



Agència
per a la Qualitat
del Sistema Universitari
de **Catalunya**

A handbook for designing and implementing an institutional model for assessing the teaching competence of teaching staff at the Catalan state-run universities

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Introduction

Article 19.2 of the Catalan Universities Act stipulates that university teaching must be subject to assessment and that the universities, in conjunction with the Agency for the Quality of the University System in Catalonia (AQU Catalunya) must develop methodologies and programmes for assessing teaching in its different modalities. In addition, article 72 provides that the government of the Generalitat (the autonomous government of Catalonia) may establish additional remuneration for teaching merit.

In response to these needs, AQU Catalunya set up a committee of experts from the Catalan universities which has drawn up this HANDBOOK FOR DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING AN INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM FOR ASSESSING THE TEACHING COMPETENCE OF TEACHING STAFF AT THE CATALAN STATE-RUN UNIVERSITIES, based on the main international benchmarks and the document “*Criteris Generals per a l’Avaluació Docent del Professorat de les Universitats Públiques Catalanes (General Criteria for the Assessment of Teaching Competence in the Catalan State-run Universities)*”, passed by the Interuniversity Council of Catalonia (CIC) in December 2002. The purpose of this handbook is enable the universities to establish their own systems for assessing the teaching competence of their teaching staff, which will then have to be approved by AQA Catalunya following an experimental application period of no more than three years.

Bearing this framework in mind, the system for evaluating teaching competence must remember that an overall view of teacher quality must cover both the points of entry as well as promotion, incentives and enhancement for which the universities are responsible. That is why, in designing the system that is now required of them, universities should try to ensure that their approach contributes to the professional development of their teaching staff and links up with their human resources policy.

Having a good assessment system on which to base themselves should allow universities to design their own assessment systems within a common frame of reference enabling them to periodically assess the teaching activity of their staff, with the approval of AQU Catalunya, for the purposes of granting five-year-service awards, increments, awards in recognition of special merit, etc.

Lastly, the design of the system must take into account that introducing this type of assessment involves a period of experimentation. There are at least two aspects of this which deserve special attention:

- the gradual incorporation of the different technical components of the assessment system (what is assessed, how, who and when)
- the need to gradually formalise the assessment system (assessment protocol) and adapt the quality requirements (standards)

Universities must therefore plan the introduction of the systems they adopt depending on the size and type of their teaching staff as well as their own experience and history of assessment.

The first part of this handbook contains some general considerations regarding the frame of reference adopted, approval of the assessment system devised, the actors involved and everything to do with the technical components and the internal assessment process itself. The second part, in the form of an appendix, sets out proposals regarding the specific way the *University Assessment Manuals* ought to approach each of the different dimensions.

Finally, in accordance with the document “*Criteris Generals per a l’Avaluació Docent del Professorat de les Universitats Públiques Catalanes* (General Criteria for the Assessment of Teaching Competence in the Catalan State-run Universities)”, passed by the Interuniversity Council of Catalonia (CIC) in December 2002, AQU Catalunya will draw up a draft set of criteria for certifying the university assessment manuals.

General considerations

1. Frame of reference

The following reference documents and contributions have been taken into account in drawing up this Handbook:

- the provisions of the LOU (Spanish Universities Organic Law) and the LUC (Catalan Universities Law)
- *Criteris Generals per a l'Avaluació Docent del Professorat de les Universitats Públiques Catalanes (General Criteria for the Assessment of Teaching Competence in the Catalan State-run Universities)* (DURSI [Ministry of Universities, Research and the Information Society of the Catalan Autonomous Government], 2002)
- Marc general de l'avaluació del professorat (General Framework for Teacher Assessment - AQU Catalunya, 2001)
- *Marc general per al disseny, el seguiment i la revisió de plans d'estudis i programes (General Framework for the Design, Monitoring and Review of Curriculums and Syllabuses - AQU Catalunya, 2002)*
- *Marc general per a l'avaluació dels aprenentatges dels estudiants (General Framework for the Assessment of Student Learning - AQU Catalunya, 2002)*
- documentation on the “state of the question” in the international field
- contributions by the AQU Catalunya *ad hoc* committee

Universities should take into account this handbook and the documents listed here above in drawing up their own assessment manuals. It must be remembered that putting in place the components of the system defined by the handbook requires each of the universities to establish its own specific frame of reference.

2. From the process of certifying to the process of approving universities' assessment systems

The lack of prior experience, as well as the complexity and the extent of implementation of the system by the universities, means that it is advisable to exercise prudence in adopting a *stable* assessment system. Consequently, this should be divided into two stages or successive periods:

a) AN EXPERIMENTAL PERIOD (lasting three years)

beginning in 2003 with the CERTIFICATION of the experimental assessment system adopted by the university in question.

Although it has to be based on each university's particular experience and situation, and the framework of contents and procedures laid down in the handbook, this initial experimental system must specify and include the following minimum requirements:

- Item to be certified: *Manual for assessing the teaching competence of the university's teaching staff.*
- Procedure: to be established annually.

At the end of the first application of the system (2003) and successive applications during the experimental period, AQU Catalunya will, in conjunction with each university, set in train a process of analysing, evaluating and *gradually adapting* the system (with the horizon of 2006 in mind) to the approval requirements. By this time, the universities must have introduced the full set of assessment procedures listed in appendix I of the Handbook.

During this experimental period, each university shall have a certain amount of flexibility, provided that it is argued for and agreed with AQU Catalunya.

b) AN APPROVAL PERIOD (lasting five years)

The evaluation process will begin at the end of the experimental period (2006). This process will conclude, following a positive evaluation, with the approval of the assessment system for a five-year period.

Item to be approved: *The university's teacher assessment system.*

Procedure:

- Internal report (Handbook – production protocol)
- Internal evaluation of the implementation of the Manual (processes)
- External analysis and evaluation of the decision-making process and the results.
- A new draft of the *University Assessment Manual*.
- External audit (Handbook – execution protocol).
- Evaluation process.
- New draft manual.
- Approval decision (AQU Catalunya Quality Committee).

Consequences: if a university's assessment system fails to gain approval, assessment of its teaching staff shall be carried out directly by AQU Catalunya (LUC, art. 72).

Any objection made by the university shall be passed on to the Standing Committee of the AQU Catalunya Management Council.

