UniTrento scores big in ANVUR assessment

It is the only Italian university that has been awarded the top assessment among the 35 that have been evaluated so far. That's what has emerged from the evaluation report for the periodic accreditation of universities and degree programmes that was released today in Rome. “This is the first time that an Italian university has reached such a high level”, commented Rector Paolo Collini. While Director General Alex Pellacani added: “This achievement is the result of a very well-functioning organization, with efficient departments and strong process management abilities”. For this and other reasons Paolo Miccoli, president of ANVUR’s Steering committee, will participate in the inauguration ceremony of the academic year in Trento on 14 November

Trento, 8th November 2018 – UniTrento assessed in the top category (A), “very positive”. That is the outcome of the periodic accreditation process carried out by the Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes (ANVUR) on behalf of the Ministry of Education, universities and research (Miur). The global score obtained placed the University in the first of five categories. We have just received the news from Rome. “Between 2014 and today, Anvur’s Evaluation expert committees visited 35 Italian universities for periodic accreditation. But this is the first time that an Italian university has obtained such an assessment”, commented Rector Paolo Collini. On his part, Director General Alex Pellacani added: “This achievement is the result of a very well-functioning organization, with efficient departments and strong process management abilities”.

For this and other reasons Paolo Miccoli, president of ANVUR’s Steering committee, will participate in the inauguration ceremony of the academic year in Trento on 14 November (at the Paolo Prodi Building, at 17.30). The ceremony will provide the occasion to examine the factors for which the University obtained a “very positive” assessment in the periodic accreditation. Accreditation is granted to universities for a period of five years by Miur on proposal from Anvur once the initial accreditation requirements have been confirmed. Accreditation is required for the university to operate and to continue to offer programmes of study: in fact, non-accredited universities or programmes are shut down.

Evaluation expert committees are appointed by Anvur and are made up of experts from the sector, of discipline areas and of students. The committee that visited the University of Trento last April examined six programmes of study and two departments. The accreditation process began with an in-depth examination of information and data provided in documentation by the University. The purpose of this review is to understand and evaluate the basic elements of the quality assurance process implemented by the university and used to assess study courses. Once the
review is complete, the Evaluation expert committees organize a visit to the University that will last 4-5 days. Its purpose is to conduct a quality assessment on a sample of departments and study programmes and to seek confirmation of the information and data provided in advance. During the assessment, committee members conduct interviews and attend to some lessons, visit the departments’ facilities, study rooms and research laboratories. The evaluation report for the periodic accreditation of universities and programmes of study examines the existence and efficacy of quality assurance processes implemented by universities and aims to identify areas of improvement for the global development of the university and of its programmes, highlighting good practices and stimulating continuous growth. The programme of visits that started at the end of 2014 represents a significant novelty in the Italian university system and brings Italy in line with European practices.

**Accreditation requirements**

The assessment offered by the committee considered the university as a whole based on four requirements. The first requirement examines management performance, that is to say the University’s vision, strategies and policies on quality of teaching and research. Its purpose is to verify that the university has adopted a strong and coherent quality assurance system for teaching and research that supports internal improvement efforts and makes the university more accountable externally.

The second requirement focuses on the efficacy of university policies for quality assurance. It measures, in particular, the University’s data collection and monitoring capacity; it verifies that procedures are in place to self-assess study programmes and departments, and that the University’s Evaluation Group performs internal assessments.

The third requirement focuses on the quality of study programmes. It aims to verify that the course objectives identified in the design phase match with cultural, scientific and social objectives. But it also aims to verify that adequate resources are available for teaching, staff and services, it monitors results and strategies adopted for improvement, and promotes student-centred learning.

The fourth requirement examines the efficacy of the quality assurance system for research and third mission, as defined by the University in its strategic documents and implemented by its academic departments and centres.

**Definitions:**

- Anvur: the Italian national agency for the evaluation of universities and research institutes;
- Ava: self-assessment, accreditation and periodic evaluation of the Italian university system;
- AQ: quality assurance. The internal processes for the design, management and self-assessment of teaching and scientific activities, including internal and external
self-assessment exercises, which aim to enhance the quality of higher education bearing in mind the university’s responsibility toward society;

- Quality: in the framework of university quality assurance, “quality” means the extent to which universities achieve their teaching, scientific and civil development objectives; it therefore means to create a vast base of advance knowledge, participate and stimulate research and innovation, train students for active citizenship and their future role in society, be part of their cultural growth while respecting their motivations, expectations and personal views.