

The Benefits Of Obtaining International Quality Seals For Argentine, Chilean, Ecuadorian, Spanish And Mexican University Courses

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Abstract

The objective of this work is to reflect on the benefits provided by the international quality labels managed by the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA), in collaboration with professional institutions and international quality assurance agencies, after passing a completely virtual evaluation process since the pandemic, according to international standards. These labels are aimed at Bachelor and Master level training programs in Argentine, Chilean, Ecuadorian, Spanish and Mexican universities. Materials and methods: The data used in this study are supplied directly by ANECA, from its evaluations carried out from 2014 (pilot project) to July 2021. Results and discussion: 49 universities have obtained some of these labels for their educational programs, which has given benefits to its management teams, teachers, students, graduates and employers.

Keywords: international accreditations; quality; labels; teaching evaluation ; Introduction

1. Introduction

In 2013 in Spain, a new phase opens in the process of promoting quality in university education with the renewal of the accreditation of official training programs. The renewal of accreditation is mandatory according to Royal Decree

861/2010, of July 2, its article 27 bis states that the initial accreditation of official programs must be renewed periodically from the date of its verification or from the date of your last accreditation.

The National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) of Spain, an autonomous body attached to the Ministry of Universities of said country, which contributes to improving the quality of the higher education system through the evaluation, certification and accreditation of teachings. , teachers and institutions, takes advantage of this new stage to take another step in the accreditation of teachings, offering the possibility of obtaining international seals of recognized prestige for Bachelor's and Master's level programs in certain disciplines and delivery modality from any Spanish university. or foreign.

These seals are awarded to all those Bachelor's or Master's level programs that pass an evaluation process with favorable results, in which experts from different countries participate. These evaluations verify compliance with quality standards agreed upon by representatives of the academic and professional world from different countries (ANECA, 2021a; García-Martín and Escudero de la Cañina, 2021; Hamid-Betancur and Torres-Madronero, 2015; Lucas et al., 2021; Peláez et al., 2020).

These international accreditations are developed within the ANECA International Quality Seal Program (SIC) following the same procedure, terminology and defined standards, in accordance with the principles of quality, relevance, transparency, recognition and mobility, contemplated in the Space European Higher Education to universities from different countries. Argentina, Chile, Spain and Mexico participate to this day (Bonilla-Calero et al., 2018).

The stamps currently offered by ANECA are the following:

- Since 2013, the EUR-ACE® Engineering Seal from ENAAE in collaboration with the Institute of Engineering of Spain (IIE) and the Accreditation Council for Engineering Education (CACEI) of Mexico (Bonilla-Calero et al., 2021) and the EQANIE EURO-INF Computer Science Seal in collaboration with the General Council of Professional Colleges of Computer Engineering (CCII), the General Council of Official Colleges of Technical Engineering in Computer Science (CONCITI) and the National Council for Accreditation in Computer Science and Computing (CONAIC) .(Bonilla-Calero and Serrano-García, 2021d).
- Starting in 2018, the ECTN EURO-LABELS® Chemistry Seal in collaboration with the Royal Spanish Society of Chemistry (RSEQ) and the Interinstitutional Committees for the Evaluation of Higher Education (CIEES) of Mexico (Bonilla-Calero and Serrano- García, 2021c).
- Since 2021, the ANECA International Quality Seal in Non-Personal and Hybrid Teaching (ENHPI®) , the first to be designed and executed exclusively by ANECA in 2020, in order to be applied by users of semi-face-to-face¹ or non-face-to-face training programs, as a tool that allows measuring the level of confidence regarding the optimal development of the non-face-to-face teaching-learning process of the programs taught under this modality (Bonilla-Calero and Serrano-García, 2021b; Bonilla-Calero et al., 2019).
- Starting in 2021, the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) Seal of Medicine will be issued to respond to the demand formulated by the National Conference of Deans of Spanish Medical Schools , after announcing that starting in 2023 (postponed by the pandemic to 2024) doctors who apply for the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) certification to work in the US will have to have graduated from a university center of Medicine accredited

according to globally accepted criteria (Bonilla-Calero and Serrano-García, 2021a; WFME, 2020; Bonilla-Calero et al., 2000).

