



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

EVALUATION PROGRAMME FOR AFFILIATED INSTITUTIONS GUIDELINES TO THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

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1. INTRODUCTION

A key element in the evaluation process of affiliated institutions is the review carried out by a panel of external experts, known as the *external review panel*, the fundamental objectives of which are:

- To assess the evidence provided by the institution's academic coordinators on each of the specific quality standards and criteria.
- To identify the institution's strong and weak points.
- To make suggestions on measures that the institution can adopt to enhance quality.

The external review panel is designated by AQU Catalunya, in agreement with the university that the institution is affiliated to, and is made up of three academics of standing in the fields of knowledge associated with the institution's programmes of study, one methodologist, one professional and one student.

The work of the external review panel is carried out over five stages:

1. Study of the self-evaluation report drawn up by the self-evaluation committee.
2. Consultation of the evidence (over the Internet/website, CD-ROM provided, etc, etc.).
3. Planning of the site visit.
4. A site visit to the institution.
5. Drawing up of the final report.

A brief description of these stages is given in sections 3 to 6 of this document.

2. THE LEVELS OF REVIEW

The affiliated institution may decide on just a basic level review, or it may choose a basic review extended with an advanced level review in one or more spheres of its activity. The work of the external review panel is partially conditioned by the type of review proposed by the institution.

The basic evaluation is primarily prescriptive in that it lays down a series of specific criteria that the institution must comply with. The self-evaluation report must clearly state the evidence that the institution can provide to demonstrate that it complies with each criterion. Sections 3 to 6 give specific instructions to help the external review panel evaluate each specific quality criterion.

The advanced level review is much more open in that each institution can decide the way in which it complies with the quality standard and the type of evidence that it can present, which must be explained very clearly in the self-evaluation report. Due to this freedom, no advanced details are given here of how the external review panel will evaluate the evidence. On the basis of the self-evaluation report, the external review panel proposes a timetable for the site visit to the institution in order to evaluate the abovementioned evidence. Section 5.5 describes certain details of information that may be obtained during the interview with a representative group of the teaching staff, in the case of the basic level review. If the institution decides on an advanced

level review of research and knowledge transfer, the interview with the teaching staff will more than likely call for other information being provided, in addition to that given in section 5.5, and always in conformity with the content of the part of the self-evaluation report that refers to the advanced level review.

The specific quality standards and criteria that correspond to the basic and advanced levels are given in the presentation document on the Evaluation Programme for Affiliated Institutions.

3. THE WORK OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW PANEL

3. 1. Study of the review methodology

The external review panel needs a precise grasp of the review methodology. It therefore needs to understand the philosophy behind the process of quality evaluation in the universities and, in a specific way, the information in the guide to carrying out the process, from both the internal and external points of view.

3.2. Analysis of the self-evaluation report

AQU Catalunya first reviews the self-evaluation report, checks that it complies with the evaluation guidebook and contains all of the more important sections and aspects. Once this has been checked, it is referred to the external review panel in order for the review to begin. In the case of any shortcomings in the self-evaluation report, the institution is requested to make the necessary modifications. The members of the external review panel must receive the self-evaluation report at least fifteen days prior to the site visit.

The fundamental purpose of this stage is to study the contents of the self-evaluation report, which is the key element that the external review is based on, and the self-evaluation process undertaken. On the basis of this, the procedure that was followed and the end product (self-evaluation report) are analysed to check that they comply with the specified methodology and technical requirements. With strict regard to the assessments given in the self-evaluation report, a distinction needs to be made between those that are evidence (statements based on objective data and documents) and those that are opinions. Of those that are opinions, an explanation is also necessary of those where there are consensus and those upheld only by part of the stakeholders.

The self-evaluation report must basically provide:

1. General data on the institution.
2. Sufficient data on the institution's human and physical resources in order for an assessment to be made of their adequacy in relation to the institution's requirements.
3. A self-evaluation of each of the specific quality standards and criteria (according to the type of review that the institution has decided on), specifying the materials made

available to the external review panel to demonstrate that the quality standards and criteria are complied with.

