



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

ANNUAL REPORT

2013



Generalitat
de Catalunya

 ENQA eqar/// ISO 9001

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Calle dels Vergós, 36-42, 08017 Barcelona

Document endorsed by the AQU Catalunya Board of Management, 2 April 2014.

First edition: September 2014

Legal deposit: B-22.433-2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

0. INTRODUCTION	7
1. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMMES	8
1. Framework for validation, monitoring, modification and accreditation.....	8
2. Internal quality assurance systems.....	13
3. Reviewers and students.....	13
2. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF TEACHING	15
1. Ex-ante assessment of university contract teaching staff.....	15
2. Assessment of merits in research, teaching and management.....	19
3. KNOWLEDGE GENERATION	22
1. The system of universities and higher education in Catalonia	22
2. Workshops and events	24
4. INTERNATIONALISATION	26
1. Institutional relations	26
2. International projects.....	27
3. Other activities	28
5. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION	30
1. Review of AQU Catalunya in accordance with the ESG	30
2. The Agency's governing and QA bodies	30
3. Advisory bodies.....	31
4. Catalan universities and social partners	31
5. Communication	31
6. INTERNAL ORGANISATION	33
1. Accountability and internal quality	33
2. Information and communications technologies/ICT	33
3. Human resources.....	34
4. Financial and accounting management.....	35
5. Legal activity	37

FOREWORD

Before looking at the activities undertaken by AQU Catalunya during 2013 that are set out in this comprehensive ANNUAL REPORT 2013, the sole purpose of which is the accountability and full transparency of everything that was carried out by the Agency throughout the year, I would just like to point out three facts that they were influenced by.

The first was the change in the Agency's top-level management positions of president and director (CEO). Dr. Josep Joan Moreso took over from Dr. Joaquim Prats as President, and I myself, the undersigned, took over from Dr. Josep Anton Ferré as Director of the Agency. Allow me to dedicate just a few words at the beginning of this report in acknowledgment of their work. Their time with AQU Catalunya resulted in the development and implementation of the Framework for validation, monitoring, modification and accreditation (VSMA Framework); the development and launch of WINDDAT, the website with teaching indicators for the analysis of the running and delivery of degree programmes, a very important instrument used in review and evaluation processes; the making of AQU Catalunya into one of the best quality assurance agencies in Europe as regards compliance with the European standards and guidelines (ESG); and many other activities that were given impetus to under their guidance and which have helped to enhance AQU Catalunya's solid reputation as a quality assurance agency.

The second fact that shaped the Agency's activities throughout the year was the complex budgetary situation, which, aside from the uncertainties caused by deferments, was characterised by a reduction in the AQU Catalunya budget. In order to balance the budget, tough austerity measures therefore had to be taken, activities postponed and the salaries of reviewers and in-house staff inevitably reduced. Thanks are therefore due to everyone for their commitment to a job well done, which has continued to be maintained in spite of the circumstances, and for everyone's meaningful contributions.

The third is that AQU Catalunya had to deal yet again with the challenge of relocating its offices as a result of the agreement between the Catalan Audiovisual Council and the Zona Franca Consortium concerning the sale of the building on c./ Sancho de Ávila in order to cancel current debt. This unforeseen event, which occurred at one of the most critical times of the year, meant that staff at AQU Catalunya had to bear the brunt of the extra effort needed for the Agency's activities to be undertaken in compliance with deadlines agreed to with the universities.

Moving on to the ANNUAL REPORT 2013 itself, and after a careful read of the activities that were carried out throughout the year, I believe the assessment to be overall a positive one, with AQU Catalunya satisfactorily dealing with the core activities that define it as a university quality assurance agency.

With regard to the review of study programmes, the Agency completed the third year of the quality assurance (QA) processes involving programme validation, modification and monitoring, and started the external visits in relation to the accreditation of recognised degree programmes.

It is also ten years now that AQU Catalunya has been carrying out the ex-ante assessment of contract teaching staff prior to recruitment at Catalan universities. These processes are now fully consolidated in the Agency, with the different versions that have been produced over time.

In the case of internationalisation, the establishment of the EHEA represents the primary realisation of this process within which the association between quality and internationalisation is a priority among the actions that are developed. In spite of the current difficulties, AQU Catalunya has enhanced its presence in international bodies, examples including the taking over of the vice-presidency of ENQA and hosting the Secretariat of INQAAHE, as well as participating in international projects that bring added value to the university system in Catalonia.

The ANNUAL REPORT 2013 gives details of these and many more activities that are beyond the scope of this brief foreword, although I'd like to take this opportunity in this final paragraph of stressing the position of the Board of Management as regards its disagreement with the Spanish government's proposed measure in the Report on the Reform of the Public Administration in Spain (CORA). As far as the Agency's Board is concerned, we can but express our full support as regards this position and, at the same time, work to reinforce what has already been accomplished and help build the future. A robust and exemplary QA agency in Catalonia is an imperative for higher education and the university system in Catalonia to be more competitive in the world.

Martí Casadesús Fa

Director

0. INTRODUCTION

As a whole, 2013 was marked by the design and implementation of the accreditation of recognised degree programmes. The main activities of 2013 were as follows:

- **Quality assurance of institutions and programmes:** continuation of the roll out of the VSMA Framework and development of the methodology for the accreditation of First and Second Cycle degrees, including the external faculty visits.
- **Quality assurance of teaching:** ex-ante (pre-selection) assessment of university contract teaching staff, and preparation for the reaccreditation of the handbooks used for teaching assessment at public universities in Catalonia.
- **Knowledge generation:** start of the fifth survey on the labour market outcomes (destinations) of the graduate population from Catalan universities; the university student satisfaction survey; and preparation of the project to assess the transition into employment of graduates from the point of view of employers.
- **Internationalisation:** taking over of the Secretariat of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE); the maintenance of international institutional contacts with the European associations that the Agency is involved with, and participation in international projects and QA activities that generate added value for Catalan universities.
- **Strategic management and communication:** establishment of the position of the AQU Board of Management as regards the Spanish government's CORA report; the adoption of measures to ensure a balanced budget, and the setting in motion of AQU Catalunya's presence in social networks.
- **Internal organisation:** accountability and optimisation in the allocation of human and physical resources in the Agency's different projects and activities; relocation of the Agency's offices and the initial stage of the adoption of the ISO 27001 information security standard.

1. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMMES

1. Framework for validation, monitoring, modification and accreditation (VSMA Framework)

1.1. Recognised university degrees and programmes

Validation

AQU Catalunya carried out the ex-ante assessment of proposals for First and Second Cycle and doctorate degree programmes from Catalan universities to be introduced in the 2013-2014 academic year, which was carried out in accordance with the implementation of the VSMA Framework.

A total of 270 proposals were submitted by Catalan universities for validation: 12 First Cycle degree programmes, 162 Second Cycle (Master's) programmes and 96 doctoral programmes. 94% of the total number of proposals received a favourable evaluation. According to the different programme levels, 80% of First Cycle programmes received a favourable evaluation, 93% of Second Cycle programmes and 98% of doctoral programmes.

Table 1. Result of validation (ex-ante assessment), according to university. 2013

	UB	UAB	UPC	UPF	UdG	UdL	URV	URL	UOC	UVic	UIC	UAO	Total
Bachelor's	2			2	1		2	1		3		1	12
Master's	44	41	9	11	14	4	9	14	9		4	3	162
Doctorate programmes		34	17		10	8	14	8	2	2	1		96
Total	46	75	26	13	25	12	25	23	11	5	5	4	270

Table 2. Result of validation (ex-assessment), according to subject area/review panel. 2013

	Favourable	Unfavourable	Withdrew	Total	% favourable
Arts and Humanities	26	4	0	30	87%
Social Sciences and Law	60	8	6	74	81%
Sciences	20	0	2	22	91%
Health Sciences	20	0	0	20	100%
Engineering and Architecture	27	1	0	28	96%
Doctorate programmes	93	2	1	96	97%
Total	246	15	9	270	91%

Graph 1. Result of validation (ex-ante assessment) (2011-2013)



Given the rotation of the members of the Quality Assurance Commission's various specific QA committees, which are responsible for the validation, monitoring, modification and accreditation of recognised university degree programmes, AQU Catalunya organised a training course for the new committee members on 20 December.

Modification

96 proposals for the modification of recognised degree courses were submitted: 72 First Cycle programmes and 24 Second Cycle (Master's) programmes. All together, 99% of the total number of modification proposals received a favourable evaluation, with 100% of all First Cycle programmes and 95% of Master's programmes.

Table 3. Result of the evaluation of modifications to degree programmes, according to university. 2013

	UB	UAB	UPC	UPF	UdG	UdL	URV	URL	UOC	UVic	UIC	UAO	Total
Bachelor's	3	25		1	9	6	16	1		7	3	1	72
Master's	1	14		3		1	2	1		1	1		24
Total	4	39		4	9	7	18	2		8	4		96

Table 5. Result of the evaluation of modifications to degree programmes, according to subject area/review panel. 2013

	Favourable	Unfavourable	Withdraw	Total	% favourable
Arts and Humanities	12	0	1	13	92%
Social Sciences and Law	45	0	0	45	100%
Sciences	14	0	0	14	100%
Health Sciences	11	0	0	11	100%
Engineering and Architecture	11	1	1	13	85%
Total	93	1	2	96	97%

Graph 2. Result of the evaluation of modifications to degree programmes (2011-2013)



Monitoring

AQU Catalunya carried out the monitoring of recognised First and Second Cycle degrees corresponding to the 2011-2012 academic year. As confirmed by the universities, an analysis was made of the delivery of a total of 757 degrees (442 First Cycle and 315 Second Cycle).

Out of this total of 757, AQU Catalunya selected 144 monitoring progress reports (93 Bachelor's and 51 Master's), which accounted for 19% of all the reports processed by the universities, to issue the final reports.

Table 5. Results of Monitoring reports assessed by AQU, according to university. 2013

	UB	UAB	UPC	UPF	UdG	UdL	URV	URL	UOC	UVic	UIC	UAO	Total
Bachelor's	62	84	66	27	44	31	38	32	15	14	21	8	442
Master's	23	76	22	30	21	33	40	38	13	9	7	3	315
Total	85	160	88	57	65	64	78	70	28	23	28	11	757

Table 6. Results of Monitoring reports assessed by AQU, according to university. 2013

	UB	UAB	UPC	UPF	UdG	UdL	URV	URL	UOC	UVic	UIC	UAO	Total
Bachelor's	14	15	10	6	10	8	10	7	3	4	5	1	93
Master's	4	11	8	5	3	5	5	5	2	1	1	1	51
Total	18	26	18	11	13	13	15	12	5	5	6	2	144
%assessed	21%	16%	20%	19%	20%	20%	19%	17%	18%	22%	21%	18%	19%

Table 7. Monitoring reports assessed by AQU, according to university and subject area/review panel. 2013

	UB	UAB	UPC	UPF	UdG	UdL	URV	URL	UOC	UVic	UIC	UAO	Total
Arts and Humanities	3	4	0	2	2	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	18
Social Sciences and Law	6	9	2	5	4	4	5	4	4	2	2	2	49
Sciences	4	5	1	0	2	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	16
Health Sciences	3	4	1	2	2	3	2	1	0	1	1	0	20
Engineering and Architecture	2	4	14	2	3	4	4	5	1	1	1	0	41
Total	18	26	18	11	13	13	15	12	5	6	5	2	144

Accreditation

The guidelines, conditions and procedure for the accreditation of degree programmes are laid down in Royal Decree 1393/2007.

In 2013 AQU Catalunya completed the development of the methodology for degree programme accreditation, which it had begun to work on, together with the various stakeholders, in 2012. The methodology is set out in the *Guide to the accreditation of recognised First and Second Cycle degree programmes* (AQU Catalunya, 2013), which was endorsed by the Agency's Quality Assessment Commission on 15 November 2013.

