Missions

The remit of the High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (Hcéres) is defined by the Law of 22 July 2013. Its core values are independence, transparency and fairness. Its method is based on a commitment to the evaluated institutions, a commitment to accompany them and to be a partner in their progress.

Hcéres is committed to its public service mission and designs its evaluations and analyses as a tool to develop and improve the institutions and entities with which it works. Driven by a determination to guide, support and advise, it strives to ensure recognition of the high standards of excellence in higher education programmes and research. In this way, it contributes to their reputation in France and abroad. The High Council structures its work around 4 broad areas of action.

Evaluating to guide institutions

Hcéres guides institutions or their groupings in their quality assurance approach. It manages and provides a tried and tested methodology combining self-evaluation with the external view of a panel of experts made up of peers. It is chosen by the institutions to fulfil their obligations and provides them with its expertise in evaluations of:

- study programmes (bachelor’s degrees, vocational bachelor’s degrees, bachelor’s-degree-level qualifications, master’s degrees, master’s-degree-level qualifications), and doctoral schools and doctoral colleges (or equivalent structures);
- research units;
- higher education institutions: universities, engineering schools, schools of art, schools of architecture, private public-interest higher education establishments (EESPIG);
- research bodies;
- their territorial clusters.

Hcéres acts as a partner of the institutions, helping them to progress and achieve their strategic objectives, and its evaluation provides them with a key tool for defining their scientific and educational policy and their continuous improvement processes.

The law also allows institutions to choose their evaluator and therefore to turn to a body other than Hcéres. In this case, the role of the High Council is to verify the quality of these evaluations by validating the procedures of the evaluator.

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Developing insightful quantitative analyses

The Hcéres Science and Technology Observatory (OST) works in close liaison with the institutions and holds unrivalled data on higher education, research and innovation. It produces analyses and indicators by which it contributes:

- to the strategic thinking of the different stakeholders (ministries, European Commission, regional councils, universities, research bodies, companies),
- to the evaluations organised by Hcéres,
- to the design and evaluation of public policies.

Its work is of three kinds:

- Regular production of indicators on scientific research and patents
- More specific analyses, including in support of Hcéres evaluations
- Research projects to improve its methods and systems.

On the strength of its competencies and expertise, the Observatory has established itself as a reference at the international level (EU, OECD)

- More about the analyses and indicators produced by Hcéres

Sharing its expertise internationally

As the national quality assurance agency, Hcéres is recognised in Europe and proposes a range of services in other countries in compliance with the European standards.

International evaluations

Working within the framework of the Bologna Process, Hcéres is helping to build the European Higher Education Area and bases its action on international and European best practices in quality assurance. It is a member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and is listed in the European register of such agencies (EQAR).

Building on this recognition, Hcéres offers its expertise on request for the conduct of evaluations or accreditations in other countries, in compliance with the respective national legislations. The evaluation is based on dedicated standards and criteria. The accreditation label attests to the quality of the evaluated entity.

A recognised international player

In Europe and internationally, Hcéres plays an active role in the quality assurance agency networks and submits bids in calls for tender in which it can provide its expertise as an evaluator. As a committed stakeholder, it is also developing exchanges of experience and collaboration with the other agencies and actors in higher education in other countries.

- More about the international activity of Hcéres

Driving scientific integrity at national level

The French Office for Research Integrity (OFIS) is part of Hcéres and is responsible for ensuring that research activities in France are beyond reproach. Its role is to steer a new national system aiming to:

- boost trust between research communities and also between these communities and society as a whole,
- harmonise the professional practices of researchers,
- promote a shared culture of scientific integrity and the values that go with it.

It therefore provides its expertise in defining standards, manages a national observatory and contributes to defining a national scientific integrity policy. It also supports and promotes the work of the network of “Scientific Integrity” Officers in the higher education and research institutions.

- More about scientific integrity
To consult:

- Loi ESR du 22 juillet 2013 relative à l’enseignement supérieur et à la recherche
- Hcéres brochure
- Hcéres organisation chart
- Evaluation charter
- Rapport d’activité 2020 du Hcéres