4. A final self-reflexion, in which the self-evaluation committee must identify enhancement measures in order to comply with the specific quality criteria that the institution still does not comply with, according to its self-evaluation.

As a general outline, it is recommendable that, on examining the self-evaluation report, close attention is paid to assessing the quality of the evidence provided, significant changes in recent years, the occurrence of any comments or clarifications regarding the assessment of indicators, the strong and weak points, as well as the possible correction of any deficiencies or reinforcement of strong points (enhancement proposals), and, lastly, the main contradictory aspects and any gaps or loopholes detected.

3.3. Study of the self-evaluation report prior to the visit

The visit to the institution constitutes the review panel's most significant activity in the external review process. Its preparation is therefore very important from both the logistical and technical points of view.

From the technical point of view, the self-evaluation report is the first input available to the external review panel for starting its review process, and it is therefore essential that the report is read to detect any areas, issues and/or information that may need to be dealt with more carefully.

The proposed protocol for the members of the external review panel when reading the self-evaluation report is meant to:

- Help identify the strong and weak points in the evidence provided
- The need to request new evidence
- Assist the drawing up of a list of possible matters of interest to be raised in the different interviews/hearings anticipated in the visit
- Provide a preliminary understanding among the members of the external review panel for its initial approach regarding the overall content of the self-evaluation report

For each area of content to be reviewed, monitoring of the following sections is suggested:

- a) Identify the presence or absence of evidence that supports the judgment issued in the self-evaluation report, in addition to whether it is adequate or not. In the case where this is positive, the approval given by the member of the external review panel signifies that, from his/her point of view, it is sufficient with the given evidence to make an external assessment. If not, he/she identifies the type of evidence that needs to be requested from the institution in order for it to be made available either prior to or at the start of the

- visit. The review panel's chairperson gathers the requests in order for them to be presented to the self-evaluation committee.
- b) Irrespective of or in addition to the above, note can be made of matters and issues of interest to be dealt with in each of the different interviews/hearings that are to be held during the visit. This will enable the review panel's chairperson to draw up a proposed list of matters or questions for each interview.
 - c) As soon as possible (**at least one week prior to the visit**), the chairperson makes the request for new evidence to the self-evaluation committee. He/she will also need to prepare the questions to be asked during the interviews/hearings. The outline of this proposal is gone over in the external review panel's meeting at the beginning of the visit.

Most of the documentary evidence appearing in the self-evaluation report will need to be consulted prior to the visit. For this purpose, the self-evaluation committee will need to make this evidence available to the external review panel through one of the following means:

- The institution's website.
- An intranet especially set up for the external review panel.
- A CD-ROM, enclosed as an appendix to the self-evaluation report.

All evidence that is provided in these ways must be clearly indexed and with appropriate reference to the self-evaluation report in order for it to be efficiently evaluated.

Table 1 gives the type of evidence for each specific criterion (numbered in the left-hand column) that could be made available for consultation prior to the site visit, either on the institution's website, via an intranet or on a CD-ROM.

Table 1: Type of evidence that can be made available prior to the site visit to the institution, in relation to each specific quality criterion

Programmes of study	
1.1.	Curricula, general aims, graduate profile, entry requirements, programme structure.
1.2.	Information on each type of course/module (learning outcomes, syllabus, credits, method of assessment, etc.) in the curricula.
1.3.	Details on the organisation of curricula, course sequencing, free choice subjects, mobility programmes, etc.
1.4.	Details on the organisation of work experience/placement.
1.5.	Documents produced by the management team on figures gathered on the labour market outcomes of graduates from the institution.
1.6.	Documents produced by the management team that show that assessment is made of the data gathered. Minutes of the meetings of the governing bodies that show that details were presented at the meeting on how the curricula are functioning and that these details were discussed.
1.7.	Information describing enhancement measures currently in force.
Management	