The underlying reason for accreditation is to ensure that study programmes offered by higher education institutions meet the formal and administrative requirements laid down by the authorities, and that the level of acquired learning achieved by their graduates corresponds with the level certified by the institution (type of degree). According to the accreditation methodology designed by AQU Catalunya, an accredited study programme must have demonstrated that:

- It complies with the legal requirements laid down by the competent authority.
- The programme's academic proposal complies, in terms of the intended learning outcome, with the Qualifications Framework in Spain (QF-EHEA in Spain) according to the level of the programme (First Cycle, Second Cycle, doctorate).
- Appropriate resources, in terms of teaching staff, learning support services and physical infrastructure and resources, have been deployed in programme delivery.
- Certificates that are issued conform to relevant and appropriate procedures for the assessment of the students' achievements (outcomes).
- The academic profile of graduates, in terms of advancement, graduation and employability, corresponds with the characteristics of the students and the potential of the labour market.
- Internal QA procedures are in place to ensure periodic analysis of the learning process for the continuous enhancement of study and learning by the students.

AQU Catalunya organised twelve briefing sessions during 2013 (one at each Catalan university) on the accreditation methodology, in which approximately one thousand people participated.

1.2. Higher awards in the Performing Arts and Visual Arts

As of 2012, AQU Catalunya, on commission from the Catalan Government's Ministry of Education, and through the Agency's CAQ specific committee for the Arts and Humanities, is the body responsible for the validation, monitoring, modification and accreditation of higher awards in the Performing Arts and Visual Arts.

For validation and modification, the methodological material from the VSMA Framework is applicable.

Table 8. Higher studies in the Arts laid down in the VSMA Framework

Higher studies in the Arts	Institution
Dance	Institut del Teatre - Conservatori Superior de Dansa (CSD)
Dramatic Arts	Institut del Teatre - Escola Superior d'Art Dramàtic (ESAD)
Dramatic Arts	Escola Superior d'Art Dramàtic Eòlia
Restoration and Preservation of Cultural Heritage	Escola Superior de Conservació i Restauració de Béns Culturals
Design	Escola Superior de Disseny i Arts Plàstiques
Design	Escola Superior de Disseny Felicidad Duce
Design	Escola Superior de Disseny IED
Music	Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya (ESMUC)
Music	Conservatori del Liceu
Music	Taller de Músics

For monitoring, the *Guide to the monitoring of higher awards in the Performing Arts and Visual Arts* (AQU Catalunya, 2013) is applicable, which is an adaptation of the *Guide to the monitoring*

of recognised First Cycle and Second Cycle Degrees according to the specific characteristics of higher awards in the Performing Arts and Visual Arts. The process of monitoring degree courses validated during 2013 began in October.

2. Internal quality assurance systems

2.1. AUDIT programme

The objective of the AUDIT programme, which is run jointly by ANECA, ACSUG and AQU Catalunya, is to evaluate the suitability of internal quality assurance systems (IQAS) at faculty level prior to their implementation (ex-ante assessment).

Assessment of the design of the IQAS at the Barcelona School of Architecture (ETSAB, at BarcelonaTech/UPC) was completed during 2013.

2.2. AUDIT-EAS programme

In 2013, the Catalan government's Ministry of Education and AQU Catalunya started work on the AUDIT-EAS programme for the orientation and assessment of the design of IQAS in faculties offering degree programmes in the Performing Arts and Visual Arts.

The Agency produced and published the *Guide to assessing the design of an internal quality assurance system for degree programmes in the Performing Arts and Visual Arts* (AQU Catalunya, 2013). Various dimensions had to be adapted to the context of degree courses in the Performing Arts and Visual Arts, following on from the Agency's experience gained in recent years in assessing other faculty IQAS.

The Agency provided support, in the form of training sessions, for the quality committees of faculties that offer degree programmes in the Performing Arts and Visual Arts. It also organised a workshop on IQAS design aimed at faculty directors and course coordinators, which took place on 20 November and was attended by around 50 people.

3. Reviewers and students

3.1. The Agency's pool of reviewers

External experts are selected from the Agency's pool of reviewers. To be included and to participate in the Agency's QA processes, candidates fill out the C.V. form, which is available on the Agency's website, confirm acceptance of the conditions and send their C.V. by e-mail.

3.2. Students

Impetus was given in 2013 to the programme of courses on quality assurance for university students, the objective being to reinforce their role in the teaching and learning process and



participation in QA procedures. Agreements were signed with Universitat Ramon Llull, Universitat de Vic, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya and Universitat Abat Oliba CEU.

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF TEACHING

1. Ex-ante assessment of university contract teaching staff

In order to apply for selection for a contract teaching post at a public university in Catalonia, applicants must already be in possession of a favourable pre-selection (ex-ante) report for the category of tenure-track (pre-/non-career grade lecturing) staff, and an accreditation in either research or advanced research for the categories of assistant professor and full professor, respectively.

An agreement signed between the private universities in Catalonia and AQU Catalunya covers the assessment of teaching staff at private universities under the same terms as for the issue of reports for tenure-track staff and accreditations for research and advanced research.

In 2013, all calls for applications were made through the Generalitat de Catalunya's on-line applications website (OVT). Almost all applications were made on-line through the website.

On 4 March 2013, a call for applications was made by the Secretariat for Universities and Research and the public universities in Catalonia for places on the Serra Húnter programme, which plans to recruit more than five hundred new faculty staff members for posts at Catalan universities during the period 2013-2020, and who will be selected according to international criteria for excellence. In this first call for applications, seventy-five (75) posts were offered.

1.1. Reports for tenure-track and collaborating lecturer staff

Reports for collaborating lecturer staff are no longer issued as of 2013. Pursuant to current regulations, the final closing date for the universities to hold competitive recruitment drives for contract collaborating teaching staff was 3 May 2013.