Different elements may be included in the first approval process compared to subsequent renewal processes. In view of the lack of experience with the system in general, the evaluation (audit) could be aimed at improving the same system.

3. The assessment agents

The document *Criteris Generals per a l'Avaluació Docent del Professorat de les Universitats Públiques Catalanes* (DURSI, 2002) states that the significant actors in the assessment process are the teaching staff themselves (self-evaluation report), the students, the academic managers and the experts. They supply evidence and evaluations so that the university's assessment committee can integrate them and issue the appropriate final assessment. There follow a number of remarks about these agents.

3.1. The teacher's self-evaluation report

The self-evaluation report is the key piece in the assessment process. Its content and form are laid down in a standardised protocol. Appendix I of the Handbook gives the details enabling each university to draw up its own model self-evaluation report.

The contents of the self-evaluation report must include two types of evidence:

- Information, by way of a *curriculum vitae*, supporting the teacher's merits in regard to the different dimensions and indicators that are the object of the assessment. Proof of such evidence must be provided according to the terms laid down in the university's assessment system.
- Evidence supplied by way of reflection, analysis and self-evaluation by the teacher concerned. Such evidence refers to the following points:
 - assessment of teaching over the previous five-year period
 - assessment of teaching over the past year
 - assessment of student satisfaction
 - contributions of special value and assessment of the current situation and prospects

Finally, in view of the teacher's prior knowledge of the assessment criteria and referents adopted by the university in question, by signing the application for the teaching increment

awarded by the government of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, the teacher shall explicitly accept the assessment procedures and actions of the university's assessment system.

3.2. Assessment by undergraduates and graduates

In spite of the controversies in the specialist literature over the reliability, validity and relevance of users as assessors of the teaching competence of teaching staff, there is no doubt that, *if their involvement is properly channelled*, students' opinions are a fundamental factor in a comprehensive system for assessing teaching staff.

Never the less, it must be made clear that regarding undergraduates and graduates as assessment agents does not mean that their opinions automatically become a decision criterion in this case, but that they have to be evaluated in the context in question by academic managers and experts. The opinions of undergraduates and graduates are relevant evaluations for certain aspects or dimensions of teachers' professional activity.

Appendix I to the Handbook contains precise considerations and suggestions regarding the different procedures for gathering undergraduates' and graduates' opinions. Only general considerations will be dealt with here.

3.2.1. Institutional surveys of students' evaluation of the teaching they receive

It is important to separate matters referring to the evaluation of the subject in question (contents, usefulness, adaptation to the syllabus, etc.), for which the person teaching the subject is often not responsible, from specific matters referring to the teacher's performance (attention to students, suitability of teaching strategies –depending on the number of students and the physical characteristics of the lecture room–, clarity of presentation, assessment criteria, etc.).

On the other hand, consideration must be given to the diversity and influence of the different major disciplinary fields, the nature of the subjects (from the teaching standpoint) and the conditions in which they are taught. That is why the most appropriate content is often one that includes general and homogeneous features as well as specific features deriving from the different situations that have been previously determined to deal with the above-mentioned diversity.

When to carry out such surveys. It is logical and relevant that teaching be assessed once the job has been finished, in other words, after the outcome of the learning has become known. Never the less, this raises various problems concerning both the logistics and the content of the survey. At all events, it is inappropriate for a teacher to be assessed when a significant part of their teaching job remains to be done.

3.2.2. Reports or minutes of *ad hoc* groups

Classes may express their opinions on previously determined matters or other matters of special interest to the group in question with the knowledge, and under the supervision, of the competent academic bodies and authorities, through the students' representatives. Such opinions/evaluations must be recorded in a properly formalised (signed and registered) document constituting the report on the teaching staff's teaching performance or any other matter on which the group may decide to express an opinion.

3.2.3. Deferred assessments by undergraduates and graduates

One of the well-founded criticisms levelled against opinion surveys is that they are carried out "in the heat of the moment", i.e., just when the students have finished taking a particular subject (especially when matters to do with the academic assessment or qualifications are included). It is argued that at such a time students lack the necessary perspective to provide an accurate assessment. That is why *deferred assessments* have been suggested. These could be carried out the following academic year, when the students move on to another stage of study, when they finish studying, or even in follow-up and assessment studies of training during their professional careers. This could be adopted as a strategy for identifying excellence among teaching staff.

3.3. Assessment by academic managers and experts

There is broad consensus that an assessment system focusing on the substantial aspects of teaching requires that the main assessment agent be an *expert and peer* (1). Whereas in the seventies and eighties teacher assessment surveys by students were the norm, during the nineties the idea gained ground that teaching staff, as peers and experts, should be involved in assessing teaching competence.

In the current university context, it appears necessary, above all, to involve academic managers in the assessment process. It is true that being an academic manager it is not sufficient to be able to assess certain contents and that *specific knowledge* is required. Each university must look at the characteristics of its own academic managers and find other potential assessors within the university, or from outside, who can make up for any weaknesses. The question of which specific dimensions a peer review must be able to cover adequately is dealt with below.

Once the teaching assignment (TA) defining the tasks to be carried out in virtue of the type of contract has been determined, it seems obvious that the academic managers should be the ones charged with evaluating formal compliance with the contract. Never the less, assessment of the quality of the teaching must stress the substantive component of teaching (2). Attention must be given to three aspects:

- *The planning of the teaching:* assessment of intentions and beliefs, concentrating on the following points:
 - mastery of the subject matter
 - appropriate choice of contents
 - relevance of the subject's aims and objectives
 - suitability of the course materials
 - relevance of the strategies and criteria for assessing the students
 - co-ordination with other parts of the educational syllabus
- *Teaching performance:* assessment of the fit between actions, intentions and beliefs. This may include contents ranging from educational competence to the way they teach or their attitude to, or involvement in, innovation and improvement in education.
- *The results:* assessment of student learning, the course and the teacher, including the following aspects:
 - estimation of the progress (success) in achieving the course goals
 - information on *unscheduled* learning
 - assessment of the *value of the course*
 - assessment of the teacher's effectiveness

Potential and limitations of the peer review

As already mentioned at the beginning of this section, the very complexity of teaching, on the one hand, and the nature of the consequences resulting from the assessment of teaching competence, on the other, point to the need to give consideration to *expert peer* involvement in the process of assessing teaching competence. It would probably not be very useful to put a lot of effort into defining the indicators and success standards of good teaching, as *accuracy is unattainable*. It would be much more helpful to reach agreement on the elements constituting significant learning by students. The really necessary contribution by expert peers is one making it possible *to evaluate* a teacher's contribution to students' learning. That is why it is necessary *to find out* and *understand* what can be done in the teaching-learning process with particular students in a given context.