2.1.	Information (for example, the institution's rules and regulations) that states the most important aspects in the institution's organisation and internal administration (management team, governing bodies, committees, etc.).
2.2.	There will probably be no evidence on this criterion prior to the site visit.
2.3.	Internal documents of the management team that set out the short, medium and long-term goals.
2.4.	Documents produced by the management team in which the annual results are assessed and new goals set, which must be consistent with the short and medium-term goals and the results of the annual assessment.
2.5.	The institution's annual report will probably be accessible on the website, where information can be obtained on this criterion. Minutes of the meetings of the governing bodies, committees, etc. that show that the management team periodically informs on progress relating to its goals.
2.6.	Minutes of the meetings of the management team with the university's delegate to the institution that show the degree to which the affiliation agreement is being followed.
Human resources	
3.1.	Most of the information on this criterion should be included in the self-evaluation report, although it is probable that the academic coordinators will provide some complementary information.
3.2.	Most of the information on this criterion should be included in the self-evaluation report, although it is probable that the academic coordinators will provide some complementary information.
3.3.	Most of the information on this criterion should be included in the self-evaluation report, although it is probable that the academic coordinators will provide some complementary information.
3.4.	Some information on this criterion may be available on the website. Materials that describe training activities that have been recently applied.
Physical resources	
4.1.	Some institutions give information on the characteristics of their classrooms on their websites. The complementary material may provide more details on this.
4.2.	Some institutions give information on their websites on the characteristics and equipment of their teaching labs. The complementary material may provide more details on this.
4.3.	Some institutions give information on their websites on the characteristics and facilities of their staff rooms. The complementary material may provide more information on this.
4.4.	Some institutions give information on their websites on student support services. The complementary material may provide more information on this.

4. SITE VISIT

After analysing the self-evaluation report, the external review panel will need to compare and broaden the information that it considers to be important from other sources so that it can deliver a judgment on the unit being assessed.

For this purpose, the external reviewers use three strategies: the interviews with the different groups, personal observations *in situ* and the analysis of additional documentation.

The interviews with the respective groups constitutes one of the fundamental aspects of the external review panel work, in that it enables:

- Information to be obtained on the self-evaluation process that has been carried out
- Consideration to be given to their assessment of the self-evaluation report
- Problems and aspects that have not been dealt with to be detected
- Information that the external review panel considers appropriate to be obtained and checked.

Given that the possibilities of observation in an institution are very broad, each member of the external review panel will need to specify the aspects that he/she considers most important, based on the available information.

Observing classroom work can be considered to be a fundamental aspect. It is not advisable, however, for the external review panel to enter classes while teaching is going on. This could produce unnecessary “noise” that will be of no benefit at all to the aims of a review process that still needs to be further consolidated.

At all times, it is important to transmit an evaluation culture in which the external reviewers fundamentally have to help the unit being reviewed to discern the reality of its situation and possible enhancement measures to be undertaken.

The external reviewers need to be seen as ‘peers’ who can serve as a mirror for the institution being reviewed to help clarify its situation and strategic actions, and not as examiners.

The external review panel therefore needs to take special care that its actions and the documents that it draws up can never be perceived as an element for criticising specific individuals, groups or the unit being assessed as a whole.

Along these lines, the interactions of the external review panel with the members of the unit being assessed as a norm will almost need to be of a negotiatory nature, in which both recognise each other's point of view as being partial and complementary.

4.1. Action by the external review panel

- a) During the visit, care needs to be taken that the gathering and systemising of information is random and representative. It is therefore important to establish the criteria for selecting the people to be interviewed, the validity and reliability of the information contained in the self-evaluation report, the composition of the self-evaluation committee, the consistency of the opinions expressed in the open hearings with those given in the interviews and in the self-evaluation report, etc.