The main objective of this study is to show the benefits provided by the International Quality Seals managed by ANECA in Argentina, Spain and Mexico (so far the three countries with completed evaluations), based on the results obtained between December 2020 and January 2021 (closing of this article) for the testimonies received from: the universities that offer programs with these seals, the students who are taking them, the graduates who have completed them and the companies that have hired graduates with these stamps.

The motivation that led to the publication of this work is the success obtained during the development of the evaluations of the 2019 and 2020 call in terms of deadlines and the interest in new applications for future calls. In just nine years since the implementation of this project, an increase in these has been experienced, especially in the last four years, through calls and emails from Spanish and Latin American universities interested in participating in the evaluations. This increase is due to several of the benefits provided by obtaining one of these seals, which are analyzed in this article below.

2. Methods and materials

The data used in this study has been provided by the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA), which is in charge of managing these international accreditations. The Agency is authorized by international associations to evaluate the obtaining of these international seals. The result was obtained after passing an evaluation process between 2013-2014, which lasted approximately twelve months for each of the seals.

The Argentine, Chilean, Ecuadorian, Spanish and Mexican training programs that request evaluation to obtain some of the seals, managed by the Agency, must undergo an evaluation procedure, defined by its staff in collaboration with experts. national and international academics and professionals, approved and audited every five years by the agencies that own these seals.

A procedure that cannot exceed twelve months, counted from the day that the higher education institution presents the self-evaluation report and the evidence required for the evaluation (the moment the procedure begins), until the ANECA issues the final decision on the awarding of the seal through a Seal Accreditation Commission. Halfway through the process, a virtual visit is made to the center where the program is taught, evaluated by an external evaluation panel, which is in charge of interviewing all the agents involved in it: management team, teachers, students, graduates. /as and companies that hire the latter.

Based on the information obtained in the analysis of the Self-Evaluation and Evidence Report, presented by the university, together with that collected during the visit, the external evaluation panel prepares an Evaluation Report. This team is made up of two academics, one of whom serves as president, one professional, one student and a third academic or quality technician, who serves as secretary. a of said team, to guarantee that the evaluation is carried out in compliance with the regulations established by ANECA for these evaluations, which every five years are subject to approval by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and, as has already been previously cited, also, by the agencies that own the stamps.

The Evaluation Report is sent to the Accreditation Commission of the Seal ², in charge of issuing a provisional evaluation, first, and then a final one, once the

possible allegations that each university may present to the report derived from the provisional evaluation have been analyzed. This Commission is made up of 6 academics and 6 professionals from the field of the corresponding seal; In addition, it has a seventh quality academic or technical person who acts as secretary, who may be in a different field than that of the seals, as he or she does not have an evaluator role. He/she is in charge of guaranteeing that the evaluation complies with all the regulations established by ANECA, prior to the start of it. The evaluators of this Commission have extensive international experience, due to the importance of the internationalization of these seals.

From the development of these international accreditations, the following data is obtained:

1. Evaluation results, obtained from the pilot call (held in 2014) to the 2020 call (ended in July 2021): number of evaluations; positive versus negative final results, distribution of positive evaluations by country, number of universities with seal, evaluations by cycle and seal.
2. Those identified in the meta-evaluation carried out annually to the International Quality Seals Program (SIC), based on the analysis of the satisfaction surveys completed by all Spanish, Argentine and Mexican universities (which to date have completed evaluations) and evaluators from different countries who participate every year in each call.
3. The testimonies received by email between December 2020 and January 2021 about the benefits experienced since obtaining some of these seals by universities (management team and teaching staff), students, graduates and their employers. latter, after ANECA made a call to all the universities that had obtained some of these seals between January 2014 and December 2020, with the aim of obtaining

real experiences about the advantages they provide to each of the agents involved in the same.

In the case of completed evaluations, the possible results to be achieved are the following:

- a) Obtaining the Seal: for those official educational programs that have achieved a rating of A (passed excellently) or B (achieved) in all evaluation criteria. Obtaining the Seal may include, in any case, recommendations for improving the program, and will be valid for six years.
- b) Obtaining the Seal with prescriptions: for those programs that, having achieved A or B ratings in most of the evaluation criteria, have some C rating (partially achieved) in some criterion.

If the degree obtains the Seal with requirements, these are specified in terms of time and form in the final evaluation report issued by ANECA, and their achievement must be possible within a reasonable period of time (as a general rule less than half of the usual total period of accreditation renewal). The Seal Accreditation Commission is responsible for determining the date of verification of compliance with the requirements.

