

# HCERES

High Council for the Evaluation of Research  
and Higher Education

## Structure and funding

The High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (HCERES), created by the Law No. 2013-660 of July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013 relative to higher education and research, has replaced the AERES as from November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Its organisation and operating are defined by the decree No.2014-1365 of November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

After some years of experience the High Council's creation is an outcome of the thoughts being given to the evaluation of research and higher education in France.

### In this regard, HCERES:

- has an independent administrative authority status, preserving evaluations' impartiality of the influence from evaluated parties or any other stakeholders;
- makes all of its evaluation reports accessible to the public and also publishes its evaluation methods and procedures in complete transparency;
- acts in accordance with the international standards and European Standards and Guidelines (ESGs) adopted in Bergen (Norway) in 2005.

## Organisation

The HCERES is endeavouring to forge close working ties between:

- The High Council Board, on which the Council's President sits, is appointed by decree for four years (renewable once); this is made up of 30 French, European or international members. The Board defines measures that will guarantee the quality, transparency and publicity of evaluation procedures and ensures that the diversity of the institutions and programmes evaluated is considered on board, along with the diversity of disciplinary fields.
- The three evaluation structures (for institutions, research units, programmes and degrees) are each run by a head who is appointed by the HCERES Board, following a proposal by the HCERES President. He or she organises the structure's work, particularly as regards the expert committees and the evaluation process.
- It also includes an Observatory of Science and Technologies (OST) responsible for strategic research and analysis.
- The HCERES has 225 administrative and scientific support staff, including 100 scientific delegates, researchers and professors. Working full or part time, these delegates are tasked with the scientific organisation of evaluations. They work under the authority of the department head to organise the expert committees and evaluation follow-up.

- The HCERES also calls on some 4,500 French and foreign experts every year to help with conducting its evaluations. These are chosen at the proposal of:
  - the High Council’s Board members and department heads,
  - the rectors or directors of higher education and research organisations and institutions,
  - the presidents of staff evaluation bodies that are competent in higher education and research.

The evaluation is mainly carried out by peers (researchers or professors) and experts from other backgrounds (students, professionals from the corporate sector or governmental departments, etc.). The committees’ members vary depending on the specific nature of what is being evaluated.



### The law tasks the HCERES with the following missions:

- evaluating HEIs and their groupings, research bodies, scientific cooperation foundations and the French National Research Agency, or, where applicable, overseeing the quality of evaluations carried out by other bodies;
- evaluating research units on request from the overseeing institutions, in the absence of validation of evaluation procedures or in the absence of a decision by the overseeing institutions to use another evaluation body, or, where applicable, to have research unit evaluation procedures validated by other bodies;
- evaluating the programmes and degrees offered by higher education institutions or, where applicable, validating evaluation procedures developed by other bodies;
- ensuring that all missions defined by law and the specific status of higher education and research personnel are taken into account in their evaluations;
- ensuring that activities relating to the dissemination of scientific, technical and industrial culture are properly taken into account in the career progression of higher education and research personnel;
- conducting a *posteriori* evaluation of investment programmes and private bodies receiving public funding intended for research or higher education.



ENQA (the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) has confirmed the full membership of HCERES. HCERES is also included on the EQAR-Register (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher

Education), which enables it to shore up its credibility abroad. As part of its responsibilities, the High Council is called on by international organisations to evaluate foreign institutions, training programmes and research bodies; or to collaborate on international projects. These types of evaluation and cooperations are rising sharply.



### Evaluations (annual average):

50 HEIs or research bodies  
630 research units  
600 Bachelor’s, 300 Master’s Degrees, 70 Doctoral Schools

### Organisation and resources implemented:

A pool of some 10 000 regularly renewed and trained experts, around 4 500 of whom are activated every year (20% of them are foreign experts)  
225 administrative and scientific staff (including 100 scientific delegates, working part time)  
€18.5M Budget



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