Choice of suitable assessors. In general, the experts point out that more stress has been laid on defining the type of evidence and, sometimes, the quality criteria of teaching competence than on ensuring the *suitability* of the persons reviewing and evaluating them. The key is that the person being assessed should recognise the *assessor's standing* and *feel* that he or she has been assessed by an *expert who knows* what they are talking about (the problem lies in the fact that this expression conceals very different representations of such knowledge). In short, steps must be taken to ensure that there is a climate of trust in which things are properly done. In this

connection, the eagerness to find assessors from as far away as possible, as though this very distance were the key to the quality of their assessment, must be questioned.

Choice of appropriate assessment methods and strategies. Once again the need arises of contextualising the methods and strategies in the framework of the overall assessment system and, especially, taking into account the *performance* and *educational* perspectives of teacher assessment (3). However, it should not be forgotten that the set of assessment strategies employed must provide two kinds of evidence:

- evidence from an external analysis of the *facts and documents*
- evidence from the analysis and reflection carried out by those concerned in regard to the *facts and documents*

The time to be employed. Cost-benefit analysis is (implicitly or implicitly) an ever-present factor in academic activity. The problem is that there is more than *one* variable in this relationship: assessee/assessor, individual/university (in its different areas), new teaching staff/expert teaching staff are some of the possible conflicts of interests. All analysis point to the fact that as teaching becomes more highly valued compared to other duties and tasks carried out by teaching staff, academics themselves will attach greater value to the time and resources devoted to assessing teaching performance. On the other hand, if the prestige (perhaps the power?) of *being an assessor*, or *being favourably assessed*, goes up in the academic community, then people will come to the view that the assessment of teaching must also be done properly. Once again the principle emerges that the *consequences of assessment* are a powerful factor in its development.

A time for trials. As part of the gradual introduction of the assessment system, consideration should be given to the possibility of *trying out expert assessments* facilitating the generation of a climate of openness to, and acceptance of, this type of assessment agent while training possible experts on the job within the university itself.

In short, the most reasonable and operative proposal is to take into consideration the involvement of experts in assessing contents in regard to:

assessment of teacher planning

assessment of professional development and performance

assessment of undergraduate and graduate satisfaction

3.4. The University Assessment Committee (UAC)

From a strictly formal viewpoint, the UAC is responsible for issuing a judgement on each of the applications for an increment. The decisions taken by the university on the assessment agents mentioned in the previous point will affect the UAC's composition and operational structure.

At all events, it seems reasonable to take the following criteria into account:

- The members should have a good reputation as teachers and also a certain knowledge of assessment processes, which are basic components of moral authority. In addition, the UAC should have the support and technical assistance of a specific technical unit or members of the university community.
- Its members should belong to the different major disciplinary fields present in the university and the different types of teaching staff being assessed.
- While ensuring compliance with the above criteria, the number of members should allow the committee to be operative.
- The publicity and transparency of the committee's actions must be ensured and applicants' interests safeguarded.

4. The technical components if the assessment

Based on the contents of the document *Criteris Generals per a l'Avaluació Docent del Professorat de les Universitats Públiques Catalanes* (DURSI, 2002) and other reference documents, the following assessment strategies are proposed: teacher's self-evaluation report, academic managers' assessment, undergraduate and graduate students' satisfaction, and external expert assessment. The proposed contents to be assessed through each of these agencies and suggestions as to the assessment criteria and protocols are listed in the corresponding sections of the Handbook.

The UAC shall be responsible for the integration of these assessment strategies and formalising this integration in the *assessment proposal*. Section 4.2 gives details of the procedure and formal protocol for this proposal. However, as indicated at the beginning of this document (point 2.2), the proposal regarding the gradual incorporation of the different technical components of the assessment system (what is assessed, how, who and when) and also the need to gradually formalise the assessment system (assessment protocol) and adapt the quality requirements (standards) must be taken into consideration.

4.1. Assessment dimensions, indicators and criteria

A public definition of what is meant by *quality teaching* and the ways to recognise it are generally called for, although, as many experts point out (4), it is necessary to distinguish between *competence* and *excellence*. Never the less, it has to be borne in mind that the excellence of teaching performance is linked to the context (it is difficult to require individual excellence in teaching when the conditions of the context in which it is carried out —department, university— are not conducive to it).

On the other hand, excellence has more dimensions and elements to it than competence.

Excellence implies having achieved a high degree of competence in the performance of the *teaching assignment* and, in addition, contributes, among other things, evidence regarding innovation, teaching research, the organisation and design of educational programmes, or leadership of processes aimed at improving teaching.

In this sense, it is useful to suggest that the assessment system should consider the possibility of establishing two levels of evaluation: the first (YES) would be attained when the teacher in question is regarded as having sufficient competence merits; the second (EXC) would be attained when, in the UAC's judgement, based on pre-established criteria, the applicant's merits exceed those required to demonstrate competence. This second level, which would be *optional depending on each university's judgement*, could be a useful tool in the university's assessment system and a way of identifying good teachers for official interuniversity policies designed to promote good teaching practice.

At all events, it seems logical, as a requirement of any approach to assessment, to ask the university to make the two levels for the different indicators and dimensions explicit on the basis of the considerations and suggestions in appendix I to the Handbook.

- Minimum: minimum success standard for obtaining a positive assessment.
- Excellence: standard of success required to be *singled out*.

Similarly, the UAC will have to establish the relevant differences regarding the different types and situations of teachers.

Dimensions and indicators

The following table summarises the points to be assessed. It is based on the document *Criteris Generals per a l'Avaluació Docent del Professorat de les Universitats Públiques Catalanes* (DURSI, 2002). Eight dimensions and 21 indicators (26 if the aspects to be considered in the self-evaluation report are included) provide a view of professional teaching performance at a university which takes into consideration what is *substantive* to such activity.

