



Overview

Quality Assurance System
in Higher Education

France

Overview of the Quality Assurance System in Higher Education: France

Introduction

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The National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE) has developed the 'Information Package' as a means for publishing basic information on higher education and its quality assurance system in Japan as well as some other countries. In addition to these of Japan, U.S., U.K., Australia and Netherlands, we have presently produced an "*Overview of the Quality Assurance System in Higher Education: France*" in both English and Japanese.

NIAD-UE is taking a systematic approach to collect information of higher education and quality assurance systems in other countries, working closely with overseas partners to increase internationally the value of Japanese quality assurance in higher education through close cooperation with foreign quality assurance organizations as well as our core activities of university evaluation, awarding of degrees, and research.

To develop strategically international collaborative activities among quality assurance bodies, it is increasingly necessary to distribute the information on quality assurance in Japanese higher education, and to understand the historical, social and cultural background and institutional system of the partner countries. This will be the key factor in realizing effective cooperation with other countries. Thus, NIAD-UE is working actively for a mechanism to share information towards the enhancement of 'mutual understanding'.

French higher education and research is known for its high quality. Now there are a number of collaborations on education and research between French and Japanese higher education institutions. French high quality education and research is achieved through a national system and quality assurance such as review activities by the higher education institutions themselves and accreditation and evaluation by external evaluation agencies, considering the university autonomy. France also has broad experience in the field of international promotion, collaboration and its quality assurance. So far a variety of quality related activities such as quality assessment/evaluation, mutual recognition of qualifications and disseminating QA information have been undertaken at national, European and international levels to promote various forms of inter-institutional cooperation and institutional mobility on students, teachers and researchers. This 'Overview' document is based on public information concerning French higher education system, quality assurance system.

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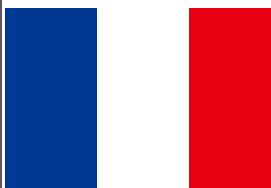
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If necessary, you may refer to “Glossary”, at the end of the text with regard to the abbreviations and some specific words in Higher Education appeared in the text.

I. Basic Information on the Country

Name of country	French Republic		
Capital	Paris		
Major language	French		
Population*	61,840,000 (2008)		
Nominal GDP*	2,121,700 million USD (2008)		
Nominal GDP per capita*	33,090 USD (2008)		
Public spending on education as a percentage of total public expenditure**	All levels of education 10.6% (OECD average 12.9%)	HE level 2.3% (OECD average 3.0%)	(2008)
Public spending on education as a percentage of GDP**	All levels of education 5.5% (OECD average 5.0%)	HE level 1.2% (OECD average 1.0%)	(2008)
Annual expenditure by educational institutions per student at higher education level**	14,079 USD (2008)		
Annual public expenditure per student at higher education level**	10,577 USD (2008)		
Progression rate into higher education***	86.2% of 625,713 candidates for French <i>Baccalauréat</i> passed the examination in 2009. The details are: General channel: 88.9% of 322,576 candidates passed the examination Technological channel: 79.8% of 164,894 passed Professional channel: 87.3% passed		
Organization of education system***	See II-3. French educational system (p.8).		
Cycle of academic year	The beginning and end of the academic year depends on the university and cycle (between 1 st September and mid-July). The French academic year is divided into two semesters. Generally, the first semester is from early September to late January and the second semester is from early February to late May. Examination periods are at the end of each semester.		

Source:

* The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): *OECD Country statistical profile: France 2010*

** OECD: *Education at a Glance 2011*

*** European Commission (EC): *Eurydice – Organisation of the education system in France, 2009/2010*

II. The Higher Education System

1. Introduction

1-1) Various higher education institutions

In France, there are various types of higher education institutions, that look complicated, but it can be classified into universities and *grandes écoles*, in which provided professional training. In addition, there are others including higher professional schools (*écoles supérieures professionnelles*), specialized schools (*école spécialisée*), university institutes for technology (IUTs: *Instituts universitaires de technologie*) and preparatory classes for *grandes écoles* (CPGE: *classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles*). (reference “4. Higher education system” and “6. Courses and qualifications”)

Totally, there are 3,500 higher education institutions, of which approximately 80 are universities, 220 are *grandes écoles*, and more than 3,000 are other specialized or professional schools.

1-2) Degrees and diplomas (*diplôme*)

French higher education system relies on deferent sorts of diplomas (*diplômes*) granted by the educational institutions. A diploma is a certificate used to certify the completion of a course of study under a certain educational program. A “national diploma (*diplôme nationale*)” is awarded in accordance with the procedures provided for under law and regulations, or any controlled by the authorization (*habilitation*) of the national government, while a “university diploma (*diplôme universitaire*)” is awarded under the authority of the university itself. A person who is awarded a specific national diploma related to academic degrees or titles will be automatically awarded the academic degrees or titles that are common to the same program. On the other hand, it is a diploma not an academic degree or title that universities and other higher education institutions are allowed to award.

Educational institutions that are eligible for the authorization to award national diplomas are those having educational and academic autonomy (Article 4 of the Decree concerning university academic degrees and academic titles, and national diplomas No.2002-481). Educational institutions allowed to grant diplomas are not only universities but also others including *grandes écoles* and public establishments (EP).

1-3) Integration of LMD system

French government signed the Bologna declaration in 1999 with some other European countries. The Bologna process was set up with a view to harmonizing national education systems in the member states and facilitating student and staff mobility, achieving structural uniformity, transparency and quality assurance as key objectives. One of the ways to establish Europe-wide standardization within the higher education system resides in the three-tier bachelor, master, and PhD academic award system. These three levels have constituted a rather revolutionary reform in French education and are abbreviated as LMD. In accordance with the European organization of higher education, long training programs offered in France are organized in three successive levels, with three types of national diploma:

- Bachelor (Licence), prepared in six semesters
Two possible options:
 - Bachelor: Consists of general training
 - Professional/vocational bachelor: Consists of professional/vocational training
- ※ The *Licence* which was the diploma certified the 1 year completion of the third year of the university before the LMD, changed, after the LMD, to the one which certifies the 3 years completion from the admission.
- Master (Master), prepared in four semesters after the bachelor's degree
Two possible options:
 - Research Master: More research oriented, which will allow continuation to a doctorate
 - Professional Master: More for professional oriented, which will be a preparation for a specific profession, and which allows immediate entry into the job market.
- Doctorate/Ph.D. (Doctorat), prepared in six semesters after the master's degree in a doctoral school. This third level will be dedicated to research work. The doctorate diploma is obtained after a thesis defense.

Sources:

French Embassy in Japan: <http://www.ambafrance-jp.org/>

Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR): <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.fr/>

CampusFrance: <http://www.campusfrance.org/fr/>

Jun Ohba, Tatsuya Natsume: *The university and degree in France, Gakui to Daigaku (Degrees and Universities)*, National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE) (2010)

2. History and legislation

2-1) Historical overview

The history of higher education in France originates in the 12th century, when the first universities were established. They were independent institutions with autonomous status that were awarded significant privileges.

In 1794 during the French Revolution (late 18th century), the Convention created the special *grandes écoles*: the Central School of Public Works (a year later renamed the *École polytechnique*), the arts and crafts conservatory, the school of oriental languages, the school of fine arts etc. In 1806, Napoleon I created a law setting the Imperial University (the first decree to organize it was set in 1808) in order to control education, and all institutions were combined under this banner. The Imperial University was really centralized. In the 27 cities where academies were installed there were faculties which were directly managed by the central government. There has been contestation against this centralization. However, in the reign of Napoleon III, the title of Grand Master of the University (*Grand maître de l'université*) to which had designated the Minister by Emperor was taken place by the emperor himself. When France was divided into 16 academic constituencies and the faculties took separate control, eventually each taking the name of University in 1896. It was the reform in 1896 in which the university

was given the right to deliver their own diplomas, even if the grades were still the responsibility of the state.

2-2) Edgar Faure law

The framework law on higher education of 1968, known as the Edgar Faure law, created a new type of institution, or a Public Establishment of Scientific and Cultural Character (EPCSC) (p.32). The former faculties by this law were replaced with education and research units (UFR) which were autonomous, involved the participation of all the players in the university community and multidisciplinary. However, higher education continued to be divided into two separate blocks: the *grandes écoles*, educating the nation's senior executives and the universities, which were effectively "UFR federations". Another important point of this law is to give more autonomy to the universities, after the contestations of May 1968 (election of president, presence of students in the councils).

2-3) Savary law

The current organization of higher education is ruled by the Code of Education, from the law of 1984, known as the Savary law. Its main idea is to have a common public service of education and higher education. While maintaining the major principles of the Faure law, it defines objectives to regroup *grandes écoles* within the same context as other higher education institutions and promote greater openness of these institutions to the outside world. It confirms the status of them as public institutions, now called Public Establishment of Scientific, Cultural and Professional Character (EPCSCP) (p.32). The principle of equal opportunity has long been emphasized in the French education system. In this frame, the education along life is also given to universities.

The most important elements in French higher education history between 1984 and 2007 were: first, the implementation of a contractual policy that links the State and the institutions and provides independent higher education institutions with a new and viable content (1989); second, U2000 (University for 2000) followed by the "U3M (University in the Third Millennium) Plan for 2000-2006, which outlined the major development guidelines for the higher education system within the framework of the State-region plan; and third, the implementation of the European qualification architecture since 2002, known as the LMD reform.

2-4) Recent developments: 2007 to the present –giving much more autonomy to universities–

An important milestone in the recent history of the French higher education system was the adoption of Law for Freedom and Responsibilities of Universities (LRU) in August 2007, according more autonomy to universities in terms of budget and human resources introduced by the Sarkozy administration. At the same time, a process of consolidation was undertaken by many universities, in the form of either the Centers of Research and Higher Education (PRES*), which enable universities, *grandes écoles* and research organizations to pool resources and activities, or a merger of several institutions. Moreover, to encourage the presence of foreign students and researchers in its higher education institutions, France has taken several steps over the past years, including the establishment of *CampusFrance* to promote

studies in France and the National Agency for Research (ANR) for research funding, increased budget for the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research, and increased autonomy of universities, in accordance with the French law relative to the freedom of responsibility of universities, which authorizes universities to create foundations for private fundraising.

According to the LRU law, full autonomy of universities must be achieved by 2012. This process was introduced step by step and on 1st January 2009 the minister in charge of higher education and research announced a list of 18 universities that became autonomous. A further 33 universities became autonomous on 1st January 2010 and 22 more on 1st January 2011, making a total of 73 which marks about 90% of French universities and leaves a further 10 to achieve autonomy on 1st January 2012.

There are two main reasons why university reform has been deemed necessary in France. First, there is no selection process for students wanting to enter at bachelor level in French universities: every candidate has to be accepted. Due to that 90,000 students exit the education system every year without a diploma and 50% of students registered in the first year at the university fail at the end of their first two semesters. These statistics suggest that often university courses have often not been attracting the attention of many of the students taking them. Also, one year after obtaining their diploma, 53% of university graduates with a degree (Bac +4) (p.20) are still looking for employment, which suggests employers are also not entirely satisfied by the content of university courses. The objectives of this reform are therefore to provide direction for the 50% of the young people to a higher education diploma who are currently failing, and in order for them to achieve a degree that will assure their employment future. Second, due to the cementation of research between universities and National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) university research is not visible at the international level. The French academic community now considers it unacceptable for the nation to be unable to place its universities among the best institutions in international rankings.

*Note about PRES

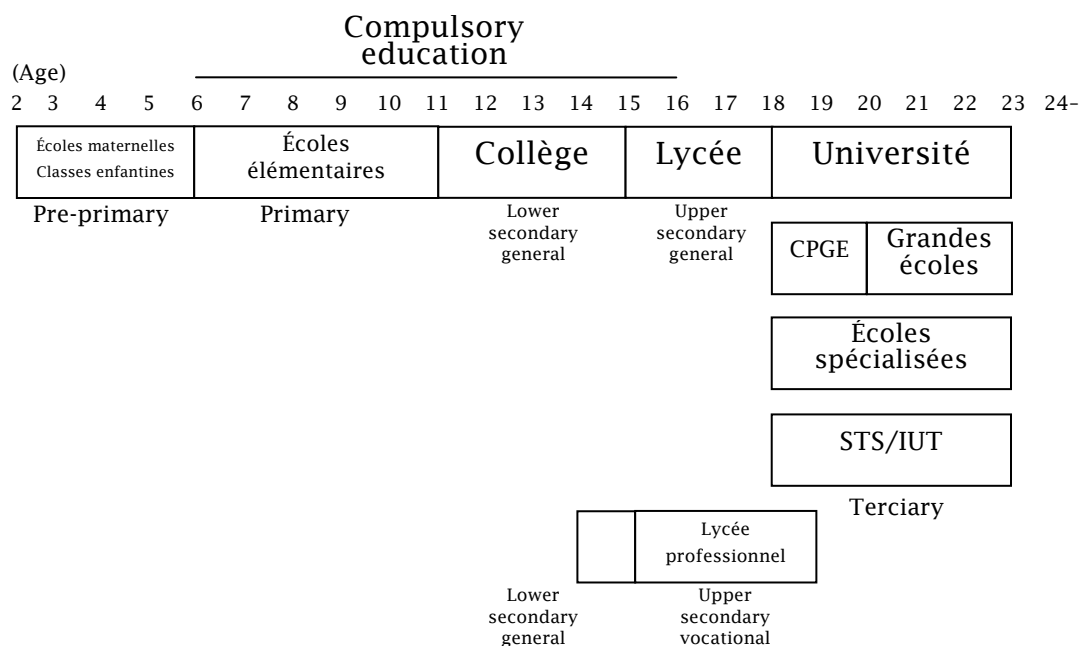
PRES (Centers of Research and Higher Education) have been introduced since 2006 to the French higher education system, with the objective of building up strong research departments that will be noticeable on an international level. The number of the PRES counts 21 in early 2011. This enables the facilitation of university and research institution links at a particular site. Conference of University Presidents (CPU) has strongly promoted the concept of the PRES to introduce a new set of dynamics within French institutions of Higher Education and Research. The major goals of PRES establishment include: providing coherence in the institutional politics of institutions of a particular site with regard to education, counseling and professional orientation; improving consistency and integration of organization, efficiency and governance; boosting the research capacities and the international impact of the institutions; and allowing joint development of new services and infrastructure.

Source:

Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR): <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/>
Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs: <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/>
Legifrance: <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/>
Conférence des présidents d'université (CPU): <http://www.cpu.fr/>
European Commission (EC): *Eurydice - Organisation of the education system in France, 2009/2010*
French Embassy in Japan: <http://www.ambafrance-jp.org/>

3. French educational system

Diagram of French Education System



Source: European Commission (EC): *Eurydice – Organisation of the education system in France, 2009/2010*

4. Higher education system

4-1) Types of institution

Higher education in France is characterized by a variety of institutions with different objectives, structures and conditions of admission. They can be divided into universities, *grandes écoles*, and other higher education institutions (including Public Establishments of Administrative Character (EPA), private institutes and schools of higher education).