- b) Given the scope of the programme, and for reasons of methodology, the timetable for the visit by the external review panel will need to be very tight. **Therefore, it is important to maintain strict control over the time, both in terms of punctuality when starting and ending the hearings.** It is advisable that the institution recommends everyone to be punctual when those taking part in the different hearings are summoned.
- c) Taking this fact into account, the external review panel will need to agree which aspects are to be selected in each section to be dealt with in each hearing, and which member of the review panel will ask the questions connected with each issue.
- d) The review panel chairperson has to begin each hearing session with a brief yet clear explanation of the significance and purpose of the review panel's work, making sure that the principles and criteria to be followed during the external review are understood by all those present.
- e) To ensure that the work is planned in each session, it is recommended that the chairperson of the external review panel announces the list of issues to be dealt with at the beginning of each hearing.
- f) In the case of difficulties or obstacles when the site visit is made, it is advisable to avoid any confrontation (the problem can be dealt with and assessed in the report, where necessary).
- g) During the visit, all criticism must be avoided, and strict neutrality must be maintained regarding the institution and its members in all interviews. Another very important aspect is that of strict confidentiality regarding all information obtained from the institution being reviewed not explicitly contained in the report drawn up by the external review panel.
- h) During the visit, the external review panel needs to act together at all times. All of the panel members must attend each hearing, and they must all take part together in the visit to the facilities and in any other activity.
- i) All of the external review panel's internal working sessions and various interactions must follow the principle of consensus and negotiation. It is the chairperson's function to make for the maximum consensus possible between the various points of view expressed by the committee's components and the reflexion on diversity in the final report. Panel members shall avoid publicly contradicting or getting involved in an argument with those taking part in the hearings.

4.2. Planning the site visit

The institution proposes a work schedule to the self-evaluation committee, which must at least include the following activities:

1. The external review panel is received by the management team.
2. Preliminary meeting / briefing of the external review panel.

3. Site visit to the institution's facilities.
4. Interview with the management team.
5. Interview with students.
6. Interview with graduates.
7. Interview with teaching staff.
8. Interview with support staff.
9. Interview with the university's delegate to the institution.
10. Preparation of the final report begins.
11. Preliminary conclusions and farewell.

The duration and scope of each of the activities to be carried out during the visit (which are described in the following section) will depend on the institution's characteristics (for example, the visit to the facilities will be shorter in a small institution) and the type of review to be undertaken. Table 2 gives a possible timetable that would be adequate in the case of a basic level review.

Table 2: Possible timetable for the visit, in the case of a basic level review

Day 1	
10.00 to 10.15	The external review panel is received by the management team
10.15 to 12.00	Preliminary work session / briefing
12.00 to 14.00	Visit to the facilities
14.00 to 15.30	Lunch
15.30 to 16.30	Interview with the management team
16.30 to 17.30	Interview with the students
17.30 to 18.00	Break
18.00 to 19.30	Interview with the graduates

Day 2	
9.30 to 10.30	Interview with the teaching staff
10.30 to 11.00	Break
11.00 to 12.00	Interview with the support staff
12.00 to 13.00	Interview with the university's delegate to the institution
13.00 to 15.00	Lunch
15.00 to 16.00	Preparation of the final report begins
16.00 to 16.30	Preliminary conclusions and farewell

A brief description is given below of each of these stages, in the case of a basic level review.

4.2.1. The external review panel is received by the management team

There are two purposes to the external review panel being received by the management team:

1. An overall presentation of the institution and its activities.
2. The external review panel receives any additional documentation that was requested, where applicable.

4.2.2. Preliminary work session / Briefing

After being received by the management team, the external review panel will then, where applicable, have time to study the package of additional information provided and to settle the final details for the visit. The institution's management team has the responsibility for providing a suitably equipped space for the external review panel to do this work in comfort.

4.2.3. Visit to the facilities

An inspection of the institution's most important facilities is made during the site visit by the review panel: classrooms, laboratories, lounges, library, etc. During this visit, the members of the external review panel will be able to assess the adequacy of these facilities in relation to the requirements of the programmes of study, in line with the specific criteria.

4.2.4. Interview with the management team

In addition to the management team, the university's delegate to the institution and a representative group of the members of the self-evaluation committee (one teacher, one student and one member of the support staff) also attend this interview. The interview has two aims:

1. To assess compliance with certain specific quality criteria.
2. To identify the institution's strong and weak points, according to the opinion of the management team.

Table 3 gives a series of questions that would be interesting to ask to obtain relevant information for assessing the state of each specific criterion.