1. Assessment of self-evaluation report

- 1.1. Assessment of teaching over the five-year period
- 1.2. Assessment of teaching performance during the last year
- 1.3. Assessment of academic results
- 1.4. Assessment of student satisfaction
- 1.5. Contributions of special significance, evaluation of current situation and prospects

2. Assessment of the teaching assignment for the five-year period

- 2.1. Assessment of teaching performance

- 2.2. Assessment of teaching-related tasks
- 2.3. Assessment of fulfilment of TR
- 3. Assessment of planning
 - 3.1. Assessment of syllabus design
 - 3.2. Assessment of suitability of syllabus
 - 3.3. Assessment of teaching resources and materials
- 4. Assessment of development and professional performance
 - 4.1. Assessment of training and professional development
 - 4.2. Assessment of direct observation of teaching performance
 - 4.3. Assessment of specific innovation projects
 - 4.4. Assessment of involvement in tasks aimed at improving teaching
 - 4.5. Assessment of tasks relating to the transition to the European Space
- 5. Assessment of teaching results
 - 5.1. Assessment of academic results
- 6. Assessment of undergraduate and graduate satisfaction
 - 6.1. Institutional surveys of students' evaluation of the teaching they receive
 - 6.2. Reports or minutes of *ad hoc* groups
 - 6.3. Deferred assessments by undergraduates and graduates
- 7. Assessment of involvement in promoting, assessing and disseminating good teaching practice
 - 7.1. Assessment of involvement as a teacher
 - 7.2. Assessment of involvement as an (internal/external) assessment expert
 - 7.3. Assessment of involvement in transition from school to university
- 8. Assessment of external recognition of teaching quality
 - 8.1. Assessment of teaching-related publications
 - 8.2. Assessment of teaching-related prizes and distinctions
 - 8.3. Assessment of invitations to teach at other universities

Assessment scale: from unsuitable to excellent

In accordance with the criteria definitively established by the university and taking into account the suggestions in appendix I of this Handbook, each indicator and dimension shall be *graded* as follows:

- NO Fails to attain the required success standard
- YES: Attains the required success standard
- EXC: Attains the excellence standard

However, as the success standard required may vary for the different indicators belonging to the same dimension, or a positive evaluation on one or more particular indicators may be made a requirement for a positive evaluation on the dimension as a whole, it would be useful for the following to be spelt out:

- the criterion of the requirement for a positive evaluation on certain indicators
- the *weighting* criterion of positive evaluations
- the *compensation* criterion between evaluations that do not *necessarily have to be positive*

4.2. The proposal of the University Assessment Committee

As stated in section 2.1 above, each university shall pass on the final results of the internal assessment process to the External Increments Assessment Committee (EIAC, formed by the DURSI, AQU and the universities).

4.2.1. The contents of the assessment proposal

A *protocol* will have to be formally approved in which the following will be recorded for each case:

- a) Personal identification details.
- b) The specific results of the assessment, with the evaluation of each of the dimensions considered:

- teaching assignment
- planning
- development and professional performance
- results teaching performance

self-evaluation report

undergraduate and graduate satisfaction

involvement in promotion, dissemination, etc.

external recognition

The applicant's overall evaluation which shall be expressed in accordance with the following *evaluation scale*:

NO

YES

EXC

UNS: The UAC leaves the decision pending as a result of a lack of agreement in the Committee, which calls for an assessment external to the university. In such cases, the whole of the applicant's case file will be passed on to the EIAC in the terms laid down by each university's system.

The protocol (signed by the chairperson and secretary of the Committee) shall be accompanied by the minutes of the session at which the assessment decisions recorded in the protocol were taken.

In order to ensure the traceability of the assessment process and also so as to have elements of proof in the event of any complaints or requests for documents for the purposes of approving the system (audit), the UAC shall have:

- Each applicant's individual case file containing the primary evidence supporting the assessments of each of the following aspects in accordance with the protocol adopted for obtaining and documenting these assessments:
 - self-evaluation report
 - academic managers' report
 - experts' report
 - users' (undergraduates' and graduates') satisfaction
- The internal summary of the assessment of the different aspects considered in the overall assessment (protocol), for the totality of the applicants, for internal use by the UAC, shall have at its disposal the corresponding assessment summary in which the evaluation results obtained by each applicant for each of the *indicators* and *dimensions* considered shall be recorded. The above information, in a suitable digital medium, will give the Committee

sufficient material to analyse and study enabling it to maintain, or alter, certain evaluation criteria.

4.2.2. The University Assessment Committee's evaluation process

In view of the formal dimension of the process, it is the UAC's responsibility to integrate the different assessments into a *final grade* which will be communicated to the appropriate body to make its decision on whether or not to grant the salary increment. The UAC shall document the process it has performed. This process may take one of two forms as follows:

a) From assessment of the *indicators* to assessment of the *dimensions*

The UAC assesses all the evidence provided in the process: from an evaluation of the primary evidence regarding each of the indicators (from 1.1 to 8.3) to the different processes combining assessments in order to obtain the relevant dimension (from 1 to 8).

This method may be regarded as being of *doubtful strategic efficacy* (it prevents the academic managers from becoming involved) and extreme technical difficulty (due to both the large number of applicants and the requirement that the Committee members have specific technical knowledge), although it is true that these obstacles could be avoided by the UAC appointing *ad hoc* rapporteurs or experts. This would ensure greater homogeneity in the application of the assessment criteria.

b) From assessment of the *dimensions* to the *final assessment*

The UAC makes its assessments at the first level (*indicators* 1.1 to 8.3) and the second level (*dimensions* 1 to 8). These assessments may have been made by academic managers or (internal or external) expert peers. In such cases, the UAC should ensure that there is sufficient homogeneity by the use of specific assessment protocols.

Determining the final assessment

Irrespective of which of the two methods is chosen, the UAC must consider the assessments of each and every one of the dimensions that *have been previously identified as part of the system in each year of the experimental period*. Applying the criteria and referents previously defined for obtaining the final grading, the UAC shall determine this final assessment in terms of the scale set out in section 4.2.1 above.

5. The components of the assessment system to be adopted: the university assessment manual

As stated in the introduction to this Handbook, it seems advisable that the concretisation of the proposal for a teacher assessment system should be carried out from the standpoint of those to whom it is addressed: the teaching staff. In this way, the transparency in the setting up and application of the *rules governing assessment* will make it possible not just to comply with a basic formal and legal requirement, but also *orient* the actions of the teaching staff. This is where the potential of a particular approach to assessment that explicitly sets out and takes on board a comprehensive policy regarding teaching staff lies, as it allows both the individual's and the university's goals of success to be made plain.