4-1-1) Universities

Regulated by the 1984 Savary law, French universities are Public Establishments (EP, mainly Public Establishments of Scientific, Cultural and Professional Character: EPCSCP/EPSCP) (p.32). They have to accept all students with a French “*baccalauréat*” (p.12), which is the qualification of graduation from high school, with a little exception such as medicine, and could also accept foreign diploma which allows access to universities in the country of origin. French universities had a little more than 1.4 million students in 2009-2010. These include 14.8% non-French students. These establishments provide basic training courses, technological or vocational training programs. There are a total of 83 EPCSCPs, or universities.

Since 1984, they have been organized into training and research units (UFR). They also include internal institutes and schools such as University Institutes of Technology (IUT), created in 1966, and professional university institutes (IUP), created in 1994. The IUTs created under the conditions of

Article 33 of the Law of 1984 (Article L 713-9 of the Code of Education) have their own special prerogatives: the director has control of income and expenses and has authority over the entire staff.

The majority of universities are multi-disciplinary. Some of the universities are structured around close pairs of fields such as sciences and health, sciences and arts, medicine and law, law and arts.

4-1-2) *Grandes écoles* and other higher education institutes

Higher education schools are public or private selective establishments which provide preparation for specialized professional work; for example, in the fields of engineering sciences, architecture, business and management and also for translation, interpreting, and journalism.

Grandes écoles

The *grandes écoles* are peculiar French institution. These highly selective establishments have a right to select their students unlike the universities. They accept much fewer students than the universities, although over 200,000 students are enrolled as of 2011. The *grandes écoles* train engineers, high level managers, and specialists in the arts, literature, the social sciences and law. Training in the *grandes écoles* and specialized schools generally takes five years, including two years of initial preparation, either in the *grande école* itself or in secondary establishments (*lycées*) (Preparatory Classes for *Grandes Écoles*: CPGE). These schools therefore more often issue a diploma at the *baccalauréat* level +5 years, providing a master's degree upon graduation.

The environment of the *grandes écoles* is special. Many of which are funded in part by corporate partners. Students enjoy ample opportunities for interaction with faculty, because classes are small. Projects and case studies are the predominant educational models, and students have a wide choice of options.

The two largest groups of *grandes écoles* are schools of engineering and schools of management, but there are also the *Écoles normales supérieures* (ENS) known as teacher training colleges, veterinary schools, and other schools in a variety of specialized areas. In regard to the ENS system, there are three in all (Paris, Lyon and Cachan (its branch has been established in Ker Lann)). They are under the control of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. Students who are citizens of the European Union, attending these schools have the status of "civil servants in training" and therefore receive a salary for the duration of their studies (currently four years).

EPA (Public Establishment of Administrative Character)

EPAs are very diverse and come under the authority of various ministries. Some are categorized as *grandes écoles* such as *École polytechnique* under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defence. The following are included in this category:

- Local public education institutions (EPLE) with preparatory classes for *grandes écoles* (CPGE) or higher technician sections (STS);
- Scientific *grandes écoles* come under the authority of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research;

- Superior institutes of military education, which come under the authority of the Ministry of Defense: the army, navy and air force institutes;
- The National School of Administration (ENA), under the authority of the Prime Minister;
- Superior agricultural institutes, which come under the Ministry of Agriculture;
- National veterinary schools, under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture;
- Superior institutes of artistic studies, which come under the authority of the Ministry of Culture;
- National superior engineering institutes and national engineering schools.
- The Paris institute of corporate administration (IAE-Paris), which provides a link between university education and practical business studies;
- The Institute of Higher Education for Science and Technology (IHEST), under the authority of the ministers in charge of national education and higher education and research.

Other EPAs can be connected to an EPCSCP, by decree or at their request, after the National Council on Higher Education and Research (CNESER) renders its decision.

Other Specialized Schools

France is internationally recognized in the fields of gastronomy, hotel management, fashion, films, among other areas. Numerous specialized schools offer programs in these and other fields.

4-1-3) Private institutions of higher education

There are two types of private institution:

- Private institutes of higher education. There are 13 in France, governed by the Law of 1875 on the freedom of higher education, which offer general university education programs;
- Private technical and management institutes of higher education. 44 are private engineering schools and 90 are private business and management schools). The education dispensed by these schools is recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education.

Differentiation between public and private institutions

It is legally prohibited in France to use the term, "University (*université*)" in names of private higher education institutions (Article L 731-14 of the Code of Education). However, in some cases, "universities" are commonly used by name such as "X university (*université (catholique) X*)", or it is sometimes used in international agreements. However, some of the Research and Higher Education Hubs (PRES) under the Research Program Act of 2006 are given names with the term "university". Private higher education institutions must clearly indicate in their names to the effect that they are privately owned institutions.

Sources:

CampusFrance: <http://www.campusfrance.org/fr/>

Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR): <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/>

4-2) Statistics

Number of institutions (2011)

Type of Institutions	Number of Institutions
Public universities	83
Doctoral schools in Universities	300 approx.
University Research laboratories and centers	1,200 approx.
<i>Grandes écoles</i>	225
Engineering schools (<i>grandes écoles</i> included)	224
Business schools (<i>grandes écoles</i> included)	220
Other institutions (including <i>lycée</i> with STS or CPGE)	3,000

Source: CampusFrance: <http://www.campusfrance.org/en>

Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR): <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/>

Number of students

Student population (schools and higher education)

(Unit: Thousand)

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Higher education	2,283	2,254	2,231	2,234	2,316
Preparatory Classes for <i>Grandes Écoles</i> (CPGE)	75	76	78	80	81
Higher Technician Sections (STS)	230	228	231	234	240
University Institutes of Technology (IUT)	113	114	116	118	118
universities (excluding IUT and engineering schools belonging to them)	1,284	1,259	1,221	1,266	1,306
engineering schools	108	109	109	114	118
business schools	88	87	96	101	116
Grand total	15,020	14,966	14,914	14,880	14,955

(Including overseas departments)

Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR): *The State of Higher Education and Research in France, 2010*

Evolution of immediate enrolment rates of *baccalauréat* holders (%) in the different higher education courses (metropolitan France + overseas departments)

* *Baccalauréat* is the national examination and the certification which certifies the graduation of high school. It is divided to each category corresponding to the areas including natural sciences, economy and social sciences, or literatures. The *baccalauréat* is, basically, the first step to enter universities, or requirement for the access to higher education. It is considered of importance element described in the diploma how it takes to finish after obtaining the *baccalauréat* (expressed as Bac+ α).

Type of <i>Baccalauréat</i>	2000	2002	2003	2004	2006	2007
General <i>Baccalauréat</i>						
University excluding IUT	61.8	62.4	62.8	62.1	58.8	55.6
IUT (University Institutes of Technology)	11.2	11.4	10.7	10.7	10.4	10.7
CPGE (Preparatory Classes for <i>Grandes écoles</i>)	12.6	13.6	13.0	13.6	13.2	13.3
STS (Higher Technician Sections)	9.0	8.4	8.0	7.8	7.8	8.3
Other courses	9.1	9.7	9.7	10.8	10.8	11.4
Technological <i>Baccalauréat</i>						
University excluding IUT	19.1	17.8	18.1	18.1	17.4	15.8
IUT	9.1	9.5	10.0	10.2	9.9	9.5
CPGE	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.3
STS	44.5	45.8	45.1	44.1	42.5	42.3
Other courses	3.9	4.2	4.2	4.7	5.0	5.4
Total General and Technological						
University excluding IUT	46.4	46.6	47.3	46.5	45.0	42.5
IUT	10.5	10.7	10.4	10.5	10.3	10.4
CPGE	8.4	9.1	8.9	9.2	9.2	9.4
STS	21.8	21.7	20.9	20.6	19.3	19.4
Other course	7.2	7.7	7.8	8.6	8.9	9.4
Vocational <i>Baccalauréat</i>						
University excluding IUT	6.4	6.0	6.3	6.4	5.8	5.0
IUT	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
CPGE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
STS	9.7	12.8	14.4	15.2	15.5	15.6
Other course	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Total for all <i>baccalauréats</i> (general, technological and vocational)						
University excluding IUT	39.2	38.9	39.8	38.9	37.5	35.0
IUT	8.7	8.8	8.7	8.7	8.4	8.4
CPGE	6.9	7.4	7.3	7.4	7.4	7.5
STS	19.6	20.0	19.7	19.6	18.6	18.7
Other courses	6.0	6.4	6.5	7.1	7.3	7.6

Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR): *The State of Higher Education and Research, 2008*

5. Enrollment

The conditions of admission largely depend on the institutions and the degrees offered. However, all institutions require, in general, the *baccalauréat* or an equivalent diploma. Access to the different levels of post-*baccalauréat* education offered by institutions under the Ministry of Higher Education and Research (whether universities, institutes or public schools) can also be gained through the professional experience validation system (p.24). Students with foreign degrees, for example, can benefit from this validation process for the admission. Validation is decided by the president of the university or director of the institution, on the advisement of a teaching committee.

5-1) Admission requirements for universities

There is no selection process at Bachelor level. Universities have to accept all students having the following diploma:

- French *baccalauréat* or a document that is considered equivalent (e.g. *certificat de capacité en droit*)
 - DAEU (Diploma for Access to University Studies), through passing the tests
- *DAEU is a national higher education diploma, created in 1994, which replaced the Special Examination of Entry to the University (ESEU).

Admission to University Institutes of Technology (IUT), however, is based on an application process involving an interview of *baccalauréat*-holding candidates.

5-2) Admission requirements for *grandes écoles*

Public and private *grandes écoles* are often very different in nature but all share a strict process for admission. Most of the candidates must not only have their *baccalauréat* but also succeed in passing a high level test that requires two years of preparation in Preparatory Classes for *Grandes Écoles* (CPGE), which are also highly difficult to enter. However, National Institute for Applied Sciences (INSA) for example, select their student just after the *baccalauréat* without the CPGE.

Students do not receive a diploma on completion of the CPGE. However students who fail their admissions test can join a university. The *grandes écoles* are very selective for international students as well. In total, they enroll about 30,000 international students, who, upon graduation, enjoy excellent career prospects.

5-3) Access to higher education (Admission Post –Bac portal)

The “Admission Post-Bac” portal (Post-*baccalauréat* Admission) has been created as a website listing all higher education courses and was extended to all academies in 2009. It lists more than 9000 courses in more than 2000 public and private institutions.

Source:

Admission Post-bac: <http://www.admission-postbac.fr/>

European Commission (EC): *Eurydice - Organisation of the education system in France, 2009/2010*

CampusFrance: <http://www.campusfrance.org/>

Jun Ohba (2008): *The Higher Education Institutions and Degree Granting Authority in France, The 14th report of SOCIÉTÉ FRANCO-JAPONAISE DES SCIENCES DE L'ÉDUCATION*

6. Courses and qualifications

6-1) Courses

In France, courses are categorized into three types: short programs, long programs, and specialized programs. An overview of these courses is described in the following:

6-1-1) Short programs

Short programs mostly require 2 or 3 years of study and are common in the areas of business, manufacturing, and services. Many are offered in multidisciplinary institutes affiliated with universities or specialized schools. These programs are designed to enable graduates to begin their careers in the shortest possible time, without forgoing the possibility of continuing their higher education. As the curriculum always includes at least one internship with a commercial enterprise, short programs offer a practical, relevant introduction to the job market. Most are highly selective in their admissions and when delivered by universities are exception to the principle of non-selection for the admission of first cycle university degrees.

6-1-2) Long Programs

Long programs are offered in universities, *grandes écoles*, and specialized schools.

Universities

Studies are organized into three basic levels (p.21):

- Bachelor: 3 years of study corresponding to 6 semesters and 180 ECTS credits.
- Master: 5 years of study (after 3 years study of bachelor), 4 additional semesters and 120 ECTS credits.

At the master's level, two paths are possible. Students who choose a rather "research oriented master" (formerly known as the DEA: Advanced Studies Diploma) typically intend to go on to earn a doctorate, whereas those who elect for a rather "professional oriented master" (formerly DESS: Higher Specialized Studies Diploma) want to begin their careers directly after graduation. Provided they have sufficient undergraduate experience, international students can enroll directly in a master's program for one or two years of specialized education.

- Doctor/Ph.D.: 8 years of study (after 3 years study of bachelor and 2 years of master), 6 additional semesters.

Grandes écoles

Long programs in the *grandes écoles* represent five years in total of postsecondary study, starting with two years of preparation within the *grandes écoles* or in a preparatory class at a secondary school. Preparatory classes for the *grandes écoles*, also known as CPGE or *prépa*, are demanding programs that enable graduates to sit for entrance exams for 3-year programs at *grandes écoles*. The CPGE courses, which are usually held in the *lycées* (secondary education institutions) but in some cases in universities or the *grandes écoles* themselves, is the equivalent of the first cycle of tertiary education. They are broken down into the three categories of economic and business classes, literature classes, and science

classes. Their studies give them ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits in the European frame. Upon the successful completion of a total of five years of postsecondary study, graduates are awarded their school's diploma, which is formally equivalent to a master's degree. Many *grande école* programs are now taught in English, especially in the areas in which the school specializes. Degree programs in the *grandes écoles* usually include international internships and study abroad.

Other specialized schools

Other specialized schools offer degrees in fields such as communications, tourism, and health, paramedical specialties, gastronomy, hotel management, fashion, and film, comic art, animation, video games, photography, and the performing arts, as well as in journalism, communication, social work, and more. Specialized schools may offer diplomas or degrees that are specific to the granting institution. Most programs are two to five years in length. Admission decisions are typically based on examination results or on an evaluation of the student's application. Graduates of private specialized schools receive a diploma that is specific to their school. That diploma may or may not be recognized as the equivalent of a master.

6-1-3) Specialized programs

Combined theoretical and practical training programs

This training program system is combined theoretical training in a school or university with practical training in a company. This type of training which provides professional experience and competence, is constantly progressing in the higher education sector. The combined training program provides diplomas at the *baccalauréat* level +2, such as Higher Technician Certificate (BTS), or *baccalauréat* +3 or *baccalauréat* +5. Around ten universities and *grandes écoles* offer the possibility of acquiring an engineering bachelor or master's diploma through combined training programs.