The awarding of the Seal is made based on the acceptance of the prescriptions by the university, included in the final evaluation report to obtain the Seal. Once this period has ended, compliance with the requirements indicated in said report is checked. If the requirements established in the final evaluation report to obtain the Seal are not met, it will no longer be valid for that title.

- c) Denial of the Seal: for those cases in which the evaluation procedure determines that the criteria and standards previously established in its evaluation are not met.

For data analysis, it is recommended to use completed evaluations and not those assigned to a call, given that the evaluations may be assigned to a call and have been evaluated in a year different from that of the call. Since 2018, the usual thing is to start the evaluation at the end of the year of the call and finish it in the following year, although ANECA is making adjustments to the evaluation plans, to ensure that they end the same year in which they are carried out . they start.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 International accreditations in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Spain and Mexico (2014-2021) managed by ANECA

From 2014 to 2021 ³373⁴ evaluations have been completed . There are 73⁵ active universities distributed among 20 universities: 16 Spanish, 3 Mexican and 1 Chilean. ²²⁰6 applications have been received to apply for the 2022 call for the ANECA International Quality Seal Program distributed among: 21 Spanish, 6 Mexican, 5 Ecuadorian and 1 Chilean universities (ANECA, 2021b).

Every year, between the months of June and November, the Agency offers a period of reflection to universities that have expressed interest in submitting their programs to the evaluation of international quality seals, in order for them to carry out an analysis of the guarantees of success that they have to obtain the chosen seal, to this end the evaluation procedure and the documentation that each university must present for each educational program to be evaluated are facilitated and they are offered the resolution of all doubts that they may have. arise to interested parties in this regard.

During this analysis, there are universities that detect that they do not meet all the criteria to obtain the seal for which they would opt or that they need more time to be able to present themselves with sufficient and/or appropriate evidence to justify

that they meet them. For example, 40 applications from the 2021 call were postponed to future calls for this reason.

Regarding the evaluations in process and those already carried out, Table 1 shows the data since 2014, in which there were two calls: the pilot with 18 evaluations and the first ordinary, with 9, until July 2021, in that the 2020 call has ended, which began in that year with a total of 53 evaluations. At the time of writing, 65 more are in progress. As already indicated, up to 12 months may elapse between the start and closure of the evaluation of an educational program. In May, predictably, the universities present the documentation to be evaluated to ANECA (as it is the date preferred by the majority of applicants so far) and from that date they establish between two or three months to carry out the virtual visit to the university. university, with the aim of interviewing the different agents involved in the educational program to be evaluated: management team, teaching staff, students, graduates and employers.

Table 1. Programs evaluated per year

Year	No. programs evaluated*	No. evaluation completed	programs
Pilot (2014)	18	18	
2014 (first ordinary call)	9	7	
2015	23	25	
2016	30	30	

2017	31	31
2018	55	55
2019	150	73
2020	179	80
2021 (July)	127	53*
Total	622	373

* 73 more evaluations in process.

Source: self made.

If the number of program evaluations per year is observed (622), there is an increase in evaluations starting in 2019, going from 27 evaluations in 2014 to more than 100 evaluations in 2019, 2020 and 2021, without being affected. this growing trend due to the health crisis caused by COVID-19, because the universities that have submitted to the 2019, 2020 and 2021 calls have made an effort to meet all evaluation deadlines, providing in a timely manner all the documentation requested by the evaluators during said process.

Of these 622 evaluations, in 373 the final evaluation has already been carried out by the Accreditation Commissions of three seals: EURA-CE ® for Engineering, EURO-INF for Computer Science and EURO-LABELS ® for Chemistry.

Table 2. Results of programs with final evaluation by the Accreditation Commission by seal.

Seal	No. evaluation programs	%
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	completed	
EUR-ACE®	305	81.77
EURO-INF	59	15.82
EURO-LABELS®	9	2.41
Total	373	

Source: self made.

Among the results obtained in the three seals, the number of evaluations completed in the EUR-ACE® seal stands out, to which all Bachelor's and Master's level training programs in all Engineering specialties can be submitted. The next seal with the highest number of evaluations is that of Computer Science, to which Computer Science and Computer Engineering programs can opt. Lastly, there is the Chemistry seal, to which only Chemistry programs can be submitted, whose implementation at ANECA was in 2018, three years after that of the other two seals (see Table 2).