Consequently, under the suggested title of “*X University's Teacher Assessment Manual*”, each university should deal with:

- A. The dimension of the university's teacher assessment policy
- B. The specific dimension of assessment as an incentive to good teaching practice
- C. The general process and its agents
- D. The technical components of the assessment

a) Assessment dimensions, indicators and criteria:

1. Assessment of self-evaluation report
2. Assessment of the teaching assignment of the five-year period
3. Assessment of planning
4. Assessment of professional development and activity
5. Assessment of teaching results
6. Assessment of undergraduate and graduate satisfaction
7. Assessment of participation in the promotion and assessment of teaching standards.
8. Assessment of external recognition of teaching quality

b) The UAC's proposed assessment system: contents and assessment process

The relevant document shall be sent to AQU Catalunya stating the procedures employed by the university for producing and approving it.

NOTES

(1) Patricia Hutchings (1996, 221), director of the American Association for Higher Education Teaching Initiative, concludes emphatically: “[...] teaching, like research, should be peer reviewed”.

(2) Pratt (1997) points out that essential elements of university teachers’ professional activity have frequently been left out of teacher assessment and excessive stress has been laid on what happens in the lecture room.

(3) The items that have to be considered range from *in situ* (classroom) observations to *Teaching Profiles* (Gibbs, 1993) or the *Teaching Portfolio* (Courts and McInerney, 1993).

(4) Elton (1996) says that a distinction has to be made between competence and excellence. It is the latter that ought to guide assessment aimed at recognising incentives. Never the less, it must be remembered that excellence is linked to context (that of the department —within the British university system— according to the author). On the other hand, excellence has more dimensions and elements to it than competence. An excellent teacher is a “highly competent, reflective practitioner, innovative teacher, curriculum designer, course organizer, pedagogic researcher, leader, member of a team, etc.” (Elton, 1996, 35).

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APPENDICES

I. Proposed contents of the universities’ teacher assessment system

Appendix I: Proposed contents of the universities' teacher assessment system

<i>Components of the assessment system</i>	<i>Approaches/Referents</i>
A. The university's institutional policy on teacher assessment	<p>This section should deal with issues such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Approaches to assessing the hiring of teaching staff by the university and their enhancement and promotion, and how this is concretised in the legal framework of the statutes. — The assessment of the quality of the teaching staff within the general framework of the university's quality policy. — Assessment for the purposes of providing incentives in the general context of the assessment of the university's teaching staff.
B. Assessment of teaching staff for the purposes of providing incentives to good practice	<p>Going beyond the <i>General Criteria for the Assessment of Teaching Competence in the Catalan State-run Universities</i> (DURSI, 2002), the university shall make any contributions it considers relevant in order to constitute its own specific frame of reference. It will be necessary to spell out aspects such as the possible connections between this assessment process and other decisions concerning teaching staff.</p>
C. The general process and its agents	<p>In regard to the process for which the university is responsible, the system put forward should spell out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The stages involved in the process: from the application for the increment to the final assessment of the application. — Completion of the application form and the candidate's self-evaluation report — The itinerary of the application — The deadlines and calendars for the steps in section <i>b</i>. — Measures concerning the proper handling of case files

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Transparency and safeguard mechanisms <p>Agents: The university shall define, in accordance with the considerations set out in section 4.1 in the first part of this Handbook, the indicators and/or dimensions to be assessed by the agents listed below and also the procedures to be followed by them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Academic managers — Experts (whether from the same university or not) — University Assessment Committee (UAC): taking into consideration its characteristics and duties, its composition and rules of functioning would need to be defined (see sections 3.4 and 4.2 of the Handbook).
D. Assessment dimensions, indicators and criteria	<p>The university may introduce any new elements it considers relevant to complete the reference proposal in point 4.1 of the Handbook. Special attention is drawn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Indicators and dimensions requiring a positive assessment for the purposes of proposing the award of an increment during the experimental stage. — Suggestions of minimum requirements laid down in the indicators. The university shall establish the last level of concretisation on the basis of the different types and grades of teaching staff. <p>Details are given here below of the approaches and suggestions of referents for each of the eight assessment dimensions concretised in the document <i>General Criteria for the Assessment of Teaching Competence in the Catalan State-run Universities</i> (DURSI, 2002).</p> <p>Although the suggestions in the Handbook concerning assessment criteria (requirements, referents and minimum levels for excellence) refer to this stage, the university should bear in mind the time frame for the full implementation of the system and, if it sees fit, lay down guidelines regarding the gradual introduction of certain requirements and/or minimum standards.</p>
<p>1. The teacher's self-evaluation report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — A document containing <i>duly documented</i> evidence serving as the 	<p>The document shall have a pre-established content and format (protocol)</p> <p>In addition, the university should draw up a set of instructions on how to complete and process it, paying special attention to:</p>

<p>basis for the assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — A document including the teacher's analysis and evaluation of various aspects of his or her teaching activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The regulations concerning the contents of the teaching assignment (TA): The university should make available a public document concerning the specific regulations regarding the components regarded as part of the TA and the relevant units of measurement. In this context, credits actually taught are considered to be a valid measure. By way of example, the following are regarded as part of the TA: teaching in the first and second cycle of degree courses, directing students' practical work, directing end-of-degree projects, doctorate teaching, university extension courses, etc. — The regulations concerning the contents of teaching-related tasks (TRTs): The university shall identify and make public the tasks regarded as related to the TA and their equivalents in hours per week, which is the proposed unit of measurement for this indicator. By way of example, these might include: directing doctoral theses (to be read during the five-year period), taking part in tribunals (end-of-career projects, advanced studies diplomas, theses), co-ordinating subjects/laboratories, etc. — The level of formalisation of the accreditation or certificate of the contents of the self-evaluation report: It will be necessary to determine the way in which the different items of evidence are to be accredited and also who the agents responsible for doing this are. This applies specially to evidence for TA and TRT indicators (department, academic secretariat, etc.). <p>In addition to ensuring that it complies with the formal requirements, assessment of the self-evaluation report must concentrate on the following sections which include the teacher's own analysis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Assessment of teaching over the five-year period — Assessment of teaching performance during the last year — Assessment of academic results — Assessment of student satisfaction — Contributions of special significance, assessment of the current situation and proposals for improvement <p>In regard to the assessment of the self-evaluation report, it is suggested that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The minimum criterion for obtaining a positive assessment should be the <i>presence</i> (fulfilment) of the personal reflection on the five points just mentioned.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The mention of excellence should be given on the basis of an <i>ad hoc</i> assessment protocol in which the quality grades of the self-evaluation report are spelt out. <p>The candidate's academic managers are the principal evaluating agents of this dimension.</p>
<p>2. Assessment of the teaching assignment of the five-year period</p> <p>2.1. Assessment of teaching performance</p>	<p>The TA is assessed by means of three indicators which may be assessed differently depending on the <i>type of teaching staff</i> in question.</p> <p>2.1. Assessment of teaching performance</p> <p>Concerning the referents:</p> <p>It is possible to choose a quantitative approach (a percentage of <i>credits</i> taught, which could be at least 50% of the average for the university) or a qualitative referent, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — having taught in certain cycles at some point during the period — having taught compulsory subjects — having changed subject during the five-year period <p><i>A minimum requirement must be set for someone to be considered a teacher</i> during the five-year period in question and the volume and type of TA warranting the rating of excellent. In addition, the university should clearly delimit the conditions regarding teaching performance in order to avoid any complaints of unequal treatment.</p> <p>A positive assessment on this indicator shall be considered a <i>minimum requirement</i>.</p> <p>The agents responsible for assessing this indicator are the academic managers.</p>

