of MECES (for masters degrees) with level 7 of the EQF, and level 4 of MECES (for doctorates) with level 8 of EQF.

The full Report of the Self-Certification Committee will be published by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science at [www.mecd.gob.es/portada-mecd/en/](http://www.mecd.gob.es/portada-mecd/en/), and additionally by ANECA at [www.aneca.es](http://www.aneca.es), as the national competent body responsible for the self-certification process.

## 1. Summary introduction to higher education and its quality assurance in Spain

Higher education [in Spain] includes university studies, higher-level artistic education and professional/vocational training studies, professional education in fine arts and design, and high level sports education. <http://www.mecd.gob.es/educacion-mecd/areas-educacion/sistema-educativo/enseanzas/educacion-superior.html>

### 1.1 Organisational and legal aspects of Higher Education in Spain

#### 1.1.1 Higher education encompasses both university and 'non-university' teaching and learning

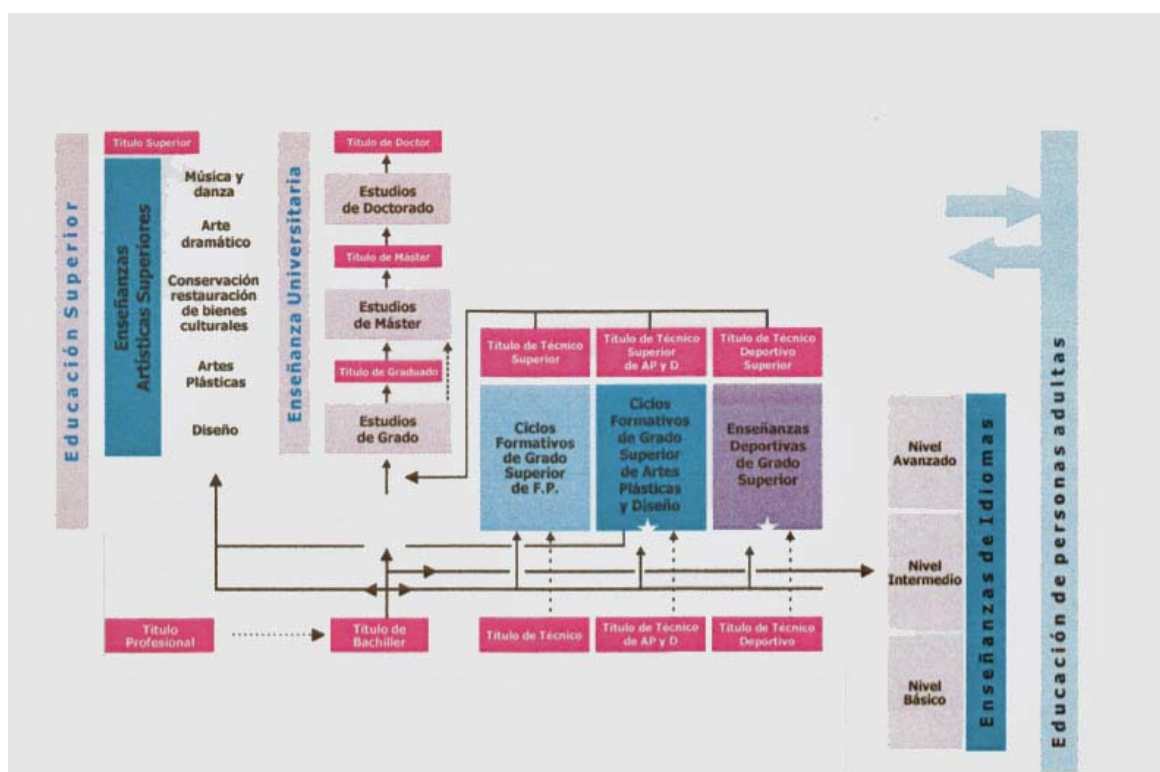
The totality of Spanish higher education is summarised in *Figure 1.1.1*. Within the university system It includes those academic and academically-related professional studies undertaken within the Bologna format, adopted by Spain from 2001, and that lead to qualifications based on three-cycles: at Grado, Masters and Doctoral levels. There are also some programmes within the university system that are completing their pre-Bologna formats. *Enseñanzas Artísticas Superiores* may also be taken within the university system, leading to Masters and doctoral degrees. Higher education studies, outside of the university system can be undertaken within specialist institutions, colleges and conservatoires etc. Such studies can lead to *Técnico Superior* awards in the general areas of 'Formación Profesional' (VET), Fine Arts and Design, and Sports studies. Such awards can provide entry to, and can to a limited extent contribute to, university studies to *Grado* level.

Additionally, there are higher education studies in 'Enseñanzas Artísticas Superiores', specifically in the fields of Music and dance, Drama, Fine Arts, Design and Conservation and Restoration that lead to 'Superior' awards within the field of study. Related studies within the university system can lead to Masters level awards. The regional governments have the legal competence to regulate this sector as well as its evaluation procedures at the 'Grado' level. A typical example of such regional approach and organisation can be seen in the following web-site of the non-university higher education system of the Madrid Region: <http://www.emes.es/EnseanzasArtísticas/tabid/674/Default.aspx>.

The figures behind the university system show that for the academic year of 2012-2013, 1.561.123 students were enrolled in Grado and Master programmes in the Spanish universities. While Bologna 'Grados' occupy 1.027.823, those who enrolled master studies are 113.805 students and doctoral studies are 10.504. The pending 406.906 are enrolled in other programmes leading to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycles in pre-Bologna programmes and 'Enseñanzas Artísticas'.

For the 'Ciclos Formativos de Grado Superior' from Vocational Education and Training courses, leading to Level 1 of the MECES, are 315.207 at the national level.

Figure 1.1.1 Study opportunities within Spanish higher education, including an indication of the potential progression routes between types and levels of study (n.b. the diagram does NOT indicate alignment of the levels of the qualifications - these are set out below in *Figure 1.2.4 Higher education titles and their legal bases*).



A summary of the quality assurance of the design, delivery and outcomes of the different types of study programmes within Spanish higher education is given below (see Section 1.3)

### 1.1.2. An interaction between National and Regional roles

Spain is characterised by a model of higher educational administration that is, in most aspects, decentralised and distributes competences between the national government, the autonomous communities and the universities. State (national) laws set out a framework of competences for each of these three actors and also the extent to which the autonomous communities can develop their own regulations on education.

The Spanish university system is regulated by the (national) Organic Law 4/2007 (LOMLOU), amending the Organic Law 6/2001 (LOU) on Universities including the fact that the national government is responsible for ensuring the consistency and uniformity of the education system as a whole. A series of Royal Decrees set out more detailed aspects on the competences of the national administration.

The autonomous communities have competencies for the creation, modification and elimination of programmes in both the public and private universities, and also for the core funding of public universities.

The balance between competences at the national and the regional levels leads to the need to strengthen the coordination mechanisms between both administrations. The main body in charge of assuring such functional coordination at the level of education in a broad sense is 'Conferencia Sectorial de Educación', set up by the regional ministers of education and the minister of

education of the central government. This main body can also work in subcommittees for specific issues within education.

To learn more about the higher education structure and the coordination bodies at the national level: <http://www.mecd.gob.es/educacion-mecd/areas-educacion/sistema-educativo/principios-fines/administracion-educativa.html>.

### *Regulations governing the granting, issuance and approval of academic and professional degrees*

The national government, through the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, regulates the conditions for obtaining, issuing and recognising degrees including those leading to professional occupation regulated. In summary, the State issues the degrees and defines the conditions under which a university degree can lead to a regulated professional activity (e.g. medical doctor or civil engineer). Most regulated professions are linked to profesiones tituladas, defining certain professions that require an academic degree for those who want to practice, although there are some regulated professions that do not require an academic degree. Spain is a signatory to the Lisbon Convention and enacts the European Directives concerning recognition of professional qualifications (see e.g. <https://sede.educacion.gob.es/en/catalogo-tramites/gestion-titulos/estudios-universitarios/titulos-obtenidos-fuera-de-espana/reconocimiento-titulos-directiva-comunitaria.html>).

### *Students and the university system*

Admission to university programmes requires students to hold a Baccalaureate (high school) or equivalent qualification. To apply for the admission to a university programme students must either pass the regular university entry exams, or hold higher-level vocational training qualifications matching that university programme, although there are specific examinations for students over 25, 40 or 45 years old. Detail of the requirements for university admissions can be found at <http://universidad.es/en/spain/spains-universities/university-admissions>.

In line with the expectations of the Bologna reforms, students / student representatives are involved in all aspects of Spanish higher education from its strategic development to practical implementation and improvement/enhancement. Students are included in all key committees and working groups involved in higher education and its quality assurance, whether at national, autonomous regional, institutional, faculty/unit, or study programme levels. Student representatives also contribute to the development of the Bologna Process through international activities. The only area where students are not directly involved in Spain is in the national committees concerned with evaluation of professors, although evidence from student feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching/work is a crucial consideration.

A clear example of the involvement of students in quality assurance practices since the early stages of the external evaluation processes level, may be seen in the fact that the ex-ante programme accreditation procedure (VERIFICA) run by ANECA included a student as member of the panel trained and considered in the same level of the academic members since the beginning of the procedure in 2008.

Furthermore, student participation in the ex-post programme accreditation procedure (ACREDITA) includes a student in the review panel and a student representative is one of the members of the Accreditation Committee that makes the final decision based upon the panel team reports.

With regard to this particular report on the development and self-certification of MECES, students have been involved at all stages in other evaluation procedures and working groups, as well as in the discussions and decision-making processes.

### 1.1.3. Universities in Spain and their organisations

Spanish universities may be public or private entities and are established under state or regional law. The main features of the Spanish university system are given in *Figure 1.1.3*.

Figure 1.1.3. The numbers of institutions (public and private), students and staff in Spanish higher education (2012-2013)

	Public institutions	Private institutions	Total
Number of institutions	50	32 (7 affiliated to Catholic Church)	82
Number of students - Bachelors programmes	889,450	138,373	1,027,823
Number of students - Masters programmes	84,291	29,514	113,805
Number of doctoral students (thesis)	9,948	556	10,504
Number of students still on pre-Bologna programmes (undergraduate and post-graduate)	370,954	35,952	406,906
Number of academic staff	101,299 (48,423 public servants)	14,033	115,332

(Numbers taken from: <http://www.mecd.gob.es/educacion-mecd/areas-educacion/universidades/estadisticas-informes/datos-cifras.html>)

It is clear from the numbers in **Figure 1** that a large majority of students studying in Spanish universities attend public institutions. Whilst not particularly relevant to the Self-certification of MECES it should be noted that any simple numerical calculations concerning, for example, comparative student / staff ratios in different sectors would not be valid since there are significant differences in the types of study patterns / employment. Similarly, the apparently disproportionate numbers of students remaining on pre-Bologna programmes within public institutions relates more to study patterns and in particular part time study in the public HE sector, including a large number of students at the Spanish Open University UNED.

#### *The coordination bodies for the Spanish university system*

The **Universities' Council** (*'Consejo de Universidades'*) is chaired by the Minister of Education, Culture and Sport and includes the Rectors of all of the universities and five members appointed by the President of the Council. It is the body for academic coordination, cooperation and consultation concerning universities. With full functional autonomy it:

- a) Provides a channel for collaboration, cooperation and coordination in academia.
- b) Reports on the laws and regulations affecting the university system as a whole.

- c) Provides advice on university matters that are required by the Ministry of Education and Science, the General Conference for University Policy or, where appropriate, of the Autonomous Communities.
- d) Makes proposals to the Government, on matters concerning the university system and the General Conference for University Policy.
- e) Verifies the adequacy of curriculum guidelines and conditions established by the Government for official degrees.
- f) Develops such other tasks entrusted to the laws and their implementing regulations.

Among its functions, the law grants it decision-making competences in relation to the *ex-ante* and *ex-post* accreditation of study programmes based on the contents of evaluation reports, and for the evaluation of academic staff. The Universities Council nominates the members of assessment committees including some appeals procedures, choosing from a list proposed by the national accreditation agency (ANECA), and signs the formal assessment certificate on the basis of the Agency's decision.

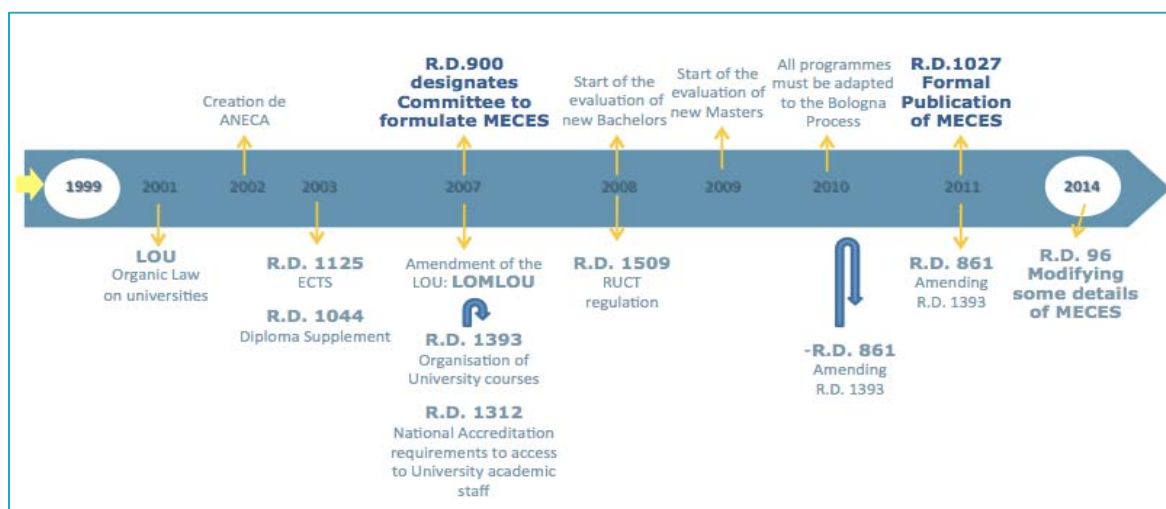
The General Conference of University Policy (*Conferencia General de Política Universitaria*) is the body dedicated to agreeing and coordinating general university policy. It comprises the Minister of Education, Culture and Sport and the regional ministers responsible for higher education in the Autonomous Communities. Its functions include establishing and assessing general university policy and approving the criteria for coordinating evaluation, certification and accreditation activities.