Table 9. Results¹ 2012² of the second call in 2011 for collaborating lecturer reports

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	100
Social Sciences	4	0	3	1	0	0	3	1	75
Experimental Sciences	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health Sciences	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Sciences	14	1	11	1	0	1	11	2	85
Engineering and Architecture	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	21	3	15	2	0	1	15	3	83%

Table 10. Results of the second call in 2012³ for tenure-track lecturer reports

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	28	0	22	5	0	1	22	6	79
Social Sciences	54	0	25	21	0	8	25	29	46
Experimental Sciences	14	0	14	0	0	0	14	0	100
Health Sciences	23	0	13	7	0	3	13	10	57
Medical Sciences	17	0	5	12	0	0	5	12	29
Engineering and Architecture	30	1	22	2	2	3	24	5	83
Total	166	1	101	47	2	15	103	62	62%

Table 11. Results of the first call 2013⁴ for tenure-track lecturer reports

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	27	3	16	7	0	0	16	8	67
Social Sciences	78	7	37	28	0	0	37	34	52
Experimental Sciences	16	0	14	2	0	0	14	2	88
Health Sciences	29	3	12	13	0	0	12	14	46
Medical Sciences	24	3	11	10	0	0	11	10	52
Engineering and Architecture	36	2	31	2	0	0	31	3	91
Total	210	18	121	62	0	0	121	71	63%

¹ TS: total applications; TSR: closed/no decision; F: favourable; D: unfavourable; RE: appeals accepted; RD: appeals dismissed; RP: appeals pending; TF: total favourable; TD: total unfavourable; %F: percentage of favourable out of the total (excluding those closed with no final decision).

² Resolution ECO/3017/2011, 30 December.

³ Resolution ECO/3017/2011, 30 December.

⁴ Resolution ECO/15/2013, 7 January.

Table 12. Applications received in the second call in 2013⁵ for tenure-track lecturer reports

Field of knowledge	Junior Lecturer
Humanities	29
Social Sciences	67
Experimental Sciences	14
Health Sciences	20
Medical Sciences	19
Engineering and Architecture	31
Total	180

1.2. Accreditation for research and advanced research

The outcomes of the calls made in 2013 were as follows:

Table 13. Results of the second call in 2012⁶ for research accreditations

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	35	5	17	4	0	9	17	13	57
Social Sciences	78	7	52	11	0	8	52	19	73
Experimental Sciences	20	2	13	4	1	0	14	5	78
Health Sciences	14	1	8	4	1	0	9	5	69
Medical Sciences	21	1	9	9	0	2	9	11	45
Engineering and Architecture	47	2	34	8	2	1	36	11	80
Total	215	18	133	40	4	20	137	64	70%

Table 14. Results of the first call in 2013⁷ for research accreditations

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	87	23	34	20	10	34	30	53
Social Sciences	124	28	60	27	9	60	36	63
Experimental Sciences	85	23	43	18	1	43	19	69
Health Sciences	56	11	18	27	0	18	27	40
Medical Sciences	55	8	23	18	6	23	24	49
Engineering and Architecture	80	16	43	14	7	43	21	67
Total	487	109	221	124	33	221	157	58%

⁵ Resolution ECO/15/2013, 7 January.

⁶ Resolution ECO/1443/2012, 9 July.

⁷ Resolution ECO/1443/2012, 9 July.

Table 15. Results of the second call in 2012⁸ for advanced research accreditations

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	100
Social Sciences	10	1	4	5	0	4	5	44
Experimental Sciences	6	1	2	3	0	2	3	40
Health Sciences	8	0	4	3	1	4	4	50
Medical Sciences	11	0	8	2	1	8	3	73
Engineering and Architecture	12	0	4	8	0	4	8	33
Total	49	2	24	21	2	24	23	51%

Table 16. Results of the first call in 2013⁹ for advanced research accreditations

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	5	0	3	2	0	3	2	60
Social Sciences	28	5	8	10	5	8	15	35
Experimental Sciences	10	1	6	2	1	6	3	67
Health Sciences	9	0	8	1	0	8	1	89
Medical Sciences	10	2	6	2	0	6	2	75
Engineering and Architecture	15	4	6	5	0	6	5	55
Total	77	12	37	22	6	37	28	57%

Table 17. Applications received in the second call 2013¹⁰ for research accreditation and advanced research accreditation

Field of knowledge	Research	Advanced research
Humanities	25	4
Social Sciences	72	18
Experimental Sciences	20	7
Health Sciences	21	8
Medical Sciences	31	9
Engineering and Architecture	43	15
Total	212	61

1.3. Teaching assessment certificates

Teaching certification applies to teaching staff with an accreditation of either research and/or advanced research issued by AQU Catalunya, as well as contract and public service teaching and research staff at public universities in Catalonia.

Eighty-three (83) applications were received in 2012, of which fifty-four (54) were ruled as favourable, and twenty-nine (29) where no final decision was made.

⁸ Resolution ECO/1444/2012, 9 July.

⁹ Resolution ECO/1444/2012, 9 July.

¹⁰ Resolutions ECO/1476/2013 and ECO/1477/2013, 27 June.

2. Assessment of merits in research, teaching and management

The allocation of salary increases to public service and contract teaching and research staff at public universities in Catalonia is based on the assessment of individual merits in teaching, research and management.

2.1. Merits in research

Merits in research are assessed directly by AQU Catalunya according to an established procedure and criteria. Assessments carried out by the Spanish Research Assessment Commission (CNEAI) for the same purpose are also recognised through a signed agreement.

The specific criteria for the assessment of research by teaching and research staff at public universities in Catalonia were revised for calls for applications made during 2013. As of 2011, public service and contract teaching and research staff applying for the assessment of merits in research can also request assessment for premiums on research and technology transfer.

Table 18. Results of the 2013 call for public service teaching and research staff¹¹ at public universities

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RP	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	89	5	80	4	0	80	4	95
Social Sciences	159	19	139	1	0	139	1	99
Experimental Sciences	150	9	141	0	0	141	0	100
Health Sciences	70	9	60	0	1	60	1	98
Medical Sciences	91	7	82	1	1	82	2	98
Engineering and Architecture	170	15	152	3	0	152	3	98
Total	729	64	654	9	2	654	11	98%

Table 19. Results of the 2013 call for contracted teaching and research staff¹² at public universities

Field of knowledge	TT	TSR	F	D	RP	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	69	9	34	19	7	34	26	57
Social Sciences	109	13	76	14	7	76	21	78
Experimental Sciences	55	6	42	4	3	42	7	86
Health Sciences	50	4	35	5	6	35	11	76
Medical Sciences	51	11	33	3	4	33	7	83
Engineering and Architecture	122	17	74	21	10	74	31	70
Total	456	60	294	66	37	294	103	74

¹¹ Resolution ECO/2903/2012, 21 December.