Unconventional education structures

Long-distance education

The Ministry of National Education (MEN) has established the National Center for Distance Education (CNED) to offer correspondence courses in all fields. Online seminars and meetings between students and teachers are organized for programs that require a higher degree of professional qualification. The "electronic campus (*campus électronique*)" program offered by CNED gives users access to all of the services available on a real campus, including the library.

Lifelong university education

Institutions of higher education also provide lifelong education. This began with the Law of 1971 (Law on the organization of vocational training as part of continuing education) and universities have been providing access to professional training since 1985 and issued partial degrees rewarding professional experience since 1993. This was taken a step further in 2002, when an entire degree could be earned through the validation of professional experiences, including volunteer, social and unpaid work. These

programs are being organized into modules and information technology options are being explored for those with limited access to onsite education (due to work and/or family obligations or distance).

6-2) Curriculum

In 2002, the Ministerial Order on University Studies Leading to A Bachelor provided for programs to be spread out over six semesters and organized them by field in both initial and continuing education formats. The programs operate under the objectives defined for the following degrees including:

- DEUG and bachelors (the Ministerial Order of 1997)
- Multi-discipline bachelors (the Ministerial Order of 1994)
- Bachelor in public administration (the Ministerial Order of 1985)
- DUT (the Ministerial Order of 1994)
- DEUST (the Ministerial Order of 1984, not included in the LMD structure from 2007-2008)
- Vocational bachelor (the Ministerial Order of 1999)
- National interpreter/guide degree (the Ministerial Order of 1995)

The study programs basically include, to a various extent depending on the degree, education theory, methodology, and practical applications. Based on the educational objectives (while ensuring that students acquire a certain general foundation of knowledge), the programs can include elements of pre-professionalization, professionalization, individual or group projects, and one or more internships. The programs are organized into mandatory teaching units (UE) chosen by the student and in some cases elective units. They include appropriate levels of modern foreign language teaching and IT training. The curricula notably involve learning university working methods and research techniques.

6-2-1) Student Assessment

In French universities, courses are usually grouped into modules (sets of related subjects) that are cumulative. A degree consists of a certain number of modules, some required, others are optional or selective. Once a student completes a module it can never be lost. It can be carried over and counted toward the degree requirements of another program.

Assessing student performance

Student performance is assessed in two ways in French higher education:

- Continuous assessment. Learning is measured continuously through tests and quizzes administered throughout the year in every subject.
- Final examinations. These measures for student learning in all subjects over a period of several days. Final exams are given twice a year at the close of each semester.

Grading scale

In general, French higher education institutions use the French grading scale from 20(the highest mark) to 0 (the lowest mark) by each subject.

The French grading scale

Numerical Grade	Description	Meaning	Note
From 16 to 20	<i>Très bien</i> (TB)	Very good	
14 and 15	<i>Bien</i> (B)	Good	
12 and 13	<i>Assez bien</i> (AB)	Fairly good	
8 to 11	<i>Passable</i>	Satisfactory	In some cases a supplementary exam may be taken
0 to 7	<i>Ajourné</i>	Unsatisfactory	

Source:

Nuffic: *Evaluation of foreign Degrees and Qualifications in the Netherlands Country Module France International Recognition Department 2009*

The ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) grading scale has been developed in order to help institutions translate the grades awarded by host institutions to European students. It provides information on the student's performance in addition to that provided by the institution's grade. A student who has a 19 grades and who passes the second exam more than 9 grades are given the same number of ECTS.

Awarding credit for experience

A series of regulations has now made it possible for France's educational institutions to award academic credit toward a degree, certificate, or other credential (such as a professional qualification) in recognition of a candidate's experience on the job or in another setting. Candidates seeking credit are required to complete an application in which they describe their professional experience and the skills they acquired. The application is presented to a jury that decides how much academic credit the candidate should receive for the experience and skills described. If the jury decides to award less than the full amount of credit sought, the candidate is also offered suggestions on how to make up the remaining credits.

Two distinct procedures are used. The first, called VAP 85, makes it possible for candidates to transfer directly into a program at the level decided by the validation process. The second, Validation System of Acquirement of Experience (VAE) (p.24) allows the candidate to receive a degree or credit toward a degree based on the jury's assessment of the candidate's prior learning and accomplishments.

6-2-2) Ongoing debates

Advancement

In order to create a coherent teaching environment, universities establish rules of advancement within the programs they offer, with respect to the requirements for the various teaching units (UE) proposed. This type of organization makes it possible to redirect students through the establishment of "gateways".

University studies can now begin with an orientation semester, which gives students the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the university and the discipline they have chosen, but also to decide whether or not the choices they have made are right for them. In the second semester, they can choose

to:

- continue the same bachelor program,
- begin a new bachelor program,
- ask to be transferred to a different program (STS, IUT, etc.).

The Ministerial Order of 2002 (by the Ministry of National Education) amended by the Order of 2008 (by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research) established a certain number of principles guaranteeing student rights with respect to the system of measuring acquired knowledge and skills. The current system includes: compensation, capitalization, and the coefficient of teaching units. The student must now be informed by university of the system one month after the start of the school year at the latest.

Access to labor market (professional integration in universities)

Since 1974, a great effort has been done by French universities to build numerous professional degrees at master level: called Higher Specialized Studies Diploma (DESS), University Institute for Vocational Training (IUP) selecting students, working with firms and practicing internships. The Law for Freedom and Responsibilities of Universities (LRU) also gives higher education institutions a mission to provide vocational guidance to students at bachelor level in order to support them until they get jobs. Institutions are required to publish not only statistics on their success rates in examinations, but also statistics on the professional integration of their graduates. The law stipulates that each institution create professional integration support offices that will publish lists of work placements and job offers that correspond to the education provided by the university. These will assist students in finding first job placements.

In addition it is considered important for institutions to raise student awareness regarding the available professional integration services and what exactly is being taught at higher education institutions. Article 20 of the LRU (L 612-3 of the Code of Education) states that candidates are free to choose where they study as long as they have requested a pre-enrolment application. This pre-enrolment process is part of a system known as “active guidance”. This is advice and support-oriented approach provided by universities to assist future *baccalauréat* graduates in making higher education choices that will lead to a suitable profession afterwards, and also reduce cases of academic failure where a student drops out due to unsuitable coursework. This approach has improved links between universities and secondary education institutions.

This process of job guidance traces its history back to the Faure law of 1968. This gradually evolved into the official creation of university information and guidance departments that came with the reform of first cycle university education in 1973, and then the decree of 1986 that made student information and guidance systems a part of the university structure and named “joint university and inter-university services for guidance and professional integration (SCUIOP)”. This is designed to give future *baccalauréat* graduates information on university courses in terms of educational content and potential professions after graduation. It also entrusts teachers and researchers with missions to provide employment guidance in addition to their regular educational roles. It develops the facilitation of

professional integration of students by creating relationships between institutions and both the professional world itself and employment services that provide access to it. It publishes an annual report on the professional integration of graduates. SCUIOP is therefore the central figure in implementing the LRU in 2007.

6-3) Qualifications

As a result of the integration of LMD system (p.4), the higher education in France is currently organized around a three cycle degree system, consisting of bachelor, master and doctorate. Only these three types of degrees (diplomas) are recognized by European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Though other sorts of diplomas are not accepted, many of those are still utilized as important indicators in the national context.

The higher education institutions and degrees (diplomas)

LEVELS		THE LMD SYSTEM		
		Universities		
9	18 semesters (+9 years)	• State diploma of doctor of medicine	Doctoral school	
8	DOCTORATE 16 semesters (+8 years)	• Doctorate / PhD		Schools of art Schools of architecture Other institutions (lycées, specialized schools)
7				
6	12 semesters (+6 years)	• State diploma of doctor of dental surgery • State diploma of doctor of pharmacy	• Specialized Mastère (MS) • Master of Business • Administration (MBA)	• Professional credential for Independent practice of architecture (HMONP)
5	MASTER 10 semesters (+5 years) 300 ECTS	• Research master • Professional master • Engineering diploma	• Engineering diploma • Master of Science (MSc) • Business school diplomas • Degrees of the Grandes Écoles	• Diploma of art schools (DNSEP) • State diploma of architect • Diplomas of specialized Schools (health, social work, tourism)
4				
3	BACHELOR 6 semesters (+3 years) 180 ECTS	• Bachelor • Vocational bachelor		• Diplomas of art schools (DNAT - DNAP) • Architecture diploma
2	4 semesters (+2 years)	• University diploma in technology (DUT)	• Admission to the first year of a Grande École program • Preparation for admission to Grandes Écoles (CPGE)	• Diploma of art schools (DMA) • Higher technical certificate (BTS)
1				

Note: Completion of secondary school + *Baccalauréat* or equivalent (eligibility to enter higher education in home country) = access to French higher education

The degrees conferred in French universities and other institutions of higher education are certified by the French government.

Source: CampusFrance: <http://www.campusfrance.org/en/resource/licence-degree>

6-3-1) Degrees from short programs

BTS: *Brevet de Technicien Supérieur* (Higher Technician Certificate) - non university degree

BTS is offered in the Higher Technician Section (STS) of vocational secondary schools, these programs require two years of study (120 ECTS credits). They are designed to train middle managers in one of 145 defined specialties. The BTS courses are situated in *lycée*, but are also considered as higher education

studies as well as IUT (University Institute of Technology). Upon graduation, more than 30% of students continue their higher education at a university, engineering school, or business school.

DUT: *Diplôme universitaire de technologie* (University Diploma of Technology) – university degree

DUT is a two-year diploma awarded by France's 116 IUTs. Designed to train mid-level technical personnel in two years, IUT programs also allow graduates to continue on for a more advanced degree, such as a vocational bachelor, and about 80% of IUT graduates do so. The types of courses offered are the DUT for Legal Careers, the DUT for Corporate Management and Administration, and the DUT for Information and Communication.

DEUST: *Diplôme d'études universitaires scientifiques et techniques* (Scientific and Technical University Studies Diploma) – university degree

DEUST is a career-oriented degree offered in 2-year university programs. Each of the 80-odd DEUST specialties is very specific, having been created in response to local labor-market needs. The curriculum of DEUST programs is often designed in consultation with employers and local governments. Practicing professionals take a share of the teaching load. In this course, graduates may continue on for another degree and the vocational bachelor is the most common choice.

Licence professionnelle (Vocational Bachelor) – university degree

This degree is granted after one year of further study to students who had already successfully completed two years of post-secondary study. The content of the wide variety of vocational bachelor's programs is determined by partnerships of universities, employers, and professional associations and the teaching faculty includes many active professionals. The vocational bachelor is one of the best French degrees for individuals hoping to find a job immediately after graduation.

6-3-2) Intermediate degrees

This type of degree, or master 1 is not recognized as a valid diploma in Europe. However, for historical reasons, the master 1 as well as the Bac+2 degree) is considered of importance in France: Before the LMD reform, it was one of the reference degree for obtaining the job. Moreover, the countries historically linked to France are sometimes used to send their students at this level to France, since the local universities suffer a lack of place or material for this level. The number of ECTS permits the student to pursue his studies in another university, but it would be possible between two semester.

6-3-3) Degrees from long programs

The implementation of the 'LMD reform' has seen a new degree structure for higher education, to align the French system with the rest of Europe, by offering three levels of studies (bachelor/master/doctorate), in accordance with the Bologna process. These are:

- Bachelor, Vocational bachelor, DNTS (National Diploma for Specialized Technology): degrees received after three years of post-*baccalauréat* studies, corresponding to 180 ECTS credits;
- Master, DEA (Advanced Studies Diploma), DESS (Higher Specialized Studies Diploma): degrees obtained after 5 years of post-*baccalauréat* studies, corresponding to 300 ECTS credits;

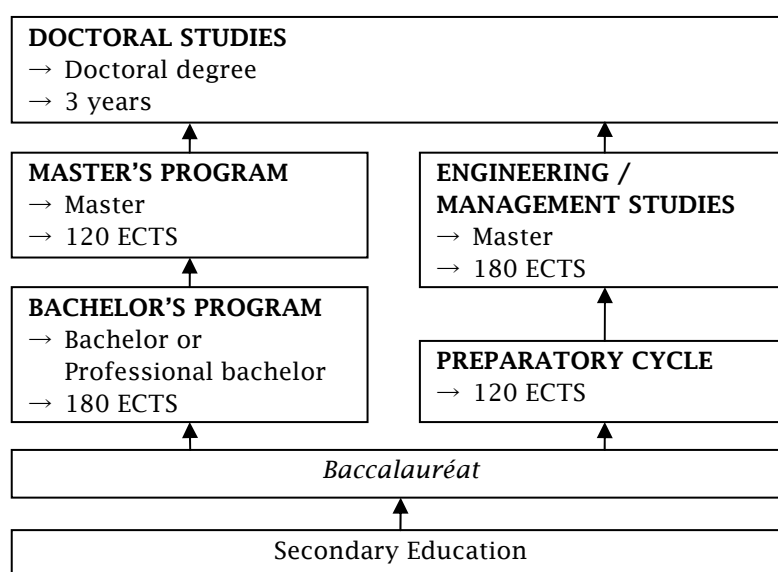
- Doctorate: degrees obtained after post-master's studies, corresponding to 480 ECTS.

Degree awarding powers

In France, the authority to confer degrees is granted and renewed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research after review of an application presented by the institute in question, which is evaluated by AERES (Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education) through a scientific and technical panel of experts and transmitted to the national council of higher education and research which presents its opinion.

Academic degrees include the *baccalauréat* and the bachelor, master and doctorate. The *baccalauréat* is not recognized as the degree in the context of Bologna process, but it is the first level degree in the French law. Bachelor and Master's degree programs, as well as intermediary degrees, are issued by universities and occasionally by other Public Establishment of Scientific, Cultural and Professional Character (EPCSCP) accredited for educational purpose by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR).

French Degree Structure



Source:

Grossroads: Higher education in France: <http://www.grossroads.eu/higher-education-in-europe/france-30>

Bachelor (Licence)

The institutions eligible for authorization to award bachelor's degrees are universities (Article 8 of the Ministerial Decree concerning university education which leads to Bachelor's Degrees of 2002).

The national qualification for the HE studies leading to the bachelor

- *Certificat de capacité en droit*;
- DEUST (Scientific and Technical University Studies Diploma);
- DEUG (General University Studies Diploma), at the request of the student;
- DUT (University Diploma of Technology);

- DNTS (National Diploma for Specialized Technology), which is progressively disappearing ;
- DEUG awarded by University Institute of Technology (IUT);
- Bachelor;
- Vocational bachelor;
- Bachelor awarded by IUT

Master

Authorization to award master's degrees can be granted to an EPCSCP alone or jointly with other national higher education institutions. In contrast, although non-EPCSCP higher education institutions can offer higher education courses, they have no authority to award master's degrees.