Table 3: Type of information to be obtained during the interview with the management team, in relation to each standard and quality criterion

Programmes of study	
1.1.	The evidence for this criterion should have been available for analysis prior to the interview.
1.2.	The evidence for this criterion should have been available for analysis prior to the interview.
1.3.	Which subjects in the curriculum have a bearing on each of the learning outcomes and elements that characterise the graduate profile?
1.4.	The evidence for this criterion should have been available for analysis prior to the interview.
1.5.	The evidence for this criterion should have been available for analysis prior to the interview.
1.6.	What are the most important details concerning the functioning of the programmes of study?

1.7.	What are the envisaged short and medium-term enhancement measures for the programmes of study?
Management	
2.1.	What are the most important features of the institution's organisation and internal administration?
2.2.	How does the system for administering student transcripts work?
2.3.	What are the management team's short, medium and long-term goals?
2.4.	How does the team manage its goals and identify new ones?
2.5.	What mechanisms are there to inform the community of its goals, actions and results?
2.6.	What short and medium-term actions have stemmed from the monitoring of the affiliation agreement?
Human resources	
3.1.	Do you consider the teaching staff to be adequate for the requirements of the programmes of study?
3.2.	Is the teaching staff as stipulated in the regulations? Are the envisaged actions adequate and do they allow for adaptation to the regulations in the anticipated time?
3.3.	Do you consider the support staff to be adequate for the requirements of the programmes of study?
3.4.	The management team can explain the learning activities that have recently been given impetus to in the institution.
Physical resources	
4.1.	Do you consider the classrooms to be adequate for curriculum requirements?
4.2.	Do you consider the teaching labs and their equipment to be adequate for curriculum requirements?
4.3.	Do you consider the staff room facilities to be adequate?
4.4.	Do you consider the student support services to be adequate for curriculum requirements?

4.2.5. Interview with the students

During the site visit to the institution, the external review panel will have an interview with a representative group of the students at the institution. The interview has two purposes:

1. To assess compliance with certain specific quality criteria.
2. To identify the institution's strong and weak points, according to the opinion of the students.

Table 4 gives the type of information on each specific criterion that can be obtained in this interview.

Table 4: Type of information to be obtained during the interview with the students, in relation to each standard and quality criterion

Programmes of study	
1.1.	Do you know what the general goals and the graduate profile of the programme are?
1.2.	Do you have easy access to information on the courses? Do you think you are well informed about the syllabi, programmes, activities, methods of assessment, etc.?
1.3.	Do you think you are well informed about the organisation of the curriculum, the sequence of courses, free choice subjects, etc.? Do you consider the curriculum to be adequate in relation to the graduate profile?
1.4.	Do you think you are well informed about profession-oriented work experience/placement? What is your assessment of such experiences?
1.5.	Do you think you are well informed about graduate employment figures (labour market outcomes)? What is your assessment of them?
1.6.	Does the institution ask for your opinion on the quality of the teaching that you receive and on the running of the college/institution? Do you consider that your opinion is taken into account? Do you think you are well informed about the way in which your opinions are taken into account?
1.7.	Not applicable.
Management	
2.1.	Are you familiar with the most important aspects of the institution's organisation (management team, governing bodies, committees, etc.)?
2.2.	Is it easy for you to clarify your doubts concerning your student transcripts and your academic situation?
2.3.	Not applicable.
2.4.	Not applicable.
2.5.	Do you think you are well informed about the management team's goals and the results of its work?
2.6.	Not applicable.
Human resources	
3.1.	Do you consider the teaching staff to be adequate for curriculum requirements?
3.2.	Not applicable
3.3.	Do you consider the support staff to be adequate for curriculum requirements?
3.4.	Not applicable.
Physical resources	
4.1.	Do you consider the classrooms to be adequate for curriculum requirements?
4.2.	Do you consider the teaching labs and equipment to be adequate for curriculum requirements?
4.3.	Do you consider the lounge areas to be adequate?
4.4.	Do you consider the student support services to be adequate for curriculum requirements?

4.2.6. Interview with a representative group of graduates

During the visit to the institution the external review panel will have an interview with a representative group of graduates of the institution (preferably graduates from three or four years prior to the review). The interview has two aims:

1. To assess compliance with certain specific quality criteria.
2. To identify the institution's strong and weak points, according to the opinion of the graduates.

Table 6 gives types of information on each specific criterion that can be obtained in this interview.

