THE EFFECTS OF IMPLEMENTING THE ESHE ON THE ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING COMPETENCY IN SPAIN [*]

Arturo Galán, María G. Amilburu and Isabel Muñoz[*]

Summary

1. Introduction

2. Teaching competency and ESHE: anything new at sight?

3. Towards an assessment of teaching competency in the ESHE

3.1 ANECA and the Docentia Programme: going forward or backwards?

4. The ideal of teaching excellence in the ESHE vs. teaching assessment

5. Conclusions and discussion

6. References

1. Introduction

Following the Sorbonne (1998) and Bologna (1999) declarations, the European Space for Higher Education (ESHE) was officially inaugurated with the Budapest-Vienna declaration (2010). As indicated by the third major objective of the latter declaration, the ESHE is intended to become competitive and attractive within the framework of international higher education. This objective, which was proposed during the process of European integration, derives from the growing importance assigned to the presence of university-educated human capital in developed countries (Baker, 2009), from the awareness of its influence on economic development (Agasisti, 2009), and from concerns related to the relatively low position of European universities in international

[*] Arturo Galán, Facultad de Educación, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED)
C/ Juan del Rosal, 14, 28040 Madrid, agalan@edu.uned.es
María G. Amilburu, Facultad de Educación, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED)
C/ Juan del Rosal, 14, 28040 Madrid, mgamilburu@edu.uned.es
Isabel Muñoz, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales, Universidad Pontificia Comillas
C/ Alberto Aguilera 23 - 28015 Madrid, isabelmsanroque@chs.upcomillas.es

rankings, such as the *Times Higher Education World University Rankings* (especially compared with North American universities). These facts have led to the change in the European political agenda that resulted in the commitment of 47 countries to initiate a process of university standardisation to ensure the quality of their universities and increase the competitiveness of the European Space for Higher Education[2].

The ability of universities to attract international students requires that universities offer education of the highest quality, among other requirements. Although it is thoroughly understood that employing excellent faculty is critical, official documents have not sufficiently developed a process for ensuring faculty excellence in the teaching dimension; this aspect will be discussed in this article.

The controversy prevailing in some university departments regarding the new university model proposed in the ESHE is not addressed in this paper (Lattuca, 2010; Rioja, 2007). We shall adopt the framework proposed by the official documents as a *factum* to which Spanish university institutions should adapt their degrees to ensure that they are valid and recognised in Spain and throughout the European Union.

However, although this study does not enter the debate, we must address a preliminary difficulty: the lack of a definition for the concept of 'competency'. The imprecision of this term has generated a large amount of academic literature, particularly as this model is applied in the area of education and specifically to the skills of both teachers and students. See, for example, the most recent studies by Attewell (2009) or Guerra (2008). In this paper, we shall consider the concept of 'teaching quality' as synonymous with 'teaching competency' or 'teaching excellence' (e.g., Shephard *et al.*, 2011; Woody, 2010; King and Watson, 2010; McKenzie, 2007; Moore and Nyiel, 2007; Palmer and Collins, 2006). This concept focuses on the design and development of actions that are closely related to student development processes (e.g., academic achievement, competency acquisition, social skills, and adaptation to the workforce). This study also involves the beliefs of faculty regarding their professional practices and their understanding of 'quality learning'.

The research project of which this article is a part is designed to develop an assessment model to encourage the teaching quality of faculty. The design of a model for evaluating university teaching that suits the ESHE framework is necessary because in some countries, such as Spain, the

---

[2] It is also relevant for the case to mention the Lisbon Strategy, approved by the European Council on march 23rd and 24th 2010. One of its main objectives was to transform the UE in the first economic power –the most competitive and dynamic in the world- before 2010. This will make possible an enduring economic growth and a qualitative and quantitative increase of the employment rate, and a stronger social cohesion. One of the aims of the Lisbon Strategy was to prepare the transition to the knowledge economy and society, through politics that provide better means for the needs of information and development; as well as to speed up structural reforms in order to reinforce competitiveness and innovation. This is why quality in higher education is so important: because Europe will need to compete against other continents, specially the USA. See European Council, 2000. *Conclusiones de la presidencia*. Lisboa: Consejo Europeo de Lisboa, 23 y 24 de marzo de 2000.

law includes the provision of individual salary bonuses to faculty as a consequence of positive evaluations of their teaching, research, and academic management[3].

Thus, this article will present some dimensions of 'teaching quality' according to the change in the university paradigm instituted by the implementation of the ESHE. Additionally, we will propose that these issues should be addressed in the model for teaching assessment according to the ESHE.

2. Teaching competency and ESHE: anything new at sight?

Any study designed to assess 'teaching competency' should begin with the following question: What does it mean to be a 'skilful faculty'?

Anticipating the guidelines that would later define the teaching priorities of the ESHE, Ramsdem (1992) defined a broad array of the specific teaching abilities that are associated in the research literature with a skilful professor: he/she is mindful of the goal of student learning, teaches the key concepts of his/her subject, learns from the students, constantly assesses his/her teaching performance, realises that teaching facilitates learning, teaches with enthusiasm, encourages students to be self-reliant learners by using methods that require students to learn actively and cooperatively, provides high-quality *feedback* to students regarding their work, and avoids excessive amounts of work.

Later, the General Assembly of UNESCO in Paris in 1997 suggested some of the characteristics of excellent faculty: Faculty should understand the different ways in which students learn, be knowledgeable regarding the teaching methodologies that are suitable for answering the new social challenges, possess the knowledge, skills and attitude that is necessary for using student assessment and information and communication technologies as a tool to foster learning and master tutoring techniques in both face-to-face and distance learning environments.

Parallely, Tigeelar (2004) states that teaching skill is 'an integrated set of personal traits, knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that are necessary for efficient performance in several teaching contexts'. According to this author, high-quality university professors must excel in the ways pointed out in table 1.

Recently, Skelton (2009) establishes four similar and fundamental levels in which high-quality faculty should excel: The 'knowledge' of disciplines, the practical knowledge of teaching, the 'knowledge' of relationships and the 'knowledge of learning' (based on the need for both students and the faculty to learn how to learn).