<p>2.2. Assessment of teaching-related tasks</p>	<p>2.2. Related tasks. It is suggested that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Obtaining a positive assessment on this indicator <i>is not considered a minimum requirement</i> during the experimental period. However, attaining the standard set by the university should be considered a merit of excellence. — The university considers the possibility of setting minimum standards and standards of excellence not just in regard to teacher assessment, but also in regard to the institution's goals in relation to teacher improvement and promotion policies. <p>The agents responsible for assessing this indicator are the academic managers.</p>
<p>2.3. Assessment of the fulfilment of the TA</p>	<p>2.3. Assessment of the fulfilment of the TA. It shall be determined whether the teaching assignment for the five-year period has been carried out satisfactorily.</p> <p>The university shall draw up an <i>ad hoc protocol</i> in order to do this.</p> <p>Having a positive assessment in regard to this indicator shall be considered a <i>minimum requirement</i>. The minimum requirement for a positive assessment shall be the absence of warnings, negative reports or complaints regarding fulfilment of the TA.</p> <p>The agents responsible for assessing this indicator are the academic managers.</p>
<p>3. Assessment of planning</p>	<p>Assessment of the teacher's planning of their teaching is approached by means of three indicators of varying kinds and importance, depending on the current situation and the <i>type of teaching staff</i> in question.</p> <p>A necessary <i>qualification</i>: although the <i>syllabus</i>, as an official public document, may be the result of an agreement among the different members of the teaching staff involved or even of decisions made higher up in the department, the <i>teaching plan</i> represents the teacher's personal concretisation of this. The teacher takes and accepts the general goals and contents of the subject, but brings to them and makes explicit other elements which indicate his or her approach to teaching.</p> <p>On the other hand, the university must take into consideration the current state (regulations and reality) of the planning of teaching</p>

<p>3.1. Assessment of the design of the teaching plan</p>	<p>among its teaching staff and adjust the minimum requirements for a teacher to obtain a positive assessment accordingly. It must also determine the gradual introduction of stricter requirements in regard to these indicators.</p> <p>The main evaluating agents may be experts, from the same university or outside, or else academic managers.</p> <p>3.1. Assessment of the design of the teaching plan. The university must draw up an <i>ad hoc</i> protocol allowing confirmation of the fact that the teaching plan conforms to the required structure and basic contents. Consideration should be given to the possibility of issuing guidelines on the planning of teaching based on the <i>European credit</i>.</p> <p>The teaching plan must explicitly include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — the subject's place and meaning within the cycle or curriculum — goals and contents — course planning (calendar of the different activities or pieces of work required) — teaching methodology and guidelines for the performance of the activities and the time devoted to them — assessment procedures and criteria — documentary resources <p>Formal presentation, clarity, tone and suitability of the language employed are desirable features of the teaching plan.</p> <p>A positive assessment of this indicator should be considered a <i>minimum requirement</i>. In order to obtain such an assessment, it would be necessary to document the existence of the teaching plan and the inclusion in it of the points listed here above, at least in the teaching carried out during the last five-year period.</p> <p>3.2. Assessment of the suitability of the</p>
<p>3.2. Assessment of the suitability of the</p>	<p>3.2. Assessment of the suitability of the teaching plan. The assessment protocol shall contain, among other things, questions concerning the suitability of the goals and contents of the syllabus in relation to:</p>

teaching plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — the educational profile of the qualification — whether the syllabus is up-to-date in regard to the discipline in question — teaching methodology — the degree of effort required of students — assessment of students, etc. <p>During the experimental phase, it does not seem appropriate to require a positive assessment of this indicator taking into consideration the difficulty of assessing it correctly. However, the university should start to plan for such assessment with a view to its becoming operational once the system has been formally approved.</p>
3.3. Assessment of teaching resources and materials	<p>3.3. Assessment of teaching resources and materials. The following points should be assessed using the relevant protocol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — suitability in relation to the goals of the course and the level of interest of the compulsory reading matter given in the bibliography for the subject — resources: slides, presentations, supplementary information, multimedia materials, etc. — specific material for use by students <p>During the experimental phase, it does not seem appropriate to require a positive assessment of this indicator taking into consideration the difficulty of assessing it correctly. However, the university should start to plan for such assessment with a view to its becoming operational once the system has been formally approved.</p>
4. Assessment of professional development and activity	<p>This dimension covers five indicators of varying kinds and importance, depending on the university's objectives, the <i>type of teaching staff</i> in question and the current situation in regard to assessment at the university.</p>
4.1. Assessment of professional training	<p>4.1. Assessment of professional training and development. Using the simile of the recognition of <i>free-choice credits</i>, the university</p>