Table 5: Type of information to be obtained during the interview with the graduates, in relation to each standard and quality criterion

Programmes of study	
1.1.	Do you consider that the institution provided you with the education that you were expecting to receive when you started your studies?
1.2.	Were the courses well organised?
1.3.	Do you think you were well informed about the important academic aspects during your time at the institution? Do you consider that the curriculum provided you with an adequate training for the requirements of the labour market and employment? What were the strong and weak points of your university education?
1.4.	Did you receive adequate information on profession-oriented work experience/placement? Do you consider the offer of profession-oriented work experience/placement to be adequate in relation to the learning outcomes?
1.5.	Do you think you are well informed about graduate employment figures (labour market outcomes)? What is your assessment of them? What is your personal experience?
1.6.	Has the institution asked for your opinion on the quality of your university education and new training requirements? Do you have any evidence that your opinion has been taken into account?
1.7.	Not applicable.
Management	
2.1.	Are you familiar with the most important aspects of the institution's organisation are (management team, governing bodies, committees, etc.)?
2.2.	Was it easy for you to clarify all of your doubts regarding your student transcripts and academic situation?
2.3.	Not applicable.
2.4.	Not applicable.
2.5.	Do you think you were well informed about the management team's goals and the results of its work?
2.6.	Not applicable.
Human resources	
3.1.	Do you consider that the teaching staff was adequate for curriculum requirements?
3.2.	Not applicable
3.3.	Do you consider that the support staff was adequate for curriculum requirements?

3.4.	Not applicable.
Physical resources	
4.1.	Do you consider that the classrooms were adequate for curriculum requirements?
4.2.	Do you consider that the teaching labs and their equipment were adequate for curriculum requirements?
4.3.	Do you consider that the lounge areas were adequate?
4.4.	Do you consider that the student support services were adequate for curriculum requirements?

4.2.7. Interview with a representative group of the teaching staff

During the visit to the institution the external review panel will have an interview with a representative group of the institution's teaching staff. The interview has two aims:

1. To assess compliance with certain specific quality criteria.
2. To identify the institution's strong and weak points, according to the opinion of the teaching staff.

Table 6 gives the type of information on each specific criterion that can be obtained in this interview.

Table 6: Type of information to be obtained during the interview with the teaching staff, in relation to each standard and quality criterion

Programmes of study	
1.1.	Do you know what the general goals and the graduate profile of the programme are?
1.2.	How are the programmes of study organised? How are they delivered?
1.3.	Can you describe the contribution made by your courses to the graduate profile? Do you consider the curriculum to be adequate in relation to the graduate profile?
1.4.	Do you consider the offer of profession-oriented work experience/placement to be adequate in relation to the learning outcomes?
1.5.	Do you think you are well informed about graduate employment figures (labour market outcomes)? What is your assessment of them?
1.6.	Does the institution ask for your opinion on the quality of your teaching and on the running of the college/institution? Do you consider that your opinion is taken into account? Do you think you are well informed about the way in which your opinions are taken into account?
1.7.	Not applicable.
Management	
2.1.	Are you familiar with the most important aspects of the institution's organisation (management team, governing bodies, committees, etc)?
2.2.	Not applicable.
2.3.	Not applicable.
2.4.	Not applicable.
2.5.	Do you think you are well informed about the management team's goals and the results of its work?
2.6.	Not applicable.

Human resources	
3.1.	Do you consider the teaching staff to be adequate for curriculum requirements?
3.2.	Do you consider the plan established to comply with prevailing regulations to be adequate?
3.3.	Do you consider the support staff to be adequate for curriculum requirements?
3.4.	Are adequate and sufficient teacher training activities organised by the institution's academic coordinators?
Physical resources	
4.1.	Do you consider that the classrooms were adequate for curriculum requirements?
4.2.	Do you consider that the teaching labs and their equipment were adequate for curriculum requirements?
4.3.	Do you consider that the lounge areas were adequate?
4.4.	Do you consider that the student support services were adequate for curriculum requirements?