---

[3] Spanish University Law (LOMLOU, 2007; art. 69.2, which modify LOU, 2001) says: The Government may establish additional salary bonuses related to individual merits as a result of teaching activity, teacher training, research, technological development, knowledge transfer and management. However, the problems for the measurement of teaching quality and the implementation of experimental evaluation are delaying implementation. Nevertheless, some universities such as Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, have started to grant economical supplements and certificates of excellence for the piloting phase of the program Docentia, in a firm commitment to support quality teaching.

In sum, the study of the traits that define high-quality university teaching has a long tradition (see table 1).

ESHE SKILLS FRAMEWORK	TIGEELAR (2004)	UNESCO (1997)
Knowledge	Expert	Has knowledge
Practical knowledge	Communicator Facilitator Advisor Evaluator	Use of teaching methodologies Use of technology Use of tutoring Evaluation for learning
Knowledge of relationships	Collaborator-manager	
Knowledge of learning	Academic facilitator	Awareness of the forms of learning

Table 1. The characteristics of excellent faculty according to different sources

As we may see, there are not many great changes in the definition of teaching competency. Nevertheless, according to the developments of the times, the reference to ICT and the student's main role in the educational process are stressed. But a previous consideration needs to be made.

Each professor has – at least unconsciously – a general theory of learning that directly influences the content and structuring of the subject matter (what is to be taught), the teaching methods (how the material should be taught), and the assessment that is conducted (which quantifies the results of teaching and learning) (Kreber, 2010; Lattuca, 2010; Loiola and Tardif, 2001). Considering the premise that each professor uses his/her own philosophy of teaching as a foundation, we must analyse whether the ESHE implementation will "force" faculty to modify those philosophies and their classroom performance in a particular way.

Ferrer and González (2009) organise the great traditions of conceiving the teaching profession in higher education into two broad categories. First, there are those teachers who understand teaching as the *transfer of knowledge*, for which the most important aspect is the knowledge imparted. On this basis, any individual who is an expert on the subject matter could be a professor. The qualities necessary to be a good professor would include the mastery of the subject being imparted and the clarity of the explanations offered. The second category refers to a more complex way of understanding teaching: faculty should possess an in-depth knowledge of the subject they are teaching and should be 'experts in the didactic transposition of knowledge'; thus, their methodology should be tailored to specific groups of students. Thus, the mission of a professor would consist of using all the methods available to him/her to ensure that learning is not

only possible but certain (Norton *et al.*, 2005). Based on a study of the concise official texts concerning the construction of the ESHE, it seems to follow that the proposed paradigm for university teachers corresponds more closely with the second approach mentioned.

The ESHE has been designed to introduce substantial changes in two large areas of education: *structural and pedagogic*. In relation to teaching, the ECTS credit system reflects the change in the educational paradigm generated at the structural level because the process has shifted from calculating the importance and 'weight' of subjects from the number of teaching hours performed by the professor to a system that assigns more relevance to the time that the average student dedicates to following and passing a certain subject. In this sense, the ESHE shifts the focus of attention from teaching to learning at the *structural* level.

However, considering the *pedagogic* level –although the ESHE does not make any explicit statements regarding the desired teaching methodology– there are two basic changes that need to be taken into account: teaching centred on learning, and learning oriented towards the acquisition of competencies. It is possible to find a number of authors who have reflected on the consequences of both changes for educational practice, and have stated that we are facing a change of paradigm (Schaeper, 2009; Kinchin *et al.*, 2008; Brew and Ginns, 2008; Elsen *et al.*, 2008; Gray *et al.*, 2007; Kreber, 2006; De la Calle, 2004; Cottrell and Jones, 2003). According to this research it is possible to advance that there are 8 traits which characterize faculty's teaching dimension in the new EHES model which were not present in the old teaching context:

1. The new paradigm is based on the self-guided learning of the student, who is guided by the professor.
2. It is oriented towards the results of student learning, which are expressed in specific and general professional skills.
3. It focuses the teaching-learning process to encourage cooperative work between students and faculty.
4. It demands more specificity in the formulation of objectives, a new definition of learning activities and the adoption of new teaching methodologies and implies a decrease in the time used for teaching by lecture or exposition.
5. It proposes a new way to organise learning: modular, multi- and trans- disciplinary curricular spaces in service of a global educational project.
6. It requires the introduction of collective planning in the centres to develop specialist training projects; thus, there should be a specified time and space in which to facilitate the coordination and exchange of experiences.

7. It promotes the use of assessment that is strategic and integrated with teaching-learning activities, assigns new value to continual training assessments and reviews the final-certification assessment.

8. It assigns a greater importance to the use of information and communication technologies and their potential for developing new forms of learning.

If these traits cannot be considered as something absolutely new, that were completely absent from previous ways of understanding teaching and learning, we must admit that the new European model of university teaching, is forcing to change higher education traditions of countries such as France, Italy, Spain and Portugal, in which teaching has been based on lectures and final exams as methods of verifying that students have learned the content. The changes brought by the ESHE require from faculty to adopt a new philosophy in their work: a new way of understanding the concept of 'teaching competency'.

Although the Bologna Declaration did not causes necessarily methodological changes, but rather aimed to introduce changes at the level of university's structure, it has had a great influence in university teaching nowadays. For instance, the fact of giving grades that look at unifying professional profiles across the UE country members, implies that it is necessary to plan teaching in terms of competencies that must be acquired through equivalent learning methodologies, which also implies a need for cooperation and coordination of faculty involved in teaching in the same course or grade. León (2007) argues that changes in the Law degree will allow the new design of the different legal professions in Europe, allowing full interchangeability in the training and professional careers regardless of the country where studies have been performed. This will require, by public authorities, a strong commitment to improving the financing of Spanish universities and the support and dignity of the working conditions of faculty.

Thus, it is critical to convince faculty that their need to update in order to confront this great challenge, because it is closely related to the goal of improving the quality of university teaching (Bain, 2004). However, we must be careful in this regard: teachers are nowadays under growing levels of pressure with respect to assessment (e.g., accreditations, verifications, productivity, accountability) while they've enjoyed in the past great freedom in their teaching methods. In this sense, they may be reluctant to seek professional development in the pedagogical field. Recent research confirms that when faculty is asked about the need to increase their development in the terms of managing new methodologies or other topics related to the ESHE, their answers indicate that all of them *generally* consider this goal to be very important, but they do not *personally* consider it as necessary (Fernández, Carballo and Galán, 2010).