¹² Resolution ECO/2903/2012, 21 December.

Agreements dealing with the assessment of research and quality premiums

AQU Catalunya has different agreements in connection with the assessment of research work by teaching and/or research staff at Catalan private universities, the Catalan Institute for Physical Education (INEFC), BarcelonaTech/UPC (research staff) and the University of Extremadura. An agreement was also signed in 2013 with the TecnoCampus Mataró-Maresme. The criteria and procedures are the same as those used in the assessment of research work by public service and contract teaching and research staff at public universities in Catalonia.

Table 20. Results of the agreements signed with different institutions for the assessment of research work by teaching and/or research staff. 2013¹³

Institution	TT	TSR	F	D	RP
Private universities (Catalonia)	118	0	77	41	9
UPC (assessment of research staff)	2	0	2	0	0
INEFC	6	0	3	3	0
TecnoCampus Mataró-Maresme	8	0	4	4	2
Universidad de Extremadura	49	7	22	20	3
Total	183	7	108	68	14

2.2. Merits in teaching and management

The assessment of merits in teaching

AQU Catalunya has been working with Catalan universities since 2003 in the development and application of teaching assessment models using the model set out in their respective teaching assessment handbooks.

Teaching assessment handbooks.

In accordance with the strategy agreed at the workshop titled Reaccreditation of the teaching assessment handbooks used in public universities in Catalonia, held on 16 April, AQU Catalunya endorsed the procedure for the reaccreditation of these handbooks, which are used to assess the working and application of teaching assessment processes designed by each university.

All seven public universities in Catalonia applied for the reaccreditation of their teaching assessment handbooks. The body responsible for carrying this out is AQU's special committee for the assessment of individual merits and activities (CEMAI), and an evaluation was carried out by the external review panels during the first half of 2014. If the outcome of the evaluation is favourable, reaccreditation has a validity of five years.

¹³ Resolution ECO/2903/2012, 21 December.

Outcome of the assessment of merits in teaching

Certification of the teaching assessment reports on teaching and research staff issued by the universities is dealt with by CEMAI.

Table 21. Results of the 2012 call for certification of the assessment of merits in teaching

Potential applicants	Actual total applicants	%	Positive	%	Negative	%	% favourable/potential
2.308	1.433	62,09%	1.329	92,74%	36	2,51%	57,58%

The number of potential applicants includes academic staff from previous calls with the option to participate in the 2012 call.

The assessment of merits in management

Assessment of the individual merits in management of public service and contract teaching and research staff by the universities in Catalonia is carried out in accordance with instructions endorsed by AQU Catalunya and the Directorate General for Universities for this purpose. Following the assessment of its teaching staff, each university then refers the assessment reports to the Agency for it to certify that assessment has complied with the abovementioned instructions.

Table 22. Results of the 2012 call for certification of the assessment of merits in management premium

Assessed periods	Favourable	Unfavourable	1st period	2nd period	3rd period	4th period
353	353	0	125	99	77	52

The information in the table refers to periods of externally assessed skills in management, not people.

3. KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

1. The system of universities and higher education in Catalonia

1.1. The WINDDAT portal (with indicators on teaching for use in the development and analysis of study programmes)



WINDDAT is a public website launched by AQU Catalunya in 2012 that offers data on student demand, admission grades, the number of places offered, student achievement rates, etc., which can be used by the university to draw up monitoring progress reports and compare course data with that of other programmes offered in Catalonia.

Work was carried out in 2013 to extend the service and improve its capabilities. The main new development was the setting up of an administration environment whereby the universities can consult, validate and export data (in .xls and .pdf formats) before they are released and made public. A section for indicators from the 3-yearly survey on the labour market outcomes of graduates from Catalan universities has also been set up.

The WINDDAT portal received 15,120 visits in 2013.

1.2. The transition to the labour market of university graduates

Work was started on the preparations for the fifth survey on graduate labour market outcomes, which is being carried out this year (2014) with the participation of all the public and private universities in Catalonia. The three-yearly study on the transition to the labour market of graduates from Catalan universities has two main objectives, namely, to establish the quality of employment of the graduate population and to gather relevant information at study programme level for the improvement and enhancement of curricula that are being offered.

New developments in the fifth survey are the participation, for the first time, of graduates of Second Cycle (Master's) programmes and the use, also for the first time, of the online format for collecting data on international Master's programmes, as well as doctoral degrees (3,036 people). The rest of the survey is to be carried out by telephone poll.

The reference population of the survey is 51,743 people, with an anticipated sample of 27,848 people.

Table 23. Population and sample of the fifth survey on graduate labour market outcomes

	Reference population (people)	Anticipated sample (people)	Survey type
Undergraduate degrees Graduates who completed their studies in 2010, with the exception of Medicine, where the year of completion was 2007	31.734	17.295	Telephone
Master's degrees Graduates who completed their studies in 2010 and 2011	12.370	6.074	Telephone
	4.535 (International: Master's degree courses where international students were more than 40%)	2.372	Online
Doctorate/PhD degrees Graduates who completed their studies in 2009 and 2010	2.135	1.443	Telephone
	969 (International: foreign students)	664	Online
Total	51.743	27.848	

During 2013 agreements were signed with the universities and partner and affiliated institutions; the Master's survey was developed; the existing surveys for undergraduate and doctoral degrees were adapted; computing platforms were developed for the exploitation of outcomes; and the contract for the survey field work and data collection was tendered and awarded to IKERFEL, a company endorsed by the *Centre d'Estudis d'Opinió* (Centre for Opinion Poll Studies).

1.3. Student satisfaction survey

AQU Catalunya, in coordination with the Catalan universities, has developed a survey on the satisfaction of students on completing their undergraduate studies. The objective of this project is to define a survey model that can be integrated together with other instruments used by the universities and incorporated on a regular basis into the monitoring and accreditation of study programmes.