4.2.8. Interview with a representative group of the support staff

During the visit to the institution the external review panel will have an interview with a representative group of support staff at the institution. The interview has two aims:

1. To assess compliance with certain specific quality criteria.
2. To identify the institution's strong and weak points, according to the opinion of the support staff.

Table 7 gives the type of information on each specific criterion that can be obtained in this interview.

Table 7: Type of information to be obtained during the interview with the support staff, in relation to each standard and quality criterion

Programmes of study	
1.1.	Do you know what the general goals and the graduate profile of the programme are?
1.2.	Not applicable.
1.3.	Not applicable.
1.4.	What is your opinion regarding the organisation of profession-oriented work experience/placement?
1.5.	Not applicable.
1.6.	Does the institution ask for your opinion on the running of the college/institution? Do you consider that your opinion is taken into account? Do you think you are well informed about the way in which your opinions are taken into account?
1.7.	Not applicable.
Management	
2.1.	Are you familiar with the most important aspects of the institution's organisation are (management team, governing bodies, committees, etc.)?
2.2.	Can it be demonstrated that the system for managing the student transcripts works well? It may be advisable to check some transcripts during the interview.

2.3.	Not applicable.
2.4.	Not applicable.
2.5.	Do you think you are well informed about the management team's goals and the results of its work?
2.6.	Not applicable.
Human resources	
3.1.	Not applicable.
3.2.	Not applicable
3.3.	Do you consider that the support staff is adequate for the institution's requirements?
3.4.	Are there adequate and sufficient teacher training activities organised for the support staff by the academic coordinators in the institution?
Physical resources	
4.1.	Not applicable.
4.2.	Do you consider that the teaching labs and equipment are adequate for the institution's requirements?
4.3.	Do you consider that the staff lounge areas are adequate?
4.4.	Do you consider that the student support services are adequate for curriculum requirements?

4.2.9. Interview with the university's delegate to the institution

During the visit to the institution the external review panel will have an interview with the university's delegate to the institution, who may be accompanied by other people from the university involved in supervising the running of the institution. The interview has two aims:

1. To assess compliance with certain specific quality criteria.
2. To identify the institution's strong and weak points, according to the opinion of the delegate.

Table 8 gives the type of information on each specific criterion that can be obtained in this interview.

Table 8: Type of information to be obtained during the interview with the university's delegate to the institution, in relation to each standard and quality criterion

Programmes of study	
1.1.	Not applicable.
1.2.	Not applicable.
1.3.	Not applicable.
1.4.	Not applicable.
1.5.	Not applicable.
1.6.	Does the institution ask for your opinion regarding the running of the college/institution? Do you consider that your opinion is taken into account? Do you think you are well informed about the way in which your opinions are taken into account?
1.7.	Not applicable.

Management	
2.1.	Are you familiar with the most important aspects of the institution's organisation are (management team, governing bodies, committees, etc.)?
2.2.	Not applicable.
2.3.	Not applicable.
2.4.	Not applicable.
2.5.	Do you think you are well informed about the management team's goals and the results of its work?
2.6.	Do you consider that there is adequate monitoring of the affiliation agreement? Can you describe the mechanisms for this monitoring? Can you describe short and medium-term measures stemming from the monitoring of the affiliation agreement?
Human resources	
3.1.	Not applicable
3.2.	Do you consider the plan established to comply with prevailing regulations to be adequate?
3.3.	Do you consider the support staff to be adequate for the institution's requirements?
3.4.	Not applicable.
Physical resources	
4.1.	Do you consider that the classrooms are adequate for curriculum requirements?
4.2.	Do you consider that the teaching labs and their equipment are adequate for curriculum requirements?
4.3.	Do you consider that the lounge areas are adequate?
4.4.	Do you consider that the student support services are adequate for curriculum requirements?

4.2.10. Preparation of a draft final review report

The work of the external review panel ends with the drawing up of an evaluation report, which has three parts:

1. General assessment of the institution's strong and weak points, according to the information gathered during the visit.
2. Assessment of the level of compliance of each specific quality standard and criterion, according to the evidence gathered.
3. Recommendations to the institution for enhancing levels of quality in the short and medium term.

In the final part of the site visit, an hour will need to be spent to start the process of preparing the report, and perhaps to divide up the work among the panel members in order for it to be completed over the following few days.