3. Towards an assessment of teaching competency in the ESHE

Teaching competency in the realm of the ESHE is determined by the capability of faculty to successfully perform all of the functions required by their professions in a manner that corresponds to the teaching quality traits that we have derived from the official documents in the previous sections of this paper. Thus, a skilful professor should possess specific skills in his/her specific area of expertise and in the didactic, communicative, and innovative realms (Valcárcel et al., 2003). These skills can be framed in the four realms: cognitive, functional, personal and ethical skills (Villa and Poblete, 2007).

The previous sections have described the major axes of the paradigm shift in the definition of teaching competency required by the implementation of the ESHE and the new skills that define the professional profile of faculty.

In accordance with the tendency to assess faculty teaching skills, based on the recommendations of the *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education* (ENQUA) and *Agencia Nacional Española de Calidad y Acreditación*[4] (ANECA) in Spain, it seems logical that the assessment model to which university faculty is subjected should evolve to fit the new paradigm.

3.1 ANECA and the Docentia Programme: going forward or backwards?

The Docentia Programme for the evaluation of teaching was launched by the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) in collaboration with the Regional[5] University quality agencies in early 2007, with the aim to provide Spanish universities with a model and the procedures to guarantee the quality of the teaching staff and to promote its development and recognition.

The Docentia Programme[6] is developed according to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, promoted by the ENQA. Among its criteria and guidelines it says that institutions need to have the means to ensure that teachers are qualified, and are responsible for their work; and they should also provide opportunities for them to

---

[4] The National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (*Agencia Nacional Española de Calidad y Acreditación* ANECA) is a governmental foundation, created on July 19, 2002 according to the *Act of universities (art. 32 LOMLOU) 4/2007,* April 12, and *Law No. 14/2000*, December 29, by the Spanish Ministry of Education Culture and Sport. The *Organic Law* 4/2007, april 12, (LOMLOU) which modifies the *Act of Universities* 6/2001, december 21, authorizes ANECA as a National Agency according to the State Agencies Law for the improvement of public services.

[5] The kingdom of Spain is divided in regions –*comunidades autónomas*-, and regional governments have a very high degree of autonomy in order to apply the common legislation inside the limits of their basic legislation. Education –as well as medical care, etc.- is one of the fields in which this freedom applies.

[6] *Act of universities (LOU) 6/2001*, December 21, art. 31, ap. 26. The Law made ANECA and the regional governments responsible to assess teaching, research and governance in Universities. This same Law, art. 43 ap. 3, defines that the Statutes of the University must implement the means to evaluate faculty's teaching and research results. In the RD 1312/2007, October 5, is established the need for national accreditation in order to teach at Universities. ANECA is part of this process of accreditation, hence the importance of this Programme. The Docentia program, is developed in close collaboration with the Regional Governments Assessment Agencies. ANECA assumes a committmet to help universities and Autonomous Communities in technical aspects of the process. Universities must follow a model in order to present designs of evaluation. ANECA provides tools for designing teaching assessment. Besides, universities have a degree of autonomy in order to specify assessments indexes, resources and instruments

develop and expand their teaching abilities. Institutions have to provide opportunities for low performance teachers to improve their skills so that they can reach an acceptable level.

Docentia main objective is to provide a frame of reference, a model and procedures to address the evaluation of the educational activity that takes place in universities, such an assessment in the framework of internationally recognized practices, and thereby foster the personal and professional promotion of faculty as well as decision-making by the governing bodies of the University, regarding the policy and management of human resources. The docentia program is developed in close collaboration with the educational administrations of the autonomous communities and regional assessment agencies. ANECA assumes a committtmet to help universities and autonomous communities in technical aspects of the process.

The model underlying upon which this programme rests considers **three dimensions** of faculty assessment:

- **Faculty planning.** Includes elements such as organization and coordination, results of expected learning, activities planning and criteria and methods of assessment.

- **Educational development.** Includes all activities associated with the development of teaching and evaluation of learning and activities and procedures.

- **Results.** Expressed in terms of results of outcomes, targets achieved by students, academic performance and review and improvement of the teaching activity rates.

These three dimensions must be assessed according to, at least, four criteria: **suitability** to the requirements established by the University; **satisfaction** of the agents involved; **efficiency**, within the meaning of fostering in students the development of previously determined competencies; and **orientation towards innovation,** involving reflection on one's own practice in order to promotes the improvement of faculty.

Within the frame of a theoretical freedom of choice, universities have the capacity to select the most suitable sources and procedures to the objectives and implications of the evaluation, as far as they guarantee: a) absence of bias, which means to go beyond the extent perceptions of students; b) validity, using different sources of information; c) participation of the evaluated teachers; and d) feasibility. The number of sources and procedures must not call into question the sustainability of the process. However, without prejudice to other sources and procedures which the University considers of interest, Docentia proposes the use of at least these three sources: teacher self-report, report of academic leaders and student satisfaction surveys. These constraints mean in practice that ANECA leaves few options, in our view, to design alternatives evaluation.

The Docentia Programme is structured in three phases: 1. **Evaluation**: universities must submit the evaluation model developed and associated procedures. According to it, they have to follow a provided model in order to present designs of evaluation. ANECA provides tools for designing teaching assessment. Besides, universities have a degree of autonomy in order to specify assessments indicators, resources and instruments. It must include: objectives and consequences of evaluation, model and sources to be used, and procedure for decision-making related to evaluation. These models have been assessed by expert commissions and currently more than 50 universities have their models positively evaluated. 2. **Follow-up**: The implementation of the model for at least two years is requested prior to accessing the certification phase. In this phase, the University must produce a reflexive report on the implemented process, with an emphasis on how have developed procedures, the adaptation of the model and its capacity of discrimination as well as the results of the evaluation and the decisions taken. These reports are analyzed by an appointed Commission to the effect that produces a report with recommendations for its implementation and, when appropriate, gives way to the certification phase. 3 **Certification:** Finally, the results obtained with the assessment procedure applied by the University for a period of time have to be certified. After two years of experimental implantation, universities have to write an inform for a commission created by the evaluation agency. If everything goes well, the commission communicate to the university that it is ready to enter the certification phase. The university has to send the required documentation to ANECA, declaring that full fills all the requisites. When a positive certifications is granted, it lasts for four years this certification validates all the evaluation processes undergone by the faculty, in case that they want to present the to other qualification processes. This is why all certifications must be comparable.This process will be carried out by Certification Committee and will require, in any case, a visit to the University.