## 1.2. The Bologna reforms in Spain

### 1.2.1. A summary timetable

Spain made an early commitment to the Bologna Process that was initiated in 1999, with the development of an Organic (national) law in 2001. The main steps of the Bologna Process in Spain are outlined in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2.1. The evolution of the Bologna Process in Spain





### 1.2.2. Degrees before and after the Bologna reforms.

Prior to the Bologna reforms Spain had evolved an organisational system in which universities defined their educational offer by selecting their study programmes from a closed Catalogue of 144 'official' degrees. Universities could offer official degree programmes based predominantly on the specifications set out at national level within Reales Decretos associated with each of these Catalogue degrees. These RDs set out information on the requirements for contents, duration, credits etc.

The degrees were officially included within a Catalogue maintained by the Ministry and were clustered into 5 discipline areas: Humanities; Sciences; Health; Social Sciences and Law; Technology (includes engineering and architecture).

The main types of awards immediately prior to the Bologna reforms are listed below:

Title	Typical entry	Typical duration	<i>Unconfirmed</i> ** Bologna equivalence
Diplomado	School leaver equivalent	3(+) years (fte)	1 <sup>st</sup> cycle
Licenciado *	School leaver equivalent	5(+) years (fte)	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle
Licenciado	Diplomado	2 years (fte)	2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle only (specialism)
Maestro	School leaver equivalent	3(+) years (fte)	1 <sup>st</sup> cycle (specialism)
Ingeniero Técnico	Diplomado	3(+) years (fte)	1 <sup>st</sup> cycle
Arquitecto Técnico	School leaver equivalent	3(+) years (fte)	1 <sup>st</sup> cycle
Ingeniero *	School leaver equivalent	5(+) years (fte)	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle
Arquitecto	School leaver equivalent	5(+) years (fte)	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle
Ingeniero	Ingeniero Técnico	2(+) years (fte)	2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle only (specialism)

\* *Licenciatura* or *Ingeniero* consisted of two cycles, with at least two years in each. A few *Licenciaturas* include 4 years (2+2), although the number of credits was very close to the same *Licenciatura* developed over 5 years (the most frequent duration).  
*Unconfirmed* \*\* Bologna equivalence - the equivalences between pre-Bologna and Bologna degrees is the subject of current (2014) detailed investigation (lead by ANECA)

A key part of the Bologna reforms was the development of a much more flexible system where each university could decide the programme it wanted to offer, and the characteristics of those programmes, although to be officially recognised a programme needs to be evaluated (see Section 1.3.2 Programme evaluation) and included within the Register of Universities, Centres of higher education and Degrees (*RUCT*).

*Register of Universities, Centres of Higher Education and Degrees (Registro de Universidades, Centros y Títulos, RUCT)*

A key feature in terms of public information on Spanish higher education is that all official degree programmes are formally listed. Prior to the Bologna reforms they were listed within the 'Catalogue', and subsequently in the 'Register'.

Established under a '*Real Decreto*' (RD 1509/2008, 12 September) the State maintains the *Register of the Universities and Centres of Higher Education and Degrees (RUCT)* that can be

offered; it includes and maintains all of the key administrative information of the Spanish university system. For degree programmes to be included within the Register (and thus be 'official degrees') they must follow a sequence of external evaluations, and the associated student fees are fixed. The number of degrees included in the RUCT in September 2014 totalled more than 11,000. This includes the pre-2007 degrees that had been 'renovated' to the Bologna format and new bachelor, master degrees and doctoral degrees. Between 2008 and 2014, 7,950 renovated university programmes were implemented.

Universities may offer other degree programmes ('*títulos propios*') that they have established but that are not subject to routine external evaluation; the university offering these programmes fixes the student fees it wishes to charge, and there is more freedom regarding the academic staff involved among other differences. Only official degrees are, however, formally recognised by public and state bodies.

### 1.2.3. The current organisation of university (Bologna compliant) programmes

With the exception of a small number of pre-Bologna programmes that are coming to completion, official university programmes are now structured into the three Bologna cycles leading to *Grado* (Bachelor), Master and Doctoral degrees. These are built around a generic model of 1<sup>st</sup> cycle *Grado* degrees requiring 240 ECTS (4 years full-time-equivalent study), 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle Masters degrees requiring between 60 and 120 ECTS, and subsequent Doctoral degrees being typically completed within 3 to 4 years but not subject to ECTS.

Whilst the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport sets out the general specifications and the evaluation processes required to establish and implement Official programmes, universities are able to design the detail of study programmes within the general specifications. ANECA and the evaluation agencies of the Autonomous Communities develop and perform the assessment processes.

### 1.2.4. Development of a national qualifications framework for Spanish higher education

The development of the *Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior* (MECES - the Spanish national qualification framework for higher education) was initiated in 2007 but due to an extensive series of consultations, and administrative repercussions resulting from a series of changes of government and key committees, the legal instrument (*Real Decreto* RD 1027/2011) formally establishing MECES was not completed until mid 2011.

The Purpose of the Spanish Qualification Framework for Higher Education (MECES) is to allow the 'classification', comparability and transparency of higher education qualifications within the Spanish educational system. It is structured in four levels: técnico superior (Advanced VET), grado (bachelor), master (master) and doctor (doctorate). Of these the first is a non-university higher education level that is included to support and promote lifelong learning. Some advanced vocational education and training (VET) is considered HE but is undertaken outside of the university system; such advanced VET studies may be recognized not only for admission to university but also as ECTS where subjects/learning outcomes are properly aligned.

A further key role for MECES is to facilitate the comparison of Spanish HE qualifications with those in other countries. The compatibility of MECES with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher education Area is particularly important in this regard, and a particular aspect of the Spanish commitment to the Bologna Process. The levels within MECES are labelled 1 to 4 and correspond to the four levels of the FQ-EHEA and also with levels 5 to 8 within the

European Qualifications Framework (see Section 2.6 Alignment of MECES with the European Qualifications Framework).

The use of specific titles in Spanish higher education is strictly limited by a series of Royal Decrees - see Figure 1.2.4. and accompanying text.

Figure 1.2.4. Higher education titles and their legal bases.

«Niveles		Cualificaciones
1	Técnico Superior.	Técnico Superior de Formación Profesional <sup>1</sup> . Técnico Superior de Artes Plásticas y Diseño <sup>2</sup> . Técnico Deportivo Superior <sup>3</sup> .
2	Grado.	Título de Graduado <sup>4</sup> . Título Superior de las Enseñanzas Artísticas Superiores <sup>5</sup> .
3	Máster.	Título de Máster universitario <sup>6</sup> . Título de Máster en Enseñanzas Artísticas <sup>7</sup> . Título de Graduado de al menos 300 créditos ECTS que comprenda al menos 60 créditos ECTS de Nivel de Máster, que haya obtenido este nivel de cualificación mediante resolución del Consejo de Universidades <sup>8</sup> .
4	Doctor.	Título de Doctor <sup>9</sup> .

<sup>1</sup> De acuerdo con el Real Decreto 1147/2011, de 29 de julio, por el que se establece la ordenación general de la formación profesional del sistema educativo.

<sup>2</sup> De acuerdo con el Real Decreto 596/2007, de 4 de mayo, por el que se establece la ordenación general de las enseñanzas profesionales de artes plásticas y diseño.

<sup>3</sup> De acuerdo con el Real Decreto 1363/2007, de 24 de octubre, por el que se establece la ordenación general de las enseñanzas deportivas de régimen especial.

<sup>4</sup> De acuerdo con el Real Decreto 1393/2007, de 29 de octubre, por el que se establece la ordenación de las enseñanzas universitarias oficiales, con sus correspondientes modificaciones.

<sup>5</sup> De acuerdo con el Real Decreto 1614/2009, de 26 de octubre, por el que se establece la ordenación de las enseñanzas artísticas superiores reguladas por la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación.

<sup>6</sup> De acuerdo con el Real Decreto 1393/2007, de 29 de octubre, por el que se establece la ordenación de las enseñanzas universitarias oficiales, modificado por el Real Decreto 861/2010, de 2 de julio.

<sup>7</sup> De acuerdo con el Real Decreto 1614/2009, de 26 de octubre, por el que se establece la ordenación de las enseñanzas artísticas superiores reguladas por la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación.

<sup>8</sup> De acuerdo con el Real Decreto 1393/2007, de 29 de octubre, por el que se establece la ordenación de las enseñanzas universitarias oficiales, modificado por el Real Decreto 861/2010, de 2 de julio.

<sup>9</sup> De acuerdo con el Real Decreto 1393/2007, de 29 de octubre, por el que se establece la ordenación de las enseñanzas universitarias oficiales, con sus correspondientes modificaciones.»

The Real Decreto 1618/2011, of 14<sup>th</sup> November, on recognition of studies in the higher education sector, includes in Annex I the minimum number of ECTS recognised among related programmes, in terms of studies accomplished and those whose recognition is applied for. The Real Decreto includes the relationship between 'grados universitarios', 'Enseñanzas artísticas superiores' and the different categories of 'Técnico superior'.

[<http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2011/12/16/pdfs/BOE-A-2011-19597.pdf>]

The relationship between titles, ECTS and level within MECES has recently been clarified (RD 96/2014 of 14<sup>th</sup> February) for some degrees relating to professional practice including medicine and veterinary degrees (see 2.5 2011-14: testing and modification to MECES below).

### 1.3. Quality assurance of HE in Spain

#### 1.3.1. National and Regional aspects

External quality assurance in Spanish higher education is undertaken by the national agency (ANECA) and a number of agencies within some of the autonomous regions. The competencies of the QA agencies vary depending on the procedures being undertaken and whether or not the agency is a member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA: <http://www.engq.eu/>) and the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR: <https://www.eqar.eu>). In addition to ANECA, five of the regional agencies (AQU-Catalunya in Catalonia, ACSUG in Galicia, ACSUCYL in Castilla y León, ACC-DEVA in Andalusia, and UNIBASQ for the Basque Country) are members of EQAR.

A further five autonomous regions have their own QA agencies for higher education, but that are not members of ENQA and EQAR: ACPUA for Aragon, AQUIB in the Balearic islands, ACECAU in the Canary Islands, FCM in Madrid and AVAP for the Valencia Community.

Seven autonomous regions (Asturias, Cantabria, Castilla-La Mancha, Extremadura, Murcia, Navara, and Rioja) do not have their own quality assurance agency for higher education. The national agency ANECA is responsible for all external evaluation of institutions and programmes in these regions, as well as for two universities (UNED - the Spanish Open University, and UIMP - Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo) that are directed from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, and others such as the Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, under special agreement with the Holy See.

Within Spain it is mandatory to accredit and assess the quality of 'official' university programmes, as well as academic staff. Academic staff are evaluated by different procedures depending on whether they are 'civil servants' (employees of the state / region) or employed directly by the university. For further details of these procedures - Academia and PEP respectively - see: <http://www.aneca.es/eng/ANECA-for/Academic-Staff>. With regard to staff evaluations, the outcome of an assessment by a regional agency is valid only within that region, unlike ANECA where the outcome has national validity.

With regard to programme evaluations, only EQAR agencies have the competency to undertake *ex ante* accreditations, a process entitled *Verificación* (*Verifica* by ANECA). All of the QA agencies, whether members of EQAR or not, can undertake follow-up procedures (referred to as *Monitor* by ANECA and *Seguimiento* by the others) and the *ex-post* accreditation (referred to as *Acredita* by ANECA and *Renovación de la Acreditación* as the common process). Further detail is provided below in Section 1.3.2 Programme evaluation.

The impact of MECES is seen most clearly in the definition of new programmes and the *ex-post* accreditation of such programmes. Regardless of the variations in nomenclature and detail of procedures undertaken by the different agencies, all external *ex ante* and *ex post* programme evaluations fall under the same legal framework and include reference to the national qualifications framework through references to level, learning outcomes and ECTS.

The establishment of a new institution currently requires the provision of information regarding academic staff, facilities, etc. and a requirement for initial accreditation (VERIFICA) of 8 academic programs at MECES level 2 (Grados) in several academic fields. This will however be changed, probably in the coming months, to require 8 academic degrees including some at MECES level 3 (Masters) without being necessary to cover several academic fields.

Expectations about the inclusion of MECES are also becoming increasingly important in the external evaluation of internal quality assurance systems (see Section 1.3.3 Evaluation of institutions and units). In this case three regional agencies, in Catalunya, Galicia and the Basque Country, undertake their own Audit procedures for universities within their regions, whilst those in other parts of Spain are evaluated through the ANECA Audit procedure.

**Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (*Red Española de Agencias de Calidad Universitaria, REACU*)**

The network REACU was established in 2005 to provide a platform for the Spanish QA agencies for higher education to discuss their activities and to promote collaboration between them. REACU does not have an official status but it facilitates the fulfilment of the mandates set out in relevant national regulations. These regulations provide that the agencies shall jointly establish assessment protocols.

With particular relevance to the coordinated application of MECES amongst the Spanish QA agencies, REACU has published *Criterios y directrices de evaluación para la acreditación de títulos oficiales de Grado, Máster y Doctorado [Revisión aprobada por REACU reunión 8-9 de mayo de 2014]* in which:

*Dimension 3. Results: Criteria 6. Learning Outcomes*

*6. Learning outcomes achieved by graduates are consistent with the graduate profile and correspond to the level of MECES (Marco Spanish Qualifications for Higher Education) degree.*

*Achieved at a minimum:*

- training activities, their teaching methods, and systems of assessment practices are adequate to reasonably fit the purpose of acquisition of the intended learning outcomes.*
- the achieved learning outcomes meet the objectives of training program and are appropriate to their level in the MECES (bold for emphasis in this Report)*

**University Committee for Regulation, Follow-up and Accreditation (*Comisión Universitaria para la Regulación del Seguimiento y la Acreditación, CURSA*)**

CURSA was established in 2010 to ensure coordination in the implementation processes linked to the follow-up and the *ex-post* accreditation processes. Representatives from the Ministry, regional governments, quality assurance agencies and universities participate in this committee. CURSA is primarily a body where discussions and decisions are made regarding the development and timetables for external evaluation procedures. It has an important role in ensuring comparability between evaluations undertaken at national and autonomous regional levels. CURSA could be considered a delegated commission of the *Consejo de Universidades (CU)* and the *Conferencia General de Política Universitaria (CGPU)*, the ultimate responsible for QA coordination at national level.

The CGPU (see Section 1.1.2 Universities in Spain and their organisations) is formally responsible for coordination of criteria informing the activities of assessment, certification and accreditation, as well as the CU, is the main decision-making body concerning recommendations made by the external QA agencies on the outcomes of *ex ante* and *ex post* programme evaluations

**1.3.2. Programme Evaluation**

**Within the university systems**

The adaptation of the university programmes to the EHEA began in October 2007 with the publication of Royal Decree 1393/2007 that granted ANECA the responsibility for *ex ante*

accreditation of entirely new and ‘renovated’ (i.e. adapted from the pre-Bologna Catalogue degrees) programmes. In 2009, ANECA agreed to share this competence with the regional quality assurance agencies that were full members of ENQA. Subsequently, the amendment of RD 1393/2007 in 2010 redefined the role of ANECA and of the regional quality assurance agencies. From this time only ANECA and the other Spanish agencies belonging to ENQA and EQAR could perform ex-ante accreditation, follow-up and ex-post accreditation tasks, while other agencies could only participate in the follow-up and ex-post accreditation tasks in the regions where they had the relevant competence (Table 1.3).