At the close of this call, of the 73 evaluations that are in process, 48 are from Spain, 22 are from Mexico and 3 from Chile.

For the 2022 call, of the 220 provisional applications received, 170 are from Spain, 32 are from Ecuador, 15 from Mexico and 3 from Chile.

Table 3. Results of programs with final evaluation of the Accreditation Commission by country

Country	No. evaluation programs	%

	completed	
Spain	364	97.59
Mexico	7	1.88
Argentina	2	0.53
Total	373	

Source: self made.

The evaluation process is exactly the same for all countries. Having evaluations in several countries provides the programs with seal, visibility and convergence among all of them.

Table 4 shows the distribution of completed evaluations by training cycle, with Degrees occupying the highest percentage with 73%.

Spanish universities have opted, first, for the evaluations of this training cycle to then submit their Master's programs to evaluation, a trend observed in the three seals for which evaluations have been completed so far by each of their Accreditation Commissions.

In the case of Argentina and Mexico, so far, all evaluations have been at the Bachelor's or Engineering level, although several Master's representatives from these countries have contacted ANECA to inquire about these international accreditations.

Table 4. Results of evaluations with final evaluation of the Accreditation Commission by training cycle

Cycle	No. evaluation	%
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	programs completed	
First	273	73.19
Second	100	26.81
Total	373	

Source: self made.

Table 5 shows that the percentage of obtaining the seal so far is very high (91.15%), compared to the total evaluations completed by the Accreditation Commissions. Within the favorable results, two assessments are established: 1) obtaining, for which the seal is granted for up to six years; 2) obtaining with prescriptions, in those programs in which the university has to correct a series of weaknesses, identified by the evaluators, in a maximum period of three years, with the aim of maintaining the seal a total of six years.

Table 5. Positive (obtaining and obtaining with prescriptions) versus negative (denial) final results.

Concessions	No. universities	%
Obtaining	198	53.08
Obtaining with prescriptions	142	38.07
Denials	33	8.85
Total	373	

Source: self made.

It is important to note that, as this is a voluntary evaluation, not all educational programs that could be submitted for evaluation request it. Even between June, the month in which universities make their provisional application, until November, in which they confirm them, an average of 30 applications per year do not confirm the evaluation. The reason is having observed, in most cases, between those months that they do not have sufficient and/or adequate evidence to clearly demonstrate compliance with all the criteria. In such a way, they decide to apply for upcoming calls, with the aim of having a greater guarantee of success to obtain the seal in the future. As has happened in the 2021 call with some Spanish, Mexican and Chilean universities.

Until the closing of this article, all the negative results have been from the EUR-ACE® Seal, which occupy 9% of the completed evaluations of all seals. Regarding the total engineering they represent 11%.

One of the main reasons for denial observed, so far, among the programs that have not achieved the seal is not having demonstrated compliance with 7 or more learning sub-outcomes established by the international association of ENAEE. In the Bachelor's programs, 22 sub-results are established and in the Master's programs, 28 sub-results are established, grouped into the following blocks: Knowledge and Understanding; Analysis in Engineering; Engineering projects; Research and Innovation; Practical Application of Engineering; Preparation of Judgments; Communication and Teamwork and Continuing Training (ENAEE, 2015).

Regarding the reasons why evaluation reports have been issued with the result of “achievement with prescriptions” during the period analyzed, it is necessary to mention that each report can contain between 1 to 6 prescriptions, related to the

learning sub-results established by ENAEE, EQANIE and ECTN (depending on the seal), because their integration is not complete in the evaluated educational program and/or their acquisition is not total by all students, once the educational program has been completed. In these cases, the Seal Accreditation Commission, which corresponds, establishes a period between two to three years, depending on the cycle of the evaluated program, to correct these weaknesses, with the objective of achieving integration and acquisition of these sub-results. complete, both in the educational program and by the students who take it, respectively.

In the Computer Science seal there are 29 sub-results to demonstrate their acquisition in the evaluated Degree level programs and 34 sub-results in the Master's degrees, grouped in the following blocks: Fundamentals of Computer Science; Analysis; Design and Implementation; Economic, Legal, Social, Ethical and Environmental Context; Computer Science Practice; Other Professional Competencies and Skills (EQANIE, 2016).