After studying the teaching assessment system of the 5 best Spanish universities in the World University Rankings 2011-2012 according to the *Times Higher Education Supplement*[7] some conclusions can be drawn from the ANECA model:

1. Respecting the three sources and three dimensions required by the Docentia Programme, each University has designed quite different models: from essentially generalists and qualitative types of assessment to basically closed and quantitative models.

2. The disparity of systems, weights and indicators of assessment greatly difficult the comparability among universities and, consequently, competitiveness in terms of teaching quality (as opposed to research), also cutting the possibilities of information and decision of prospective students.

3. Most universities use as a key tool of teacher evaluation the survey of students' satisfaction, which include criteria used by ANECA to evaluate teachers: planning, development and results. Although several universities have been validated the survey through the appropriate psychometric techniques, there are problems with the size and representativeness of the sample that erode reliability in many cases.

4. The compulsory or voluntary nature of the evaluation also varies between universities and contractual figures. The trend will probably be mandatory evaluation once the evaluation procedure is certified by ANECA.

---

[7] 1st Pompeu Fabra University (186), 2nd University of Barcelona (201-225), 3rd Autonomous University of Barcelona (201-225), 4th Autonomous University of Madrid (276-300), and 5th University of Valencia (301-350).

5.   The effects of teaching evaluations also vary between universities. Thus, for example, in some Universities, it is a condition for renewing the contract of faculty. In others, it means a symbolic salary supplement or a certificate of excellence. The poor performance of teachers, send them to updating programs or processes of reflection on the negative of their results, in order to redefine lines of improvement.

6.   Given the characteristics of the Spanish public University, the report of the academic responsible (usually the Head of the Department) presents little variability, being almost always very positive reports. However, it is an interesting tool for detecting problematic cases.

7.   The self-report is recognized in the research literature as a good tool to encourage reflection on one's own teaching practice. Experience shows that there are big differences between self-reports, which reflect different levels of involvement. However, there are obvious difficulties to assess quantitatively the contents of a self-report in the face of an assessment with economic effects or promotion, but it facilitates the external evaluator the contextual interpretation of the data gathered through other sources of information.

8.   Pressure for the adoption of new teaching methodologies. There is no doubt that assessment is a critical lever for change. Employees are seeking professional recognition through the achievement of the objectives and directives emanating from the higher bodies. Indicators of the current tools of teaching evaluation mark the path of the new requirements for teachers: using virtual technologies, coordination of programmes, procedures for evaluation, coordination and consistency between programs

9.   The error of ANECA in the inclusion of the "result" dimension. In our opinion, it is a mistake to include an indicator as "rate of students who pass the exam" as part of the scores for the teaching competence. It sends a very dangerous message: to highest approved rate, best score -no comment-. However, it is important within the context of evaluation and, above all, of decision-making. Why has a subject, repeatedly, such a disproportionate rate of failure or success? There could be many reasons. A high failure rate is undesirable, but can it be attributed to the teacher without further study? Certainly not. It is necessary to confront the situation with the teacher involved, to review the previous preparation required of students, the adequacy of the program, etc., in order to find the cause of the problem and to look for a solution.

10.   Guarantees and academic freedom. Two major questions that may be raised against teaching assessment relate to possible invasion of academic freedom and legal thereof guarantees, especially when the evaluation will have consequences in the wage and the promotion of the assessed. Both points deserve further study that goes beyond the objectives of this article. However, in our opinion, the evaluation systems that

have been analyzed are sufficiently broad to permit faculty to make their own methodological choices among a wide range of possibilities; but it is also true that they would hardly obtain positive assessment marks if they rely exclusively on lecturing and final exams.

11.   It is a task that remains for further research to check whether these assessments processes are consolidated within the universities, if they are recognized by the authorities as salary and promotion merits, and if the results from various universities are comparable taken that they use different evaluation models, although they have common elements.

4. The ideal of teaching excellence in the ESHE vs. teaching assessment

Next, we will summarise in five points what we consider the main traits of the new vision of "teaching excellence", and our proposal regarding the ways in which the new skills that characterise the teaching professional profile in the ESHE framework should change the focus of the tools that are used for the teaching assessment of faculty.

We are going to analyze to what point the ANECA model suits them.

1. The basic proposal for university education in the ESHE is *learning-centred teaching* (Brew and Ginns, 2008; Kinchin *et al*., 2008; Kreber, 2006), which adopts approaches to student learning that agree with the socioconstructivist vision of knowledge (Otting *et al*., 2010; Fernández, 2006). This vision highlights the critical active role of the individual who is learning. This concept involves the recognition of previous knowledge, the beliefs and motivations of students regarding the construction of meaningful networks and the setting in which students learn by independently directing their capabilities to the construction of meaning. Using this approach, students are the owners and protagonists of their learning processes, and teachers only act as guides who direct and empower the efforts and capabilities of the students. In this line, Jabalera (2009) makes an interesting effort to change teaching and evaluating practices in Law subjects. Authors like Nogueira (2011) or Martín and Ruiz (2005) show also experiencies on teaching innovation in the field of Law according to ESHE. In fact, there are not many differences with other fields when faculty of School of Law apply pedagogical theory to new teaching methodologies as working seminars.

Accordingly, the instruments of teaching skill assessment should include items that address the perceptions of students regarding their learning levels and the opportunities provided by the professor to foster independent learning. ANECA only commands to gather information about the satisfaction of the agents involved. The survey of students is no doubt the element most widespread and important to evaluate faculty as docents. However, each University has designed its own assessment survey, which makes difficult to compare them, and leaves aside basic aspects, as we may see below. In our opinion, ANECA should have been agreed with regional agencies a

number of common prescribed items for all the degrees and universities, leaving also a space for freedom, so that every University could introduce items that meet own targets. Consequently, some item in the study questionnaire should be directed to see the perception of the degree of learning achieved by the students. Similarly, faculty should be evaluated in terms of whether they are assessing the previous knowledge of the students and analysing their initial and final attitudes with respect to the subject matter being taught. At this point, it may be interesting to measure the level of academic self-regulation and the adjustment between the programme estimated time to master the discipline , and the real time that students spend in doing so (Torre, 2007).