All official bachelor, master and doctoral (PhD.) degrees must pass an accreditation process based on three procedures:

- 1) *Verifica / Verificación - ex ante* accreditation of a programme proposal submitted by a university prior to its approval, commenced in 2008
- 2) *Monitor / Seguimiento* - a follow-up annual revision of the programme implementation, from 2010/11 depending on the QA agency and
- 3) *Acredita / Renovación de la acreditación* - an *ex-post* accreditation required after a programme has been implemented (four years after in the case of a master degree and six years after for bachelor and doctoral degrees), commenced in 2013.

*Verifica / Verificación* analyses those aspects that, in advance, can demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed programme. The *Monitor / Seguimiento* periodic revision focuses on assessing the evidence generated during the implementation of the programme and compliance with the commitments taken by the university during the accreditation *ex-ante* process. Finally, *Acredita / Renovación de la acreditación* validates that students have completed their training successfully, and ensures the future viability of the degree.

Figure 1.3.2. Royal Decrees that regulate programmes within the Spanish university system

Programmes	Royal Decree	Object
Programmes	RD 1393/2007, of 29 October, establishing the organisation of university studies, subsequently amended by RD 861/2010, of 2 June. <i>(note: initial ‘informal’ discussions about a QF for Spanish HE started about this time)</i>	It sets out the university framework concerning higher education in Spain as well as the assessment procedure for its ex-ante accreditation, follow-up and ex-post accreditation.
	RD 1614/2009, of 26 October, establishing the organisation of higher studies in arts as regulated by Organic Law 2/2006, of 3 May, on Education.	It organises higher studies in arts from the perspective of their integration in the educational system and encompassing all artistic studies; it also provides them with a specific and flexible space in line with the principles of the European Higher Education Area.
	RD 99/2011, of 28 January, regulating doctoral studies.	It regulates doctoral programmes and establishes the procedures for their accreditation ex-ante, follow-up and accreditation ex-post.
	RD 1027/2011, of 15 July, establishing the Spanish Qualification Framework for Higher Education, MECES.	It establishes the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and describes its levels, in order to favour the classification, comparison and transparency of higher education qualifications in the Spanish

		educational system.
	RD 1618/2011, of 14 November, on the recognition of higher education studies.	It defines the way Higher Education may proceed when dealing with credit transfer and accumulation based on the similarity of competences, knowledge and learning outcomes with a view to favouring student mobility.
	RD 534/2013 of 2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Postponing the compulsory accreditation renewal of degrees completing their academic cycles during academic years 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15
	Consejo de Estado: Dictámenes Documento CE-D-2013-1108 Date of approval: 30/1/2014  (Discussion draft of RD96/2014 below)	Draft Royal Decree amending the Royal Decrees 1027/2011 of 15 July, the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (MECES) and 1393/2007, of 29 October, to ascribe certain official titles to Level 3 (Master) of MECES.
	RD 96/2014 of 14 <sup>th</sup> February	The modification of MECES assigning level 3 to Bachelors degrees under European directives with at least 300 ECTS (Medicine, Veterinary, etc.). See Section 2.5.

#### Within the non-university system

Figure 1.2.4 indicates that MECES also provides a 'level' for those higher education qualifications where studies are undertaken outside of the university sector; Level 1 includes Técnico Superior de Formación Profesional, Técnico Superior de Artes Plásticas y Diseño and Técnico Desportivo Superior, and Level 2 Título Superior de las Enseñanzas Artísticas Superiores. Título de Máster en Enseñanzas Artísticas is typically taken within the university system. It may also be studied within, for example, the conservatoires (see below), but in all cases there is a clear link between the degree and its QA.

For further information about the framework of 'Enseñanzas artísticas superiores': <http://www.mecd.gob.es/educacion-mecd/areas-educacion/sistema-educativo/ensenanzas/ensenanzas-artisticas.html>.

For more detailed information about the contents of the particular programmes leading to these degrees:

- Music: <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2010/06/05/pdfs/BOE-A-2010-8955.pdf>; <http://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2011-9988>
- Dance: [http://www.boe.es/diario\\_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2010-8956](http://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2010-8956)
- Drama: [https://www.boe.es/diario\\_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2010-8954](https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2010-8954)
- Plastic Arts: <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2010/06/05/pdfs/BOE-A-2010-8958.pdf>
- Design: <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2010/06/05/pdfs/BOE-A-2010-8957.pdf>
- Preservation and restoration of cultural goods: [http://www.boe.es/diario\\_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2010-8959](http://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2010-8959)

The quality assurance mechanisms used for Spanish higher education outside of the university system are, as in many other European countries, quite different to those described above for programmes (and their awards) studied within the university system. In summary, programmes in the non-university sector are evaluated on a regular basis against a set framework and within the context of national and autonomous regional responsibilities (see: [http://www.educacion.gob.es/educa/incual/pdf/Acreditacion/Inf\\_Datos\\_Proc\\_Acred\\_2013\\_agos\\_to.pdf](http://www.educacion.gob.es/educa/incual/pdf/Acreditacion/Inf_Datos_Proc_Acred_2013_agos_to.pdf)) . This can, importantly, include the non-formal and informal training acquired in labour contexts (see: [http://www.educacion.gob.es/educa/incual/ice\\_ncfp.html](http://www.educacion.gob.es/educa/incual/ice_ncfp.html)).

It is anticipated that the self-certification of MECES against the European framework, and the publication of MECU, will provide a further and valuable reference point for evaluation and comparisons of higher education whether studied within the university or not, and promote transfer and progression between them.

Higher education is also undertaken within the (music) conservatoires. Following on from Grado Elemental (four years of study) and Grado Profesional (six years of study that can only be started from 12 years of age) students can progress to teaching of a specific instrument(s) and /or an HE equivalent programme leading to Grado Superior. Following 4 or 5 years of closely regulated studies, the award of Grado Superior leads to professional musician status. Traditionally equivalent to a Licenciatura, Grado Superior is yet to be formally compared with MECES expectations.

### 1.3.3. Evaluation of institutions (or 'units' within them); AUDIT

In addition to the legally-required external evaluation of official degree programmes there has, in recent years, been a move towards evaluation of the internal quality assurance system at 'institutional' level through the process of 'Audit'. In the Spanish context Audit may be applied to a whole institution though it is more frequently applied to units within an institution. Audit encompasses assistance with the design and development of internal QA systems and their subsequent evaluation by ANECA or, in their respective autonomous regions, AQU, ACSUG or UNIBASQ.

Audit encompasses the totality of internal QA systems although it should be noted, for the purposes of the self-certification of MECES, that reference within IQA to MECES, through level, learning outcomes and their particular assessments, and ECTS, are all regarded as essential expectations for the internal QA of programme design, delivery and outcomes to be regarded as effective.

It was noted earlier that external evaluation of university programmes is restricted to 'official' degrees. There are however numerous *Títulos Propios* offered by Spanish universities; whilst many command significant national and international respect they are not formally assessed by an external QA agency. The progressive development of the Audit model, particularly with its increasing application of criteria associated with MECES (level and learning outcomes, and ECTS) provides a potentially important mechanism for Spanish universities to explicitly demonstrate that their *Títulos Propios* are aligned with the expectations of EHEA, without any loss of institutional autonomy.

## 2. The development of MECES

### *2.1. 2004 to 2009: initial thoughts - a framework of qualifications or a framework for qualifications?*

Initial discussions on the development of a qualifications framework for Spanish higher education began as the decisions were taken to align the country's higher education system with the 'Bologna Process' and adopt a 'three cycle' system of higher education qualifications aligned with the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA: 2005) as adopted in the Bergen Ministerial Communiqué (2005).

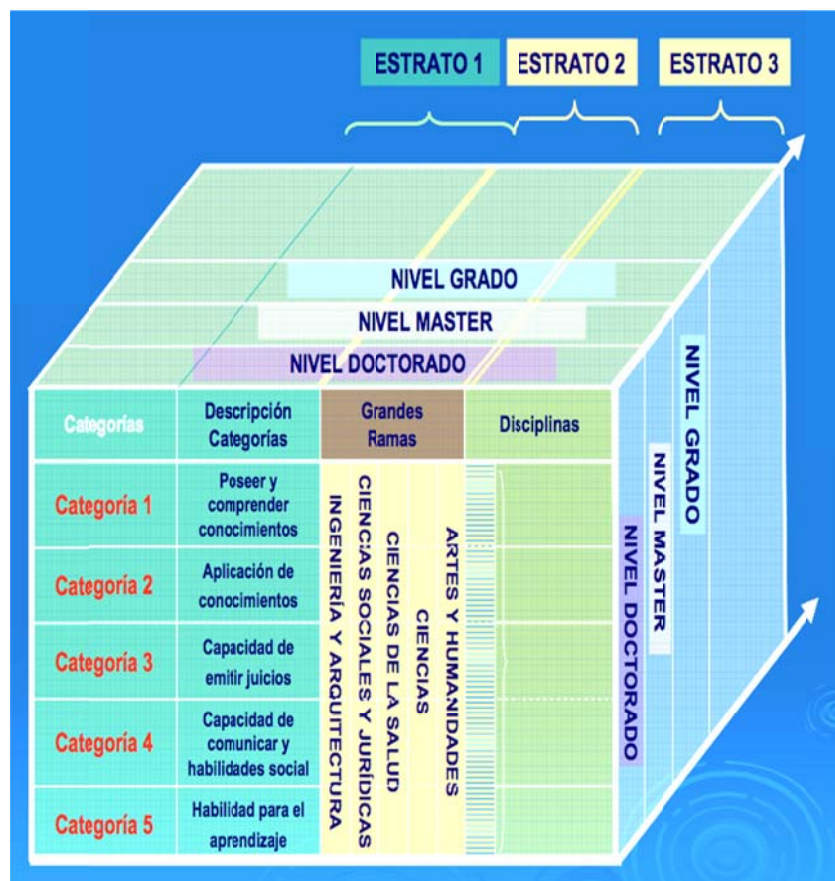
Led from largely within Spain and within the traditions and culture of Spanish higher education the initial conceptualisations started, not unsurprisingly, with a model based on the extensive detail of the legal framework and the 144 degrees specified within the ministerial Catalogue. The model could be compared to a 'filing cabinet'. Two possibilities were considered; one with 3 'drawers' (for the 3 Bologna cycles) each with a series of discipline 'folders' and *título* 'sub-folders'. The



framework would thus primarily be a 'framework OF qualifications', with detailed specifications for each.

Another version of this involved the main 'drawers' referenced to the types of competencies associated with each discipline / programme at each level - see Figure 2.1a. This was aimed at providing easier access to specific information on the different types of competencies associated with graduates by discipline and by 'level'.

Figure 2.1a. Early conceptual model for a Spanish qualifications framework for higher education. (from: José-Ginés Mora: *El Marco Español de Cualificaciones de la Educación Superior: algunas ideas para la discusión* <http://www.mecd.gob.es/dctm/boloniaeees/documentos/09grupotrabajo/04vacualif/2008valencia-meces-jose-gines-mora-ideas.pdf?documentId=0901e72b8004aae8>).



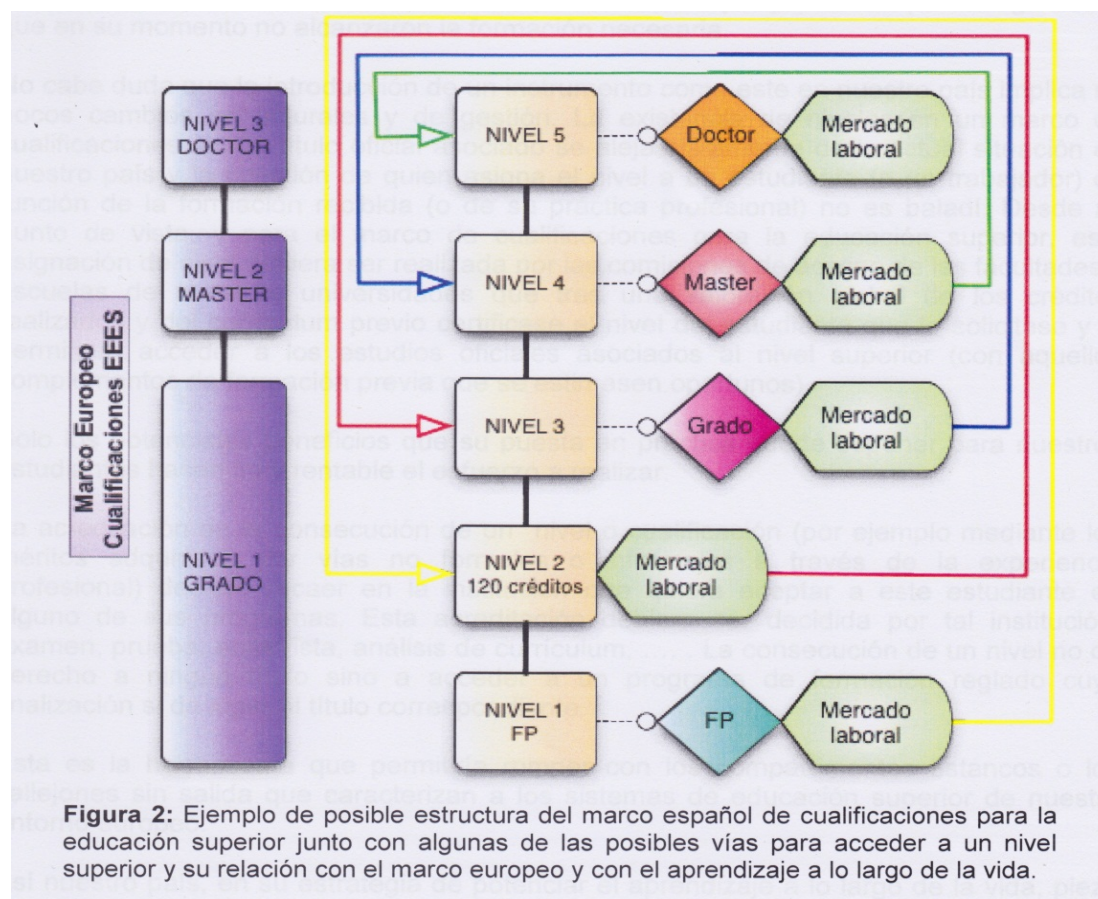
To avoid any academic stultification of programme development, particularly in those subject areas where research-led academic advancements occur at a relatively fast pace (and hence impact on frequent change in programme content), the early framework models were also linked with the concept of permissible programme modifications / developments that had to be based on published and authoritative discipline / subject 'statements' or similar reference points. It was anticipated that these would be regularly updated as required by the relevant disciplines / subject communities. Foremost amongst these in Spain would be the *Libros Blancos* published by Spanish academic and professional communities through an ANECA-led project. Other international reference points could include any relevant Tuning documents and, for example, the UK Subject Benchmark Statements.