<p>and development</p>	<p>should spell out the <i>requirements</i> with which training activities, both those to do with the discipline and those to do with teacher training, must comply (nature and intensity, institution, etc.) in order to qualify as such. On the other hand, the criteria for the <i>minimum</i> and <i>excellence</i> standards must be defined. It would be useful if the general criterion of gradual introduction of requirements, bearing in mind the hitherto predominant “culture”, were applied to this indicator. It must be remembered what the LUC (Catalan Universities Act, articles 19.1 and 19.3) lays down in regard to official training provision.</p> <p>Attendance at <i>two</i> of the events in the officially recognised training activities catalogue might be considered a <i>minimum requirement</i> and attendance at <i>five</i> or more of the activities in the same catalogue as a standard of <i>excellence</i>.</p> <p>Once the referents for the type and intensity of the activities have been established, deciding who the assessing agent is to be poses no difficulty.</p>
<p>4.2. Assessment of direct observation of teaching performance</p>	<p>4.2. Assessment of direct observation of teaching performance. It must be borne in mind that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — This is an indicator of <i>special</i> interest requiring the intervention of <i>experts</i> from inside or outside the same university to assess it. The university must define the situations and circumstances in which it will have to be taken into account and lay down the requirements for the assessment of this indicator to be accepted. — Assessment of this indicator requires the prior drawing up of a dedicated protocol specifying the number of observations, contents, positive assessment criteria, etc. — Positive assessment of this indicator requires the teacher in question to have been subject to a direct observation process based on the university's protocol and for his or her performance to have been judged satisfactory. <p>It does not seem advisable that the criterion for excellence should be based on the number of observations, but rather on the standard of the results.</p>
<p>4.3. Assessment of specific innovation</p>	<p>4.3. Assessment of specific innovation projects. In spite of institutional efforts over the past few years, formal concretisation of specific innovation projects has not been generalised, other than those included in official <i>ad hoc</i> invitations for applications and</p>

<p>projects</p>	<p>entailing specific funding. It would be useful for the university to be able to offer the possibility of having <i>projects approved prior</i> to their execution, even if they do not belong the above type of invitations for project applications. The previously mentioned matter of gradual introduction should therefore be taken into consideration. However, the award or initial approval of an innovation project must not be the only piece of evidence to be evaluated. The assessment of the <i>results</i> (of various kinds) of the project is of special significance. That is why taking this indicator into consideration entails paying special attention to this kind of assessment or proof that another organisation (e.g. the one making the award) has assessed the execution and results of the project as positive. It seems advisable to draw up a special <i>protocol</i> for this purpose.</p> <p>At all events, in order to obtain a positive assessment on this indicator, the person in question must at least be able to provide evidence of having completed a properly documented innovation project; having completed more than one might be considered as a criterion of excellence.</p> <p>The assessment agents should be experts from the same university or from outside.</p>
<p>4.4. Assessment of involvement in tasks aimed at improving teaching</p>	<p>4.4. Assessment of participation in tasks for improving teaching. The university must draw up a list (catalogue) of the tasks regarded as furthering the improvement of teaching.</p> <p>Consideration might be given to the possibility of satisfactory participation in at least <i>one</i> of the tasks in the catalogue drawn up by the university being sufficient to obtain a positive assessment in regard to this indicator. Participation in more than one might be regarded as a criterion of excellence.</p> <p>The main evaluating agents must be the academic managers.</p>
<p>4.5. Assessment of tasks relating to the transition to the European Space</p>	<p>4.5. Assessment of tasks relating to the transition to the European Space As in the case of the foregoing indicator, the university must draw up a catalogue of the tasks regarded as furthering an adequate transition to the European Higher Education Space.</p> <p>Consideration might be given to the possibility of satisfactory participation in at least <i>one</i> of the tasks in the catalogue drawn up by the university being sufficient to obtain a positive assessment in regard to this indicator. Participation in more than one would be</p>

	<p>regarded as a criterion of excellence.</p> <p>The main evaluating agents must be the academic managers.</p>
5. Assessment of teaching results	<p>This dimension is especially sensitive to inappropriate approaches and a choice of assessment referents taken out of context. The criteria and referents must be <i>qualified</i> or <i>differentiated</i> depending on the disciplinary field in question.</p> <p>On the other hand, the inclusion of just a single indicator in the dimension is due to the special, <i>separate</i> attention given to <i>undergraduate and graduate satisfaction</i>, and the <i>self report</i>, both products of teaching activity.</p>
5.1. Assessment of academic results	<p>5.1. Assessment of academic results. The evidence provided in the teacher's self-evaluation report in relation to this indicator, included in the self-evaluation report protocol, is of two types: <i>a</i>) that referring to data on the grades awarded, <i>b</i>) the teacher's evaluation or interpretation of these data (taking into account the circumstances and characteristics of the courses and the students). It is the responsibility of the academic manager appointed by the university to <i>validate</i> and <i>evaluate</i> both types of evidence. The knowledge this agent has of the overall situation regarding the degree in question and of the specific situation regarding the type of subjects taught, must serve as the context for establishing the referents.</p> <p>There are several possible choices available for the referents for a positive assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Determining an absolute value (e.g. a success rate or performance rate). — Using a statistical criterion (a given value of the standard deviation from the mean of previous rates). In the latter case, different means could be considered depending on the typology, the disciplinary area or the organic unit to which the person belongs. — Considering the progression of results over the teaching period being assessed. <p>If appropriate, the university must establish minimum criteria according to the type of subjects and disciplinary fields based on a prior, public agreement.</p> <p>Assessment of this indicator as a criterion of excellence should only be allowed if the evaluation of the students' achievements is</p>

	<p>carried out with the involvement of agents other than the teacher in question.</p> <p>The assessment agents should be the academic managers.</p>
6. Assessment of undergraduate and graduate satisfaction	<p>It is becoming increasingly evident that a reliable and valid approach to evaluating student satisfaction requires using various different strategies, although the design and planning of these strategies must be adapted to the different situations and types of teaching activity. The challenge lies in achieving a suitable combination of options reflecting the different types of users and teaching situations.</p> <p>At all events, assessment of this dimension will require the integration of evidence from different situations and procedures and this integration can be carried out only on the basis of the judgement of academic managers and experts in this matter. Even though it may be adequate in certain cases, it is considered a mistake to adopt automatically-applied numerical formulae.</p>
6.1. Institutional surveys of students' evaluation of the teaching they receive	<p>6.1 Official surveys of students' evaluation of the teaching they receive</p> <p>On the contents</p> <p>The contents subject to evaluation is a pointer towards the type of teaching staff to be encouraged. Consequently, this requires a serious reflection on the profile the university is seeking to encourage. The problem arises in the face of the difficulty of identifying a single desirable profile valid for any situation within the diverse teaching activity undertaken by teaching staff.</p> <p>It should not include matters that are not open to a variety of opinions. It is a serious mistake to include, for example, items such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the teacher's punctuality and attendance record whether the teacher has provided information on the syllabus and plan for the subject <p>How can there be a variety of opinions if these are factors that can be easily verified? Items such as this result in the instrument's</p>