2. Learning is focused on the *development of general and specific skills.* The Royal Spanish Decree 55/2005 of January 21 (BOE January 25, 2005), which establishes the structure of university teaching and regulates official university degree studies, indicates that these programmes should provide students with learning experiences that integrate general, basic skills, cross-sectional skills that are related to their overall development, and specific knowledge and capabilities (MECES, 2010). Therefore, 'learning' should not be exclusively equated with the attainment of knowledge; rather, it should involve the development of skills that allow students to grow as individuals within society and within their professions. In this sense, each student should acquire a series of skills that is oriented towards his/her whole formation. We must remember that the development of skills can be viewed in a continuum because each person can master these skills to a certain degree, and this degree of mastery should be evaluated by faculty. In relation to professional profiles, and competencies associated to Law degrees, González and Muñoz (2010) conclude that Law degree should produce, in addition to legal knowledge and expertise, a set of competencies and skills that enable students to develop their profession after accessing the labor market.

In our analysis, we do not see that the ANECA's model pays too much interest to this aspect, although it is considered essential to the ESHE. It is true that it is difficult to evaluate, but it has to be faced in order to be properly taken into account. Regarding this point, teaching skill assessment tools should address the general and specific skills that students should develop in a specific subject as defined in their programmes of study. The definition of such skills in these programmes should also be verified; this aspect could be easily assessed through the degree commissions but is difficult to assess through the use of student surveys. It is also necessary to include items that request the opinions of students regarding the degree to which they have acquired these skills.

3. Students learn as a function of how they are to be evaluated. Therefore, assessment is a very useful tool with which to appropriately guide learning. The outcomes that are fostered through the use of assessment indicate the focus of learning that students will predictably use: more

superficial or more in depth, as suggested by Biggs (2005). Therefore, assessment should be regarded as one activity among the different face-to-face and individual study sessions of learners.

We advocate the *strategic use of assessment for the self-guided learning of students* (Yorke, 2011, 2010; Coutts et al., 2011; Conrad *et al.*, 2007; Muñoz, 2006; Cottrell and Jones, 2003). The following was observed by Pérez et al. (2003) as it occurs in Spain and other European countries with universities in the Napoleonic tradition: thus far, the universities have not produced students who are capable of thinking about learning and understanding the complex nature of knowledge because university education does not promote this type of thinking. This observation is evidenced in the common assessment practices of universities, in which the tasks of recognition or definition prevail over those of construction, explanation, or argumentation. In this sense, Monereo and Pozo (2003) provide examples of the use of teaching methodologies relevant to the search for quality learning that are more closely linked to critical thought regarding content. Therefore, if this situation is to be improved, the roles of both faculty and students should change inside and outside the classroom. Students can no longer have passive and estranged roles in their own learning. Faculty is expected to act as guides and advisors, like the managers of strong teams (Benito and Cruz, 2005) or the leaders of counselling sessions.

Assessment tools should be developed in a way that allows both teachers and students to attain the degree of mastery of the different predetermined skills in the programme or study guide for the academic subject. Such tools will encourage students to direct more of their efforts towards those skills that are in particular need of strengthening. Assessment needs to be another learning activity. For instance, Jabalera (2009) presents an innovative approach in the degree of law. By means of such an innovation, faculty uses a system of continuous assessment to evaluate student effort daily, based on the attitudinal and procedural objectives achievement, besides the traditional cognitive objectives. Faculty emphasized in this manner the importance of evaluation in the acquisition of better learning aligned with EHEA. Although ANECA mentions the importance of assessing learning, Universities do not always implement instruments to evaluate this indicator. Thus, the faculty assessment instruments that students use as a source of information should include references to the type of assessments to which their learning is directed (e.g., the presence of continuous assessment, the demand of in-depth vs. memorisation knowledge in the assessment systems used, the development of general skills and the need to provide students with information regarding the degree of acquisition of skills) and the point at which teachers empower self-guided learning versus learning that involves repetition of the contents transferred. Similarly, internal commissions evaluating qualifications must ponder if the subject programmes should be analysed to gauge the degree to which their goals and stated forms of learning assessment include tools that promote the reworking of knowledge. This point will represent an essential method by which to determine whether teachers are adapting their style to the ESHE. Nonetheless, it remains to be determined whether students will want to seriously accept this active role that is expected of them

and what will happen if they does not do accept this role, as we find ourselves in a context in which apathy, disinterest and utilitarianism are common among university students.

4. The ESHE proposes a new definition of *learning activities.* To encourage students to acquire and develop different generic and specific skills, there should be coherence between all of the elements of teaching: planning, methodology and evaluation. Thus, teachers should be explicit regarding the skills that should be strengthened with the study of their subjects; they should design learning activities that are suited to the development of these skills, and all of these activities should be guided by assessment processes that favour and direct learning.

Because the new ESHE framework is intended to promote self-guided learning by students, it should be developed through relevant teaching strategies. Benito and Cruz (2005) propose the use of active methodologies to promote the independent learning of university students: cooperative learning, problem-based learning and case studies. The array of teaching strategies that assist in the development of various professional skills should be promoted by the use of information and communication technologies that allow self-guided learning and the assessment and monitoring of students. Abel (2010) presents an experience in the law degree where faculty use Problem-Based Learning applied to legal science and criminal law as a new teaching technique in the EHEA. On the other hand, Aguilar *et al.* (2009) show a experience in law degree using case methodology, so that each student has to solve a different practical case proposed by tax lawyers, tax consultants and tax administration staff. The experience showed a very positive respercusión in student learning.

Again, besides the general references from ANECA, attempts to evaluate the teaching methodology used by faculty is complex. However, the academic subject study programmes should consider how teaching can be more focused towards students, and the students in turn should be capable of describing the methods and techniques used by their faculty and (more importantly) the effects that these techniques have on their learning. These types of questions should appear in the new instruments of teaching skill assessment. In this sense, Kember and Wong (2000) and Exeter *et al.* (2010) highlight the importance of the learning context perceived by the students as an effective contributor to quality learning.