Despite some considerable academic work put into this initial model it quickly became apparent in wider discussions that the concept would become difficult to apply within the changing relationship between State and universities in terms of the design and development of 'official' degrees. The introduction of the *Real Decreto 1393/2007, de 29 de octubre, por el que se establece la ordenación de las enseñanzas universitarias oficiales* (Royal Decree regulating the

organisation of official university studies) resulted in a significant change in this relationship, and as a consequence the number of official degrees (now listed in the Register) rose rapidly from 144 to thousands.

At the same time (2006-2008), within the DGU of the then Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación, a tabular model for MECES was also being developed (Figure 2.1b) that might be more appropriate as a more generic framework for qualifications, with the detail of the ever-increasing number of qualifications being listed in the Register.

Figure 2.1b. Early conceptual model for a Spanish qualifications framework for higher education.



It is important to note that Spanish academics/administrators had been involved, from the earliest stages, in the discussions that led to the development of the Joint Quality Initiative (JQI) and the Dublin Descriptors (2004) and subsequently to the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA (2005). As a result, early models for MECES included reference to the Dublin Descriptors and ways of alignment of a national framework with the European one.

Further, and with particular reference to the framework self-certification requirement relating to 'learning outcomes' (Criterion 3) it should be noted that even the earliest proposals for MECES were referenced to these, initially through a consideration of '*competencias*'. *Competencias* relate to a broader concept within the Spanish legal framework for education than a direct translation to 'competencies' might indicate. To help clarify the situation and, in particular to support its work in programme evaluation, whether through external procedures or internal QA within institutions, ANECA has published '*Guía para la redacción y evaluación de los resultados del aprendizaje*' (*Guide for the drafting and assessment of learning outcomes*) (see:

<http://www.aneca.es/eng/Press-service/News/2013/ANECA-launches-the-Support-Guide-for-drafting-implementing-and-evaluating-learning-outcomes>).

Provision for a *Committee for the definition of a Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education* was established by Royal Decree (900/2007 of 6 July), but due to various political changes at national level and reorganisation of ministries the Committee was not formally convened until October 29, 2009. In the meantime, however, discussions and development work were being undertaken by *ad hoc* working groups organised both within the ministry itself and at ANECA (see above).

## *2.2. 2009-10: towards a framework for qualifications - consultations with academic stakeholders*

As a result of discussion in *ad hoc* working groups in the ministry and at ANECA, and involving key stakeholder groups, a shift gradually took place from the initial concept (see Section 2.1) towards one of a framework *FOR* qualifications. Such a framework would not 'include' all of the official degrees (since these are included with RUCT anyway) but act as a tool for the design and development of all degrees by distinguishing the key generic characteristics of each level, and be a reference point for their subsequent evaluation. Additionally the framework could act as an important public information resource if presented in a format and language accessible to all key stakeholders, as opposed to only those familiar with the detailed work of academic administration.

In addition to the discussions promoted by the relevant QA agencies in the autonomous regions ANECA, as the competent national agency, sought to ensure wide discussion of the framework proposals. A series of seminars was held through 2009 in universities in Murcia (12.05.09: see Annex 4a), Valencia (01.06.09) and Santander (18.06.09), at UIMP (07.07.09) and with the Spanish Bologna Experts group in Jerez de la Frontera (2010). These university-based meetings, all of which included not only academic staff but also significant numbers of student present followed a similar agenda involving general presentations on progress in the implementation of the Bologna Process in Spain (at a time when there was, in Spain, considerable uncertainty and some disquiet about the Bologna Process) and specific ones on qualification frameworks, with particular emphasis on the intended roles and potential structures for a (national) qualification framework for higher education in Spain. The presentations were followed by formal question and answer sessions with a panel from the *ad hoc* working group and then open and wide ranging discussion sessions. Extensive notes were taken to ensure that feedback from these consultation meetings could be used in subsequent development of the MECES model. ANECA devoted its *Foro XII* (May 2009) to the topic with a substantial audience hearing from a platform of leading Spanish and European experts, as well as structured discussion session (see: Annex 4b)

Key issues for academic stakeholders in all of the meetings were not so much the general nature and content of the 'Dublin Descriptors', which were already becoming quite 'well known' and used by Spanish academics in their 'renovations' of Catalogue degrees and in the design of proposed new degrees to the 3 cycle system, but rather the equivalences between 'old' and 'new' degree, and detail in the application of ECTS. It was also apparent that, in 2009, there were some uncertainties about the application of a 'learning outcomes' / 'competencies' approach in course design / renovation and the associated links to student assessment.

The feedback from such consultation meetings proved crucial to the further development of the MECES 'model'. There was support for a more generic model that included 3 levels (Grado, Masters, Doctorates), with ECTS guidelines, but in which the generic level descriptors, although based on the Dublin Descriptors, were to be edited / re-written to reflect the traditions and expectations of Spanish higher education (and its 'language'). Whilst some countries had merely translated the Dublin Descriptors to the 'local' language this was *not* an approach supported in the (academic) consultation meetings in Spain.

### *2.3. 2010-2011: developing the legal framework: ministerial working groups and consultations*

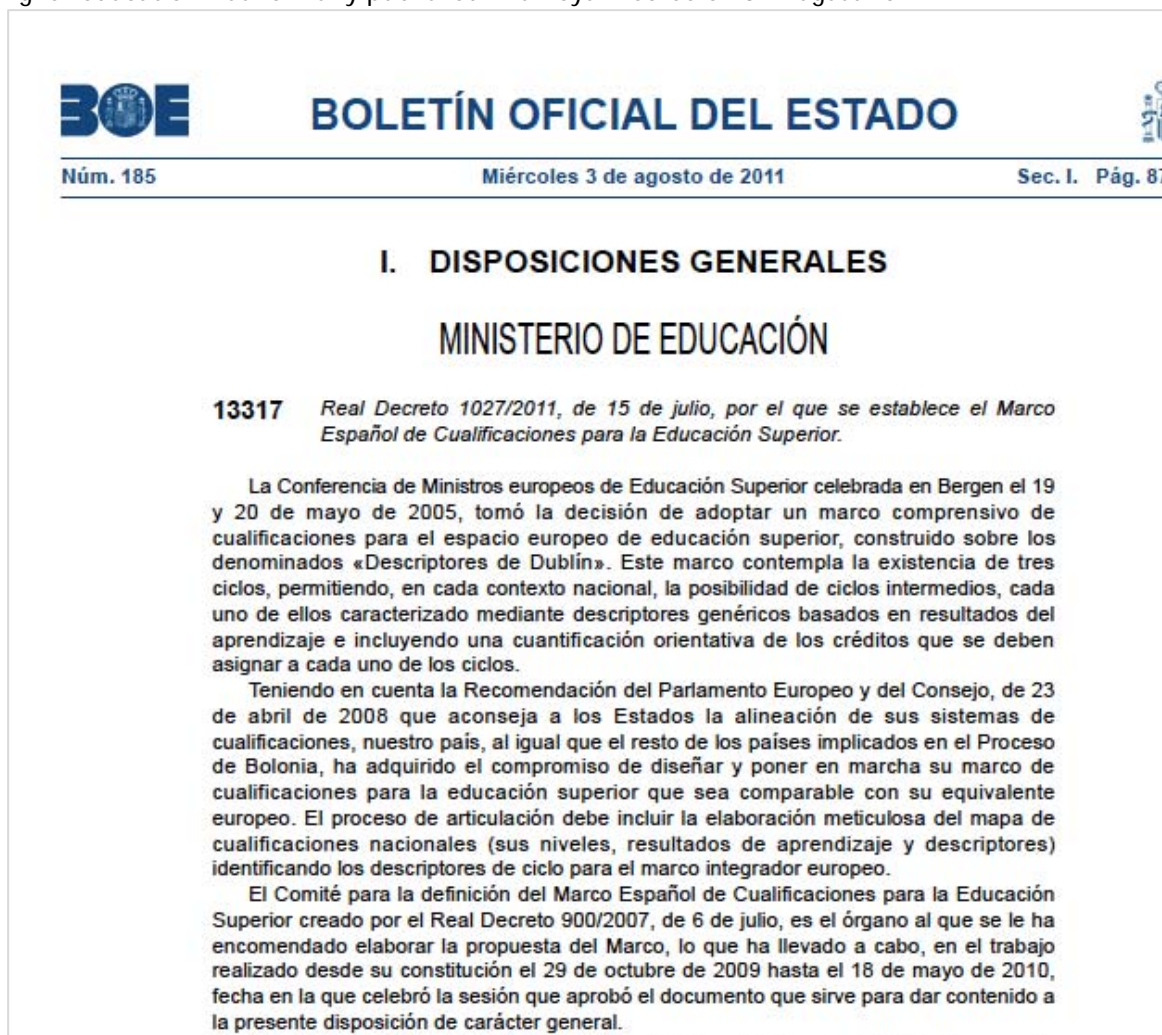
Towards the end of 2009 the formal *Committee for the definition of a Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education*, which had been created by Royal Decree 900 in 2007, was finally established. It was able to take advantage of the extensive work already undertaken by *ad hoc* working groups, external stakeholder and international participation, and various consultation meetings.

Further discussions now took place within key stakeholder groups including CURSA, REACU and the Governing Board and Advisory Board at ANECA, all of which provided feedback to the *ad hoc* working group and the main Committee.

The *Committee for the definition of a Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education* finally made its recommendations to the ministry in late 2010. A key difference from the model discussed during the academic consultation meetings was that their proposed framework should include a level for 'short cycle within the first cycle' awards. Although such qualifications are rare in Spanish higher education, and not within the university system, the inclusion of a suitable level was considered an important (potential) support for lifelong learning and the interchange between vocational and academic study routes. Again, the appropriate Dublin Descriptor provided a basis for the generic descriptor for this additional level which was also written to reflect the specificities of the Spanish context.

## 2.4. 2011: publication of the Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior (MECES)

From the early (2003 to 2006) individual Spanish contributions to the development of the European frameworks, and following a considerable amount of work in Spain (from 2006), the Spanish QA for higher education was formally published in a Royal Decree on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2011:



(For full text see: [http://www.boe.es/diario\\_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2011-13317](http://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2011-13317))

In summary, MECES includes 4 levels, generic descriptors based on the Dublin Descriptors but edited to reflect the culture, specificities and 'language' of Spanish higher education, and reference to ECTS expectations and focused on '*resultados del aprendizaje*' (Learning Outcomes).

## 2.5. 2011-2014: testing and modification to MECES

A number of countries within the EHEA Bologna Process have sought self-certification at the same time as, or very soon after, completion of the development of their QF. This has not been the case in Spain.

In Spain there has been a period in which MECES has been 'tested' in application before self-certification with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area was sought. MECES was used in the renovation of pre-Bologna programmes and in the design and development of new study programmes in universities, in their external evaluation by ANECA and the other relevant QA agencies, and in further discussions with stakeholders. As a consequence

some modifications have been made to the MECES legal framework (see Section 2.6) and to the external QA procedures applied to programme evaluation and the external evaluation of institution's internal QA systems.

It was inevitable that, within the somewhat complex legal framework in which Spanish higher education is embedded, modifications and adaptations would be required to the new legislation concerning MECES. Since the 2011 *Real Decreto* it has been subject to some changes. There have also been extensive discussion concerning the positioning of degrees that, through their structures and or titles, do not immediately conform easily to the framework; a number of such programmes are also subject to European Directives. Medicine and veterinary medicine are but some examples and along with a number of other programmes with 300+ECTS has been placed (RD 96/2014 of 14<sup>th</sup> February) at level 3 in MECES despite retaining the title of 'Bachelor' for historical reasons and international comparability.

## 2.6. 2013-2014: MECES in action - prior to self-certification

Although not formally enacted until '*Real Decreto* 1027/2011' the previous sections clearly indicate that the Bologna developments in Spain had included an increasing awareness of the forthcoming MECES and, in particular, use of the 'tools' that it would provide - ECTS and generic level descriptors (initially the Dublin Descriptors) - along with a gradual adoption of the Learning Outcomes approach.

Since publication of RD1027/2011 there has been a more explicit use of these 'tools' through the formal presence of MECES. This is apparent in the changing ways in which *Verifica / Seguimiento* are being conducted within universities and by the main quality assurance agencies, and most noticeably in the development and application *Acredita / Renovación de la acreditación*. The latter project was however subject to the requirements of RD534/2013 that postponed the compulsory accreditation renewal of degrees completing their academic cycles during academic years 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15; it was only finalised and applied from late 2013, with extensive activities in 2014. The procedure tests whether verified programmes have delivered to their initial claims and expectations and in particular the extent to which students have demonstrably achieved intended learning outcomes equivalent to those expected of the generic MECES level descriptors (and ECTS requirements), as well as the more specific discipline and subject aspects.

Another example of a project involving MECES in action prior to self-certification has been the development of the framework for adapting the qualifications of the pre-Bologna degrees. Formal initiation by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport awaits publication of a *Real Decreto* that is currently (September 2014) under review. Initial work led by ANECA has however begun to establish a series of Commissions that will consider the extent to which each of the 144 official degrees within the pre-Bologna *Catalogo* correspond with current expectations, including with MECES. The work began in July 2014 with the appointment of the main Commission and sub-commissions for each of the five discipline areas. The work will be challenging since it reflects the significant changes that Spanish higher education has undergone since commitment to the Bologna Process, with not only changes in the arrangements and time periods of study but in particular a shift from a quality assurance system based largely on 'input' measures to one in which 'learning outcomes' are a central feature.

### MECES and the recognition of foreign qualifications

The ENIC / NARIC roles in Spain are undertaken by a section within the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport; see: <http://www.mecd.gob.es/educacion-mecd/areas-educacion/universidades/educacion-superior-universitaria/titulos/naric.html> and the application of MECES is implicitly an integral and important part of this work.

It must be noted that the Self-Certification of MECES against the FQ-EHEA does not indicate any legal presumption or guarantee of equivalence or recognition of qualifications other than as has been established by the Spanish NARIC, in line with national legislation and its international commitments through the ENIC network.

