
Recently a new reform has changed the Portuguese legal framework for higher education. This reform was publicly presented as the implementation of New Public Management (NPM) in the Portuguese higher education system and, in fact, it entails a number of elements of change that characterise NPM. A new system of institution and programme accreditation is run by the Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education - A3ES, created under the new legal framework, as a private law foundation. The legislation commands that the Agency is also responsible for ensuring that Portugal joins the European quality assurance system, complying with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), and is registered in the EQAR. In this chapter, we analyse the new Portuguese legal framework, influenced by NPM, to understand how far it has contributed to implement a quality assessment and accreditation system in line with the ESG. More specifically, we will discuss the compliance of this system with the ESG from the point of view of its Part 1: European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions, namely by uncovering both barriers to ESG implementation and examples of good practice for achieving quality in higher education.