5. One of the defining changes in the higher education model envisioned by the ESHE is the requirement of integrated training projects -*interdisciplinarity and interdepartmentality*- as the goal of the educational journey is primarily professional training. We cannot speak of the mere summation of skills; rather, true interdisciplinarity should be promoted. Because some skills will be developed Galán in different subjects, joint programming is fundamental. The skills that are the most important in the area of knowledge associated with each department and the weight assigned to the different subjects in the professional development of students should also be defined. All of these

efforts require planning and design that are specific to each Certification Programme and thus interdepartmental collaboration and coordination. Fach (2012) and Bertrán y Pérez (2009) reflect on the growing multi-disciplinarity and internationality of the legal practice and how Spanish Law Schools have to make use of mechanisms such as the Problem Based Learning (PBL) to give an optimal answer both to the student's learning potential and to the requirements of a global market.

This is one of the aspects which ANECA does not mention, most probably because this responsibility belongs to the designers of the academic degree curriculum more than faculty themselves. However, the inclusion of this dimension in the assessment of teaching skill could be implemented using two data sources. First, verification by the departmental coordinator or other academic person responsible for a programme will assist in determining the degree to which the major subject programme integrates the interdisciplinary dimension. Second, students can provide valuable information regarding the potential overlap in academic content, the perception of complementarities between academic subjects, and the adequate organisation of subject matter within the curricula.

5. Conclusions and discussion

In this article, we have identified some of the traits that characterise the development of high-quality university teaching within the framework of the implementation of the ESHE. When defining the profile of an 'excellent university professor' as is understood in the new educational paradigm (Galán, 2007), we must recall that the efforts of many faculty to achieve maximum levels of professional competency were underway prior to the establishment of the ESHE.

The specific traits that we have listed throughout our work define the changes that *should happen* at the teaching level with the implementation of the ESHE, which is largely motivated by the definition of student learning results in the form of the skills associated with various professional profiles. It represents changes in perspectives that both faculty –not all of them, but a large number of university lecturers- and students should undertake in many of the countries of the European Union, Spain among them, that are unfamiliar with these educational systems and traditions.

We propose that these traits should be considered in the design of the instrument for assessing the teaching competency of faculty if the true aim of the ESHE is intended to promote greater research competitiveness and higher-quality teaching. The results of ANECA's assessment model (Docentia Programme) shows that educational policies try to favour teaching practices according to the new European regulations. But the responsibility rests mainly on Universities that, in cooperation with ANECA and the regional governments have to implement the means of evaluation and the weight given to each factor in order to positively evaluate the work of faculty. In

this sense, faculty have to quickly adapt themselves to the changes if they want to win a better salary. Many lecturers will need specific training that should be approached carefully; training plans (suitable for various types of courses, length, papers, meeting places and content) should minimise the initial reticence of the faculty and the potential for an excessive overload (Carballo, Fernández and Galán, 2010).

Many authors (Prieto, 2007; Bain, 2006; Biggs, 2005) agree that the definition of a good professor – in addition to the years of teaching experience gained – is strongly related to their ability to reflect on their work and seek new paths for improvement (Elsen *et al.*, 2008; Gray *et al.*, 2007; Kane *et al.,* 2004; Light and Cox, 2002). In this sense, we consider appropriate the inclusion of the item of self-evaluation, specifying the lecturer's personal targets as a part of the academic assessment.

The complexity associated with the evaluation of the academic quality of university faculty is significant, as there is no exclusive discussion regarding the methods of creating such assessments. This complexity is indeed relevant, and we should ensure that it is possible to evaluate a skill that reflects upon the 'art of teaching' (Beecham, 2009).

In fact, faculty assessment leads to ambiguous effects because although faculty evaluations provide personal incentives to effect improvement, partly due to the possibility of receiving awards or monetary bonuses for excellence in teaching (Shephard *et al.*, 2011; Woody, 2010; McKenzie, 2007; Palmer and Collins, 2006), this assessment simultaneously creates an increase in the pressure of accountability demanded from faculty. Professors may feel overwhelmed by the growing bureaucracy – in terms of constant and redundant assessment – undertaken by government entities and university supervisors: assessment of research quality (e.g., well-publicised journal articles, R&D projects, patents, transfer of knowledge), management (e.g., different academic posts, involvement in commissions for the coordination and development of curricula) and teaching (e.g., teaching competency, educational publications, teaching in virtual platforms, teaching innovation projects).

The students become the new main players according to the ESHE framework. However, we should question whether, in the mass university environment that currently prevails, the students will be capable of confronting the challenge of working more autonomously and responding to methods of conceiving learning much more creatively and personally. The responsibility of students to simply reproduce information will be decreased, but the new goals involve deeper learning and the exertion of greater personal effort. In fact, some student[8] and faculty[9] movements have demonstrated against the Bologna process on the basis of alleged fears regarding a supposed privatisation of the university and their perception of a considerably increased level of academic rigor and time required to complete university studies. Carreras,

---

[8] See, for instance, http://noaboloniacadiz.wordpress.com/2009/03/03/manifiesto-de-estudiantes-de-la-uca-contra-bolonia/

[9] See, for instance, http://old.kaosenlared.net/noticia/manifiesto-profesores-contra-declaracion-bolonia

Sevilla and Urbán (2006: 112) state that the interest in the acquisition of competences is determined by its ability to adapt when the needs of a flexible market and constantly changing. For these authors, full-time worker status moves to student schedule (8 hours working days), while faculty transform into tutors who control students timing. In short, they argue that the new system aims to train people whose knowledge meet only the needs of labor market and whose values are accepted and complied with the rules of the neoliberal system.

ANECA's Docentia Programme has made possible that a large number of Spanish universities adopted faculty evaluation as a global task, with practical consequences. Governing bodies of Universities and regional agencies are trying to make clear that teaching assessment is crucial in order to implement the ESHE. It is too soon to evaluate the consequences of teaching summative assessment, but it is helping to pay more attention to the teaching dimension in Higher Education after the neglect that it has suffered over the last decades, when research outcomes were considered the only valuable fruits of faculty work.

REFERENCES

Books and Articles

Abel Souto, M. (2010). El ABP como nueva técnica pedagógica aplicada a las ciencias jurídicas y al derecho penal en el EEES Dereito. *Revista xuridica da Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.* Vol. 19, Nº 2. 469-485. ISSN 1132-9947

Agasisti, T. 2009. Towards "Lisbon Objectives": Economic Determinants of Participation Rates in University Education--An Empirical Analysis in 14 European Countries. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 63, no3: 287-307.