The diploma which officially confers a degree is the national master degree. The academic master degree which does not confer a degree can also be awarded by the State, following a national evaluation and examination in the National Council for Higher Education and Research (CNESER), to the holders of other degrees such as:

- the certified engineer diploma, following an evaluation by Commission for Engineer Titles (CTI);
- the end-of-studies diploma awarded by an Institute of Political Studies (IEP);
- the national diploma of veterinary medicine;
- the end-of-studies diploma from certain higher business and management schools;
- the national diploma in architecture;
- the national heritage conservation diploma;
- the diploma from the second cycle of *École du Louvre*;
- the diploma from the special Saint-Cyr military school;
- certain diplomas from the Paris-Dauphine University institution featured on the list determined by the minister for higher education, mentioned in Article 2 of the decree of 1999 relative to the master degree.

Doctorate/Ph.D.

The Ministerial decree concerning Doctoral Programs (*études doctorales*) of 1984 provided that only institutions that offer higher education as a public service registered in a list prepared by the universities and the Ministry of National Education (MEN) were authorized to award doctorate. Private institutions were allowed to participate in doctoral programs under agreements approved by the MEN. One out of every three French doctorate is awarded to a student from outside France.

6-4) National qualifications frameworks

Professional qualifications

Professional qualifications in France greatly vary in type and level, and national diplomas granted by universities can be considered, in many cases, as professional qualifications. One of the common features is that most of them are national qualifications under the control of the national government. Different ministries, including the Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Agriculture, of Industry, of

Defence, of Health, and the Ministry of Culture, have different professional qualifications in response to their own responsible services. Types of professional qualifications required to perform respective job duties are generally specified in a collective agreement entered into between workers and employers. Professional qualifications are usually given through school education and accredited by diplomas.

CNCP (National Commission for Vocational Certification)

CNCP was set up under the French social modernization law in 2002, the national commission for professional certification is placed under the authority of the French minister in charge of vocational training. The institution is made up of 43 members: representatives of ministers, representatives of the regions, social partners, representatives of the consular chambers, and qualified person.

Its mission is to:

- List the offer of vocational certifications (national register of vocational certifications),
- Inform people and companies about the certifications listed in the national register and the certifications recognized in the member states of the European Union,
- Check the coherence, complementary and renewal of diplomas and qualification documents, together with their adaptation to evolution in qualifications and work organization.
- Issue recommendations for the attention of the institutions awarding diplomas, qualification documents for professional purposes or professional qualification certificates,
- Point out any full or partial correspondences between certifications listed in the national register, or between the latter and other certifications, mainly European certifications,
- Point out any full or partial correspondences between certifications listed in the national register, or between the latter and other certifications, mainly European certifications, and
- Draw up a new nomenclature covering levels of certification in relation to jobs held.

Under the authority of its chairperson, the CNCP relies on the work carried out by a specialized committee, a permanent secretariat and a network of regional correspondents. It contributes to work at an international level on transparency of qualifications.

RNCP (National Register of Professional Certifications)

The purpose of RNCP is to provide people and companies with up-to-date information about diplomas and qualification documents for professional purposes, together with the qualification certificates shown in the lists drawn up by the national joint employment committees in the various professional branches. It helps to facilitate job access, management of human resources and professional mobility. The certifications listed in the register are recognized throughout France.

In practice, the RNCP can be used to consult descriptions of certifications: activities targeted, sectors of activities, elements of competence acquired, modalities of access, levels, etc. An up-to-date quantitative analysis of the register (number of data sheets that can be consulted online, number of data sheets undergoing validation, list per certifying authority, etc.) is placed at the users' disposal at regular intervals. <http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/>

Validation of experience acquired (VAE)

The Validation System of Acquirement of Experience (VAE) allows people who satisfy certain conditions the opportunity to acquire a diploma through professional experience outside the formal education system. This system enables those who concerned to obtain, totally or partially, a diploma, title or certificate of professional/Vocational qualification. The act of January 17, 2002 is known as the "Social and Modernization Act" and states that "Every person who is engaged in actual life has the right to have their experiences validated, especially abilities obtained through professional experiences in achieving diplomas, professional-oriented academic titles, or professional qualifications." The accreditation of experience acquired is applicable to any person, irrespective of his/her age, level of studies or status, to validate his/her acquired experience to obtain a professional certification. Three years of experience in relation to the content of the desired certification will be necessary. VAE can be financed by vocational training funds, provided that the professional certification sought is listed in the RNCP..In 2007, there were 4,199 approved VAEs of which over 2,000 were for diplomas obtained through the VAE system.

Recognition of diplomas

Apart from a few exceptions, there is no regulatory equivalence between French diplomas and diplomas awarded in other countries. However, diplomas awarded in other countries can be recognized. If the purpose of such recognition is to continue education, it is known as academic recognition. If the purpose is that of exercising a profession, it is known as professional recognition. It is possible to obtain general information about recognition of diplomas by contacting the national centers of resources and the European relay information and orientation centers (CIO).

The European certification framework: a new way of understanding diplomas and qualifications in Europe. The European Commission adopted the recommendation made by the European Parliament and the Council, aimed at establishing a European qualification framework for learning at any time of life. The EQF creates common references that will help the Member States, companies and citizens to compare the certifications issued under the various European education and training systems.

Source:

Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR): <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/>

Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs: <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/>

European Commission (EC): *Eurydice - Organisation of the education system in France, 2009/2010*

Nouvelle Université: <http://www.nouvelleuniversite.gouv.fr/>

CampusFrance: <http://www.campusfrance.org/>

Centro Inffo: <http://www.centre-inffo.fr/>

Jun Ohba, Tatsuya Natsume: *The university and degree in France, Gakui to Daigaku (Degrees and Universities), National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE) (2010)*

National Commission for Vocational Certification (CNCP): <http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/>

7. Student unions

The National Union of Students of France (UNEF), founded in 1907, is the main national student union in France. The organization works to represent the interests of students towards the national and local governments, the political parties, the government bodies concerned with higher education and the

university administrations. The organization is also active on the international arena, particularly within the European Students' Union, ESU.

Source:

Union Nationale des Etudiantes de France (UNEF): <http://www.unef.fr/>

8. Tuition fees and financial support for students

8-1) Tuition fees

The government bears the bulk of the cost of education for public institutions of higher education in France - an average of 10,000 euros per student per year. Annual tuition rates at public institutions are set by law. The rates students pay for the 2010-11 academic year are:

- €174 for bachelor's programs
- €237 for master's programs
- €359 for doctoral programs
- €564 for programs leading to the engineering diploma

Tuition rates at private institutions (particularly schools of business and management) are generally higher than at public ones, and generally between €3,000 and €10,000 annually).

8-2) Financial support for students

Several types of financial aid are available to students in France, including: scholarships, accommodation subsidies and other financial aid. The criteria for receiving "social criteria scholarships" is now much simpler. The amount awarded now only depends on three elements: the income of the tax household that the student comes from, the number of dependent children in this household and the distance between the family's residence and the student's place of study. A new national emergency aid fund has recently been designed to provide adapted aid to students experiencing difficulties that cannot be resolved by the scholarship system based on social criteria (for example, students whose parents suddenly lose their jobs, and adults resuming their studies or a student breaking away from his/her family and must take responsibility for his/her self). This aid will be allocated in each institute by a committee chaired by the director of National Center for University and School Works (CNOUS). Finally there is now easier access to loans and all students, whether they are scholarship holders or not, may benefit, without parental guarantee, from deferred payment loans (full or partial as the student sees fit).

With regard to accommodation, the policy undertaken by the ministry in charge of higher education aims at developing the amount of accommodation offered by CNOUS, diversifying accommodation solutions, using available property whenever possible, and finally improving access to accommodation for all students.

Foreign students, whether they benefit from a grant or not, have the same rights as French students in terms of access to university restaurants, which are managed by the regional university centers and

school related benefits (CROUS), or social services.

8-2-1) *CampusBourses*: grant search engine

CampusBourses is a grant research engine by *CampusFrance*, an essential tool for financing one's education in France. It provides instantaneous information on financial aid by allowing users to perform searches customized to their needs. From the bachelor to the post-doc levels, *CampusBourses* contains data on grant and scholarship programs provided by not only national and local governments, corporations, foundations, and institutions of higher education. The following are the organizations and outline of the aid from public institutions in France and from the European Union:

- **European Union:**
Erasmus Program and Erasmus Mundus (for non-Europeans);
- **The French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs:**
Grants provided to international students by offices in Paris (25%, including Eiffel and Major Programs) and from French embassies abroad (75%);
- **The French Ministry of Higher Education and Research:**
Need-based and affirmative-action grants to French citizens and certain groups of foreign students (notably those who have lived in France for at least two years and whose residence for tax purposes is located in France) and doctoral contracts (managed by doctoral departments throughout France);
- **Public research organizations:**
Of these, most prominent is the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), which operates in all disciplines, while others specialize in, for example, economic and social development (IRD), energy and the environment (ADEME), or exploitation of the seas (IFREMER).
- **Regional councils:**
Grants awarded to students and scholars enrolled in institutions in their region, particularly doctoral and post-doctoral support administered by institutions of higher education and research, usually funded in partnership with a public research organization or a private firm. There are also grants for international students under exchange agreements with educational institutions outside France.
- **Higher education institutions:**
These provide direct grants, especially for doctoral and post-doctoral programs.

Source:

CampusFrance: <http://www.campusfrance.org/>

CNOUS: <http://www.cnous.fr/>

French Embassy in Japan: <http://www.ambafrance-jp.org/>

European Commission (EC): *Eurydice - Organisation of the education system in France, 2009/2010*

9. Internationalization of French higher education

France is one of the major countries in promoting the internationalization of Higher Education. Since 1998, EduFrance, which has since been renamed *CampusFrance* (the French operational structure dedicated to international mobility), has been the focus of French efforts in the field of international higher education, which is increasingly competitive. Dedicated to international academic and scientific mobility, *CampusFrance* exists under the auspices of three different French government ministries: Foreign and European Affairs; Higher Education and Research; and Immigration, Integration, National Identity, and Cooperative Development. In addition, *CampusFrance* is the leader in an international consortium made up of German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Netherlands organization for international cooperation in higher education (Nuffic), the British Council, the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (Eurodoc), and the Institute of International Education (United States). *CampusFrance* also participates in projects financed by the European Commission, such as IMPI (Indicators for Mapping and Profiling Internationalization) and Eurodata II (Study on mobility developments in higher education),).

With 270,000 international students (12% of the total student population), France is the third largest host nation of international students behind the United States (535,000) and the United Kingdom (340,000) and the number of international students in France has grown by 75% in the previous ten years. The number of programs held in English has been expanded dramatically; *CampusFrance* suggests that there are nearly 600 higher education programs. One particular innovation to increase the number of English-language programs comes from involvement in the EU Erasmus Mundus project. As for areas of origin, in 2007 Africa (44%) counted for the most, followed by Europe (22%), and Asia (20%), which leaves 14% for other parts of the world.

Financial support is an essential part of ensuring international mobility, both to welcome students from abroad and to send French students to study overseas. In the case of incoming mobility, the Eiffel excellence grants, Major excellence grants and French government grants (mentioned in 8.2) are all aimed at enticing the world's most talented students to study in France. In the case of outgoing mobility, on the other hand, higher education grants (based on social criteria) and international mobility grants are the main basis.

Joint programs are now being established between France and Japan as well. Many examples exist at research level or for joint diploma between. There are some double degree programs and more than 700 exchange programs between both countries' institutions.

Source:

Delegation interministérielle à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'attractivité régionale (Datar), Centre d'analyse stratégique (CAS), Agence française pour les investissements internationaux (AFII), Ministère de l'économie, de l'industrie et de l'emploi: *Tableau de bord de l'attractivité de la France Édition 2010*

CampusFrance: <http://www.campusfrance.org/>

CNOUS: <http://www.cnous.fr/>

European Commission (EC): <http://ec.europa.eu/>

10. Responsible authorities and higher education related bodies

Government department

MESR (Ministry of Higher Education and Research): <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/>

The French Government is responsible for overall public policy towards higher education.

Research funding council

ANR (National Agency for Research): <http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/>

Public research bodies

EPST (Public Establishment of Scientific and Technological Character)

CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research): <http://www.cnrs.fr/>

INSERM (National Institute for Health and Medical Research): <http://www.inserm.fr/>

INRA (National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control):

<http://www.international.inra.fr/>

INRIA (National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control): <http://www.inria.fr/>

EPIC (Public Establishment of Industrial and Commercial Character)

CEA (Atomic Energy Authority): <http://www.cea.fr/>

CNES (National Center for Space Studies): <http://www.cnes.fr/>

Foundations

Institut Pasteur : <http://www.pasteur.fr/>

Institut Curie: <http://www.curie.fr/>

Academic Information Center for Domestic and International Students

CampusFrance: <http://www.campusfrance.org/fr/>

CampusFrance is the French operational structure dedicated to international mobility. Now *CampusFrance* operates *117 offices and 24 branches around the world. In France, a representative is found in every higher education and research cluster in France. Their aim is to promote higher education among foreign students, in particular through education fairs. *CampusFrance* centers advise and guide foreign students who are contemplating study in France, and are the dedicated point of contact for all administrative procedures prior to students' arrival in France.

CNOUS (National Center for University and School Works): <http://www.cnous.fr/>

Under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, the CNOUS manages the CROUS network, or the CNOUS heads a network that extends across all of France including its overseas territories (CROUS network). There are 28 regional centers (CROUS) and 14 local centers (CLOUS) reinforcing the regional centers in 12 university towns in 2011. The objective of this network is to provide all students equal access to higher education and an equal opportunity for success, by lending support to their everyday activities including information on financial aid, residences or part-time jobs.

The comprehensive regional coverage allows a local response to user needs, and constitutes the core of a network of university social service.

CIEP (International Center for Pedagogic Studies): <http://www.ciep.fr/>

CIEP contributes to promoting international mobility in the field of education, with a specific department under the European ENIC-NARIC agency network: the France ENIC-NARIC Center. As the ENIC-NARIC center, the CIEP delivers attested comparisons of foreign qualifications, evaluating such qualifications in terms of the French system, and provides information on the conduct of professions which are regulated in France, and on international recognition procedures for French qualifications.

Representative organizations

CPU (Conference of University Presidents): <http://www.cpu.fr/Universites>

CPU represents the common interests of the institutions it includes: universities and technological universities, the National Polytechnic Institute, the *Écoles Normales Supérieures*, the National Institute of Applied Sciences, Great Institutions and Research Centers and Higher Education. Active in arousing public debate on higher education and research in France, it is an indispensable interlocutor of the authorities on the university question.

