When Research Assessment Moves Forward (in Spain)

Experiences from UAM and UC3M Libraries

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ANECA: A New Model for Research Assessment in Spain

The Role of ANECA

- ANECA, created in 2001, is the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain under the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities.
- ANECA is responsible for assessing:

  - The merits of candidates for **accessing a teacher/researcher career** in universities.
  - The merits of **researchers** to receive economic **incentives**.
  - The quality of the **degrees**.
  - The quality of **teaching** in universities.
  - The internal **systems for assuring quality in institutions**.
  - And much more…

- Signatory of DORA (San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment) and CoARA (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment) in April 3rd 2023.

ANECA: A New Model for Research Assessment in Spain

Sexenios (Incentives to Research): What Happened in 2024?
- *Sexenios* are six-year period assessments based on annual calls: this means an increase in the salary
- Eligible faculty select the 5 publications (+ 2 additional in reserve) they consider the best in the period.
- Assessment based on general criteria and specific criteria according to research fields.
- Reference date: doctoral thesis defense.
  - For example: a PhD in 2005 could apply for a first *sexenio* in 2011 (period 2005-2010); in 2023 he/she could have been acknowledged 3 *sexenios* and could apply for the 4th in 2029 (6 are the maximum *sexenios* that can be applied for).
- Reformed in 2023: a new committee for designing the new call + draft open to public discussion.

Assessment criteria until 2023	New assessment criteria in 2024
Based on quantitative metrics (JCR, SJR) in most of the research fields. Some *ad hoc* criteria for fields where quantitative metrics are less determinant (i.e. Law and Humanities).	Keeps the quantitative metrics and other criteria as evidences of relevance and impact but sets qualitative assessment in the centre of the process (researchers are asked to highlight their actual contribution and to provide evidences of social impact.
No reference to mandatory deposit of publications or data according to the Law of Science, Technology and Innovation (approved in 2011, modified in 2022).	Mandatory deposit of publications or data assessed according to the Law of Science, Technology and Innovation (approved in 2011, modified in 2022).
No reference to open access in publications or data.	Contribution to open science is worth 10% of the total points.
No reference to DORA.	Builds the model upon DORA and CoARA principles.

IMPORTANT: this change of paradigm is the ground for the new model of accreditations (enabling teachers and researchers to become civil servants [full professors or associate professors] or being hired at universities).

ANECA: A New Model for Research Assessment in Spain

Challenges for University Libraries

- For more than ten years, university libraries had been collaborating in the *sexenios* / accreditations processes by helping researchers to identify the indicators of relevance and impact (impact factor in JCR, SJR and other, as well as citations) of the publications they select
- In 2024, that task was complemented for the first time with:
  - Enriching relevance and impact reports with additional information on social impact, altmetrics… → To comply with the quantitative/qualitative assessment and info on social impact
  - Uploading publications in institutional repositories → To enable the 10% of the points on open science
    - In **open access** when copyright or licenses allow to, otherwise…
    - In **restricted access** or **under embargo**
  - Uploading open data in data repositories → To enable the 10% of the points on open science

ANECA: A New Model for Research Assessment in Spain

Challenges for University Libraries

- However…
  - In a single call, researchers can apply for more than one *sexenio*, which multiplies the tasks to do from 2024 on.
  - Publications in open access were many of them already in the repositories, but not all of them.
  - Publications in restricted access were not usually included in the policies of repositories, so outputs that cannot be shared in open access needed to be deposited in a hurry.
  - Self-deposit is not enabled in many repositories
  - Researchers had no practice of sharing data.
  - The calendar was against the researchers and the universities:
    - Libraries (and some researchers) knew by mid November (when the draft of the call was published) that many changes were coming and started to get their procedures ready.
    - Specific criteria for research fields were published in December 5th, 2023.
    - The call was published in December 19th, 2023 (pre-published a couple of weeks earlier with the definitive criteria to provide more room for preparation).
    - The application system was open from January 22nd to February 12th 2024, which means that **we all had 1-2 months to do things that had never done before**.
    - There were **many questions from researchers** that neither the libraries or de ANECA were ready to answer until late (some will depend on decisions by the assessment committees).