Aguilar Rubio, M., Luque Mateo, M.A. (2009). El aprendizaje del Derecho Financiero y Tributario en el marco del EEES: experiencias desde la Universidad de Almería (I). *Documentos - Instituto de Estudios Fiscales.* Nº. 30, 95-106. ISSN 1578-0244

Attewell, P. 2009. ¿Qué es una competencia? *Revista Interuniversitaria*, 16. 21-44.

Bain, K. 2004. *What the best College teachers do.* Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press.

Baker, D. 2009. The Educational Transformation of Work: Towards a New Synthesis, *Journal of Education and Work*, 22 no3: 163-191.

Beecham, R. 2009. Teaching Quality and Student Satisfaction: Nexus or Simulacrum?, *London Review of Education*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (July 2009), 135-46.

Benito, A. & Cruz, A. 2005. *Nuevas claves para la docencia universitaria en el Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior*. Madrid: Narcea.

Bertrán Girón, M., Pérez Lara, J.M. (2009). Presentación del proyecto de innovación docente Enseñanza del Derecho mediante supuestos prácticos interdisciplinares e interdepartamentales. *Documentos - Instituto de Estudios Fiscales*. Nº. 30. 45-54. ISSN 1578-0244

Biggs, J. 2005. *Calidad del aprendizaje universitario*. Madrid, Narcea.

Brew, A. & Ginns, P. 2008. The relationship between engagement in the scholarship of teaching and learning and students' course experiences. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 33 no5: 535-545.

Burchell, H. 1995. A useful role for competence statements in post-compulsory teacher education?, *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education,* 20 no3: 251-259.

Conrad, C.F., Johnson, J. & Gupta, D.M. 2007. Teaching-for-Learning (TFL): A Model for Faculty to Advance Student Learning, *Innovative Higher Education*, 32, 153-165.

Cottrell, S.A. & Jones, E.A. 2003. Researching the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: An Analysis of Current Curriculum Practices, *Innovative Higher Education*, 27 no3: 169-184.

Coutts, R., Gilleard, W., & Baglin, R. 2011. Evidence for the impact of assessment on mood and motivation in first-year students. *Studies in Higher Education*, 36 no3: 291-300.

De la Calle, M. J. 2004. El Reto de ser profesor en el contexto de la convergencia europea. La formación pedagógica como necesidad, *Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado*. 51 no1: 251-258.

Elsen, M., Visser-Wijnveen, G.J., Van der Rijst, R.M. & Van Diel, J.H. 2008 How to Strengthen the Connection between Research and Teaching in Undergraduate University Education, *Higher Education Quarterly*, 63, Issue 2, 64-85.

Exeter, D. J., Ameratunga, S., Ratima, M., Morton, S., Dickson, M., Hsu, D., & Jackson, R. 2010. Student engagement in very large classes: the teachers' perspective. *Studies in Higher Education*, 35 nº7, 761-775.

Fach, K. (2012). Ventajas del 'Problem Based Learning' (PBL) como método de aprendizaje del Derecho Internacional. *Bordón,* 64 (1), 59-73.

Katia Ll. M.

Fernández, A. 2006. Metodologías activas para la formación de competencias, *Educatio siglo XXI*, 24, 35-56.

Fernández, M.J., Carballo, R. & Galán, A. 2010. Faculty attitudes and training needs to respond the new European Higher Education challenges, *Higher Education*. Volume 60, Issue 1, 101-118.

Ferrer, J. & González, P. 1999. El profesor universitario como docente, *Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado*, 34, 329-335.

Galán, A. (Ed.) 2007. El perfil del profesor universitario: situación actual y retos de futuro. Madrid: Ed. Encuentro.

González Losada, S y Muñoz Catalán, E. (2010). Análisis de las competencias de los estudiantes de derecho en los nuevos planes de estudio de Andalucía en el EEES. *Revista de educación*. Nº 12. 147-162. ISSN 1575-0345

Gray, K., Chang, R. & , Radloff, A. 2007. Enhancing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Evaluation of a Scheme to Improve Teaching and Learning Through Action Research, *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 19 no1: 21-32.

Guerra, E. 2008. Las competencias ¿en educación?, *Nuevas Tendencias*, 71, 67-80.

(Viewed May 9, 2011).

Hubball, H.T. & Burt, H.2006. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Theory–Practice Integration in a Faculty Certificate Program. *Innovative Higher Education*, 30 nº5: 327-344.

Jabalera Rodríguez, A. (2009). Innovación en la evaluación de las disciplinas jurídicas: nuestra experiencia en la asignatura Derecho Fiscal Comunitario. *Documentos - Instituto de Estudios Fiscales*, Nº. 30. 75-86. ISSN 1578-0244

Kane, R., Sandretto, S. & Heatch, C. 2004. An investigation into excellent tertiary teaching: Emphasising reflective practice, *Higher Education*, 47 no3: 283-310.

Kember, D. & Wong, A. 2000. Implications for evaluation from a study of students' perceptions of good and poor teaching, *Higher Education,* 40 no1: 69-97

Kinchin, I.M., Lygo-Baker, S. & Hay, D.B. 2008. Universities as centers of non-learning, *Studies in Higher Education*, 33 no1: 89-103.

Kreber, C. 2006. Developing the Scholarship of Teaching through Transformative Learning, *Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning,* 6 no1: 88-109.

Kreber, C. 2010. Academics' teacher identities, authenticity and pedagogy. *Studies in Higher Education*, 35 no2: 171-194.

Lattuca, L., Terenzini, P., Harper, B., & Yin, A. 2010. Academic Environments in Detail: Holland's Theory at the Subdiscipline Level. *Research in Higher Education*, 51 no1: 21-39.

León Benítez, M. R. (coord.) (2007). *La licenciatura de derecho en el contexto de la convergencia europea*. **España: Tirant lo Blanch. ISBN**: **978-84-8456-849-0**

Light, G. & Cox, R. 2002. *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: The Reflective Professional.* London: SAGE.

Loiola, F.A. & Tardif, M. 2001. Formation pedagogique des professeurs d'université et conceptions de l'enseignement, *Revue de sciences de l'education*. 27: 305-326.

Martín Sánchez, C. y Ruiz, C. (2005). Innovación docente en la Universidad en el marco del EEES. *Educatio Siglo XXI: Revista de la Facultad de Educación* (Ejemplar dedicado a: Convergencia europea), Nº. 23. 171-190. ISSN 1699-2105

McKenzie, N. 2007. Teaching excellence awards: an apple for the teacher?, *Australian Journal of Education*, 51 no2: 190-204.