CNU (National Council of Universities): <http://www.cpcnu.fr/>

CNU is the national body that adjudicates on measures relating to qualification, recruitment and the career of teachers-researchers (professors and lecturers) of the French University. It is composed of groups, divided into sections; each section corresponds to a discipline. The sections, as well as the number of members of each section are fixed by order of the Minister for higher education. Two thirds of the members of each section are elected by their peers and the remaining one third is made up of members appointed by order of the Minister for higher education among universities teachers and Allied staff and lecturers and Allied personnel.

CGE (Conference of *Grandes Écoles*): <http://www.cge.asso.fr/>

CGE is an association (Act 1901) of the *grandes écoles* of engineering and management, all recognized by the state and conferring a national diploma attesting to at least five years of study after the *baccalauréat*.

Quality assurance organizations

AERES (Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education): <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

(Please refer to the chapter IV-1 for details.)

CTI (Commission for Engineer Titles): <http://www.cti-commission.fr/>

(Please refer to Chapter IV-2 for details.)

11. Legislation

Loi d'orientation de l'enseignement supérieur: 12/11/1968

(Framework law on higher education) The 1968 framework law, called the Edgar Faure Law, was the basic legislative framework for university organization in France. The law provided for academic, administrative and financial autonomy of the universities, which replaced the old faculties. This law has not been repealed and those provisions not in contradiction with those of the law on higher education dated 26/01/1984 remain in force. (p.6)

Loi sur l'enseignement supérieur: 26/01/1984

(Law on higher education) The 1984 law on higher education, known as the Savary law, defines the basic principles applying to higher education courses under the responsibility of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, and also establishes the principles governing the organization and operation of higher education institutions, including universities, colleges and institutes outside universities, *Écoles normales supérieures* (ENS), French schools abroad and the *grandes écoles*. The law reorganizes the university system, formerly governed by the framework law on higher education dated 12/11/1968, by granting more autonomy in administrative, financial, teaching and scientific matters to universities. (p.6)

Loi de programme pour la recherche: 18/04/2006

(Law on research) The 2006 law on research's main objectives are to improve the strategic vision and coherence of the research system, and to develop interfaces and cooperation between public research actors and between them and the business sector. Besides, this law (art 9), introducing into the research code articles L.114-3-1 to L.114-3-7, is a legal framework of creating AERES. These articles mostly define the mission of AERES (L.114-3-1 and L.114-3-5) as well as the tasks and composition of that council (L.114-3-3).

Loi relative aux libertés et responsabilités des universités: 10/08/2007

(Law for university liberties and responsibilities) Law reforming autonomous status and management in the universities. (p.6)

Source:

Legifrance: <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/>

European Commission (EC): *Eurydice - Organisation of the education system in France, 2009/2010*

III. The Quality Assurance System

1. Transition of French quality assurance system

1-1) The National Council for Evaluation of Universities (CNE)

An external evaluation system was formed in France in the middle of the 1980s. The University Committee (CNE) was set up in 1984 and played a central role in evaluation. It was an autonomous administrative entity that reported directly to the President of the Republic and the mission was to evaluate universities, schools and other institutions in the areas linked to the missions of the higher education public sector. The AERES (Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education) inherited the mission.

1-2) Bologna process

France is no exception to other European states that saw a drastic change in Higher Education as a result of the Bologna Declaration (1999). New state regulations were introduced from 2002 (p.4), aimed at building a degree structure that is common to all higher education institutions. The implementation of these regulations was phased in step by step and a study of the quality assurance process was put into operation.

1-3) 2006 to the present - a new era in Quality Assurance

In response to the requirement of quality assurance under the Bologna process, The Act on research (law n° 2006-450 April 18, 2006) and the Act on the Liberties and Responsibilities of Universities (LRU) was enacted, which led to large-scale changes in the QA system in addition to enhancement of university autonomy and responsibility. At the same time, a new evaluation organization was established replacing CNE, but also bodies assessing programs in HE and research. This is the Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education (AERES), and its establishment was stipulated in the Program for Research Act of 2006. AERES is in charge of institutional evaluation (universities, high schools and research organizations), research unit evaluation and bachelor, master, and doctoral program evaluation. However, when it comes to providing engineering programs for engineering diplomas, Commission for Engineer Titles (CTI) is in charge of evaluation.

Source:

Jun Ohba, Tatsuya Natsume: *The university and degree in France, Gakui to Daigaku (Degrees and Universities), National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE) (2010)*

Thierry Chevaillier: *The Changing Role of the State in French Higher Education : From Curriculum Control to Program Accreditation*

Stefanie Schwarz and Don F. Westerheijden (Eds.) (2004): *Accreditation and Evaluation in the European Higher Education Area, kluwer Academic Publishers*

2. Quality assurance system in French higher education

2-1) Higher education and university approval system

2-1-1) Establishment of Public Corporations in Higher Education

Public corporations are legal entities that have been created by the state for the purpose of education and training. They are granted formal autonomy to administer themselves and manage their own resources.

EPCSCP (Public Establishment of Scientific, Cultural and Professional Character)

Public universities, National Polytechnic Institutes and University Institutes of Technology (IUT) are included in this category. The Higher Education Act of 1984 defines and organizes these institutions. Their constitution provides for a federal structure of departments (UFR, schools or institutes), that offer both research and teaching and for an elected executive. They are created by the government after consultation with the National Council for Higher Education and Research (CNESER). Changes in the internal structure of the institutions must be approved by the minister in charge of higher education.

EPA (Public Establishment of Administrative Character)

These bodies are set by the act in the same way as EPCSCP. Not only higher education institutions but can be found in all sectors of public administration. The heads of such corporations are appointed by the minister in charge of the government department that controls them (*Ministère de tutelle*), and therefore the minister in charge of higher education for the majority of higher education institutions. Others are autonomous administrative public corporations (most schools of engineering and many other institutions). (p.9)

Departments of Public Administrations

Some higher education institutions are mere departments of ministries, without any formal autonomy or corporate identity.

2-1-2) Private institutions of higher education

According to the Code of Education L731-1, all French or persons who are the member of the European Community or the European Economic Area, and are more than 25 years old can open freely the courses and higher education insitutions under some conditions (e.g. notification to the county). These private institutions need to be recognized by the states for public financial support and granting degrees. (p.10)

2-2) Internal quality assurance

The policy of establishing contracts between the government and the universities has strengthened the area of evaluation, and internal evaluation in particular, as the contracts require a solid approach through evaluation. The development of a system based on performance that came about after the Law Relative to the Finance Laws (LOLF) was passed, has meant that higher education institutions must first acquire the tools required for genuine internal control, allowing the definition of targets that are appropriate given the resources allocated. Since 1996, universities are required to conduct internal

evaluations of study programs, which include conducting student surveys. Institutions have therefore created specialized services called “*observatories*” in charge of collecting data, conducting surveys and producing local indicators on students and graduates in order to enhance their own statistical and analytical capacity. In this regard, the accreditation process by the ministry has increasingly been associated with the evaluation of programs by AERES.

2-3) External quality assurance

Present discussions on the roles and organizational means of the university system in Europe and in France, particularly through the Law for Freedom and Responsibilities of Universities (LRU), emphasize the necessity of developing the responsibility of the institutions. In this context, institutional evaluation must indicate the capacity of an institution to evaluate itself, to set and follow its objectives within the context of the major orientations indicated by the State, to detect its problems, and to carry out activities for improvement.

External Quality Assurance includes the following areas:

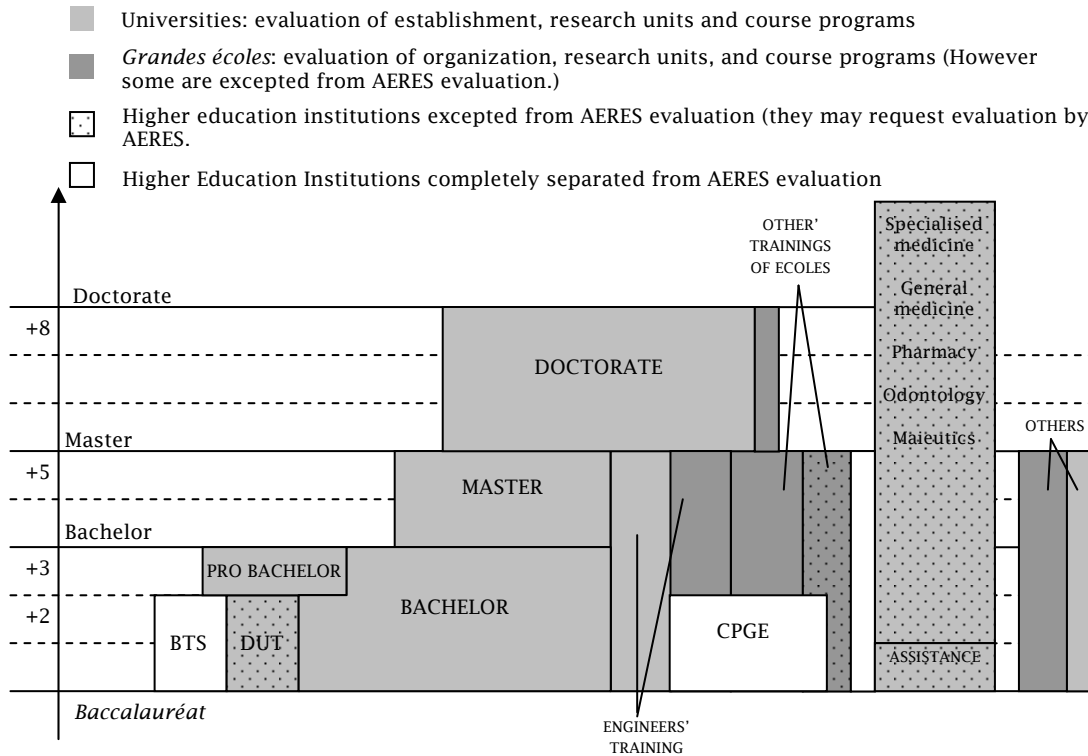
1. Institutional evaluation
2. Research (Research Units) evaluation
3. Academic program and degree evaluation (Bachelor, Master, and Doctoral Program)
4. Validation for academic staff evaluation procedure

External Quality Assurance Agency

There are some external quality assurance agencies. AERES (Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education) operates evaluation of institution, research units, and programs and degrees. CTI (Commission for Engineer Titles) accredits the engineering programs. AERES is responsible for the evaluation of the majority of higher education (*post-baccalauréat*) programs, including LMD universities and *grandes écoles* (with some exceptions). It is not responsible for institutions related to medical specializations, DUT (University Diploma of Technology) programs and other schools, although it can provide evaluations if those institutions request it of AERES. CPGE (Preparatory Classes for *Grandes Écoles*) programs, however, are totally out of AERES jurisdiction. When it comes to assessing the quality of engineering in public or private institutions, CTI accredits the program.

Following explanations are concerning the evaluation conducted by AERES (See “IV-2 CTI” for the accreditation by CTI).

Organization for Higher Education and Intervention of Boundary of AERES



Source: Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education (AERES): <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

2-3-1) Institutional evaluation

The Law Relative to the Finance Laws (LOLF) of 2001 provides an organizational law regarding the basis of the compilation and implementation of the national budget. This was fully implemented with the budget of 2006 (beginning January 1 of that year). It included a contractual dialog which has been implemented since the nineties between the government and institutions on their respective aims ending with a contract signed from that discussion. These contracts last five years. This marked a transition from a “culture of means” to a “culture of results and performance” by setting clear guidelines, expanding discretion for comprehensive budget allocation and accountability, and expanding discretion and improvement of performance evaluation. Under the new system, the institution executive’s rights were expanded, as was the discretion allowed the institution in fiscal, human resources and organizational reform. However, this extra autonomy to universities means a reduction of government control and instead independent evaluation is required. Institutional evaluation has been considered to be in contradiction to the principle of individual academic freedom, but on the other hand institutions have an obligation of care towards students and some system of checks and balances is required to ensure that this is appropriately provided.

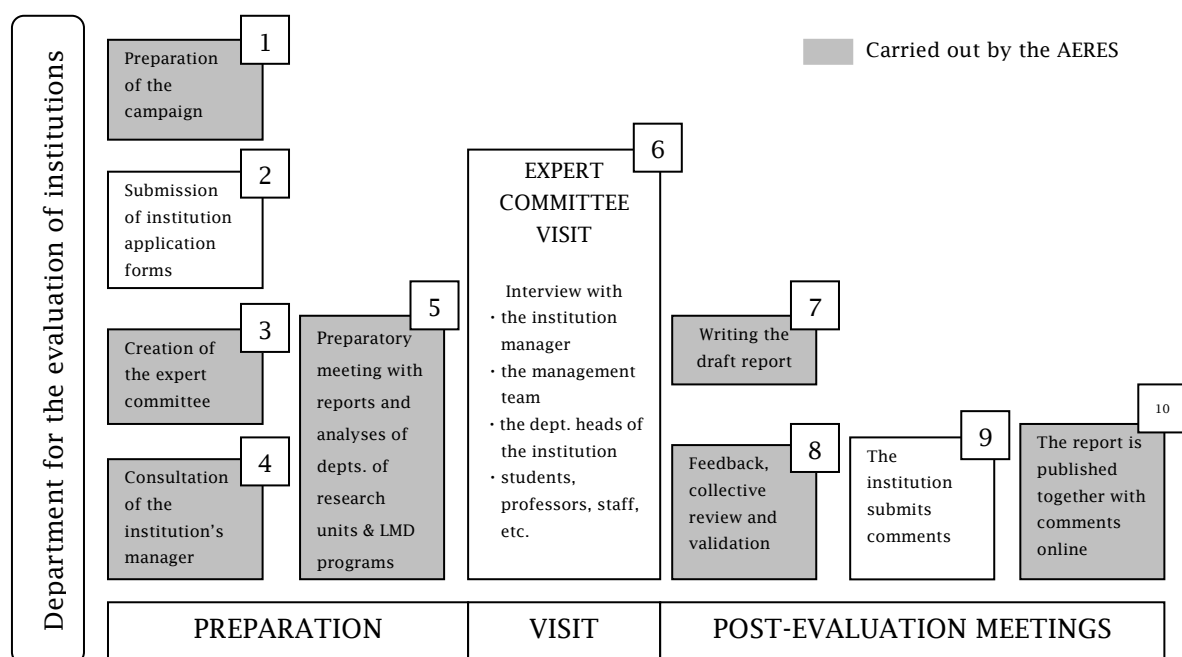
The AERES Department for the Evaluation of Institutions (Department 1) evaluates higher education and research institutions, research organizations (public science and technology institutions like National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) or National Institute for Health and Medical Research (INSERM) and Public Establishment of Scientific and Technological Character (EPST), scientific cooperation foundations

and institutions as well as National Agency for Research (ANR). Between 60 and 80 institutions are evaluated annually.

