

## Lessons learnt from the accreditation of civil/bio engineering programmes in Belgium

*AEQES and CTI have performed a joint evaluation and accreditation of civil engineering programmes in the French speaking community of Belgium (FWB)*

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## Why it concerns EUR-ACE ?

ENAAE is revising the EUR-ACE standards and framework (so does ENQA for the ESG's)

- Precise the core for the accreditation from what depends on the national context
- Understand what is good practice from what should be prescribed
- Gain experience on the gains and pitfalls of « mutual recognition »

Transnational accreditation : a matchless experience

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## outline

1. Motivation of the stakeholders
2. The main issues of the project
3. The process and results
4. Lessons learnt by the CTI and AEQES
5. Lessons learnt about EUR-ACE and its evolution

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## An ambitious joint project

- collaboration of **AEQES** (a generalist evaluation agency) and **CTI** (an engineering accreditation agency) in order to organize a joint mission
- twofold objective:
  - ✓ **the evaluation of engineering programmes according to AEQES' legal requirements**
  - ✓ **their accreditation according to CTI's criteria to be awarded the « titre d'ingénieur diplômé » and the EUR-ACE label**

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## Stakeholders' motivations(1)

### UNIVERSITIES

- gain of time and money + CTI's expertise + compliance with European standards

### AEQES

- a domain-specific agency provides a generalist agency an asset in terms of expertise
- contribute to fight bureaucracy (multilayers processes)
- analysis of the degree of compatibility between evaluation and accreditation

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## Stakeholders' motivations (2)

### CTI

- get more experience on applicability of CTI's accreditation framework outside France
- deliver abroad the EUR-ACE label
- benchmarking of internal processes against a generalist assessment-oriented agency

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## Main issues of the project

- Build a unique reference framework matching the CTI/AEQES/ENAE framework
- Combine evaluation and accreditation
- Match the cultural and legal contexts
- Award jointly the EUR-ACE label and the « ingénieur diplômé » degree outside France

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## phases of the collaboration



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## Scope

### Four universities concerned

*Catholic University of Louvain (UCL)*

*Free University of Brussels (ULB)*

*University of Liège (Ulg) (including Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of Gembloux – FUSAGx)*

*University of Mons (UMons)*

Four engineering programmes (BA + MA) in the field of agronomic sciences and **biological engineering**

Fifteen (BA + MA) in the field of **engineering sciences**

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## Composition of the panel

- 50% CTI and 50% AEQES, a total of 32 experts
- In terms of profile:
  - 39% of peers
  - 26% of students
  - 22% of experts (industry)
  - 9% of peers/industry
  - 3% educationalist
- In terms of nationality : 2 from Switzerland, 1 from Luxemburg, 8 from Belgium (25%) and 21 from France (65%)

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## Site-visits organisation

- 3 visits of six days and 1 visit of 3 days
- a permanent panel (attended all the visits): chair + 3 CTI rapporteurs + educationalist + expert of the industry + students
- additional domain experts (according to each HEI's provision)
- common interviews + parallel interviews + debriefing (prior preparatory meetings)

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## Outcomes (1)

43 programmes (civil- and bio-engineers) have been assessed in 4 universities (7 engineering faculties or schools)

21 full accreditations (6 years)

15 accreditations for 3 years

7 no accreditation

36 EUR-ACE labels awarded

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## Outcomes (2)

### Transversal analysis

- Strong involvement of the institutions and faculties to prepare the self-evaluation report
- The account of the international standards is recent but has been deeply worked out
- Many programmes are in midstream on the way to full quality assurance and outcome approach
- A very high level of scientific and technical knowledge
- A strong culture of academic freedom in the faculty, a strong tradition of consensus building hinder change of paradigm

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## lessons learnt so far

- learning process and space of trust
- programme vs. institutional assessment
- scope of the accreditation: *admission par l'état* + EUR-ACE label
- review reports
- attitudes and behaviours
- role of the domain experts vs. permanent experts

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## Lessons learnt for EUR-ACE (BR)

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## Relationship with external stakeholders

### Employers : real but informal

- Individual connections
- Research contracts
- Recent creation of advisory committees

### Alumni : Weak involvement

Follow up of the [graduate employment](#) : at the national level (FABI)

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## But ...

- (most) Graduates find jobs easily
- Employers express positive opinions on civil engineers (particularly on their scientific and technical skills)

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- Employers express positive opinions on civil engineers

Very favourable job market : 900  
graduates/year for 4.300.000 inhabitants

Weak incentive to a strong student preparation  
to professional life

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## Developing graduates employability(1)

### Which tools ?

- Transferable skills are part of the expected and assessed learning outcomes
- Active pedagogical methods (projects linked to industrial demands)
- Workplace experience (internships)
- International experience and foreign language proficiency

Different levels of practice in Belgium and France  
(mainly the two last)

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What should we require/prescribe/recommend/give  
as good practices

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## Developing graduates employability(2)

Which tools ?

- Precise follow up of graduates employment (for each programme)
- Follow up of graduates careers
- Continuing education

Different levels of practice in Belgium and France

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## Developing graduates employability(3)

Which tools ?

- Institutional implication of employers (Councils, Advisory committees)
- Implication of employers in programme definition
- Part of the curriculum taught by professionals
- Alumni are consulted/involved in the institution

Different levels of practice in Belgium and France

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## Open questions

What should we  
(accredited agencies/ENAAE)

- Require
- Prescribe
- Recommend
- Give as good practices

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## Questions for the future

- What will be the impact on the students and professionals flows between the two countries (Belgium and France)?
- What will be the impact on the (non)accredited programmes : follow-up procedures in 2016-2017

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## Future developments

A second phase of the collaboration for vocational engineering programmes (ingénieurs industriels)?

The accreditation of the Flemish civil engineering programmes is planned in 2015

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## Thank you

The evaluation reports and the synthesis report are available :  
[http://www.aeqes.be/rapports\\_intro.cfm](http://www.aeqes.be/rapports_intro.cfm)

The accreditation decisions are available :  
<http://www.cti-commission.fr/Seance-pleniere-du-9-septembre>

[bernard.remaud@cti-commission.fr](mailto:bernard.remaud@cti-commission.fr)

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