## 2.7. Alignment of MECES with the European Qualifications Framework

The formal Bologna Process / European Higher Education Area web site (on its page for the Overarching Framework for qualifications of the EHEA (<http://www.ehea.info/article-details.aspx?ArticleId=67>)) states that:

*We are satisfied that national qualifications frameworks compatible with the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA will also be compatible with the proposal from the European Commission on a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.*

A separate self-certification of MECES with the EQF has thus not been undertaken.

Spain also has a qualifications framework for vocational education and lifelong learning (el Marco Español de Cualificaciones - MECU) (see: <http://www.mecd.gob.es/mecu/>). The relationship between the two Spanish frameworks and the EQF is set out clearly by the Ministry in <http://www.mecd.gob.es/mecu/en/que-es/marcos-cualificaciones.html> :

*At national level*

*The Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (MECES) has been established, and the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (MECU) will be implemented in Spain.*

*The MECES refers to all qualifications obtained within the higher education system. Therefore, it only refers to formal education. Every qualification level in the MECES will have an equivalent level in the MECU.*

*The MECU<sup>1</sup> refers to all learning contexts, that is, it covers formal learning (taking into account all levels of the education system) as well as non-formal and informal learning.*

*The QF-EHEA levels have equivalences in the EQF, but the inverse relation is optional. For instance, a person holding a doctorate will hold the QF-EHEA cycle 3 and, therefore, the EQF level 8. However, a person accrediting a level-8 qualification in the EQF due to her/his non-formal or informal training (for instance, a senior executive at a company or government) will not be a doctor.*

The relationships between the two Spanish qualifications frameworks and the two European ones are indicated in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.7. Alignment of levels of MECES, the FO-EHEA and the EQF and hence with MECU

MECES	FO-EHEA	EQF	MECU
4 - Doctorado	3 <sup>rd</sup> cycle	8	8
3 - Masters	2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle	7	7
2 - Bachelors	1 <sup>st</sup> cycle	6	6
1 -	Short cycle within the 1 <sup>st</sup> cycle	5	5
		4	4
		3	3
		2	2
		1	1

<sup>1</sup> \* MECES currently refers to all qualifications obtained within the university system and refers to official education.

### 3. Self-certification of MECES against FQ-EHEA: Evidence for meeting the Criteria

*3.1. Criterion 1: The national framework for higher education qualifications and the body or bodies responsible for its development are designated by the national ministry with responsibility for higher education.*

The Committee to formulate the qualifications framework for Spanish higher education was designated by the national ministry through the publication of a Royal Decree (RD900/2007). The framework that was developed - MECES - was enacted through a subsequent Royal Decree (RD1027/2011) on behalf of the Ministry, and included the requirement that ANECA should coordinate work on the self-certification of MECES.

Subsequently the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport formally wrote to ANECA, as the competent national body, asking it to lead on the procedures for the self-certification of MECES (the Spanish QF for higher education) in 2014 (see: **Annex 1** for copy of letter - in Spanish).

*3.2. Criterion 2: There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications in the national framework and the cycle qualification descriptors of the European framework.*

The demonstration of a clear link between MECES, and in particular its descriptors and the Framework for Qualification of the EHEA has taken particular note of the following:

- 1) The Dublin descriptors of the FQ-EHEA were built on the following elements:
  - > knowledge and understanding;
  - > applying knowledge and understanding;
  - > making judgements;
  - > communications skills;
  - > learning skills.

The important statements within *A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area* ([http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/QF/050218\\_QF\\_EHEA.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/QF/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf)) that:

- 2) The Dublin Descriptors offer generic statements of typical expectations of achievements and abilities associated with qualifications that represent the end of each of a Bologna cycle. They are not meant to be prescriptive; they do not represent threshold or minimum requirements and they are not exhaustive; similar or equivalent characteristics may be added or substituted. The descriptors seek to identify the nature of the whole qualification. The descriptors are not subject specific nor are they limited to academic, professional or vocational areas. For particular disciplines the descriptors should be read within the context and use of language of that discipline. Wherever possible, they should be cross-referenced with any expectations/ competencies published by the relevant community of scholars and/or practitioners (see Section 3.3 Descriptors of learning outcomes (page 65), and that
- 3) In adopting the Dublin Descriptors the [FQ-EHEA] Working Group recognise that further *elaboration of the existing elements and/or introduction of new elements will be part of the evolution of them as reference points to the framework for higher education qualification of the EHEA.*



Further, the self-certification has taken particular note of the FQ-EHEA document conclusion (page 90) that

*It is important that national frameworks be developed or revised to provide detail and clarity regarding the qualifications within national systems and how they correspond to the cycles described in the European framework. All qualifications should be subject to appropriate systems of quality assurance.*

Table 3.2. sets out, in tabular form, the Dublin Descriptors and the MECES equivalents (with an unofficial translation into English). It is clear that the MECES descriptors are based substantially upon the Dublin Descriptors in terms of their basic structure and detailed contents. However, and importantly, the MECES descriptors additionally reflect:

- a) important aspects of Spanish higher education and stakeholder expectations of it, and
- b) changes in priorities, expectations and vocabulary associated with higher education in decade since the Dublin Descriptors were written.

Figure 3.2. Comparison of MECES generic cycle descriptors with the Dublin Descriptors of the QF-EHEA  
The descriptors relate to qualifications that signify completion of a higher education cycle and are awarded to students who:

Cycle	Dublin Descriptors	MECES descriptor	(unofficial) Translation to English
Short cycle within the First cycle	> have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon general secondary education and is typically at a level supported by advanced textbooks; such knowledge provides an underpinning for a field of work or vocation, personal development, and further studies to complete the first cycle;	a) haber demostrado poseer conocimientos especializados en un área profesional o de estudio, con comprensión crítica para la integración y transferencia de saberes, así como para el desarrollo de la creatividad, la iniciativa personal y el espíritu emprendedor;	<i>a) have demonstrated expertise in a professional or study area with critical understanding for the integration and transfer of knowledge as well as the development of creativity, initiative and entrepreneurship;</i>
	> can apply their knowledge and understanding in occupational contexts;	b) aplicar e integrar sus conocimientos artísticos, tecnológicos o deportivos en la definición y desarrollo de procedimientos de trabajo, en el ámbito artístico o laboral, de forma autónoma y con responsabilidad de coordinación y supervisión del trabajo técnico;	<i>b) implement and integrate their artistic, technological or sports knowledge in the definition and development of working procedures in the artistic or other workplace, independently and with responsibility for coordinating and supervising the technical work;</i>
	> have the ability to identify and use data to formulate responses to well-defined concrete and abstract problems;	c) poseer la capacidad de analizar la información necesaria para evaluar y dar respuesta a situaciones previstas y no previstas, mediante la búsqueda de soluciones fundamentadas, creativas e innovadoras dentro de un campo de estudio o profesional;	<i>c) possess the ability to analyze information necessary to evaluate and respond to expected and unexpected situations, by seeking informed, creative and innovative solutions within a field of study or profession;</i>
	> can communicate about their understanding, skills and activities, with peers, supervisors and clients;	d) ser capaces de comunicar sus conocimientos, ideas, habilidades y actividades en contextos profesionales a sus iguales, supervisores, clientes y personas bajo su responsabilidad;	<i>d) be able to communicate their knowledge, ideas, skills and activities in professional contexts to peers, supervisors, clients and persons under their responsibility;</i>

	> have the learning skills to undertake further studies with some autonomy	e) poseer las estrategias de aprendizaje necesarias para avanzar en su formación de manera autónoma, con madurez para innovar en su aplicación y progresar en el aprendizaje y formación a niveles superiores.	e) <i>posses the strategies necessary to advance their training independently with maturity to innovate in implementation and progress in learning and training to higher levels.</i>
First cycle	> have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study;	a) haber adquirido conocimientos avanzados y demostrado una comprensión de los aspectos teóricos y prácticos y de la metodología de trabajo en su campo de estudio con una profundidad que llegue hasta la vanguardia del conocimiento;	a) <i>have acquired advanced knowledge and demonstrated an understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects and methodology of work in their field of study with a depth that reaches the forefront of knowledge;</i>
	> can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;	b) poder, mediante argumentos o procedimientos elaborados y sustentados por ellos mismos, aplicar sus conocimientos, la comprensión de estos y sus capacidades de resolución de problemas en ámbitos laborales complejos o profesionales y especializados que requieren el uso de ideas creativas e innovadoras;	b) <i>be able through developed arguments or procedures and, supported by them, apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in the troubleshooting of complex or professional and specialized work environments that require the use of creative and innovative ideas;</i>
	> have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues;	c) tener la capacidad de recopilar e interpretar datos e informaciones sobre las que fundamentar sus conclusiones incluyendo, cuando sea preciso y pertinente, la reflexión sobre asuntos de índole social, científica o ética en el ámbito de su campo de estudio;	c) <i>have the ability to gather and interpret data and information on which to base their conclusions including, where necessary and appropriate, the reflection on social, scientific or ethical issues within their field of study;</i>
	> can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;	d) ser capaces de desenvolverse en situaciones complejas o que requieran el desarrollo de nuevas soluciones tanto en el ámbito académico como laboral o profesional dentro de su campo de estudio;	d) <i>be able to cope in complex situations or that require the development of new solutions in both the academic and occupational or professional aspects in their field of study;</i>
	> have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.	e) saber comunicar a todo tipo de audiencias (especializadas o no) de manera clara y precisa, conocimientos, metodologías, ideas, problemas y soluciones en el ámbito de su campo de estudio; f) ser capaces de identificar sus propias necesidades formativas en su campo de estudio y entorno laboral o profesional y de organizar su propio aprendizaje con un alto grado de autonomía en todo tipo de contextos (estructurados o no).	e) <i>ability to communicate to all audiences (specialized or not) clearly and precisely, knowledge, methodologies, ideas, problems and solutions in the area of their field of study;</i> f) <i>be able to identify their own training needs in their field of study and work, or professional environment, and to organize their own learning with a high degree of autonomy in all kinds of contexts (structured or not).</i>
Second cycle	> have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that	a) haber adquirido conocimientos avanzados y demostrado, en un contexto de investigación científica y tecnológica o	a) <i>have acquired advanced knowledge and demonstrated, in the context of scientific and technological research or highly</i>

	typically associated with the first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;	altamente especializado, una comprensión detallada y fundamentada de los aspectos teóricos y prácticos y de la metodología de trabajo en uno o más campos de estudio;	<i>specialized field, detailed and informed understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects of the methodology and work in one or more fields of study;</i>
	> can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;	b) saber aplicar e integrar sus conocimientos, la comprensión de estos, su fundamentación científica y sus capacidades de resolución de problemas en entornos nuevos y definidos de forma imprecisa, incluyendo contextos de carácter multidisciplinar tanto investigadores como profesionales altamente especializados;	<i>b) be able to apply and integrate their knowledge, and understanding of these, with sound science and problem-solving abilities in new and imprecisely defined environments, including multidisciplinary contexts both researchers and highly skilled professionals;</i>
	> have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements;	c) saber evaluar y seleccionar la teoría científica adecuada y la metodología precisa de sus campos de estudio para formular juicios a partir de información incompleta o limitada incluyendo, cuando sea preciso y pertinente, una reflexión sobre la responsabilidad social o ética ligada a la solución que se proponga en cada caso;	<i>c) be able to evaluate and select appropriate scientific theory and the precise methodology of their fields of study to formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information including, when necessary and appropriate, a reflection on the social and ethical responsibilities linked to the solution it is proposed in each case;</i>
	> can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;	d) ser capaces de predecir y controlar la evolución de situaciones complejas mediante el desarrollo de nuevas e innovadoras metodologías de trabajo adaptadas al ámbito científico/investigador, tecnológico o profesional concreto, en general multidisciplinar, en el que se desarrolle su actividad; e) saber transmitir de un modo claro y sin ambigüedades a un público especializado o no, resultados procedentes de la investigación científica y tecnológica o del ámbito de la innovación más avanzada, así como los fundamentos más relevantes sobre los que se sustentan;	<i>d) be able to predict and control the evolution of complex situations by developing new and innovative working methodologies tailored to specific scientific / research, technological or professional field, usually multidisciplinary, in which the activity takes place; e) know how to convey clearly and unambiguously to a specialized audience or not, results from science and technology or the scope of advanced innovation research and the most important that are based on fundamentals;</i>
	> have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.	f) haber desarrollado la autonomía suficiente para participar en proyectos de investigación y colaboraciones científicas o tecnológicas dentro su ámbito temático, en contextos interdisciplinares y, en su caso, con una alta componente de transferencia del conocimiento; g) ser capaces de asumir la responsabilidad de su propio desarrollo profesional y de su	<i>f) have developed enough autonomy to participate in research projects and scientific and technological collaborations within its scope, in interdisciplinary contexts and, where appropriate, with a high component of knowledge transfer; g) be able to take responsibility for their own professional development and specialization</i>

		especialización en uno o más campos de estudio.	<i>in one or more fields of study.</i>
Third cycle	> have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field;	a) haber adquirido conocimientos avanzados en la frontera del conocimiento y demostrado, en el contexto de la investigación científica reconocida internacionalmente, una comprensión profunda, detallada y fundamentada de los aspectos teóricos y prácticos y de la metodología científica en uno o más ámbitos investigadores;	<i>a) have acquired advanced knowledge in the frontiers of knowledge and demonstrated in the context of internationally recognized scientific research, a deep and detailed understanding based on the theoretical and practical aspects of scientific methodology in one or more areas of research;</i>
	have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity;	c) haber demostrado que son capaces de diseñar un proyecto de investigación con el que llevar a cabo un análisis crítico y una evaluación de situaciones imprecisas donde aplicar sus contribuciones y sus conocimientos y metodología de trabajo para realizar una síntesis de ideas nuevas y complejas que produzcan un conocimiento más profundo del contexto investigador en el que se trabaje; e) haber mostrado que son capaces de desarrollar su actividad investigadora con responsabilidad social e integridad científica	<i>c) have shown that they are able to design a research project with which to carry out a critical analysis and evaluation of imprecise situations where they apply their contributions, knowledge and methodology in a synthesis of new and complex ideas that produce a deeper understanding of the research context in which they work; e) have shown that they are able to develop their research activities with social responsibility and scientific integrity</i>
	> have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication;	b) haber hecho una contribución original y significativa a la investigación científica en su ámbito de conocimiento y que esta contribución haya sido reconocida como tal por la comunidad científica internacional;	<i>b) have made an original and significant contribution to scientific research in their field of knowledge and this contribution has been recognized as such by the international scientific community;</i>
	> are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas;	d) haber desarrollado la autonomía suficiente para iniciar, gestionar y liderar equipos y proyectos de investigación innovadores y colaboraciones científicas, nacionales o internacionales, dentro su ámbito temático, en contextos multidisciplinares y, en su caso, con una alta componente de transferencia de conocimiento;	<i>d) have developed sufficient autonomy to manage and lead teams and innovative research projects and scientific, national or international collaborations, within its scope, in multidisciplinary contexts and, where appropriate, with a high component of knowledge transfer;</i>
	> can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;	f) haber justificado que son capaces de participar en las discusiones científicas que se desarrollen a nivel internacional en su ámbito de conocimiento y de divulgar los resultados de su actividad investigadora a todo tipo de públicos;	<i>f) have justified their ability to participate in scientific discussions that take place internationally in the field of knowledge and to disseminate the results of their research to all kinds of public;</i>
	> can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society.	g) haber demostrado dentro de su contexto científico específico que son capaces de realizar avances en aspectos culturales, sociales o tecnológicos, así como de fomentar la innovación en todos	<i>g) have demonstrated in their specific scientific context they are able to make progress in cultural, social and technological aspects, as well as to encourage innovation in</i>