The survey has been designed to incorporate good practices from the Catalan university system, using the series of surveys currently available in the universities, and also from international models. A working group was set up with representatives from the quality units in all public and private universities in Catalonia in order to obtain consensus regarding the model to be used for the student satisfaction survey. The survey has been distributed among the student population and the results, which have begun to come in, are to be analysed during 2014.

1.4. Employers survey

AQU Catalunya received funding from the Obra Social "la Caixa" to carry out the Ocupadors/Employers project, the purpose of which



is to analyse the satisfaction of both graduates and companies that offer employment regarding the preparation and performance of Catalan graduates in the workplace, with a particular focus on the education-job match of graduates and work-related skills within organisations.

2. Workshops and events

Three official events were organised by AQU Catalunya in 2013:

Reaccreditation of the teaching assessment handbooks used by public universities in Catalonia

(Auditorium, AQU Catalunya, 16 April 2013)

The objective of the workshop was two-fold: on the one hand, to discuss the functioning and impact of the teaching assessment handbooks used in public universities in Catalonia and, on the other, to deal with their subsequent accreditation. More than eighty (80) participants took part.



Homage to Dr. Sebastián Rodríguez Espinar

(Aula Magna, University of Barcelona/UB, 5 November 2013)

An event was organised by the University of Barcelona/UB and AQU Catalunya to pay tribute to Sebastián Rodríguez, Professor of Educational Guidance in the field of Research and Diagnostic Methodologies (*Orientació Educativa en l'Àrea de Mètodes d'Investigació i Diagnòstic*) at the UB and adviser on quality innovation



and development to the Agency for more than fifteen years, for his contributions to quality assurance and enhancement in higher education and the university system in Catalonia. One hundred and twenty (120) people took part.



Indicators on the transition of graduates to the labour market: an instrument for professional recruitment and careers guidance

(Auditorium of the Pompeu Fabra University's Communications Campus, Poblenou, Barcelona, 3 December 2013)

The aim of the workshop was to present the WINDDAT labour market indicators for First and Second Cycle programmes and obtain people's opinions on university careers guidance and recruitment services in relation to academic and professional guidance for graduates; and to discuss ways to improve the policies and instruments for recruitment and careers guidance used by Catalan universities. Approximately 200 participants took part.

4. INTERNATIONALISATION

1. Institutional relations

1.1. ENQA



AQU Catalunya has been a full member of ENQA since the organisation was founded in 2000. Josep Grifoll, Technical Director for Quality Assurance at AQU Catalunya, was elected the association's vice-president at the ENQA general assembly, which was held on 29-30 October in Vilnius (Lithuania). Josep Grifoll has been a member of the ENQA Board since 2008.

1.2. INQAAHE

The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) is a worldwide association of over 200 organisations, most of them QA agencies, which is active in the theory and practice of quality assurance in higher education. AQU Catalunya has been a member since 1998, and in 2013 it was chosen to host the organisation's Secretariat for the following two years, from October 2013 to December 2015, taking over from the Dutch agency NVAO.



Typical tasks for the Secretariat include handling Board matters, organising events like the annual Forum and conference, producing and distributing the newsletter, and upkeep of the website.

1.3. ECA

AQU Catalunya joined the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA) in 2010, the aim of which is the mutual recognition of accreditation and quality assurance decisions. The work of ECA is carried out mainly by working groups, each of which is made up of representatives of the member agencies.



AQU Catalunya is the coordinating agency for the ECA working group on the accreditation of degrees and joint programmes.

2. International projects

2.1. Internationalisation

CeQuInt (ongoing, started in 2012)

Project coordinated by NVAO to lay down the foundations for procedures that provide for the certification of internationalisation by European universities. AQU Catalunya is a member of the consortium in charge of developing the project, which comprises European QA agencies, and it will coordinate one of the working groups.

ERANET-MUNDUS (2011-2015) / **ERANET-PLUS** (2012-2016)

Projects coordinated by the University of Barcelona (UB) to encourage mobility and links between universities in Russia and the European Union. AQU Catalunya is an associate member of the consortium in charge of developing the project.

JOQAR (2010-2013)



The overall purpose of the JOQAR project is the accreditation and recognition of Erasmus Mundus programmes offered by universities in different countries (and joint programmes in general). AQU Catalunya is a member of the consortium in charge of developing the project, which is coordinated by the ECA and the NVAO (Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders).

2.2. Innovation

ENQA WORKING GROUP ON THE IMPACT OF QA (ongoing, started in 2012)

AQU Catalunya coordinates an ENQA working group with representatives from twenty European QA agencies to identify the impact of quality assurance on higher education.

IMPALA (Lifelong Learning Programme) (ongoing, started in 2013)

AQU Catalunya participates, as a partner to the consortium, in this project, the purpose of which is to analyse the impact of external QA processes on higher education institutions. The Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) also participates.

2.3. Cooperation

ISLAH (ongoing, started in 2013)

Coordinated by the Italian consortium AlmaLaurea, the purpose of the ISLAH project is to establish two national observatories, one in Morocco and one in Tunisia, using the curricula of the graduate population to facilitate the exchange of information between the higher education system and the requirements of the labour market. The Agency is a member of the consortium in charge of developing ISLAH.

EQuAM (ongoing, started in 2012)

Project coordinated by the University of Barcelona, the purpose of which is to enhance quality assurance management in Jordanian universities. AQU Catalunya participates as a partner.

DIES ASEAN-QA (2011-2013)

AQU Catalunya participated in the project on behalf of ENQA and cooperated with experts from the Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (DAAD) and the Conference of Rectors in Germany in staff training for QA agencies in ASEAN member countries. It also participated in the carrying out of two university degree programme reviews in the region.

QUAEM (Tempus Programme) (2013)



AQU Catalunya participated, through the University of Girona, in this international project, the purpose of which is to develop a functional strategy for quality assurance in higher education institutions in Moldavia. In September and October, representatives from the state-run universities in the Republic of Moldavia participated in an experimental training course in

reviews and quality assurance designed by AQU Catalunya.