It is also important to use this meeting to establish the preliminary conclusions that will be presented to the management team prior to the farewell.

4.2.11. Preliminary conclusions and farewell

During the final meeting of the visit, the members of the external review panel present their preliminary conclusions to the management team, the university's delegate to the institution and the representatives of the self-evaluation committee.

5. STRUCTURE AND DRAFTING OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT

The external review report will need to be structured as follows:

Assessing the evidence and the quality of the self-evaluation report

When drawing up the external review report, the external review panel will need to have made a prior assessment of the quality of the self-evaluation report and the evidence provided. This assessment will need to consider both the evidence documented in the report that served to make the value judgments, and the evidence and opinions gathered during the visit. Mention will also need to be made of the impressions resulting from the review panel's own expertise.

The situation might arise where the external review panel considers it necessary to suspend judgment of various aspects due to evidence that is unsound. The grounds for the situation will therefore need to be explained.

Assessment of the various dimensions evaluated

Bearing in mind both the assessments and evidence provided in the self-evaluation report and the results obtained from the visit to the unit under review, the external review panel has to state its opinion, with an overall assessment, concerning each section in the protocol. It will therefore need to tick the corresponding key issue box.

If possible, it is also important for the external review panel to describe **the changes in each dimension in recent years**, especially if there has been any significantly important progress or setbacks/decline over the previous five-year period.

Enhancement proposals

The self-evaluation report should include the measures that the institution should reasonably be able to comply with, in terms of all of the criteria, in the short or medium term. We understand that the mission of the external review panel is not to establish the policy of the institution, although it is interesting **for it to assess the enhancement proposals submitted and to be able to recommend directions and areas that are of priority** so that the institution under review can take them into account if and when it defines an enhancement plan.

General statements and negations such as the following should be avoided: The external review panel agrees with the self-evaluation committee. The statement should be broadened along the lines of: The external review panel, just like self-evaluation committee, is of the opinion that the decline in the number of registered students is due to...

5.1. Drafting, processing and dissemination of the external report

There are two stages to the drafting of the external report, the initial drawing up stage in order for it to be presented orally at the end of the visit, and a second stage that is reserved for the careful drafting of the final document. The oral report needs to contain all of the elements that have been observed and that form part of the final written report. It is not advisable for aspects to appear in the oral communication that are not dealt with later on in the final report or that the final report contains important aspects that were not specified in the oral report.

Bearing in mind the protocol structure of the new methodology, the proposal by AQU Catalunya is for the external review panel to issue an elaborated draft report at the end of the visit.

In the report that is presented orally, the external review panel will need to issue a value judgment for each section on the quality of the evidence, the assessment of each dimension assessed, and their results. In this way, the subsequent drafting of the report will prove to be much easier.

It is also recommended that, during the oral presentation of the external report, the self-evaluation committee takes note of the review panel's assessments of each key issue, in order for the self-evaluation committee, in case of discrepancy, to be able to prepare its statement of grounds regarding the same. This will accelerate the subsequent definitive drafting of the report.

The external report basically contains the same points as the self-evaluation report. The main difference is in the inclusion of an **introductory first section** with the description of the institution being reviewed, the panel's composition and the purpose of the report, and a **second section** in which a description is given of the carrying out of the review process.

The written report is drawn up by the review panel's chairperson, taking into consideration that, prior to it being sent to the self-evaluation committee and AQU Catalunya, the other members of the external review panel will need to be able to make suggestions and proposals and agree with the final report. The written report must be received by the self-evaluation committee **within two weeks of the completion of the site visit.**

If no response is received from the self-evaluation committee within one week, the submitted report will be taken as being the definitive report. This definitive report is then sent by e-mail and normal post to AQU Catalunya, which is responsible for sending it to the institution reviewed, the university that it is affiliated with and the government department for universities.

The members of the external panel of experts may keep a copy of the self-evaluation report, although they are prohibited from making any kind of dissemination of the same in terms of content, although aspects concerning the methodology and procedure are excluded from his prohibition. Nevertheless, authorisation from the institution reviewed will be required in all cases.