	los ámbitos en una sociedad basada en el conocimiento	<i>all areas in a knowledge-based society</i>
In the Third Cycle columns the lettering sequence is retained from the MECES RD, with sections 'matched' to the most relevant Dublin Descriptor		
<p>In the Dublin Descriptors:</p> <p>a) The word 'professional' is used in the descriptors in its broadest sense, relating to those attributes relevant to undertaking work or a vocation and that involves the application of some aspects of advanced learning. It is not used with regard to those specific requirements relating to regulated professions. The latter may be identified with the profile / specification.</p> <p>b) The word 'competence' is used in the descriptors in its broadest sense, allowing for gradation of abilities or skills. It is not used in the narrower sense identified solely on the basis of a 'yes/no' assessment.</p> <p>c) The word 'research' is used to cover a wide variety of activities, with the context often related to a field of study; the term is used here to represent a careful study or investigation based on a systematic understanding and critical awareness of knowledge. The word is used in an inclusive way to accommodate the range of activities that support original and innovative work in the whole range of academic, professional and technological fields, including the humanities, and traditional, performing, and other creative arts. It is not used in any limited or restricted sense, or relating solely to a traditional 'scientific method'.</p>		

### 3.3. Criterion 3: The national framework and its qualifications are demonstrably based on learning outcomes and the qualifications are linked to ECTS or ECTS-compatible credits.

'Learning outcomes' are regarded as a key concept in the Bologna Process and their inclusion is an important factor in the self-certification of national frameworks against the FQ-EHEA.

MECES includes generic level descriptors based on the Dublin Descriptors but edited to reflect the context of Spanish higher education and the more general changes in the context of European higher education in the decade since the Dublin Descriptors were written.

MECES refers directly to learning outcomes ('*resultados de aprendizaje*' and '*competencias*')

Learning Outcomes linked to MECES level are a specific requirement in, for example, the *ex post* external evaluation of study programmes required for the formal *Acredita / Renovación de la acreditación* of all official degrees. Agreed by all of the Spanish QA agencies through REACU, Criterion 6 requires that:

*Learning outcomes achieved by graduates are consistent with the graduate profile and correspond to the level of MECES (Marco Spanish Qualifications for Higher Education) degree.*

*Achieved at a minimum:*

- *training activities, their teaching methods, and systems of assessment practices are adequate to reasonably fit the purpose of acquisition of the intended learning outcomes.*
- *the achieved learning outcomes meet the objectives of training programme and are appropriate to their level in the MECES (bold for emphasis in this Report)*

A consideration of the use of Learning Outcomes is also a specific requirement in the external evaluation of an HE institution's or unit's internal quality assurance systems within the Audit procedures.

The use of ECTS is ubiquitous in Spanish higher education and is included within MECES (see Figure 3.3.) in a manner compatible with the Bologna Process and the FQ-EHEA.

Figure 3.3 Use of ECTS in MECES in comparison to their use in FQ-EHEA

Level	FQ-EHEA	MECES
Short cycle within the 1 <sup>st</sup> Cycle	<i>Only where used</i> - approximately 120 ECTS credits (within or linked to the first cycle)	
First cycle	Typically 180-240 ECTS credits	240 ECTS
Second cycle	Typically 90-120 ECTS credits - the minimum requirement should amount to 60 ECTS credits at second cycle level;	Between 60 and 120 ECTS
Third cycle	Not ECTS rated	Not ECTS rated

**3.4. Criterion 4: The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the national framework are transparent.**

MECES is a framework 'for' qualifications, not a framework 'of' specific qualifications. Official Spanish higher education qualifications (*Títulos*) are included within the *Registro de Universidades, Centros y Títulos* (RUCT). The main qualification types are, however, included within MECES within each of its four levels. These were assigned following extensive and transparent discussions with key academic groups and stakeholders (see Sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4).

**3.5. Criterion 5: The national quality assurance systems for higher education refer to the national framework of qualifications and are consistent with the Berlin Communiqué and any subsequent communiqué agreed by ministers in the Bologna Process.**

The Spanish quality assurance system for higher education is complex with various competencies assigned uniquely or shared between the State and the autonomous regions. The national agency ANECA is a full member of ENQA and following its recent ENQA review (2012) retains its inclusion within the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR). Some but not all of the QA agencies within the autonomous regions of Spain are also member of ENQA/EQAR; they have different and wider competencies than those regional agencies that are not members (see more detail in Section 1.3).

All of the procedures applied by the national and regional QA agencies comply with expectations of quality assurance within the EHEA and are consistent with the Berlin (and subsequent) communiqués, and in particular the statements in the Berlin Communiqué that:

- on quality assurance -
  - by 2005 national quality assurance systems should include:
    - a definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.
    - evaluation of programmes or institutions, including internal assessment, external review, participation of students and the publication of results.
    - a system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.
    - International participation, co-operation and networking.
- on degree structure:
  - Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles (subsequently modified to 3 plus short cycle in later Bologna Process Communiqués)
- Establishment of a system of credits

**3.6. Criterion 6: The national framework, and any alignment with the European framework, is referenced in all Diploma Supplements.**

Universities in Spain are expected to make the Diploma Supplement (*Suplemento Europeo al Título (SET)*) available to their graduate. The form of the Diploma Supplement and the procedure for its distribution are both formally established by Royal Decree (Rd 1004.03 1<sup>st</sup> April and 1002/10

5<sup>th</sup> August), although the format of the SET is currently (September 2014) under review. The Diploma Supplement includes a description (currently under review by means of a new Real Decreto whose draft is being submitted to a consultation process of the Ministry to stakeholders in order to approve a new Real Decreto on the requirements to issue the Diploma Supplement for the Spanish Universities) of the national higher education system that itself is required to describe the 3 cycle system operating in Spanish universities as set out in MECES.

Where appropriate the Diploma Supplement (SET) offered by Spanish universities will include the regional language (e.g. Galician, Catalan) as well as Castilian Spanish and English (e.g. University de Santiago de Compostela <http://www.usc.es/en/perfis/egresados/set.html>). In some cases the DS / SET is offered on request, in others it is provided free of cost to all graduates (e.g. Polytechnic University of Valencia <http://www.upv.es/entidades/SA/titulos/396054normalc.html>)

### ***3.7. Criterion 7: The responsibilities of the domestic parties to the national framework are clearly determined and published.***

Key responsibilities for the various activities concerning MECES are clearly determined and published in so far as:

- Formal 'ownership' of MECES - resides with the State, held through the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport
- Formal modification of MECES - is, and has since its original publication, been made through government orders, the level of which will depend upon the extent of the modification (for example, a *Real Decreto* or a *Dictámen de Consejo de Estado* (see Section 2.5).
- Self-Certification of MECES against the European qualification frameworks - coordinated by ANECA, as the national competent body, at the request of the Ministry.
- Application of MECES in the 'renovation' of degree programmes and the design and development of new ones - is the responsibility of the universities (as set out in RD 1509 /2008 12<sup>th</sup> September, see *Sección títulos*).
- Application of MECES in the *ex-ante* and follow-up evaluations of degree programmes, and their *ex post* accreditation - undertaken by the national quality assurance agency ANECA and also by agencies within the Spanish autonomous regions, with their competencies depending on EQAR status.
- the application of MECES in systematic internal quality assurance within universities and or their units - individual HE institutions / units are responsible
- evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance systems within universities or their units - undertaken by ANECA or an agency in an autonomous region authorised to undertake the AUDIT procedure
- application of MECES in the formal recognition of foreign degrees - through the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport
- application of MECES in the determination of correspondence between pre-Bologna degrees and current ones - being undertaken through a substantial project lead by ANECA on behalf of the Ministry.

There is less clarity about who / what body is formally responsible for dissemination of information about MECES to stakeholders in higher education. This does not mean, however, that there is no such information, rather there is an impressive array of information easily available to, for example, employers (e.g. see Annex 5: the Confederation of Employers in Andalusia (CEA) - supports a *Platform for the promotion and 'diffusion' of professional formation for employment* (FPE) which includes a clear article on the qualifications frameworks for lifelong learning and for higher education in Spain (MECU and MECES respectively) and their European counterparts, as well an explanation of 'learning outcomes and credit transfer'; see: <http://infofpe.cea.es/fpe.php?section=c62>.

#### 4. The requirements for Self-Certification: Evidence for meeting the Procedure

*4.1. Procedure 1: The competent national body/bodies shall certify the compatibility of the national framework with the European framework.*

Following from the requirement set out in RD1207/2011, the Spanish Ministry of Education Culture and Sport formally requested that ANECA, as the competent national body, co-ordinate the Self Certification of MECES; see letter in Annex 1.

*4.2. Procedure 2: The self-certification process shall include the stated agreement of the quality assurance bodies in the country in question recognised through the Bologna Process.*

The national quality assurance body for Spain (ANECA) agreed to the mandate from the Ministry of Education, Culture and sport to lead the Self-certification process. It is also, under request of the Ministry leading the project on identifying the equivalence of pre-Bologna degrees with the Bologna cycle system as set out for Spain in MECES.

In addition to having members within the Self-certification Committee from some of the autonomous regions, ANECA is keeping the QA agencies of the autonomous regions informed of progress through their network (REACU) and will report on the Self-certification when this has been completed.

*4.3. Procedure 3: The self-certification process shall involve international experts.*

*Three international experts have been involved in the self-certification of MECES:*

- 1) Guy Haug - European expert on higher education policy in an international setting. Principal Administrator at the Directorate for Education, European Commission. Involved in Bologna process as advisor to the EUA. Director General, for Europe of the Council on International Educational Exchange. Worked for the EU for the inception of the ERASMUS, TEMPUS and ASIA-LINK programmes. Cooperated with the Council of Europe, the Nordic Council of Ministers, OECD, UNESCO and NGOs.
- 2) Dr Marlies Leegwater - Up to 2013 employed at the Ministry of Education, Culture & Science, as coordinator internationalisation higher education. Since then retired. Up to 1983 employed at the University of Amsterdam as a researcher. 1971-1974 employed as teacher Biology at the Animal Health Industrial Training Centre, Kabete, Kenya.
- 3) Dr Nick Harris (joint author of the self-certification report for ANECA) - former Director for Development and Enhancement at QAA (UK); expert in quality assurance in European higher education; advisor and evaluator for numerous European and other ministries, QA agencies and HE institutions; founder member of the Joint Quality Initiative (that developed the Dublin Descriptors); member of the working group for the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

*4.4. Procedure 4: The self-certification and the evidence supporting it shall be published and shall address separately each of the criteria set out.*

Once agreed by the relevant committee of experts and stakeholders, the Self-Certification Report will be published by ANECA and made available through the web sites of the Ministry and ANECA.

*4.5. Procedure 5: The ENIC and NARIC networks shall maintain a public listing of States that have confirmed that they have completed the self-certification process.*

The Spanish ENIC / NARIC is located within the Ministry for Education, Culture and Sport. It has been involved in discussions and developments concerning MECES and will continue to use it in its work on the homologation of foreign qualifications (see e.g.: *Homologación de títulos <http://www.mecd.gob.es/educacion-mecd/areas-educacion/universidades/educacion-superior-universitaria/titulos/homologacion-titulos.html>*).

The Ministry will undertake notification to the ENIC Naric Network when the Self-Certification process has been completed.



**4.6. Procedure 6: The completion of the self-certification process shall be noted on Diploma Supplements issued subsequently by showing the link between the national framework and the European framework**

It is anticipated that the completion of the Self-certification process shall be referenced within the description of Spanish higher education that is an integral part of the DS / SET. This is a formal process within Spain and requires the completion of Self-certification before it can be commenced. It is however not envisaged that there would be any obstacles to this further example of Spain's continuing commitment to the Bologna Process.

## 5. Conclusion

The Committee for the Self-certification of '*el Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior (MECES)*', the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, was established as required within the Bologna Process. It considered a draft Self-Certification Report and found that in all cases the required Criteria and Procedures are being met. Further, the Committee notes the importance it attaches to the fact that MECES has been self-certified as a framework that has already been, for a number of years, actively applied in all aspects of programme design and delivery in Spanish universities. Further application of MECES is an integral part of both the external and internal quality assurance mechanisms undertaken within Spanish higher education, both nationally and within the autonomous regions. MECES plays an important role within the recognition of foreign degrees carried out by the Spanish NARIC within the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, and is currently being used in the detail examination of the correspondence of Spain's degrees before and after its commitment to the Bologna Process. The Committee envisages an increasingly important role for MECES in the public dissemination of information about the attributes of Spanish graduates at all levels and their abilities to integrate into the work place, and continue with lifelong learning.

In conclusion the Committee endorses the Self Certification Report on the compatibility of MECES against the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, and through this to the European Qualifications Framework, noting that level 1 of MECES is aligned with level 5 of the EQF, level 2 of MECES (for Grado) with level 6 of the EQF, level 3 of MECES (for masters degrees) with level 7 of the EQF, and level 4 of MECES (for doctorates) with level 8 of EQF.

## Annexes

1. Letter from Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport requesting that ANECA, as the competent national body, lead on the Self-certification of the Spanish framework for higher education qualifications (MECES) with the Frame for Qualifications of the European Higher education Area (in Spanish)
2. The Committee for the Self-certification of MECES with FQ-EHEA and its timetable
3. The Committee for the formulation of MECES
4. a: Seminars - b: ANECA Foro discussion meeting programme
5. Some example of discussion meetings with stakeholders of Spanish higher education during the formulation of MECES
6. An example of stakeholder involvement in the dissemination of information about MECES and its implementation.