Regarding the Chemistry seal, the sub-results that graduates with this seal must acquire are 37 in the Degree programs and 10 in the Master's level programs, distributed in the following blocks: Specific Knowledge of Chemistry; Cognitive Competencies and Abilities; Competencies and Skills related to Chemistry and General Competencies (ECTN, 2018).

When analyzing which block of sub-results of all the stamps have issued the most prescriptions, it mainly coincides with those that have a practical component, which require significant dedication on the part of the student body, which has not been demonstrated in the educational programs. during your evaluations; and, on the other hand, the need to increase the use of a second language in the activities carried out in said educational programs.

No significant differences are observed between the Bachelor's and Master's programs evaluated, nor between the Argentine, Spanish and Mexican programs in terms of prescriptions issued per block of learning sub-results.

If the results are analyzed by training cycle (see Table 6), the distribution is similar, both in the Bachelor's and Master's evaluations. The “attainment” result is around 53%, with 52.75% in the Bachelor's degrees and 54% in the Master's programs. The rest of the evaluations – in both cases – are distributed between the results “obtained with prescriptions” and “denials”, with the negative evaluations having the lowest data, 8% in Bachelor's degrees and 12% in Master's.

Table 6. Results of final evaluations (Bachelor versus Master)

Result type	Obtaining	%	Obtaining prescriptions	%	Denial	%	Total
Degree	144	52.75	108	39.56	twenty-one	7.69	273
Master	54	54.00	3.4	34.00	12	12.00	100
Total	198	53.00	142	38.07	33	8.85	373

Source: self made.

Table 7 shows the number of universities with each of the seals. As of today, there are already 49 universities that enjoy the benefits of the seals: 45 from the Engineering seal, 29 from Computer Science and 9 from Chemistry. 40 are Spanish, 4 Mexican and 1 Argentine. Some of them already have the three seals and/or others have renewed their concession after six years have elapsed since obtaining them (ANECA, 2021b). See the lists with the programs that have obtained these seals on the ANECA website: <https://bit.ly/3rhDwOZ>

Table 7. Number of universities with international quality seal

Seals	No. universities
EUR-ACE®	Four. Five
EURO-INF	29
EURO-LABELS®	9
Total	49*

* Universities with various seals.

Source: self made.

3.2 The improvements implemented in the SIC International Accreditation Program in Spain and Latin America

Since the 2018 call, a meta-evaluation of the SIC Program is carried out every year in which the opportunities for improvement identified in each completed call are analyzed, without making a distinction whether it has been detected in an evaluation in Argentina or in Spain or in Mexico, from:

1. The satisfaction surveys completed by the universities and evaluators participating in each call, both in Argentina, Spain and Mexico, sent to ANECA after the completion of each evaluation,
2. The meetings and emails received about the SIC program (11,127 in 2018, 13,938 in 2019 and 13,620 in 2020) by evaluators from different countries and from Spanish and Latin American universities.
3. The reflection carried out in ANECA, when the SIC self-assessments are prepared, prior to the evaluations of this program by ENAEE, EQANIE, ECTN,

ENQA and by the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) every five years (ENQA, 2020 ; EQAR, 2021).

4. The analysis and adjustment of the SIC evaluation procedure and criteria when incorporating new seals to said program. In 2021, a new seal for Non-Face-to-Face and Hybrid Teaching and another for Medicine have been implemented. All applicable to Spanish and Latin American programs.

All opportunities for improvement that are identified each year are presented to the Technical Commission of the SIC Program, the committee in charge of ensuring the proper functioning of the seal evaluation procedure, as well as the review of all the documentation used in it. This Commission is made up of the director of the Education and Institutions Evaluation Division, the head of the SIC Program, assigned to said Division, representatives of the teaching staff chosen by ANECA and professionals proposed by the professional institutions collaborating with the Agency, all with experience in university quality processes in Spain and Latin America.

199 improvement opportunities have been implemented between the 2018-2020 calls, of which 50% have been identified by the SIC team. The remaining 50% by the other agents involved in this international project: universities, evaluators and collaborating associations.

Some of them, which affect universities, both Spanish and Latin American, are highlighted below:

1. A new structure for presenting evidence and adjustments to its templates.
2. The self-assessment report has become a complementary and clarifying information tool for the evidence presented by the universities.

