

International Accreditation Commission - Composition and Working Practices

Accreditation refers to official recognition by HCERES, after evaluation, that a higher education institution or a study programme is competent to carry out its missions. Just like evaluation, accreditation is based on a set of standards that define specific quality system and technical competency requirements. HCERES issues a report based on the results of the prior evaluation and the extent to which the actual conditions observed differ from the standard requirements, and decides whether or not to accredit the institution or study programme.

HCERES has an accreditation commission that is responsible for conducting its accreditation activities for foreign institutions and programmes. Its work begins as soon as the evaluation phase has been completed and the evaluation report is considered to be in its final version. Evaluation and accreditation are two separate phases and the accreditation commission must be independent of the panel of experts that conducted the evaluation. Accreditation is taken to mean the issuance of an "HCERES accreditation label", which certifies the quality of a study programme or institution. It does not infer equivalence with a French qualification. Accreditation criteria are set by HCERES in order facilitate the work of the accreditation commission. These criteria apply to all accreditation applications and are sent to the institution for information.

Section 1 - Award decisions

In accreditation phase, the commission studies the final evaluation report and accreditation proposal in the light of the accreditation criteria, before making one of the following decisions:

- Five-year accreditation.
- Five-year accreditation with mandatory follow-up after 2 years.
- Refusal to grant accreditation.

Section 2 - Composition and appointment

The accreditation commission is a standing committee made up of representatives from HCERES, the HCERES Board, and qualified figures.

2.1. HCERES representatives

- The commission is chaired by the President of HCERES;
- the Head of the Europe and International department is the permanent commission rapporteur;
- depending on the nature of the entity to be evaluated, the Head of the Evaluation of Programmes Department or the Head of the Evaluation of Institutions Department.

2.2. HCERES Board representatives

At least three representatives of the HCERES Board, including one student and one member representing a foreign quality assurance agency sit on the accreditation commission.

2.3. Qualified figures

The final two members are selected as representatives of the French and international higher education system:

- one University Vice President for International Relations;
- one representative of a higher education institution.

The members of the accreditation commission are appointed by the President of HCERES for a four-year renewable term.

Section 3 - Working practices

The accreditation commission meets three times a year. Its work is governed by the same principles of professionalism, independence and ethical standards as all other HCERES work. In the event of a conflict of interest between a member of the commission and the evaluated entity, the person in question is replaced.

Accreditation decisions are published on the HCERES website.