3. Other activities

AQU Catalunya participated in the Joint Expert Seminar on Quality Assurance in VET and HE for improving their permeability on 22-23 October in Brussels, organised by Cedefop, EQAVET and the European Commission. The objective of the seminar was to identify QA issues shared by these two education sub-sectors (higher education and vocational education and training), together with areas in which to cooperate and initiate more substantial dialogue.

AQU Catalunya participated in Workshop 2 (Quality assurance of new forms and contexts of teaching and learning) with the presentation "Quality assurance of e-learning degrees".

The Agency also participated in the eighth European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF), titled Working together to take quality forward, which took place on 21-23 November 2013 at the University of Göteborg (Sweden). The Agency, together with the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), presented the paper titled “Yes, there is impact. But is it positive, negative or ‘none of the above’?”.



The EQAF, an annual event co-organised by EUA, ENQA, EURASHE and ESU, is the European conference on quality assurance in higher education that brings together all of the key stakeholders in the field.

AQU Catalunya also participated, at the invitation of the European Commission, in the workshop on Quality assurance supporting the implementation of the learning outcomes: National case studies – higher education, where it presented “QA supporting the implementation of learning outcomes: the case of AQU Catalunya”.

5. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

1. Review of AQU Catalunya in accordance with the European standards and guidelines

In 2013 AQU Catalunya began the work of introducing the enhancement proposals recommended by the external review panel, in order for these to be duly incorporated by the time of the next review.

2. The Agency's governing and QA bodies

The AQU Board (Board of Management) met to supervise the Agency's activities, endorse the annual report and the draft action plan and budget, and to revise the processes of programme validation, modification, monitoring and accreditation.

It also adopted exceptional measures to reduce the fees paid to reviewers, experts and collaborators, as well as meals and mileage expenses, and it approved the presentation of a proposal to the Generalitat de Catalunya (Government of Catalonia) regarding the increase of fees and the setting of public-sector charges with the aim of achieving budgetary balance.

In addition, it firmly asserted its position against the measure in the report by the Commission on the Reform of Public Administration (CORA report) put forward by the Spanish government, which proposes that the regional (Autonomous Community) QA agencies either be eliminated or converted into regional delegations of the Spanish national agency (ANECA).

The Agency's Quality Assessment Commission (CAQ) endorsed the following: *Guide to the accreditation of recognised First and Second Cycle degree programmes*; *Guidelines for the accreditation of recognised First and Second Cycle degree programmes*; *Guidelines for reducing review intensity in programme validation and modification*; and the document *Procedures for the communication and/or assessment of modifications introduced in First and Second Cycle degree courses*.

The Agency's CLiC Commission (which deals with pre-/non-career grade teaching staff) convened to supervise the work carried out by the specific committees, adapt the criteria of some of the specific committees and endorse the calls for applications and assessment criteria for pre-/non-career grade teaching staff.

The Agency's Research Assessment Commission (CAR) convened to supervise the work carried out by the specific committees, improve aspects of the assessment process and endorse the calls for applications and criteria for the assessment of research and advanced research.

3. Advisory bodies

AQU's Student Commission convened to discuss the *Guide to the accreditation of recognised First and Second Cycle degree programmes* and to analyse the indicators on graduate labour market outcomes entered in WINDDAT, the Master's graduates survey and the strategy for the reaccreditation of the teaching assessment handbooks.



4. Catalan universities and social partners

AQU Catalunya convened with the heads (vice rectors) in charge of quality and academic governance to discuss the *Guidelines for reducing review intensity in programme validation and modification*, the *Guide to the accreditation of recognised First and Second Cycle degree programmes* and the *Guidelines for drawing up the accreditation self-assessment report*.

It also convened with the heads (vice rectors) in charge of teaching staff to discuss the proposed strategy for the reaccreditation of the teaching assessment handbooks used in public universities in Catalonia.

5. Communication

Publications

AQU Catalunya produced ten publications, including the methodological material for the Agency's different QA procedures, informative leaflets and the *Annual Report 2012*.

Web

AQU Catalunya maintained its website up to date. Towards the end of the year (2013) the possibility of news sharing via the social networks was made available, as well as the monitoring of users through AddThis Analytics.

Changes in the structure of the website that began in 2012 continued in 2013. The number of visits was consolidated (more than 124,000), and more than 51,000 documents were accessed online.



Improvements and updates were made to the WINSUC content manager, which contains 630 reports. Throughout the year (2013) it received 18,283 visits.

Online newsletter / *eButlletí*



The six issues (numbers 64 to 69) of AQU's bi-monthly online newsletter (*eButlletí*) in Catalan, Spanish and English were produced, with in-depth information on the Agency's activities and projects, together with feedback from the participants. As with the website, the possibility of articles being shared via social networks was made available at the end of the year (2013), as well as their subsequent monitoring.

The newsletter is sent out to 6,000 registered users.

News media



Fifteen (15) citations by AQU Catalunya appeared in the printed media during 2013. AQU President, Josep Joan Moreso, was also interviewed on 9 July on the L'Observatori, La Xarxa de Comunicació Local's night-time TV news programme, to talk about the Agency's role and activities, together with current events in higher education and the universities in Catalonia.

6. INTERNAL ORGANISATION

1. Accountability and internal quality

The activities of AQU Catalunya are based on an annual Action Plan that is endorsed by the Board of Management. This document sets out the strategic plan for the Agency in the form of activities and projects. The activities that are undertaken and the outcomes are set out in the Annual Report, which is also endorsed by the Board of Management.

1.1. Internal quality and information security system

In line with the quality and information security policy approved in 2011, prevailing legislation dealing with the protection of personal data (Organic Law 15/1999, LOPD) and the National Security Framework (ENS), the project to implement ISO 27001 (for information security) continued to be carried out.

Work was also carried out on different internal regulations regarding the use of e-mail, Internet access and the confidentiality agreements, amongst other things. Training was also provided in relation to the Agency's business continuity plan. The first compliance audit of 17 controls was conducted at the beginning of the year (2013).