Annex 1. Letter from Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport requesting that ANECA, as the competent national body, lead on the Self-certification of the Spanish framework for Higher Education qualifications (MECES) with the Frame for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (in Spanish)



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Y DEPORTE

SECRETARÍA DE ESTADO  
DE EDUCACIÓN, FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL  
Y UNIVERSIDADES

Montserrat  
Gomendio Kindelan

SECRETARIA DE ESTADO

D. Rafael Van Grieken Salvador  
Director  
Agencia Nacional de Evaluación  
de la Calidad y Acreditación (ANECA)  
C/ Orense 11, 7ª  
28020 Madrid

ANECA
Entrada
001 N.º 201400100002129 16/04/14 13:41:01

Madrid, 7 de abril de 2014

*Estimado Rafael:*

Dentro de las obligaciones contraídas por el sistema universitario español en la construcción del EEES, se encuentra el diseño e implantación del denominado Marco Español de Cualificaciones de la Educación Superior (MECES).

El último informe sobre cumplimiento de la adaptación de los países al EEES ponía de manifiesto el trabajo que aún queda por hacer para culminar el proceso de implantación del MECES.

Para la próxima reunión de Ministros, que tendrá lugar en Mayo de 2015, el Grupo de Seguimiento de Bolonia, emitirá un informe con la información recopilada acerca del cumplimiento de los compromisos contraídos en relación con todos los aspectos relativos a la implantación del MECES

A la vista de las limitaciones de tiempo que existen para llevar a cabo todo el proceso, sería necesario que la ANECA constituyera un grupo de trabajo reducido para llevar a cabo el desarrollo de un informe preliminar.

Dicho informe debería estar terminado a finales de mayo de 2014 y serviría de soporte para convocar una reunión del panel asesor de expertos internacionales en octubre de este año con vistas a completar el proceso de auto certificación.

Por todo ello le ruego que, como director de la ANECA proceda a constituir un grupo de trabajo ad hoc para que lleve a cabo las tareas necesarias para el cumplimiento de la implantación y certificación internacional del MECES dentro de los plazos anteriormente descritos.

Atentamente,

Annex 2: Committee for the Self Certification of MECES with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area and its timetable

Chair		
Sr. D. Rafael van Grieken	Director	ANECA
Members		
Sr. D. Federico Morán	Secretario General de Universidades	Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte
Sra. D <sup>a</sup> Marina del Corral	Secretaria General de Inmigración y Emigración	Ministerio de Empleo y Seguridad Social
Sr. D. Jorge Sainz	Director General de Política Universitaria	Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte
Sr. D. Angel de Miguel	Director General de Formación Profesional	Ministerio de Educación Cultura y Deporte
Sr. D. Luis Javier Lozano Blanco	Director General de Universidades	Región de Murcia
José Manuel López López	Presidente	Conferencia de rectores de las Universidades Españolas (CRUE)
Sr. D. Joaquín Moya Angeler	Presidente	Conferencia de Consejos Sociales de las Universidades Españolas
Sr. D. Martí Casadesus Fa	Director	AQU Cataluña
Sr. D. Julio Iglesias de Ussel	Presidente del Consejo Asesor	ANECA
Sr. D. Manuel Moreu	Presidente	Instituto de la Ingeniería de España
Sr. D. Juan Antonio Montero	Vicepresidente	Consejo de Estudiantes Universitario del Estado (CEUNE)
Dr. Marlies Leegwater	Former Bologna Coordinator Dutch Ministry of Education; Founder of the JQI; Member of the Bologna Working Group for FQ-EHEA	
Dr. Nick Harris	Member of Joint Quality Initiative; Expert to the Bologna Working Group for FQ-EHEA; International Advisor ANECA	
Sr. D. Guy Haug	European expert on Higher Education policy; International Advisor ANECA	
Sr. D. Pablo Oñate	Presidente Comisión de Equivalencias, Homologación y Correspondencia - MECES	Universidad de Valencia
Sr. D. Guillermo Bernabéu	Profesor	Universidad de Alicante
Secretariat		
Sr. Rafael Llavori	Head of the Institutional and International Relations	ANECA

#### **Timetable of Self-certification of MECES to FQ-EHEA**

**April 7<sup>th</sup> 2014:** Commissioning letter from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport to Director of ANECA asking that the national agency, as the competent national body, to organize, as a continuing part of Spain's continuing commitment to the Bologna Process, the Self certification of MECES against the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA

**April to July 2014:** ANECA Working Group gather evidence and prepare first draft

**September 26<sup>th</sup> 2014:** Self Certification Group Meeting 1. To discuss the nature of the work and the draft Report and submit recommendations for its further development

**November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014:** Self Certification Group Meeting 2. To discuss the revised Report and determine whether to Recommend the Self Certification of MECES to the FQ-EHEA

**Late November / early December 2014:** Self Certification Group Meeting 3. To discuss and determine strategy to assist the further implementation of MECES and in particular its application by stakeholders of Spanish higher education.

### **Annex 3: Members of the Committee for the formulation of MECES**

Technical Working Group appointed by the Secretary of State for Universities and Research to assist the committee for the definition of the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (MECES) whose creation was established under Royal Decree 900/2007 of 6 July. 2006 - 2007

- Javier Vidal García, Director-General for Universities, Spanish Ministry of Education
- José Ginés Mora, Universidad de Valencia and coordinator of the working group for MECES.
- Francisco Javier García-Velasco García, Deputy Director-General for Legal Procedures and University Coordination, Spanish Ministry of Education
- Soledad Iglesias Jiménez, Deputy Director-General for Vocational Training, Spanish Ministry of Education
- José Guillermo Bernabéu Pastor, Universidad de Alicante
- Francisco Javier Fernández Vallina, Universidad Complutense de Madrid
- Rafael Llavori de Micheo, Spanish National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA)

Working Group appointed by the Secretary of State for Universities and Research to assist the committee for the definition of the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (MECES). 2009 - 2010

- Felipe Pétriz Calvo, Director-General for Higher Education Institutions Policy, Spanish Ministry of Education
- José Ginés Mora, Universidad de Valencia and coordinator of the working group for MECES.
- Javier García-Velasco García, Deputy Director-General for Academic Coordination and Legal Procedures, Secretary General for Universities of the Spanish Ministry of Education and Secretary of the Committee for the definition of MECES
- María Soledad González Iglesias, Deputy Director-General for Recognition of Qualifications, Spanish Ministry of Education
- Araceli Sanchis de Miguel, Deputy Director-General for Analysis, Studies and teaching, Spanish Ministry of Education
- Soledad Iglesias Jiménez, Deputy Director-General for Vocational Guidance and Vocational Training, Spanish Ministry of Education



- Eduardo Coba Arango, Director of the Teaching Training Institute
- Laureano González Vega, Universidad de Cantabria
- Nick Harris, International expert
- José Guillermo Bernabéu Pastor, Universidad de Alicante
- Rafael Llavori de Micheo, Spanish National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA)

Annex 4a. Seminars held through 2009 in universities in Murcia, Valencia and Santander (18.06.09), at UIMP and with the Spanish Bologna Experts group in Jerez de la Frontera (2010)

Valencia, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009

Place: Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingeniería del Diseño (ETSID), Universidad Politécnica de Valencia

**PROGRAMME**

9:00 - 9:30	Acto de Inauguración	<i>DGU, ANECA, UPV y Consejería de Educación</i>
9:30 - 10:15	Los Marcos de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior: una perspectiva europea 	<i>Nick Harris (ANECA)</i>
10:15 - 10:30	Presentación del Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior 	<i>Felipe Pétriz (Director General de Política Universitaria del Ministerio de Educación)</i>
10:30 - 11:15	El Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior: Propósito, Objetivos y Estructura 	<i>Experto del Grupo de trabajo MECES</i>
11:15 - 11:45	Café	<i>Representante de la CRUE</i>
11:45 - 12:45	Mesa redonda (Grupo A): Sobre la utilidad del MECES	<i>Representante de la Secretaría de Estado de Educación y Formación Profesional</i> <i>Representante de Agencias de Calidad</i>
11:45 - 13:45	Mesa redonda: Sobre la utilidad del MECES	<i>Javier Bara (Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya)</i> <i>Pedro Boj (Universidad de Alicante y UGT)</i> <i>Eduardo Coba (Secretaría de Estado de Educación y Formación Profesional)</i> <i>Juan Juliá (Rector de la UPV y CRUE)</i> <i>Representante estudiantil (UPV)</i>

13:45 -  
15:30

Comida

15:30 -  
17:00

Taller

*Los asistentes se distribuirán en grupos de trabajo temáticos (ciencias experimentales, ingenierías, humanidades, ciencias sociales, etc.) donde elaborarán un conjunto de propuestas sobre como utilizar el MECES en el diseño, la implantación y la acreditación posterior de un plan de estudios (de grado, master y doctorado). Como consecuencia del ejercicio anterior, tendrán la oportunidad de seleccionar la pregunta o cuestión que entiendan como más relevante para ser presentada en la parte final del encuentro.*

17:00 -  
18:00

Conclusiones 

*Presentación de preguntas y sugerencias a la DGU respecto del MECES (una pregunta o sugerencia por cada grupo de trabajo) más las cuestiones que aporten los participantes en las mesas redondas.*



Murcia, 1st June 2009

Place: Universidad de Murcia

PROGRAMME

Hora	Título	Ponente
9:00 - 9:30	Acto de Inauguración	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Universidad de Murcia</li><li>• Consejería de Educación</li><li>• DGPU</li><li>• ANECA</li></ul>
9:30 - 10:15	Conferencia: Los Marcos de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior: una perspectiva europea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nick Harris (ANECA)</li><li>• Presentador: José -Ginés Mora (Institute of Education (University of London) y Grupo de Trabajo MECES)</li></ul>
10:15 - 11:00	Conferencia: El Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior: Propósito, Objetivos y Estructura	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Laureano González Vega (Univ. de Cantabria y Grupo de Trabajo MECES)</li><li>• Presentador: José -Ginés Mora (Institute of Education (University of London) y Grupo de Trabajo MECES)</li></ul>
11:00 - 11:30	Café	
11:30 - 12:30	Mesa redonda: Sobre la utilidad del MECES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Representante de la CRUE</li><li>• Eduardo Coba (Sec. de Estado de Educación y Formación Profesional y CIDE)</li><li>• Julio Abalde (Director, Axencia para a Calidade do Sistema Universitario de Galicia)</li><li>• Moderador: Javier Vallina (Universidad Complutense de Madrid y Grupo de Trabajo MECES)</li></ul>
12:30 - 13:30	Mesa redonda: Sobre la utilidad del MECES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Antonio Lorente (Presidente, Consejo de Estudiantes, Univ. de Murcia)</li><li>• Pedro Boj (UGT)</li><li>• Elena Ausejo (CCOO)</li><li>• Juan Menéndez-Valdés (CEOE)</li><li>• Moderador: Guillermo Bernabeu (Universidad de Alicante y Grupo de Trabajo MECES)</li></ul>
13:30 - 15:00	Comida	

15:30 -  
17:00

Taller

*Los asistentes se distribuirán en grupos de trabajo donde elaborarán un conjunto de propuestas sobre como utilizar el MECES en el diseño, la implantación y la acreditación posterior de un plan de estudios (de grado, master y doctorado). Como consecuencia del ejercicio anterior, tendrán la oportunidad de seleccionar la pregunta o cuestión que entiendan como más relevante para ser presentada en la parte final del encuentro.*

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17:00 -  
18:00

Conclusiones

*Presentación de preguntas y sugerencias a la DGPU respecto del MECES (una pregunta o sugerencia por cada grupo de trabajo) más las cuestiones que aporten los participantes en las mesas redondas.*

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Santander, 18 de Junio

Place: Universidad de Cantabria

PROGRAMME

Santander		
9:30 - 10:00	Acto de Inauguración	<i>Universidad de Cantabria, Consejería de Educación, Dirección General de Política Universitaria (Ministerio de Educación) y ANECA</i>
10:00 - 10:45	Conferencia: Los Marcos de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior: una perspectiva europea	<i>Nick Harris (ANECA)</i>
10:45 - 11:30	Conferencia: El Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior: Propósito, Objetivos y Estructura	<i>Laureano González Vega (Universidad de Cantabria y Grupo de Trabajo MECES)</i>
11:30 - 11:45	Presentación del Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior	<i>Felipe Pétriz (Director General de Política Universitaria)</i>
11:45 - 12:15	Café	
12:15 - 13:15	Mesa redonda: Sobre la utilidad del MECES	<i>Beatriz Arizaga (Vicerrectora de Calidad e Innovación Ed., UC)</i> <i>Eduardo Coba (Secretaría de Estado de Educación y FP)</i> <i>Gemma Rauret (Directora de ANECA)</i>
13:15 - 14:15	Mesa redonda: Sobre la utilidad del MECES	<i>Martín Ruiz Oceja (Presidente del Consejo de Estudiantes UC)</i> <i>Catalina Guerrero Romera (UGT y Universidad de Murcia)</i> <i>Juan Menéndez-Valdés (CEOE)</i> <i>Representante de CCOO</i>
14:15 - 15:30	Comida	
15:30 - 16:45	Taller	<i>Los asistentes se distribuirán en grupos de trabajo donde elaborarán un conjunto de propuestas sobre como utilizar el MECES en el diseño, la implantación y la acreditación posterior de un plan de</i>

*estudios (de grado, master y doctorado). Como consecuencia del ejercicio anterior, tendrán la oportunidad de seleccionar la pregunta o cuestión que entiendan como más relevante para ser presentada en la parte final del encuentro.*

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16:45 -  
17:30

Conclusiones

*Presentación de preguntas y sugerencias a la DGPU respecto del MECES (una pregunta o sugerencia por cada grupo de trabajo) más las cuestiones que aporten los participantes en las mesas redondas.*

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Santander, 6<sup>TH</sup> - 7<sup>TH</sup> July 2009

Place: Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo

PROGRAMME



## **Encuentro**

*"La internacionalización de las universidades:  
la aportación de la evaluación en España".*

Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo (UIMP)  
Santander,

6, 7 y 8 de julio de 2009

Directora:

*Gemma Rauret*

Secretario:

*Rafael Llavori*

Organiza:

*Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación (ANECA)*



***La internacionalización de las universidades:  
la aportación de la evaluación en España***

**Lunes 6 de julio**

10:00 h. **Inauguración del Curso:** Rector de la *UIMP*, Directora de *ANECA*

10:30 h. Conferencia Inaugural:

**La internacionalización de las prácticas de evaluación en Europa en el horizonte de 2010.**

**Gemma Rauret**, Directora de *ANECA*.

11:15 h. Debate

11:45 h. **Las agencias de calidad y la internacionalización de la evaluación de la calidad de la Educación Superior.**

**Karl Dittrich**, Director de la Agencia de Acreditación de los Países Bajos, *NVAO*.

**Fiona Crozier**, Subdirectora para el Desarrollo y la Mejora de la Agencia de Garantía de Calidad del Reino Unido, *QAA*.