AERES institutional evaluations are based on the examination by the committee of a self-evaluation conducted by the institution, and a visit or visits to the institutions being assessed. It seeks to identify its strengths and weaknesses and then makes recommendations. After the evaluation, AERES compiles a report which is sent to the institution in question. The institution received the report sends then their comments to the AERES. Both AERES report and comment of the institution will be published publically on the AERES website. The institutional evaluation is conducted after evaluation of research units and programs and is therefore the central component of the integrated evaluation. The evaluation of an institution focuses on its organization and governance, as well as its strategy in terms of research, exploitation of research findings, training, student life and external relations, etc. To this aim, the department provides the expert committees and evaluated institutions with an evaluation guide.

For research organizations, the evaluation covers all of their missions, particularly as regards exploitation of findings and transfers. The institutional evaluation department also analyses the site policies of institutions. Every year it draws up a summary of the evaluations conducted.

Evaluation Flow of Institutions (AERES)



Source: AERES: <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

Integrated Evaluation

AERES has implemented a system of integrated evaluation that investigates first research units (Dep. 2), then the programs of the three cycles (LMD) (Dep. 3) and finally institutions (Dep. 1), in a combined report. This report is used for reference by the government and also as the basis for future

self-evaluation by the institution which was evaluated. It is based both on a prior self-evaluation by the institution and an onsite evaluation by expert committees. The latter is necessary to get a proper understanding of the environment of the institution in question that cannot be achieved on reading documents alone.

Impact of the integrated evaluation on the institution

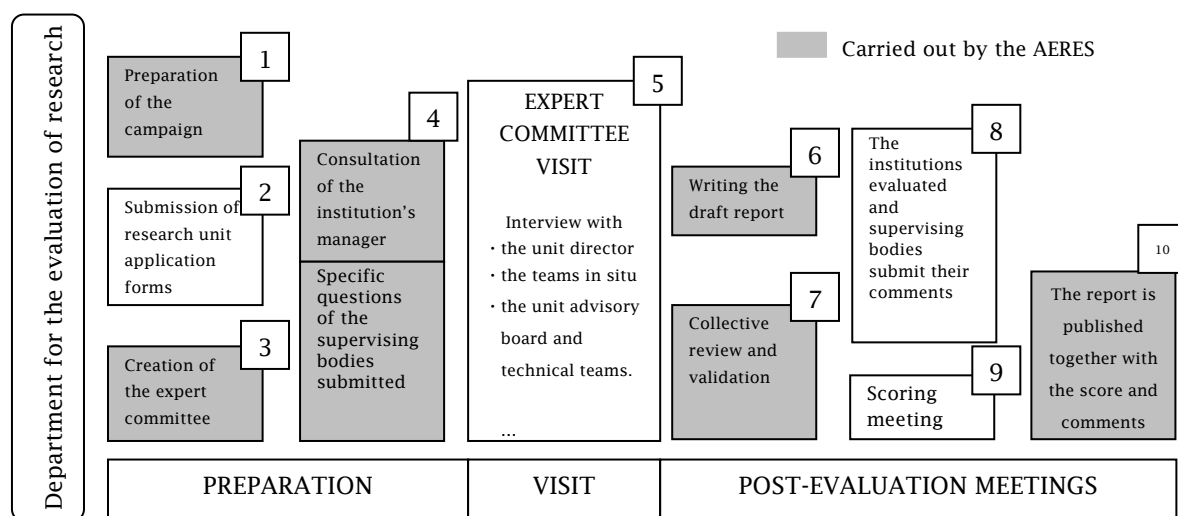
AERES gives a grade to the evaluation of programs and research units from the range of A+, A, B, and C, the outcome reports will be published on the website, and the results will be reported to the government and the recipient university. In addition, the results are also available to the general public including stakeholders such as employers and potential students. However, AERES is not involved at all in further judgment such as the continuation of research units or academic programs and the government future budget allocation to the institution.

2-3-2) Research (Research units) evaluation

Evaluation of scientific research comprises fundamental research activities, and efforts to achieve new knowledge independent of perspectives of application. The benefits of the research are difficult to measure the efficacy of the effort made. In societies where the research efforts are financed by the state or private enterprise, it is apparent that there is a strong need to evaluate the effectiveness of research. This evaluation can concern all kinds of groups conducting scientific research, ranging from individual evaluations to that of universities or institutes.

Research evaluation at AERES is conducted according to the “Guidelines for research units” the “Guidelines for federated research organizations”, and the “Preparation process for evaluation research units”, all developed and published by AERES. The AERES Department for the Evaluation of Research Units evaluates more than 700 evaluations of the research units of higher education institutions and research organizations every year. These cover CNRS, INSERM or Atomic Energy Authority (CEA), supervised by the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research and other French ministries (agriculture, industry, etc.). The purpose of evaluating research units is to help them to characterize their research potential and to pinpoint their position in their regional, national and international contexts as part of their missions and in accordance with the strategic objectives of the institutions or research organizations to which they are attached. The evaluation process begins with a declaration by the institution of which units are to be evaluated. Then the supervising bodies of the institution dispatch specific questions. The research units submit a report of activities and scientific results which are passed on to the team of experts who then visit the units and write a draft report highlighting the strengths and areas for improvement. The research units and teams are then given a score per disciplinary panel. The draft report is validated by AERES and sent to the research unit for feedback. A scoring meeting is then held. The score and final reports are sent to the institution and their supervising bodies and published on the AERES website.

Evaluation Flow of Research units (AERES)



Source: AERES: <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

Criteria

Some objective criteria are needed when conducting research evaluation including:

1. Quality of scientific production, scientific influence
2. Active participation in national and international networks and programs
3. Risk-taking in research (particularly at disciplinary interfaces)
4. Accessibility for the world of social demand
5. Responsibilities in research management (national, international) or in the publication of reviews (editor-in-international collections (director)
6. Investment in the dissemination of scientific culture
7. Applied research or expertise
8. Estimation of the proportion of researchers and professors "productive in terms of research and results" exploitation

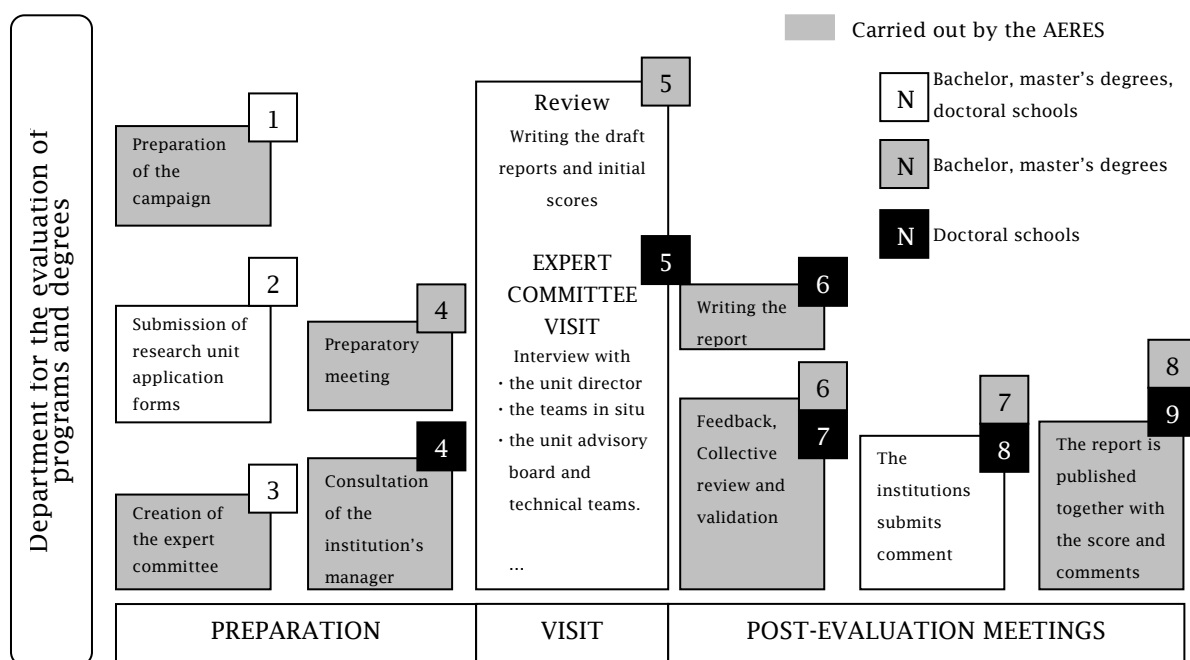
In France, before 2007 the EPST such as CNRS evaluate every four years which are affiliated with them or request their affiliation. Laboratories can gain or lose affiliation with these organizations, with consequent impact on their financing and opportunities to recruit new researchers. Since 2007, it's the national agency, AERES, which is now in charge of evaluating all research institutions and even research organization (such as CNRS and INSERM) for the first time in France.

2-3-3) Academic program and degree (LMD) evaluation

The accreditation process has increasingly been associated with the evaluation of programs. Since 2007, AERES is in charge of evaluating all programs existing in universities and higher education institutions (except programs which give you the right to use the title of engineer) from bachelor to master and doctoral programs.

The AERES Department for the Evaluation of Programs and Degrees works in the context of developing the European Higher Education and Research Area (EHEA). The scope of the evaluation covers all bachelor, master and doctoral programs of public or private higher education institutions, mainly those supervised by the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research, as well as those supervised by other French ministries (of Culture and Communication, Agriculture, Industry, Defense, etc.). The evaluation objectives are set according to three levels: bachelors, masters and doctorates. The evaluations conducted by the department take into consideration the scientific and professional relevance of the range of programs, in terms of knowledge acquisition and skills development, integration of doctorates into the job market and/or continuation of studies is assessed in terms of resources implemented and results. The assessment of bachelor and Master's degrees is carried out by committees of experts, mostly based on documents, while doctoral program evaluation consists of an onsite evaluation as well.

Evaluation Flow of Program & Degrees (AERES)



Source: AERES: <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

Criteria

Bachelor's degree program evaluation

The transition from lycée to the higher education is a primary component of the evaluation as is student

retention into second and third years. The evaluation criteria include:

1. Teaching plan: Consistency and balance of teaching plan as well as of the progressiveness of the acquisition of skills and knowledge.
2. Teaching aids for success: Variety and effectiveness of teaching aids set up by the teaching staff and the institution.
3. Integration into the job market and continuing chosen studies: Initiatives for preparing to continue studies, for gaining experience of the workplace and for following up what becomes of graduates.
4. Running the bachelor's cycle: The members and activities of the teaching team as well as the way in which it improves the management of its program by analyzing and considering the different information gathered, including the evaluation of lessons by students.

Master's degree program evaluation

For the consistency of the program range, links between bachelor and master's degrees on the one hand and between master's degrees and doctoral schools on the other should be identified. Compatibility between the second year of a master's and the requirements of doctoral schools must be highlighted. The evaluation criteria include:

1. Extent to which the master's degree is associated with research: special attention is paid to the renowned research teams on which the master's degrees call, the potential which can be called on in terms of professors and researchers, which account taken of accreditations to supervise research, research and doctoral supervision grants, etc.
2. Organization of the teaching program: Give students the opportunity to specialize in a particular field over time, resulting in either integration into the job market or admission into doctoral training.
3. Extent to which the master's helps students to prepare for the job market: links between degrees and professions, partnerships with businesses (on designing the degree, participating in teaching, offering placements), follow-up of vocational integration- a report of the fate of students since the master's was granted must be supplied and analyzed.
4. International partnership arrangements: the type and relevance of international partnerships established, the number of students concerned

Doctoral program evaluation

Doctoral schools are accredited by the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research for a maximum period of four years, after a national evaluation conducted by the AERES, " in the context of published criteria that are applicable to each doctoral school." The evaluation of the doctoral school takes account of the results of the doctoral school self-evaluation systems that the institutions implement. The quality of a doctoral school is assessed through its action plans, implementation and the results obtained.

The evaluation criteria include:

1. Quality of research units and quality of research results' exploitation carried out by the units attached to the doctoral school: industrial contracts, patents, etc.

2. Existence of a scientific policy set by the doctoral school management with the priorities indicated: cross-disciplinary projects between and within doctoral schools, support for emerging teams, etc.
3. Running of the scientific and educational council: quality of external members from the socioeconomic world, quality of foreign members, actual role of the advisory board, quality of debates, number of meetings, etc.
4. Quality of doctoral student recruitment, welcome and follow-up, particularly the existence and application of a thesis charter; organization of thematic lessons, especially those on additional, scientific and cultural training and opening on to the business world, and
5. National and international partnership policy, number of theses under joint supervision, presence of foreign members among viva voce examiners, etc.

2-3-4) Validation for academic staff evaluation procedure

AERES is competent in validating the staff evaluation procedures of the institutions concerned. This is not the evaluation for individuals.

Source:

Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education (AERES): <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

Thierry Chevaillier: *The Changing Role of the State in French Higher Education : From Curriculum Control to Program Accreditation*

European Commission (EC): *Eurydice - Organisation of the education system in France, 2009/2010*

CampusFrance: <http://www.campusfrance.org/>

LegiFrance: <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/>

3. Internationalization and quality assurance

3-1) Joint accreditation for international joint programs

As the European Union gets more entrenched, the promotion of cooperation between agencies becomes increasingly important. Building up mutual trust from the perspective of the recognition of quality assurance and accreditation assessments is a necessary element of enhancing European unity.

International accreditation enables students and academics to facilitate mobility while ensuring quality with compliance of the QA legislation in each nation and in the European framework. As a result, the number of joint accreditation projects involving Quality Assurance agencies from various countries and regions is increasing, and the French agencies are determined to be at the forefront of these efforts.

3-2) Recognition of qualifications

ENIC-NARIC (European Network of Information Centers - National Academic Recognition Information Centers)

Since 2004, ENIC-NARIC France, which is attached to the International Center for Pedagogic Studies (CIEP), has been responsible for providing information on diploma recognition. The organization prepares certificates of recognition of study levels for foreign diplomas, obtains information regarding procedures for recognition for French diplomas in other countries as well as information regarding

foreign education systems, and provides information concerning procedures to be followed to exercise a regulated profession. In addition, ENIC-NARIC France is associated with the Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR), of National Education (MEN), Conference of University Presidents (CPU), Commission for Engineer Titles (CTI), Conference of *Grandes Écoles* (CGE) and other institutional partners. Moreover, ENIC-NARIC maintains regular contacts with AERES in order to exchange of good practices. International collaboration is also a key area for ENIC-NARIC. International activities include a project with Netherlands organization for international cooperation in higher education (Nuffic) on the recognition of qualifications gained as a result of professional experience and work with UNESCO on the creation of the MERIC network (Mediterranean Recognition Information Centers).