Monereo, C. & Pozo, I. 2003. *La universidad ante la nueva cultura educativa: enseñar y aprender para la autonomía.* Madrid: Síntesis.

Moore, S., & Nyiel, K. 2007. Retrospective insights on teaching: exploring teaching excellence through the eyes of the alumni, *Journal of Further & Higher Education*, 31, no2: 133-143.

Muñoz, I. 2006. El perfil del profesor en el EEES, *Monográfico sobre EEES de la Revista Miscelánea Comillas*, 64, no 124: 39-62.

Muñoz, J. M., Ríos, M. P. & Abalde, E. 2002. Evaluación Docente vs. Evaluación de la Calidad, *Revista Electrónica de Investigación y Evaluación Educativa,* 8, no 2. Online: http://www.uv.es/RELIEVE/v8n2/RELIEVEv8n2_4.htm (Viewed May 19, 2011)

Nogueira Guastavino, M. (2011). El constructivismo como base teórica del nuevo método docente y su proyección en los estudios de Derecho del Trabajo. *Revista General de Derecho del Trabajo y de la Seguridad Social*

Norton, L., Richardson, T. E., Hartley, J., Newstead, S. & Mayes, J. 2005. Teachers' beliefs and intentions concerning teaching in higher education, *Higher Education,* 50 no4: 537-571.

Otting, H., Zwaal, W., Tempelaar, D., & Gijselaers, W. 2010. The structural relationship between students' epistemological beliefs and conceptions of teaching and learning. *Studies in Higher Education*, 35 no7: 741-760.

Palmer, A., & Collins, R. 2006 Perceptions of rewarding excellence in teaching: motivation and the scholarship of teaching, *Journal of Further & Higher Education*, 30 no2: 193-205.

Pérez, M.P., Pozo, J.I. & Rodríguez, B. 2003. Concepciones de los estudiantes universitarios sobre el aprendizaje. *La universidad ante la nueva cultura educativa: enseñar y aprender para la autonomía.* Madrid: Síntesis, 33-44.

Prieto, L. 2007. *Autoeficacia del profesor universitario: eficacia percibida y práctica docente.* Madrid: Narcea.

Ramsden, P. 1992. *Learning to Teach in Higher Education.* London: Routledge.

Rioja, A. 2007. Hacia qué modelo de Universidad converge Europa, *Revista Interuniversitaria*, 14: 21-44.

Schaeper, H. 2009. Development of competencies and teaching-learning arrangements in higher education: findings from Germany. *Studies in Higher Education*, 34, no6: 677-697.

Shepard, K., Harland, T., Stein, S. & Tidswell, T. 2011. Preparing an application for a higher-education teaching-excellence award: whose foot fits Cinderella's shoe?, *Journal of Higher Education Policy & Management*, 33, no1: 47-56.

Skelton, A. 2009. A 'teaching excellence' for the times we live in?, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 14 no1: 107-112.

Tigelaar, D., Dolmans, D., Wolhagen, I. & Dan der Vleuten N. 2004. The development and validation of a framework for teaching competencies in higher education, *Higher Education,* 48: 253–268.

Times Higher Education World Universities Rankings, Online: http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/ (Viewed January 8, 2011).

Torre, J.C. 2007. *Una triple alianza para un aprendizaje universitario de calidad.* Madrid, Universidad P. Comillas.

Valcárcel, M. *et al.* 2003. *La preparación del profesorado Universitario Español para la Convergencia Europea en Educación Superior.* Estudio EA2003-0040 MECD.

Villa, A. & Poblete, M. (Dir.) 2007. *Aprendizaje basado en competencias.* Bilbao: Universidad de Deusto/Mensajero.

Woody, W. 2010. Teaching Excellence Award Winners. *Teaching of Psychology*, 37, no4: 229-236..

Yorke, M. 2011. Summative assessment: dealing with the 'measurement fallacy'. *Studies in Higher Education*, 36 no3: 251-273.

Yorke, M. 2010. How finely grained does summative assessment need to be?. *Studies in Higher Education*, 35 no6: 677-689.

Legislation

Ley 14/2000, de 29 de diciembre, de Medidas Fiscales, Administrativas y del Orden Social.

Ley Orgánica 4/2007, de 12 de abril, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 6/2001, de 21 de diciembre, de Universidades (BOE 13/04/2007) (LOMLOU)

Ley Orgánica 6/2001, de 21 de diciembre, de Universidades (BOE 24/12/2001) (LOU)..(LOMLOU)

Real Decreto 1312/2007, October 5, por el que se establece la acreditación nacional para el acceso a los cuerpos docentes universitarios.

Documents from Public Administrations

Conferencia de Ministros de la Unión Europea (1999). *El Espacio Europeo de la Enseñanza Superior.* Declaración conjunta de los ministros europeos de educación reunidos en Bolonia el 19 de junio de 1999. Disponible en:

http://www.upcomillas.es/eees/Documentos/declaracion_bolonia.pdf [May, 4, 2011].

Consejo Europeo (2000). *Conclusiones de la presidencia*. Lisboa: Consejo Europeo de Lisboa ,March, 23 & 24.

Ministerio de Educación Español 2010. *Documento-Marco: La Integración del Sistema Universitario Español en el Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior*.

378:371(460)

Abstract

The official documents pertaining to the European Space for Higher Education (ESHE) contain few guidelines regarding the changes required in university teaching; the documents merely state that the changes should be oriented towards a) teaching focused on learning, and b) learning in order to acquire academic-professional competencies. Out of these simple guidelines, National Quality Agencies and governing bodies of the Universities have designed a set of assessments policies implying strong methodological changes in everyday teaching practices. This article provides a critical review of the new European setting and the new features defining the university teaching profession (i.e., the professional skills that ESHE implementation demands from faculty). As a result of the study, five traits that define teaching competency are proposed within the ESHE framework. It is recommended that these dimensions be considered in the design of models that assess the quality of university teaching. Finally, the appropriateness of ANECA's Docentia Programme for faculty evaluation in this context is examined.

Keywords: European Space for Higher Education (ESHE), University teaching, Faculty evaluation, Academic excellence, teaching competency.