<p>6.2. Reports or minutes of <i>ad hoc</i> groups</p>	<p>becoming invalid.</p> <p>On the number of surveys during the five-year period</p> <p>In the face of routine assessment activism (every group has the right to give its opinion about the teacher!), rational planning is called for: The different teaching situations reflected in the TA for the five-year period should be recorded (compulsory subjects, optional subjects, doctorates, etc.)</p> <p>Criteria for assessing results</p> <p>It is relatively easy to determine a criterion of excellence regarding students' opinions. The criterion adopted is the absolute one of outstanding-excellent (depending on the scale used) on each of the items in the survey.</p> <p>It is more difficult to determine the cut-off point separating a positive from a negative assessment. Two possibilities that might be considered are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Adopting the criterion of an absolute value (e.g. 5 is a pass if a scale of 1 to 10 is used). — Using a statistical criterion (a given value of the standard deviation from the mean). In this latter case, different means could be taken into consideration depending on the teaching situation, the disciplinary area or the organic unit to which the candidate belongs. <p>The university's proposal must contain both the enquiry protocol and the decision on the assessment criteria adopted.</p> <p>6.2 Reports or minutes of <i>ad hoc</i> groups</p> <p>This procedure for the students to express their opinions shall be adopted, especially in the absence of other types of evidence, given that it is easy to implement and the results are easy to manage. It shall be carried out with the knowledge, and under the supervision of, the competent academic authorities, taking into account the different teaching situations of the teacher during the five-year period, and through the students' representatives.</p> <p>Such opinions/evaluations must be recorded in a properly formalised (signed and registered) document constituting the report on</p>
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6.3. Deferred assessments by undergraduates and graduates

the teaching staff's teaching performance or any other matter on which the group may decide to express an opinion.

Criteria which may be adopted for assessing the result of such reports are:

- the conclusion of the report in question (NO negative, YES positive, excellent)
- the academic manager's assessment of and conclusion regarding the contents of the report

At all events, if a university is to use this procedure, it must first concretise the application protocol and the assessment criteria.

6.3. Deferred assessments by undergraduates and graduates

In general terms, it is possible to speak of two types of deferred surveys:

- Surveys in which good teachers are identified. The undergraduates or graduates pick out (by mentioning them) the teachers who, in their view, have stood out through the quality of their teaching in general (overall assessment). It is less appropriate to ask students to pick out bad teachers. The time elapsed may vary depending on the overall design for the use of this type of strategy and instrument: surveys carried out following an average length of time (e.g. after one or two years) or surveys carried out following a long gap (e.g. at the end of the students' degree course or during job insertion and social integration assessment processes).
- Surveys identifying teaching staff who stand out on a set of highly significant aspects in accordance with the excellent teacher model the university wishes to foster. For example:
 - facilitator of the development of documentation and oral and/or written expression skills
 - someone who provides students with tutorial attention
 - someone who provides materials that are specially important for the subject and the students' overall education and training as graduates
 - innovative in the use of didactic strategies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - skilled in the use of audiovisual means in the presentation of classes, etc. <p>Criteria for assessing the results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — absolute criterion of excellence (a given percentage of nominations) — relative criterion (the five teachers with the most mentions) <p>At all events, if a university is to use this procedure, it must first concretise the application protocol and the assessment criteria.</p> <p>The universities must explain the referents (standards) they will adopt in assessing the above-mentioned aspects and also the format (protocol) in which the assessment will be recorded. Two types of referents are suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — For there to be a minimum number of items of evidence. In the experimental phase, two institutional surveys during the five-year survey is considered a minimum. — The quality of the evidence <p>Bearing in mind the teachers' special sensitivity to the assessment of this dimension and its repercussions on the university community, it is highly advisable for the UAC to have adequate support and technical advice in order to ensure correct assessment.</p>
<p><i>7. Assessment of participation in the promotion and evaluation of teaching standards.</i></p> <p>7.1. Assessment of involvement as a teacher</p> <p>7.2. Assessment of involvement as an (internal/external) assessment expert</p> <p>7.3. Assessment of participation in helping students make the transition from school to university transition from school</p>	<p>The criteria and referents in this dimension (specifically in relation to the first indicator) must be <i>qualified</i> or <i>differentiated</i> depending on the type of teacher and, especially, the disciplinary fields, concerned.</p> <p>As has been pointed out in connection with other indicators, the university should draw up a list (catalogue) of the tasks regarded as forming part of each of the indicators described.</p> <p>The university should set minimum requirements for obtaining a positive assessment on each of the indicators.</p> <p>It does not seem advisable to consider a positive assessment on any of the three indicators as a requirement during the experimental phase. Never the less, it would be relevant to require such an assessment on one or more of them for obtaining a grade of excellence.</p> <p>The UAC is the most suitable agent for assessing these indicators and this dimension.</p>

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<p>8. Assessment of external recognition of teaching quality</p> <p>8.1. Assessment of teaching-related publications</p> <p>8.2. Assessment of teaching-related prizes and distinctions</p> <p>8.3. Assessment of invitations to teach at other universities</p>	<p>The criteria and referents in this dimension (specifically in relation to the first indicator) must be <i>qualified</i> or <i>differentiated</i> depending on the type of teacher and, especially, the disciplinary fields, concerned. The lack of any tradition of this kind of publications in a large part of the disciplinary fields means that once again it is necessary to point to the advisability of applying the general criterion of gradually introducing requirements in regard to this indicator. Using its teacher training and development resources, the university should promote the relevant actions to ensure that the teacher's wealth of experience is given a suitable format for its dissemination within the teaching community without any limiting boundaries.</p> <p>The university should lay down the minimum requirements for achieving a positive assessment on each of the indicators.</p> <p>It does not seem advisable to consider a positive assessment on any of the three indicators as a requirement during the experimental phase. Never the less, it would be relevant to require such an assessment on one or more of them for obtaining a grade of excellence.</p> <p>The UAC is the most suitable agent for assessing these indicators and this dimension.</p>