Source:

International Center for Pedagogic Studies (CIEP): <http://www.ciep.fr/>

IV. The Details of Quality Assurance Organizations

IV-1. Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education (AERES)

1. Overview of the organization

(2011)

Year of establishment	2007
Character of the organization	Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education (AERES: <i>Agence d'évaluation de la recherche et de l'enseignement supérieur</i>) is an independent administrative authority (AAI) created by France's Research Program Act of 2006. Its organization and operation were laid down by decree no.2006-1334 of 3 November 2006. Its originality lies in the integrated approach to assessment, and it covers all higher education and research institutions, research laboratories and advanced programs.
Location	20 rue Vivienne 75002 Paris, France
Representative	Didier Houssin (President)
Number of staff	Administrative staff: 170 (including 106 scientific delegates, researchers and professors)
Organization	• Board members - 25 French and foreign members • Experts- 4,500 a year (part-time assignment) • Organizational structure - three departments. • <u>Department for the evaluation of institutions (Dep. 1)</u> evaluates higher education and research institutions, research organizations, scientific cooperation foundations and institutions as well as the National Agency for Research (ANR). • <u>Department for the evaluation of research units (Dep. 2)</u> evaluates the research units of higher education institutions and research organizations, covering all types of research unit, in both higher education institutions and research organizations. • <u>Department for the evaluation of programs and degrees (Dep. 3)</u> evaluates programs and degrees (bachelors, masters, doctoral schools), covering all bachelor, master and doctoral programs of public or private higher education institutions.

Source: Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education (AERES): <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

2. Mission and principles

2-1) Mission

The missions are as follows:

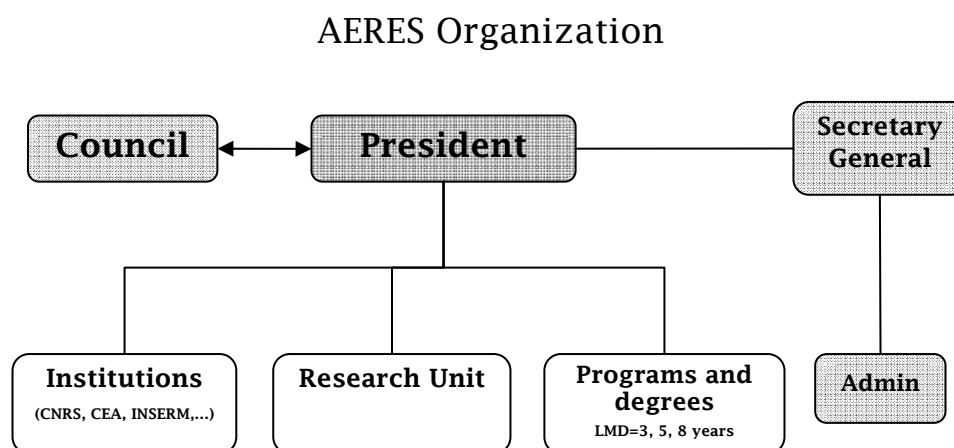
- Evaluating research organizations and institutions, research and higher education institutions, scientific cooperation foundations and institutions as well as the French National Research Agency by taking account of all their missions and activities.
- Evaluating the research activities conducted by the research units of the aforementioned organizations and institutions, which the Agency either does directly or with the support of the research organizations and institutions according to procedures that it has approved.
- Evaluating the programs and degrees of higher education institutions.
- Approving the staff evaluation procedures of research organizations and institutions and giving its opinion on the conditions under which these are implemented. Note that this concerns an evaluation of procedures and not of the staff themselves.

2-2) Principles

AERES is committed to implementing an evaluation policy based on three principles: independence, transparency and impartiality. It also intends to carry out its missions in accordance with key values, specified in its evaluation charter.

2-3) Organization

The agency is based on a board of 25 eminent figures, chaired by Didier Houssin at the time of print, and is organized into three departments: Institutions, Research Units and Programs and degrees (Figure; AERES organization). The programs and degrees department is in charge of assessing bachelor's degrees, master's degrees and doctoral schools.

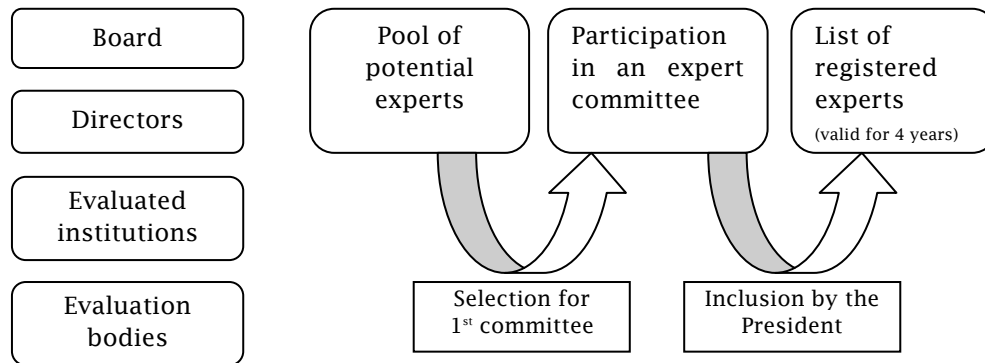


Source: AERES: <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

AERES selects committees of experts from within and outside France to carry out assessments, according to the suggestions of the entire scientific community. There is a strict procedure for selection that includes a trial inclusion before being placed on a list of experts for the following four years. The

percentage of non-French experts included in these committees is relatively high (20%), even by European standards where this is being promoted.

Procedure for including experts on the list



Source: AERES: <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

3. Activities

AERES has been given four tasks:

- Evaluation higher education and research institutions (universities, INSERM, CEA, CNRS etc.) considering all their missions and their activities.
- Evaluation of research activities of the units and groups of these institutions.
- Evaluation of programs and degrees of the higher education system (Bachelor, Master and Doctoral programs)
- Validate evaluation processes for the scientific staff of these institutions.

3-1) Evaluation (More details for p.33)

AERES evaluates institutions, research units and academic degree programs of both universities and some *grandes écoles*. However, it does not make decisions regarding accreditation and funding. Another point is that as the research and programs and degrees sections are working together, sharing the same scientific officers, the agency evaluates both research and higher education. Furthermore, transparency and independence is assured in all evaluation processes, by publishing processes both printed and made available in open documents, with all reports accessible on the website for the perusal of all stakeholders, and AERES ensures continual improvement of the evaluation process.

3-2) Validation of its evaluation

AERES considers that the quality of its evaluations is a key for ensuring its credibility and earning it the trust of higher education institutions, research organizations, public authorities, students and all stakeholders. The agency applies the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” adopted in Bergen in 2005 by the ministers of higher education of the Bologna process member states. In this context, the AERES undertakes to:

- Implement quality assurance based on the process approach and adapted to the end goals of the

agency's action throughout its various departments and activities.

- Give it the necessary resources.
- Provide a lasting framework for setting and reviewing its quality objectives, evaluating their fitness to meet the requirements of the various stakeholders and making the necessary changes and improvements
- Continuously improve the effectiveness of its methods and procedures.

This quality policy declaration is submitted by the Management to the Agency Board and made publicly available. The quality policy set by the management is also sent to all of its staff members. Everyone's adherence to this continuous improvement process is a major aspect of the Agency's quality management system.

3-3) Evaluation cycle

Every year, AERES evaluates one fifth part of the French higher education and research institutions and research organizations. AERES has based the cycle of its evaluation campaigns on five geographical zones following those used by the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research as part of its contractual relations with institutions (Groups A to E).

Groups	Name of regions included
Group A	Comprises the regional education authorities of Lyons, Grenoble, Toulouse and Bordeaux
Group B	Comprises the regional education authorities of Rouen, Caen, Rennes, Nantes, Dijon, Besançon, Clermont-Ferrand, as well as New Caledonia, French Polynesia.
Group C	Comprises the regional education authorities of Amiens, Reims, Nancy-Metz, Strasbourg, Orleans-Tours, Poitiers, Limoges, Aix-Marseille, Nice and Corsica
Group D	Comprises the regional education authorities of the Parisian region and Créteil
Group E	Comprises the regional education authorities of Lille, Versailles, Montpellier, Martinique and Guadeloupe, as well as French Guiana and Réunion.

Source: AERES: <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

3-4) Impact on the outcome of the evaluation

AERES is in charge of these evaluation activities but AERES does not include the budget allocation decision making process based on the result of the evaluation. The results of the evaluation are sent to the Ministry and the participant institution. Under the contract policy, the government and each university discuss the results of the evaluation.

According to the "Regional analysis of evaluations made between 2007 and 2010" published by AERES, AERES evaluations certify the quality of higher education training; half of the master's degrees in French universities were noted with A+ and A, and the same applies to 40% of bachelor.

4. International Activities

AERES has been established during the time of a trend marked by the increasing international application of higher education and research activities. It intends to play a key role in the development of this, particularly through its cooperation with other evaluation stakeholders worldwide. AERES views its own recognition internationally as an innovative quality assurance agency to be essential for boosting the credibility of the French higher education system to make it attractive to potential international students and to potential employers of French graduates, particularly in the context of the increasingly competitive European market. The agency is therefore involved in pan-European Quality Assurance initiatives such as the EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education) which was set up by the 47 European countries participating to the Bologna process and the ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education).

In May 2010, ENQA evaluated AERES in terms of its adherence to European Higher Education Area standards and it passed with flying colors. In May 2011, AERES was listed on European Register by EQAR and recognized as an Agency that substantially comply with common set of principles for quality assurance adopted in Europe by the 47 ministers in Bergen in 2005 (known as European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance).

4-1) Collaborations with other bodies

AERES is also aiming to respond to European and international calls for tender. For example, it signed an agreement with the French International International Center for Pedagogic Studies (CIEP), with which it shares its expertise as a reviewer. It is also considering partnerships with other French and/or European collective bodies and forging links with other Quality Assurance agencies, including those in Quebec, Brazil, Belgium, Germany, the UK, Spain, China and Japan. Such collaborations include organizing international seminars to promote the exchange of ideas and practices between agencies. AERES attempts to promote its activities in such forums as ENQA, EUA or the G8.

4-2) International evaluation

AERES has also commenced the evaluation of non-French institutions in an effort "to broaden its experience", in its own words, and this effort began in 2008 with the evaluation of Saint-Joseph University in Beirut.

4-3) Developing international skills and discussion within the agency

To help its staff members better understand the international dimension in their activities, AERES has extended training in "international relations" to all staff.

Source: Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education (AERES): <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

IV -2. Commission for Engineer Titles (CTI)

1. Overview of the organization

Year of establishment	1934
Character of the organization	Commission for Engineer Titles (CTI: <i>Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur</i>) is a nonprofit organization officially recognized as the independent body in charge of performing program accreditation of engineering degrees in France. CTI was established in 1934 according to the education Code L242-1 to 12. Its missions are respectively: the evaluation and accreditation of programs in the fields of engineering and applied sciences in France and abroad (ie. Germany, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Viet-Nam, and others in process); the development of quality in engineering education; the promotion of engineering curricula.
Location	34 avenue Charles de Gaulle F-92 200 Neuilly-sur-Seine
Representative	Bernard Remaud (President)
Organization	• 9 member Executive Board, included President and two vice-presidents • 2 permanent staff members • 3 administrative staff members provided by the French ministry of education. • Organizational structure - four sections. These are each headed by an Executive Board member. ▪ Quality Management ▪ Accreditation Process ▪ International Affairs ▪ Budget

Source:

CTI: *La Plaquette de la CTI*

CTI: <http://www.cti-commission.fr/>

2. Mission and goals

2-1) Mission

The missions of CTI are respectively: the evaluation and accreditation of higher education institutions and its curricula in the fields of engineering (computer science, applied mathematics, project management, etc); the development of quality in engineering education; and the promotion of engineering curricula and careers in France and abroad (i.e. Germany, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Viet-Nam).

2-2) Goals

CTI sets its goals as supporting higher education engineering institutions in the implementation of effective internal quality assurance and fostering competence-based engineering education to offer its experience to foreign universities wishing to increase their international visibility.

2-3) Organization

CTI is comprised of 32 members, equally representatives of the academic world and of enterprises: 16 are university professors or staff members, 8 are representatives of industrial company associations, 8 are representatives of trade unions and associations of engineers. All members are selected by their own organizations and appointed by the ministry of Education for a 4-year mandate, renewable once. CTI's administrative staff is provided by the French ministry of education.

Source:

CTI: *La Plaquette de la CTI*

CTI: <http://www.cti-commission.fr/>

3. Main areas of activity

3-1) Evaluation and accreditation

CTI evaluates and accredits programs only at the master's level. (In France, the engineering programs are organized as an integrated 5 year master program. Currently, engineering bachelor programs do not exist in France). There are about 220 French institutions accredited by CTI, delivering yearly about 30,000 engineering master's degrees. Each year, CTI evaluates about 150 engineering programs.

3-1-1) Procedures and criteria

The evaluation and accreditation of engineering curricula by CTI are conducted according to the European Standards and Guidelines and to the standards of EUR-ACE label (European Accreditation Consortium of Engineering Programs). The accreditation is valid for a maximum of six years. This period may be reduced to three years or even less if the evaluation reveals important problems which need to be resolved rapidly.

Procedures

The procedures for the institutional accreditation consist of:

- A preparatory stage in which a self-assessment report must be made by the higher education institution
- An audit stage,
- An accreditation stage,
- A communication stage.

Criteria

CTI sets criteria for each institution to practice self-evaluation as follows:

- A. Mission & organization
- B. Openness & partnerships
- C. Student admission
- D. Education & training for integrated master degree
- E. Employment of graduate engineers
- F. Quality management & ongoing quality development

3-2) International CTI accreditation

At the worldwide level, CTI is one of the most experienced bodies in charge of evaluation and accreditation of engineering curricula and institutions. CTI has progressively widened its activities. It has been fully involved in the development of the European Higher Education Area.

Procedures

Foreign institutions may ask the French State for the official recognition of their curricula that have been positively assessed by CTI. This recognition implies an official agreement between the two governments. The first step is the accreditation by CTI according to the procedure based on its standards fitted to the academic and industrial context of the concerned country. The list of accredited foreign engineering degrees is published annually in the French Official Journal. Graduates holding a foreign engineering degree are entitled to have the same professional rights and levels of recognition in France as the graduates from French institutions. CTI is also entitled by ENAEE (European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education) to deliver the EUR-ACE label (European engineering accreditation label) (p.50) to all engineering programs accredited which increases recognition of CTI's accreditation.