Modera: **Javier Bará**, Director de la Agencia *AQU Catalunya*.

Debate

13:30 h. Comida

15.30 h. Mesa Redonda

**La visión de los expertos en Evaluación.**

**Patricia Odber**, (U. Birmingham) Evaluador internacional del Programa VERIFICA.

**José Manuel Bayod**, (U. Cantabria), Evaluador del Programa VERIFICA con experiencia internacional.

**Esther Huertas**, (*AQU*) estudiante experta en evaluaciones internacionales.

Modera: **Ana Cano** (U. Oviedo), Presidenta de la Comisión de Artes y Humanidades del Programa VERIFICA.

Debate.

17:30 h. Cierre.



## Martes 7 de julio

09:30 h. **Escenarios de la educación superior: Europa 2010, el día después.**

**Nick Harris**, Experto europeo en el Proceso de Bolonia.

**Tibor Szántó**, Vice-Presidente de la Asociación de Agencias de Garantía de Calidad, *ENQA*.

**Robert Santa**, Comité de Asuntos Académicos de la Asociación Europea de Estudiantes, *ESU*.

Modera: **Laureano González**, Universidad de Cantabria.

10:50 h. Debate.

11:30 h. Mesa Redonda:

### **El papel de las instituciones de educación superior: de la decisión estratégica a las redes.**

Representante de la *Secretaría General Iberoamericana, SEGIB*.

**Jorge Mora**, Director de FLACSO, sede académica de Costa Rica.

**Guido Langouche**, Presidente del *Grupo Coimbra de Universidades*.

Modera: **Federico Gutiérrez-Solana**, Rector de la *Universidad de Cantabria* y Presidente de la *CRUE*.

13:00 h. Debate

13:30 h. Comida

15:30 h. Mesa redonda:

### **Escenarios de la evaluación: la dimensión global.**

**Rolf Heusser**, Miembro directivo de la Red Mundial de Agencias de Garantía de Calidad, *INQAAHE* y Presidente del Consorcio Europeo de Acreditación, *ECA*.

**Fernando Chaparro**, Miembro del Comité Ejecutivo de la Red Iberoamericana para la Acreditación de la Calidad, *RIACES*.

**Fabrice Hénard**, Proyecto *AHELO-OCDE*.

Modera: **Rafael Llavori**, Jefe de Relaciones Institucionales de *ANECA*.

17:00 h. Debate.

17:30 h. Cierre.



### Miércoles 8 de julio

09:30 h. Mesa Redonda

**La internacionalización como eje vertebrador de las políticas de Educación Superior.**

**Mónica Margarit**, Directora de la Fundación para la Proyección Internacional de las Universidades, *Ministerio de Educación*.

**Alejandro Tiana**, Director de Altos Estudios Universitarios de la *OEI*.

**Alfredo Moreno**, Director Académico de la *Fundación Carolina*.

Modera: **Ramón Torrent (UB)**, Coordinador del Observatorio de las Relaciones UE - América Latina, *OBREAL*.

11:00 h. Debate.

11:30 h. Conferencia de Clausura

**La internacionalización de la educación superior en España a través del Proceso de Bolonia: estado de la cuestión.**

**Carmen Fenoll**, Secretaria del Consejo de Coordinación Universitaria del *Ministerio de Educación*.

12:15 h. **Conclusiones y Clausura.**

Rector de la UIMP, Secretaria del Consejo de Coordinación Universitaria y Directora de ANECA.

13:30 h. **Cierre del Curso.**



Annex 4b. Programme of ANECA Foro XII: held to support stakeholder input to the formulation of MECES (Madrid, May 2009)



## XII FORO ANECA

### Los referentes de calidad en la educación superior. ¿Es necesario un acuerdo?

Hotel Holiday Inn, Madrid  
6 de mayo de 2009

#### Agenda

09:15 h. – 10:00 h.	Recepción de participantes y entrega de documentación
10:00 h. – 10:30 h.	Bienvenida a los participantes <b>Gemma Rauret Dalmau</b> , <i>directora de ANECA</i>
10:30 h. – 11:15 h.	<b>Mesa 1: El marco europeo de cualificaciones de la educación superior y los marcos de cualificaciones nacionales</b>  Ponentes: <b>Nicholas Harris</b> , <i>U.K. Bologna expert</i>  <b>Marlies Leegwater</b> , <i>head Bologna Secretariat, senior policy advisor Ministry of Education, Culture and Science Directorate for Higher Education</i>  Moderador: <b>Guillermo Bernabéu Pastor</b> , <i>catedrático de Física de la Universidad de Alicante</i>
11:15 h. – 12:00 h.	Coloquio
12:00 h. – 12:30 h.	Pausa-Café
12:30 h. – 14:00 h.	<b>Mesa 2. Utilidad e impacto de los referentes de calidad</b>  Ponentes: <b>Fernando M. Galán Palomares</b> , <i>representante de estudiantes de Medicina de la Universidad de Cantabria</i>  <b>Jesús M. Pintor Borobia</b> , <i>vicerrector de la Universidad Pública de Navarra</i>  Moderador: <b>Laureano González Vega</b> , <i>catedrático del Departamento de Matemáticas, Estadística y Computación de la Universidad de Cantabria</i>
14:00 h. – 14:30 h.	Coloquio
14:30 h. – 16:00 h.	Comida buffet



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16:00 h. -16:45 h. **Mesa 3. Bases, naturaleza y alcance de los referentes de calidad.**

Ponentes:

**Julia González**, *viceirectora de Relaciones Internacionales de la Universidad de Deusto*

**Padraig Walsh**, *chief executive officer, Irish Universities Quality Board*

Moderador:

**Javier García Velasco**, *subdirector general de Régimen Jurídico y Coordinación Universitaria, Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación*

16:45 h. – 17:30 h. Coloquio

17:30 h. – 18:00 h. Conclusiones y clausura de la jornada

Annex 5. Typical programme for Discussion Meetings held to support academic input to the formulation of MECES (University of Murcia, June 2009)



**PRESENTACIÓN**

La Conferencia de Ministros europeos de Educación Superior celebrada en Bergen en 2005 tomó la decisión de adoptar un marco comprensivo de cualificaciones para el EEES, que está construido sobre los denominados "descriptores de Dublín". Este marco contempla la existencia de tres ciclos, cada uno de ellos descrito en términos de descriptores genéricos basados en resultados del aprendizaje y destrezas o competencias e incluye una cuantificación orientativa de los créditos que deben asignarse a los dos primeros ciclos.

Los Ministros se comprometieron a elaborar, en cada uno de sus países, el correspondiente marco nacional de cualificaciones para su sistema de educación superior y que éste fuera compatible y comparable con el marco europeo mencionado. Ahora nuestro país tiene la obligación de diseñar y poner en marcha el marco nacional correspondiente a la educación superior. La puesta en práctica de un marco de estas características permitiría un fácil reingreso en nuestro sistema de educación superior de aquellos profesionales que precisen de una formación adicional por las nuevas demandas que el mercado laboral impone, para mejorar sus expectativas de promoción o para obtener un título de Grado o Máster por parte de aquellos egresados que en su momento no alcanzaron la formación necesaria.

No cabe duda que la introducción de un instrumento como este en nuestro país implica no pocos cambios estructurales y de gestión. La existencia de niveles en un marco de cualificaciones sin un título oficial asociado se aleja claramente de la actual situación en nuestro país y la cuestión de quién asigna el nivel a un estudiante en función de la formación recibida (o de su práctica profesional) no es baladí. Esta es la herramienta que permitiría romper con los compartimentos estancos o los callejones sin salida que caracterizan a los sistemas de educación superior de nuestro entorno europeo.

El REAL DECRETO 1393/2007 por el que se establece la ordenación de las enseñanzas universitarias oficiales, indica que los nuevos planes de estudio tendrán que contemplar en su diseño tanto las competencias que indica el Marco Europeo de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior como las competencias que marque el correspondiente marco español, MECES, que se encuentra en la actualidad en proceso de elaboración. Además ANECA tendrá que velar por esta cuestión tanto en los procesos de verificación como en los procesos de acreditación posteriores.

**OBJETIVO**

El objetivo de estos encuentros, los tres con idéntica estructura y contenidos, es introducir a la comunidad educativa (profesores, estudiantes, personal de administración y servicios), a los gestores académicos (Universidades, FP, Comunidades Autónomas, etc.) y a los agentes sociales (sindicatos, empleadores, etc.) los resultados de los trabajos que durante este año se están realizando respecto del diseño de Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior - MECES.

**PROGRAMA**

**9:00 - 9:30 h.** Inauguración  
Universidad de Murcia, Ministerio, ANECA y Consejería Universidad, Empresa e Investigación de la CARM.

**9:30 - 10:15 h.** Los Marcos de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior: *Una perspectiva europea.*  
Ponente: Nick Harris (ANECA).

**10:15 - 10:30 h.** Presentación del Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior Ministerio de Educación.

**10:30 - 11:15 h.** El Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior: *Propósitos, objetivos y Estructura.*  
Experto del Grupo de Trabajo MECES.

**11:15 - 11:45 h.** Pausa - café

**11:45 - 12:45 h.** Mesa Redonda (Grupo A): *Sobre la utilidad del MECES*  
Representante de la CRUE.  
Representante del Ministerio de Educación.  
Representante de Agencias de Calidad.

**11:45 - 12:45 h.** Mesa Redonda (Grupo B): *Sobre la utilidad del MECES*  
Representante estudiantil.  
Representante de Comisiones Obreras y UGT.  
Representante de CEDE.

**12:45 - 13:45 h.** Mesa Redonda (Grupo B): *Sobre la utilidad del MECES*  
Representante de la CRUE.  
Representante del Ministerio de Educación.  
Representante de Agencias de Calidad.

**12:45 - 13:45 h.** Mesa Redonda (Grupo A): *Sobre la utilidad del MECES*  
Representante estudiantil.  
Representante de Comisiones Obreras y UGT.  
Representante de CEDE.

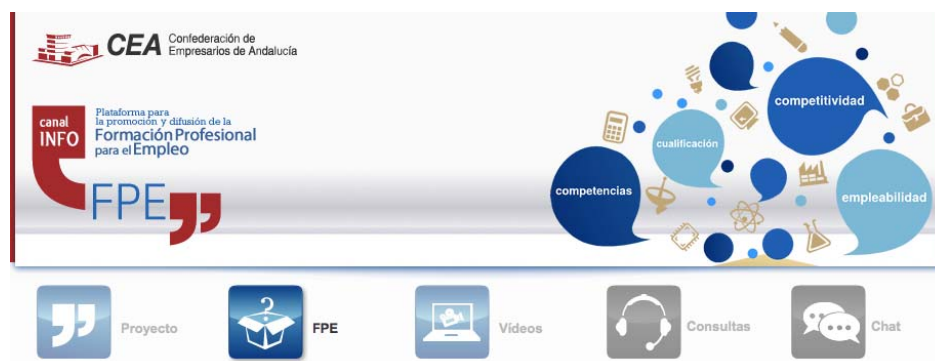
**13:45 - 15:30 h.** Comida

**15:30 - 17:00 h.** Taller  
Los asistentes se distribuirán en grupos de trabajo temáticos (CC. Experimentales, Ingenierías, Humanidades, CC. Sociales, CC. de la Salud) donde elaborarán un conjunto de propuestas sobre cómo utilizar el MECES en el diseño, la implantación y la acreditación posterior de un plan de estudios (de Grado, Máster y Doctorado). Como consecuencia del ejercicio anterior tendrán la oportunidad de seleccionar la pregunta o cuestión que entiendan como más relevante para ser presentada en la parte final del encuentro.

**17:00 - 18:00 h.** Conclusiones  
Presentación de preguntas y sugerencias al Ministerio de Educación respecto del MECES (una pregunta o sugerencia por cada grupo de trabajo) más las cuestiones que aporten los participantes en la mesa redonda.

## Annex 6: An example of stakeholder interest in Spanish qualifications frameworks

Confederación de Empresarios de Andalucía (CEA) - Formación Profesional para el Empleo (FPE)

(see: <http://infofpe.cea.es/fpe.php?section=c62> )

¿Qué es la fpe? → El marco europeo → 2. El marco europeo y el marco nacional de cualificaciones

### El marco europeo

## 2. El marco europeo y el marco nacional de cualificaciones

La correlación del modelo español con el EQF se realiza desde el Marco Español de Cualificaciones (MECU) o National Qualification Framework (NQF), que abarca todos los niveles, desde el nivel 1 de educación básica hasta el 8 de doctorado universitario.

El MECU por tanto es el producto de la suma del Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales (CNCP) y el Marco Español de Cualificaciones para la Educación Superior (MECES).

Estas especificaciones se superponen en el nivel 3 del CNCP, que se correspondería con el nivel 1 del MECES y con el nivel 5 del EQF, estableciendo como educación superior la correspondiente al título de Técnico Superior de Formación Profesional.

Para la correlación efectiva entre el marco nacional y el marco europeo de cualificaciones hay que establecer las referencias en los diferentes dominios de responsabilidad, coordinación, jurídicos, administrativos, metodológicos y de garantía de calidad.

Por parte del CNCP, el organismo de referencia es el Instituto Nacional de las Cualificaciones (INCUAL) del Ministerio de Educación, y por parte del MECES lo es La Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación (ANECA). Existe la necesidad de integrar las responsabilidades de ambas en un centro nacional coordinado con el marco europeo para facilitar y sustentar la organización con las entidades europeas.

### 2.1. Vinculación entre niveles del marco nacional y del europeo

Existe un vínculo claro entre los niveles de cualificación en el marco nacional y los descriptores de los niveles del marco europeo. Ambos son compatibles, aunque se deben concretar en la descripción de cada una de las cualificaciones.

El Catálogo Nacional de Cualificaciones Profesionales especifica las cualificaciones de los niveles 1, 2 y 3 (niveles 1, 2, 3, 4 y 5 del EQF), que se entienden como del ámbito de la formación profesional inicial (media y superior), así como de la Formación Profesional para el Empleo en el ámbito del aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida.

EQF	CNCP	Acreditación
Nivel 1	Nivel 1	Operario
Nivel 2		
Nivel 3	Nivel 2	Técnico Medio
Nivel 4		
Nivel 5	Nivel 3	Técnico Superior
Nivel 6	Nivel 4	Grado
Nivel 7	Nivel 5	Máster
Nivel 8	Sin definir	Doctor

Relación entre el EQF y el CNCP