In addition, AQU Catalunya satisfactorily underwent an external audit to renew the certification of its management system according to ISO standard 9001:2008, which was carried out by the certification agency Applus.

Within the framework of collaboration with other higher education QA agencies in Spain, AQU Catalunya:

- Extended the framework partnership agreement with Unibasq for establishing mechanisms for cooperative efforts and the exchange of experience in the fields of quality assurance, certification and accreditation, signed on 23 June 2011.
- Directed the internal audit of the QA system at ACSUCYL, the QA agency for the Autonomous Region of Castilla y León, and an expert from ACSUCYL participated in the internal audit at AQU Catalunya.

2. Information and communications technologies/ICT

As regards IT management, AQU Catalunya implemented the following:

- NEXUS.

- Extranet for teaching staff assessment.
- ApliEval.
- Improvements to online formalities on the Generalitat de Catalunya's application website (OVT).
- WINDDAT.

With regard to computer systems, the following actions were carried out:

- Relocation of the AQU Catalunya offices.
- Migration to the new telephony service provider.
- AQU Catalunya Intranet.
- Monitoring system and back-up copies.
- Preparations for a video-conferencing system.
- Development of the database for managing the Agency's human resources.
- The technological requirements as a consequence of the Agency hosting the INQAAHE Secretariat were met.
- Office software suites, operating systems on clients' platforms and anti-virus software were all updated.
- Full updates for all technological infrastructures and full user support provided.

3. Human resources

3.1. Staff

As of 31 December 2013, in addition to the director and the manager, the Agency's staff totalled 41 (30 female and 11 male), 26 of which had a permanent contract and 15 were interim staff

In order to cover one person taking a voluntary leave of absence and another taking leave on personal grounds, two posts were filled (one at administrative level and one administrative assistant), one with an interim contract and the other a contract to cover an accumulated workload. In addition, using funds from hosting the INQAAHE Secretariat (50,000 dollars/year), one administrative-level contract was signed to cover an accumulated workload.

Throughout the year, AQU Catalunya received support from one coordinator for innovation and methodological development, as well as two advisers. It also continued to collaborate up until August with one student doing a placement (work experience) as support for the UNEIX project.

3.2. Salaries

AQU Catalunya applied the Catalan government's agreement GOV/19/2013, 26 February, whereby exceptional measures were adopted to reduce staff salaries for the 2013 financial year.

Staff annual salaries were reduced by half the amount of each bonus payment (*paga extraordinària*)

The Public Services Federation of the General Workers Union (UGT) of Catalonia brought legal action regarding a collective agreement against AQU Catalunya in relation to the application of Royal Decree 20/2012, 13 July. Settlement proceedings took place without agreement on 14 June 2013, and the matter is still pending a decision.

3.3. Training

47 training activities took place in 2013. The Agency also used eligible funding of a total of €5,889.50 from the *Fundació Tripartita* for staff training, which amounted to 88.5% of available credit.

3.4. Risk prevention

Due to the relocation of the Agency's offices, a new occupational hazards analysis was carried out in 2013. In addition, and due to the fact that there are other enterprises located in the same building where the Agency was relocated to, AQU Catalunya participates in the Business Coordination Committee to lay the foundations for cooperation with regard to the prevention of occupational hazards.

4. Financial and accounting management

The 2013 financial year was characterised by budgets that were carried over.

The financial audit for 2012 took place in April and was carried out by Pleta Auditores, an external firm.

The Agency regularly submitted its accounts to the Directorate General for Financial Policy, the Comptroller General's Office (*Intervenció General*), the Directorate General for Universities and the Ministry of the Economy and Knowledge's Secretary General, in addition to the Court of Auditors (*Sindicatura de Comptes*).

4.1. Budget settlement

Table 24. Budget revenue 2013

Recognised income and assets	Initial budget (budget 2012)	Actual amount in €
Charges, sale of goods and services	85.990,00	96.478,07
Current transfers	2.772.900,64	2.767.615,93
Additions to capital	520,00	56,32
Variation in financial assets	75.261,06	62.316,16
Total	2.934.671,70	2.926.466,48

Table 25. Final expenditure 2013

Recognised expenditure and liabilities	Initial budget (budget 2012)	Actual amount in €
Staff salaries	1.816.397,52	1.599.711,32
Expenditure on current assets and services	1.034.503,12	846.484,13
Financing expenses	10,00	15,57
Current transfers	8.500,00	38.840,00
Current investments	75.261,06	61.406,88
Total	2.934.671,70	2.546.457,90

The budget settlement for 2013 was positive mainly due to leftover funds amounting to €380,008.58, mostly from agreements signed in relation to projects to be carried out in 2014, including the fifth survey on the labour market outcomes of graduates.

A breakdown of the expenditure budget for each of the strategic areas in which the Agency was active is given below:

Table 26. Final economic costs and work hours of staff at AQU Catalunya according to strategic categories

Strategic category	Amount in €	Work hours
Teaching quality	208.851,31	12.253
Teaching staff quality	201.647,29	6.731
Knowledge generation	50.351,32	2.582
Internationalisation	22.809,14	3.872
Strategic management and communication	87.132,03	3.147
Internal organisation	375.955,49	26.397
Total	946.746,58	54.982

Table 27. Final expenditure 2013 including staff wage costs for each category

Strategic category	Amount in €	% of the budget
Teaching quality	565.357,49	22
Teaching staff quality	397.478,23	16
Knowledge generation	125.480,90	5
Internationalisation	135.462,78	5
Strategic management and communication	178.703,30	7
Internal organisation	1.143.975,20	45
Total	2.546.457,90	100

4.2. Awards

AQU Catalunya was awarded an honourable mention in the EAPC's Alfons Ortuño Awards (School of Public Management of Catalunya) held for the first time, in the field of budget management, review and transparency.

These awards were presented at a ceremony held on 11 March 2013.



5. Legal activity

Some of the activities of AQU Catalunya are formalised either through the signing of agreements that stipulate the scope of the activity to be carried out or with publication in the Official Journal of the Autonomous Government of Catalonia (DOGC) of the resolutions of the relevant bodies, with information on forthcoming quality reviews and evaluations.