

ACPUA: Aragon Agency for QA and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education

The mission of the Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance (from now on, QA) and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education (ACPUA) is to assure and strengthen the quality of the university system of the region of Aragon (Spain). Part of this aim is the development of useful links between the university, the social-productive areas, the institutional decision-making bodies and the society of Aragon as a whole, as well as promoting the exchange of experience, not only with other national and international university systems but also with other educational levels, with QA networks and agencies, etc.

In order to achieve this mission, ACPUA mainly develops technical quality assurance activities, such as evaluation, assessment, certification and accreditation tasks. This public service is complemented with strategic foresight and research tasks, as well as with other activities to foster a culture of quality in higher education within the region.

Activities

ACPUA was created by the Aragon Higher Education Act (art. 84) to be an instrument “to promote the improvement of the quality of the Aragon university system”. Following this legal mandate, ACPUA’s activity can be classified in three areas:

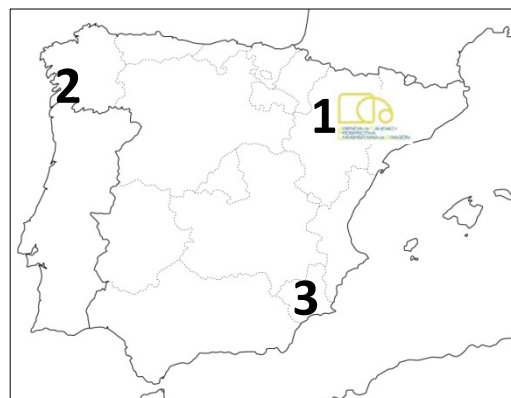
- Quality assurance: ACPUA’s main function is to develop quality assurance evaluations and reviews in three fields: study programmes, institutions and research. Progressively.
- Strategic foresight: ACPUA develops different types of studies to support higher education policy decisions upon request of the Aragon Government, as well as research studies on key topics upon the authority’s request.
- Outreach activities: ACPUA supplements the two abovementioned tasks with a complementary mission: promoting a culture of quality by developing seminars and cooperation with national and international entities or networks, etc. Among these, the international activity, started in 2013, is especially relevant.

For more information: acpua.aragon.es

Education of future officers of the Spanish Force: the role of ACPUA

In Spain, the military education of future officers takes place in the three main Military Academies of the three forces: 1. General Military Academy, 2. Naval Military School and 3. Air Force Academy. Within each of these academies operate the so call University Centers for Defense Studies, which supplement the strictly military education with Bachelor and Higher Education Degrees.

These University Centers for Defense Studies are presided over by the Ministry of Defense, through the Under Secretary of Defense, and are located within the grounds of the military academies responsible for officer training. The purpose of University Centers for Defense Studies is to offer an official university Degree in accordance with the affiliation agreement with a University.



As part of its study programme evaluation, ACPUA carries out the evaluation of Degrees of the University Center for Defense Studies of the Zaragoza General Military Academy. Specifically, the University Centre for Defense Studies in Zaragoza (affiliated with the public University of Zaragoza), offers a Degree in Industrial Management Engineering, which was favorable accredited by ACPUA in 2015 after a review process consisting of an external site visit and a final evaluation report.

This General Military Academy located in Zaragoza, Aragon, is the most important military education center in Spain and trains not only future Army officers, but also from other military corps such as military Lawyers and Security officers of the Civil Guard (Guardia Civil). This University Center also receives exchange students from the most prestigious Military Academies in the world, such as West Point or Saint-Cyr.

Moreover, the Zaragoza University Centre for Defense Studies has collaborated with ACPUA in several occasions to promote a dialog and discussion to foster Quality in the area of Defense Studies:



7-8 November 2012: “Quality in the Defense University Centers”, seminar organized jointly by ACPUA and the Zaragoza University Centre for Defense Studies.

19 May 2016: “University Centers for Defense Studies and QA Agencies”, technical meeting organized by ACPUA in collaboration with the

Zaragoza University Centre for Defense Studies at the Zaragoza General Military Academy facilities, with participation of QA Agencies and all Spanish Centers for Defense Studies and its corresponding QA evaluation agencies:

- General Military Academy
- Naval Military School
- Air Force Academy
- Madrid University Center for Defense Studies
- University Center of the Civil Guard
- ACPUA (Aragon Agency for QA and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education)
- ACSUG (Galicia Higher Education QA Agency)
- ANECA (national Spanish Higher Education QA Agency)
- FCM (Madrid Higher Education QA Agency)



General Luis Lanchares (Director of General Military Academy), Antonio Serrano (Director of ACPUA) and Antonio Elipe (Director of Zaragoza University Center for Defense Studies) opening the session.