3. The presentation of evidence is carried out completely electronically.
4. A Frequently Asked Questions document and a Glossary that are published on the ANECA website and are updated each year, prior to the opening of each call.
5. Evaluation reports provide more detailed information.
6. A savings plan to reduce costs in tasks derived from international accreditations.
7. A completely virtual evaluation, given the impossibility of carrying out the visits in person as they were usually carried out, because at the time of their celebration, between June and October 2020, there was no guarantee of having the necessary security measures to protect the health of evaluators and university representatives during evaluations, due to the health crisis caused by COVID-19. In order to implement this improvement, a completely virtual evaluation proposal was sent to ENAEE, EQANIE and ECTN for approval, supported by a contingency plan drawn up based on the results obtained in the survey sent to the 160 evaluators, who were collaborating in the ANECA SIC Program in 2020, to find out their opinion on the possibility of a virtual visit, on the possible incidents that could occur, as well as the solutions to these and the recommendations to take into account in its development. A decalogue was generated for evaluators and universities with the aim of facilitating the development of visits under the virtual modality, a specific training day on virtual visits for the 160 evaluators and an additional calendar to the information-technical meetings, since established, with the Spanish and Latin American universities that participated in the 2020 call, which were offered a complementary channel to email and telephone to resolve all doubts related to this new type of visits. At the close of this article, virtual visits

have already been carried out in 24 universities, all of them with a positive assessment of this change (Bonilla-Calero and Serrano-García, 2021e).

8. Do not re-evaluate Criteria 1 to 7 contained in the evaluation model established to obtain each of the seals, if the educational program has previously been evaluated by an agency that collaborates with ANECA in a period of less than two years. , after making a comparison between the criteria that a program must meet to obtain accreditation with said agency versus the first seven criteria of the ANECA seal evaluation model, which corresponds. The evaluation model of each seal is made up of nine criteria, Criterion 9 “institutional support of the university to the evaluated program” and the most important, Criterion 8 “Learning results of the seal”, as it is the one that includes the guidelines regarding to the integration of the learning results required by the corresponding international agency and the acquisition of all of these by all its students, once the evaluated program is completed (ANECA, 2021a).

3.3 The benefits of obtaining an ANECA International Quality Seal

Once the results obtained in the international accreditations managed by ANECA between the pilot project and July 2021 have been presented, as well as their improvements implemented throughout this period, the benefits that these seals provide to the agents involved in them are presented. based on an analysis of the testimonies that have reached the Agency between December 2020 and January 2021; after requesting, in that same month of December, all universities with a seal to send testimonies to ANECA in which they could share the benefits they had experienced since obtaining these seals.

40 universities that had obtained some of the 273 seals ⁷ were contacted, of which 23 sent testimonies from 114 people: management team (47), teaching staff (5), students (18), graduates (22) and employers (22) (See Table 8).

In the “management team” category, experiences have been obtained from rectors, vice-rectors, deans, directors, deputy directors, heads of studies and coordinators.

From the 114 testimonials received, 200 benefits were identified, which are then grouped by type of benefit and agent who reported it.

Table 8. Benefits experienced by the agents involved in the universities with the seal

Agent involved	Experienced benefit	Number of times identified
Management teams	Promote motivation collectively (of teachers, students and administration and services staff) in participation in actions to improve the program with a seal in an international context.	32
	Increase the quality level of certified programs with updates and changes.	7
	Obtain greater satisfaction from the personnel who participate in the evaluated program.	4
	Increase the demand for students in certified	12

Agent involved	Experienced benefit	Number of times identified
	training programs.	
	Facilitate the international mobility of students from programs with a seal.	8
	Provide access to other programs of international prestige to people who graduate from programs with a seal.	1
Management teams	Provide training programs with a seal of recognition of professional qualifications in the business sector at an international level.	13
	Provide mutual recognition between programs with a seal.	5
	Improve the position of universities with training programs with a seal in the rankings of international higher education institutions.	3
	Offer confidence to the productive sector when hiring people who graduate from programs with a seal in terms of the content and skills acquired.	5
	Provide better job placement opportunities to	14

Agent involved	Experienced benefit	Number of times identified
	graduates with a worldwide seal.	
	Incorporate the centers of the training programs with seal in international networks of scientific and/or technological development and/or innovation and/or business.	5
	Improve the visibility of certified programs in an international context.	4
Graduates	Obtain a positive assessment from graduates regarding the preparation provided according to common standards with validity at a national and international level.	13
	Improve job opportunities for people who graduate with the seal.	twenty
	Facilitate the international mobility of graduates with the seal.	7
	Facilitate access to prestigious higher-level training programs for graduates with the seal.	3
	Help graduates with the seal obtain	1

