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Evaluations in France □ Evaluation by Hcéres
□ **Principles and methods of evaluation**

Principles and methods of evaluation

Hcéres evaluations support continuous improvement and foster strategic dialogue, both internally and with supervisory authorities, by providing a shared framework for analysis and understanding.

An approach in line with the European framework

The principle of regular, transparent and independent evaluation of higher education institutions is at the heart of [Bologna Process](#) , launched in 1999 to harmonise and strengthen higher education in Europe.

The nature and purpose of this evaluation are defined and specified by the [European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area](#) , which constitute a reference framework shared by European quality assurance agencies.

This shared reference framework also underpins Hcéres' international activities, enabling it to conduct evaluations and provide support and advice abroad, in accordance with national contexts.

› [Find out more](#) 

Hcéres' evaluation methods: peer review

In line with European standards, the evaluations conducted by Hcéres are based on two complementary mechanisms:

- › Self-evaluation, whereby the actors being evaluated analyse their functioning, results and prospects;
- › Peer review, based on an examination of the self-evaluation, analysis of available data and in-depth discussions during site visits.

The evaluation process is based on an ongoing relationship with institutions and research units:

- › A preparatory phase to clarify expectations and the scope of the evaluation;
- › A phase involving site visits and interviews with stakeholders;
- › A contradictory phase allowing institutions and research units to submit comments;
- › A phase to follow up on recommendations.

Why evaluate?

The State has entrusted an independent agency with the task of evaluating institutions, research units and training programmes, or, where applicable, ensuring the quality of evaluations conducted by other bodies.

Hcéres evaluations benefit all stakeholders and audiences involved in higher education and research. In particular, they contribute to:

- To advise management teams on the steering and implementation of their strategy;
- To provide teaching and research teams with tools to analyse their practices and improve the quality of the service they provide;
- To provide public authorities with independent analyses that can inform discussion and debate on higher education and research policies;
- To provide the student community with useful information to help them make career choices;
- Respond to the information needs of businesses and socio-economic partners;
- Inform civil society in a transparent manner about the activities and results of higher education and research.

Validation of procedures

To ensure the quality of assessments carried out by other bodies, Hcéres validates the procedures they implement.

To use another assessment body, institutions must inform Hcéres of their choice and undertake to comply with [the principles of validation by Hcéres of the assessment procedures implemented by other bodies](#).

Further reading

Consult the Hcéres Evaluation Charter and its evaluation guides.

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