

African Academic Credit System (ACTS)

Report of the Policy Country Visit to MOROCCO

(Rabat, 24th February 2025)

Date: Monday 24th February 2025 – 10.00 – 12.00

Location: Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation - Rue Idriss Al Akbar - Hassan, B.P: 4500 - Rabat - Morocco

ACTS Experts who participated in the visit:

- Pablo Beneitone (Higher Education Expert of OBREAL)
- Wail Benejelloun (Higher Education Expert of OBREAL)

List of participants from Morocco:

- Azzedine Midaoui - Minister of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation
- Mohammed Khalfaoui - Secretary general, Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation
- Abderrazak Ben Saga - Director for Higher Education and Pedagogical Development, Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation
- Fatima Zahra Alami Director ANEAQ - National Agency for Higher Education Evaluation and Quality Assurance
- Vice President of Université Hassan II, Casablanca
- 4 staff members from the Research and Cooperation Divisions - Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation

1. Purpose of the site visit

- Validation and enrichment of the data provided by the countries through the responses to the State of the Art Questionnaire, with a particular focus on data on Morocco.
- Presentation of ACTS initiative and its importance for international mobility and academic recognition.
- Discussion with participants for the identification of the main challenges for the implementation of ACTS at the national level.

2. Description of the visit

The visit focused on the presentation of the report from the survey on the Credit System being implemented in Morocco and also on getting an understanding of how the credit system is being implemented and the related challenges. This document records the main aspects to be retained from the interactions that took place at the meeting and, in the end, presents the opinion of the members of the ACTS Technical Team on the possibilities and challenges of Morocco's participation in the implementation phase of ACTS.

3. Commitment of the policy authorities with the ACTS implementation phase

The official opening was done by the Minister of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation, Prof. Azzedine Midaoui who personally stepped in to greet participants at the start of the

meeting in the Ministry, and expressed the Ministry's commitment to engage with HAQAA3. He comfortably committed to being part of the implementation phase.

4. Systematisation and analysis of topic exchange during the visit

The authorities made two presentations on the situation of higher education in Morocco, one general by Prof. Abderrazak Ben Saga - Director for Higher Education and Pedagogical Development, Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation and the other on the quality assurance by Prof. Fatima Zahra Alami - Director ANEAQ - National Agency for Higher Education Evaluation and Quality Assurance

The discussion was focused on the concept of academic credits as essential units of measurement for coursework in higher education, aiming to standardize these credits for improved learner mobility and recognition of qualifications across Africa. The presentation of Pablo Beneitone was on key topics including the characteristics and challenges of credit systems and recognition processes across different regions. The presentation highlighted the transition from input-based, teacher-centered approaches to outcome-based, student-centered methodologies, emphasizing that recognition of studies requires a structured process reliant on credits and learning outcomes. It was presented preliminary findings on the state of the ACTS survey report in terms of the current situation regarding academic credits in higher education in African countries, and narrowed it down to Northern Africa and Morocco, with a view to gathering contributions for its validation and enrichment..

Then, the key elements of ACTS proposal were introduced. The presentation focused on introducing and developing the African Credit Transfer System (ACTS) to standardize higher education across the continent. Key discussions highlighted the need to transition from a teacher-centered credit calculation approach, based on contact hours, to a learner-centered system emphasizing student workload and specific, measurable learning outcomes. The proposed ACTS aims to enhance student mobility, facilitate lifelong learning, and implement the recognition of academic credentials. Plans include conducting regional consultations, selecting pilot countries and universities, and creating an online course to educate about curriculum design and workload assessment. Action items established during the meeting include validating existing credit system reports, selecting pilot countries and institutions, and developing an ACTS user guide to aid in the transition towards competency-based curricula in African higher education.

Finally, the ACTS Expert Team introduced the next steps to be followed in the implementation phase. It was explained that this visit, together with the one to Egypt, were the last to take place. From this, the State of the Art report will be finalized and translated into four official African languages (French, English, Portuguese, and Arabic). ACTS Expert Team will make a preliminary assessment/recommendation for 10 pilot countries for ACTS implementation. The authorities of those countries will be asked to submit a proposal for participation in the pilot phase, accompanied by a national work plan that aligns to specific policy interests. Once approved, a cohort of universities will be selected to for the pilot phase, to accompany the national authority. The pilot phase will entail work at the level of study programs and learning outcome design, as well as intra-African mobility and recognition and broader training on the credit systems and their usage with respect to regional integration, recognition, mobility, lifelong learning, etc.

5. Opinion of the ACTS Technical Team on Morocco's participation in the implementation phase

In the opinion of the ACTS Expert Team, Morocco offers wide possibilities for participation in the implementation phase of ACTS. There is a political commitment of the country to the operationalization of the African initiative, declared and demonstrated at the highest level, by the

authorities of the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation who supervises higher education.