A New Framework for University Libraries

The Role of REBIUN

- REBIUN, created in 1998, is the Spanish Network of University Libraries. Integrated in the area of Research, Development and Innovation of Crue (Spanish Conference of Rectors)
- REBIUN has a strong reputation supporting libraries in coordinating regulations, services and procedures for teaching, research and management in universities through:

Groups derived from the implementation of strategic plans (see below Strategic Plan 2024-2027)	Permanent working groups
Line 1: The library in the context of digital transformation	Collective catalogue
Line 2: Open Science	Repositories
Line 3: Teams and professional training	Bibliographic heritage
Line 3: Governance, collaboration and internationalization	Statistics
	Interlibrary loan
	Communication
	IPR (Intellectual Property Rights)
	Strategic Plan (to monitor its development)

A New Framework for University Libraries

First Steps

- REBIUN started strengthening links with ANECA in 2023 prior to the changes of the *sexenios* call. When the call was announced in November 2023, a joint seminar ANECA-REBIUN was organized where library directors and specialists participated
- REBIUN prepared an [infographics](#) in collaboration with ANECA

UAM & UC3M: Experience and Some Data from the Libraries

A Time Trial to Get us Ready and Help Researchers

- Reacting immediately in November/December 2023 to the upcoming changes of the call by
  - Involving researchers as much as possible
  - Reorganizing library research teams (some in central services, some in the school libraries)
  - Adding people to the specialists in assessment and open access (some of them from circulation desks)
  - Reviewing the procedures to speed up the deposit of publications and data
  - Learning on how to demonstrate social impact and provide altmetrics to enrich the relevance and impact reports
  - Coordinating efforts with other university libraries
    - In REBIUN, by encouraging a fluent communication with ANECA and contacting colleagues from other libraries
    - In Madroño, the regional consortium UAM and UC3M belong to, by agreeing on a single policy on uploading with a long embargo the publications that cannot be deposited in open access
- Facing stress and uncertainty
  - How many researchers would apply? How many already had their publications in the repositories? How many researchers would try to share their data?
  - Would we be on time to prepare the relevance and impact reports and to deposit publications and data?
- Arising expectations
  - Would this be (finally) the moment when publication and data repositories (and libraries) will (finally) triumph in OA?
  - Would we (both librarians and researchers) "die" by attempting it?
  - Would we (both librarians and researchers) "hate" or "love" each other forever?

UAM & UC3M: Experience and Some Data from the Libraries

UAM and UC3M universities are barely comparable because their size is much different, but the figures below show an unprecedented effort from the libraries to respond to researchers' needs

Key data	UAM	UC3M
Library staff involved	29	38
Training sessions to researchers		
Number	8	9
Hours	12	12
Participants (non-unique)	224	401
Questions received	109	150
Reports on relevance and impact		
Reports prepared	331	81
Publications reviewed	2.533	719
Publications deposited	1.522	960
Data deposited	2	17

Conclusions So Far?

- 3 good news!
  - Publication and data repositories are now more well known than ever!
  - Librarians and researchers managed to survive!
  - Librarians and researchers seem to "love" each other more than ever! (let's wait until researchers get their *sexenios* acknowledged)
- 3 issues to keep improving
  - Working towards new organizational models (both with regards to researchers practices and library procedures) to avoiding concentration of too many tasks in so short a time (danger with accreditations that are open all the year!)
  - Automatizing processes further (i.e. better links between the CRIS and the repositories, more self-deposit options)
  - Coordinating (even) better within REBIUN / Madroño and with ANECA, with a special focus to evaluate the actual impact of the new models of assessment and if there are criteria to refine/remove/add