Criteria

Engineering graduate schools from abroad need also to globally comply with the criteria mentioned before (p.48).

3-3) Other international activities

3-3-1) Collaboration with other overseas accreditation bodies

CTI signed agreements towards mutual recognition of accreditation results with NVAO (Accreditation

Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders) and OAQ (Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Swiss Universities) as bilateral recognition. They have provided joint accreditation for some academic programs both through the authorization by each organization. The legal framework they use is a combination of the European Standards and Guidelines, the ECA Code of Good Practice and the ECA Principles for the Selection of Experts. The accreditation process involves self-evaluation, on-site visit (done jointly), and decision-making (done separately). No substantial differences were found between the two parties that would prevent them from carrying out procedures together, with separate final decisions.

CTI also implemented joint accreditation with ASIIN (German Accreditation Agency for Degree Programs in Engineering, Informatics/Computer Science, the Natural Sciences and Mathematics). This partnership is based on the ASIIN-CTI cooperation agreement of 2005, regarding criteria and procedures facilitated by cooperation in the framework of the EUR-ACE project. Their efforts at cooperation in the accreditation of bi-national engineering degree programs include writing a joint accreditation report, and if successful, a joint certificate and also undertaking a review of the procedures and criteria for the joint accreditation process at regular interval

Besides, CTI participates in the ECA-MULTRA (Multilateral Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Accreditation Results regarding Joint Programs) as multilateral recognition. In addition, CTI also acts as a professional body because there is not a board of engineers in France. The agency has signed a professional recognition agreement with the board of engineers of Canada and is preparing a similar accord with the board of engineers of Malaysia.

3-3-2) EUR-ACE project

The EUR-ACE project (September 2004/March 2006) has formulated and proposed a European system of accreditation of engineering programs at the First and Second Cycle level (but allowing also accreditation of “Integrated Programs”, i.e. programs leading directly to a SC degree). To this aim, a set of Framework Standards to be respected by all participating agencies has been formulated and published. To operate this system, an International non-profit Association (ENAAE: European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education) has been established. It promoted the EUR-ACE Implementation project, that aims at making these proposals operational by setting up the necessary organization, planning and supervising the award of the first EUR-ACE labels, favoring the spread of the system to other countries, establishing a fee policy that can rapidly make the system self-supporting. On November 2008, after an external review of its standards and procedures, CTI has been authorized until 31 December 2013 to award the EUR-ACE® Label to accredited Second-Cycle engineering programs.

Source:

CTI: *La Plaque de la CTI*

CTI: *References and guidelines 2009 (Références et Orientations 2009)*

CTI: <http://www.cti-commission.fr/>

Rolex Learning Center: *Welcome to Swiss Tech Lausanne (EPFL), a Learning Technological University (powerpoint presentation) (2010)*

European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA): <http://www.eaconsortium.net/>

Appendix: Glossary

Explanation of Abbreviations & Glossary

Explained here are some words and abbreviations which appeared in the text, in alphabetic order. In abbreviation, next to the abbreviation comes the full title in French (*Italic*), after which is indicated the full title in English, and then a description of the organization.

AAI: *Autorité administrative indépendante*, Independent Administrative Authority

AERES: *Agence d'évaluation de la recherche et de l'enseignement supérieur*, Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education

ANR: *Agence nationale de la recherche*, National Agency for Research

The ANR is a research funding organization established by the French government law in 2005. The role of the organization is to fund research projects, based on competitive schemes giving researchers the best opportunities to realize their projects and contribute to groundbreaking new knowledge.

BTS: *Brevet de technicien supérieur*, Higher Technician Certificate

CEA: *Commissariat à l'énergie atomique*, Atomic Energy Authority

Certificat, Certificate:

Certification is a generic term which applies to a wide number of subjects and actions, official or not.

CGE: *Conférence des grandes écoles*, Conference of *Grandes Écoles*

CIEP: *Centre international d'études pédagogiques*, International Center for Pedagogic Studies

CIO: *Centre d'information et d'orientation*, Center for Information and Orientation

CNCP: *Commission nationale de la certification professionnelle*, National Commission for Vocational Certification

CNE: *Commission nationale d'évaluation*, National Commission for Evaluation

CNED: *Centre national d'enseignement à distance*, National Center for Distance Education

The National Center for Distance Learning is an establishment primarily in charge of providing correspondence teaching at all levels of academic teaching, including university training and the presentation of competitive administrative exams.

CNES: *Centre national d'études spatiales*, National Center for Space Studies

CNESER: *Conseil national de l'enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche*, National Council for Higher Education and Research

CNOUS: *Centre national des œuvres universitaires et scolaires*, National Center for University and School Works

CNRS: *Centre nationale de la recherche scientifique*, National Center for Scientific Research

CNU: *Conseil national des universités*, National Council of Universities

Competence:

Competence refers to a skill which contributes to a set of knowledge, knowhow and behavioral skills in order to carry out a task or activity. It always has an occupational goal.

Continuing education:

Continuing education and training has been a legal obligation toward the state since 1971. Its purpose is to ensure that salaried employees, workers and job-seekers receive training intended to confirm,

improve or add to their professional skills. According to Article L900-1 of the employment code, “continuing training throughout life is a national obligation. It includes an initial training, and subsequent training periods aimed at adults and young people already in the working world or just starting out. These further training arrangements represent continuing professional education.

CPGE: *Classes préparatoire aux grandes écoles*, Preparatory Classes for *Grandes Écoles*

A two year course extendible to three-years, acting as a preparation course with the main goal of training post-high school students for enrollment in a *Grande École*.

CPU: *Conférence des présidents d'université*, Conference of University Presidents

CTI: *Commission des titres d'Ingénieur*, Commission for Engineer Titles

DAEU: *Diplôme d'accès aux études universitaires*, Diploma for Access to University Studies

The diploma provides the same rights as the “*baccalauréat*” for those who wish to enter higher education studies in order to increase their chances of promotion or return to the job market, to acquire a diploma to allow them to take the administrative competitive examinations requiring the “*baccalauréat*”, and to obtain a diploma certifying their general competencies.

DEA: *Diplôme d'études approfondies*, Advanced Studies Diploma

DESS: *Diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées*, Higher Specialized Studies Diploma

DEUG: *Diplôme d'études universitaires générales*, General University Studies Diploma

DEUST: *Diplôme d'études universitaires scientifiques et techniques*, Scientific and Technical University Studies Diploma

Diplôme, Diploma:

A written document establishing rights (as applicable: access to competitive examinations, the continuation of studies). It is issued by a relevant authority under the control of the State. It determines access to certain occupations and certain training programs or competitive examinations. It acknowledges the verified skill level of the diploma holder.

DNTS: *Diplôme national de technologie spécialisée*, National Diploma for Specialized Technology

DUT: *Diplôme universitaire de technologie*, University Diploma of Technology

The DUT is a two-year diploma awarded by France's 116 IUTs (University Institutes of Technology). Designed to train mid-level technical personnel in two years, IUT programs also allow graduates to continue on for a more advanced degree, such as a vocational bachelor, and about 80% of IUT graduates do so. The types of courses offered are the DUT for Legal Careers, the DUT for Corporate Management and Administration (GEA), and the DUT for Information and Communication.

ENA: *École nationale d'administration*, National School of Administration

Engineering Diploma

The Engineering Diploma can only be issued by schools authorized by CTI. CTI exclusively covers engineering diplomas.

ENS: *École normale supérieure*, known as teacher training college

EP: *Établissement public*, Public Establishment

EPA: *Établissement public à caractère administratif*, Public Establishment of Administrative Character

EPCSC: *Établissement public à caractère scientifique et culturel*, Public Establishment of Scientific and Cultural Character

EPCSCP: *Établissement public à caractère scientifique, culturel et professionnelle*, Public Establishment of

Scientific, Cultural and Professional Character

EPCST: *Établissement public à caractère scientifique et technologique*, Public Establishment of Scientific and Technological Character

EPIC: *Établissement public à caractère industriel et commercial*, Public Establishment of Industrial and Commercial Character

EPSCP: Same as EPCSCP

EPST: Same as EPCST

ESEU: *Examen spécial d'entrée à l'université*, Special Examination of Entry to the University

ESU: European Students Union

IAE: *Institut d'administration des entreprises*, Institute of Business Administration

IEP: *Institut d'études politiques*, Institute of Political Studies

INRA: *Institut national de la recherche agronomique*, National Institute for Agroicultural Research

INRIA: *Institut national de recherche en informatique et automatique*, National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control

INSA: *Institut national des sciences appliquées*, National Institute for Applied Sciences

INSERM: *Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale*, National Institute for Health and Medical Research

IUP: *Institut universitaire professionnalisé*, University Institute for Vocational Training

IUT: *Institut universitaire de technologie*, University Institute of Technology

LMD: *Licence-master-doctorat*, Bachelor-Master-Doctorate

LOLF: *Loi organique relative aux lois de finances*, Law Relative to the Finance Laws

LP: *Licence professionnelle*, Vocational bachelor

LRU: *Loi sur les liberté et responsabilités des universités*, Law for Freedom and Responsibilities of Universities

MEN: *Ministère de l'éducation nationale*, Ministry of National Education

MESR: *Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche*, Ministry of Higher Education and Research

PRES: *Les pôles de recherches et d'enseignement supérieur*, Centers of Research and Higher Education

RNCP: *Répertoire national des certifications professionnelle*, National Register of Professional Certifications

SCUIOP: *Services communs universitaires d'information et d'orientation*

STS: *Section de technicien supérieur*, Higher Technician Section

This is a form of technical training for two years after the *baccalauréat* that provides access to the BTS.

UE: *Unité d'enseignement*, Educational Unit

UFR: *Unité de formation et de recherche*, Training and Research unit

UNEF: *Union nationale des étudiants de France*, National Students Union of France

VAE: *Validation des acquis de l'expérience*, Validation System of Acquirement of Experience

Source

Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education (AERES): <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE): <http://www.insee.fr/>

National Commission for Vocational Certification (CNCP): <http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/grand-public/glossaire>

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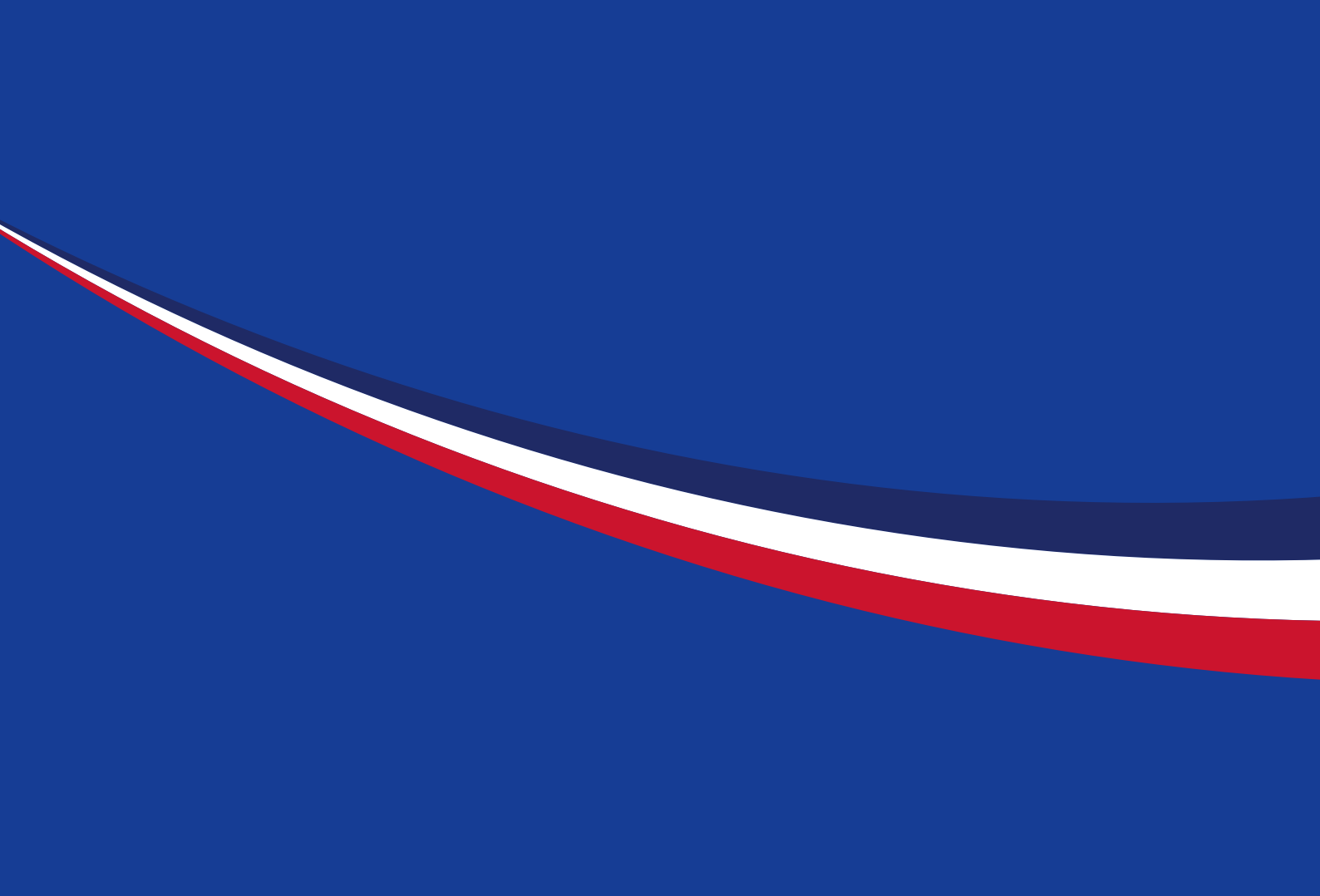
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- Agence Nationale de la recherche (ANR): <http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/>
- Bologna process: <http://www.ehea.info/>
- Campus France: <http://www.campusfrance.org/>
- Center d'études et de Recherches sur les Qualifications (Céreq): <http://www.cereq.fr/>
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- National Institute of Informatics (NII): <http://www.nii.ac.jp/>
- National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE): <http://www.insee.fr/>

- Nouvelle University: <http://www.nouvelleuniversite.gouv.fr/>
- Paul Sabatier University: <http://www.up-s-tlse.fr/>
- Quality Network for a European Learning Resource Exchange (eQNet):
<http://www.eqnet.eun.org/>
- Tohoku University: <http://www.tohoku.ac.jp/>
- Union nationale des étudiants de France (UNEF): <http://www.unef.fr/>
- Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3: <http://www.univ-montp3.fr/>
- University of Strasbourg: <http://www.unistra.fr/>
- University of Tokyo: <http://www.u-tokyo.ac.jp/>

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