

Considering higher education, not only as the last stage in the academic path of a young adult, but also as an essential area for economical, cultural, scientific and technological development of a country, we admit that this study is relevant at the present moment.

In the path traversed by the University in Europe, especially regarding the Portuguese context, there were essential stages that justify the present framework: religious influence during the Middle Ages, regionalization and laicization throughout the Modern Ages, expansion and massification during the twentieth century, as well as, the regulating political ideas for the twenty – first century.

Along this way, the institutions started gaining independence opposed to the religious and political powers that, associated to the recent massification of Education and the control of the State regarding costs, made the Quality Assessment movement emerge. Regardless of the meaning that is attributed to the quality in Higher Education, we defend that Institutions should seek to identify their quality indicators and work continuously to improve them.

This way, the role of the teacher in Higher education has also changed and is now being redefined, mainly if we consider the promotion of quality of teaching as one of the fundamental areas of quality assessment in Higher Education.

Using Harden and Crosby's model (2000) as a multidimensional answer for the current challenges placed upon the University teacher, a study at the Medical Faculty of Porto University (FMUP) was developed with the aim of characterizing *The State of Art*. Teachers and students were consulted as to find out their opinion about the importance attributed each of the 12 roles that are considered significant for teaching. Teachers were also asked which was their current role and future commitment on those roles. Data concerning the study carried out at Dundee University by Crosby and Harden (*in press*), was also used with the intention of establishing a comparison of the profile of the “role of the teacher” in two different medical teaching settings.

Teachers and students conferred equal importance to all the roles and perceive less importance attributed by FMUP. Currently, teachers say that they less perform the roles than they would like to in the future. Comparatively to the teachers from the Medical Faculty at Dundee, the teachers from FMUP showed lower levels of importance attributed by the Faculty to the twelve roles and higher levels regarding the current role and the future commitment.

The results obtained with this project will be considered as one of the aspects of the internal assessment procedure presently taking place at the Medical Faculty of Porto University.