Agent involved	Experienced benefit	Number of times identified
	scholarships.	
Students	Guarantee the choice of a training program that complies with European and international standards recognized by employers from different countries.	3
	Provide support to graduates when entering the labor market.	1
	Provide the acquisition of knowledge and practical skills based on international standards.	2
Employers	Select students for internships and/or hire graduates with:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high qualification at an international level with content and practical skills based on international standards. 	8

Agent involved	Experienced benefit	Number of times identified
	• Excellent training endorsed by an external international evaluation process.	4
	• Training that promotes horizontal and vertical mobility.	2
	• Training that provides confidence and prestige to the company that selects and/or hires them.	5
	• Competencies such as: motivation, leadership, the ability to adapt, the ability to acquire new knowledge and the fulfillment of objectives.	8
	• A proactive profile, with the ability to listen actively and solve problems.	1
	• A decision-making capacity based on the analysis of the results.	1
Total		200

Source: self made.

4. Conclusions

The National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA), with the objective of taking another step in promoting higher educational quality in

Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Spain and Mexico and the international recognition of its graduates, implements the international seals of quality.

At the close of the article, 622 program evaluations have been carried out per year between January 2014 and July 2017, with an increase in evaluations observed starting in 2019, going from 27 evaluations per year in 2014 to more than 100 evaluations in 2019. , 2020 and 2021, without this growing trend being affected by the health crisis caused by COVID-19.

Of these 622 evaluations, in 373 the final evaluation has already been carried out by the Accreditation Commissions of three seals: EURA-CE ® for Engineering, EURO-INF for Computer Science and EURO-LABELS ® for Chemistry. The EUR-ACE ® seal is the one on which the most evaluations have been carried out. In 2021, ANECA has begun managing the evaluation of two new seals, the ENPHI ® and WFME seal, with a pilot project in each case, which are in process at the close of this article.

ANECA has managed these international accreditations in Argentina, Spain and Mexico. Chile currently has programs in the evaluation process and Ecuador has expressed its interest in participating in the next call. The evaluation process is exactly the same for all countries and this international projection provides the programs with seal, visibility and convergence among all of them.

73% of the programs with evaluation completed by the Accreditation Commissions of the seals are at the Degree level. Universities have opted, first, to evaluate their Degrees, and then submit their Master's degrees to evaluation.

The percentage of obtaining the seals is very high (91.15%) compared to the total of evaluations completed by all the Accreditation Commissions. It is important to note that they are voluntary evaluations and not all educational programs that could

be submitted for evaluation request it. Even some who make the provisional application do not confirm it when the call opens, because they do not have sufficient guarantees to obtain the seal for which they would opt, after carrying out a prior self-assessment.

In all the seals, it coincides that weaknesses have been identified, mainly in the demonstration of integration in the evaluated programs and their subsequent acquisition by their graduates of learning results with a practical component, as well as those that require the use of a second language.

No significant differences are observed between the Bachelor's and Master's programs evaluated, nor between the Argentine, Spanish and Mexican programs in terms of identified weaknesses.

49 universities already enjoy the benefits of the seals: 45 from the Engineering seal, 29 from Computer Science and 9 from Chemistry. 40 are Spanish, 4 Mexican and 1 Argentine. Some of them already have the three seals and/or others have renewed their concession after six years have elapsed since obtaining it.

Since 2018, an annual meta-evaluation of the ANECA International Quality Seal Program has been carried out, based on the satisfaction surveys completed by the universities that have participated in each call. From these meta-evaluations, 199 improvements have been implemented. 50% detected by the SIC team. These improvements include: a new structure for presenting evidence and self-assessment report, complete virtualization of evaluations, etc.

40 universities that had obtained some of the 273 seals between January 2014 and July 2021 were contacted, of which 23 sent testimonials. A total of 200 benefits were identified, pointed out by members of management teams, teachers, students, graduates and employers, among which the following stand out: promoting

motivation collectively in participation in improvement actions, increasing demand from students to training programs, providing better job placement opportunities for graduates, etc.

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QUIMACOVA, SIMA Engineering, Técnicas Reunidas, SA, Tecon Soluciones Informáticas, SL., Vestas Manufacturing and Softtek.

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