



Agència
per a la Qualitat
del Sistema Universitari
de Catalunya

AQU Catalunya Activities report 2006

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First edited: July 2007
Legal number: B-38.937-2007

Prologue

In September 2006 I had the honour of being appointed Executive Director of AQU Catalunya, the longest standing quality agency in Spain and a recognised point of reference for other agencies that have been subsequently established. It is now ten years since the Agency has been supporting the Catalan university system, and the balance of this period is decidedly positive. I find myself at the head of a consolidated agency with a sound course of development in quality assurance processes and a solid European projection.

All of this has been made possible by my predecessors, Professor David Serrat Congost, who had the challenge of setting up the entity, Professor Gemma Rauret whose merit it was to develop and consolidate the Agency into what it is today, and Professor Antoni Serra Ramoneda, who with his extensive knowledge of the Catalan university system, has presided over the Agency since it was founded.

When I joined the Agency, the programme of activities was in an advanced stage of development in which, in terms of what is an important stage in its institutional consolidation, the Agency was completing the process of implementing the powers assigned to it under the 2003 Catalan Universities Act and awaiting the changes anticipated in the reform of the Spanish Universities Act, which at that time was passing through Parliament, and will foreseeably lead to significant progress in the activities of evaluation and accreditation of the university system. The internal stage of the Agency's external evaluation process, which ENQA is expected to complete during the first half of 2007, was also under way, the result of which will be of great importance for the Agency's continued recognition in Europe.

Of all the activities included in the five main sections of this Report (I. Evaluation of institutional quality; II. Teaching staff and research; III. Cooperation and exchange; IV. Communication, promotion and publications; and V. Quality and functioning of the organisation), special mention is worthy of the ex ante evaluation processes of Masters degree programmes, due to their number (183 programmes), the importance of the consequences and the novelty (still) for the universities of submitting their proposals for degree programmes to ex ante evaluation; the VIRTUAL programme, which involved the designing of methodological tools to evaluate entire distance learning programmes and of the evaluation of a university as an institution; the second graduate employment study, which consolidates the groundwork for the rigorous and continual follow-up over time of developments in the assimilation of university graduates into society; and in the area of teaching staff, mention should be made of the new scheme to evaluate merits in teaching, research and management for salary bonuses funded by the Autonomous authorities, due to the impact that this will have on teaching staff and the awarding, for the first time, of bonuses for teaching and management activities.

An extensive amount of activity was carried out during 2006, all of which is set out in this report for the accountability of the Agency's commitments entered into with the Catalan administration and the universities. I would like to thank Professor María Lluïsa Hernanz Carbó, chairwoman of the CLiC committee, Professor Joan Rodés Teixidó, chairman of the CAR committee, the members of the advisory evaluation committees, the members of the Agency's numerous advisory committees and

working groups, and all the staff for their dedication and commitment to rigorously and professionally carrying out all of the work included in this report.

Javier Bará Temes
Executive Director

AQU Catalunya. Activities report 2006

The activities carried out by AQU Catalunya during 2006 were structured according to five main areas of work:

- Evaluation of institutional quality
- Teaching staff and research
- Cooperation and exchange
- Communication, promotion and publications
- Quality and running of the organisation

EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY

QUALITY OF THE STUDY PROGRAMMES

Recognised postgraduate programmes

The Agency established the procedure and started the second ex ante evaluation of proposals for recognised postgraduate programmes, using as the point of reference the proposals for improvement made in the critical review of the first evaluation process.

To carry out this evaluation, a guide was prepared (*Guide to preparing the academic aspects of proposals for recognised Master's degrees programmes to be introduced in the 2007-2008 academic year*) on the basis of the joint criteria agreed to by the Spanish network of university quality agencies (REACU) and the accreditation standards for Masters programmes approved by AQU Catalunya's Quality Assessment Committee (CAQ).

The proposals were assessed on a collegial basis by experts grouped according to academic disciplines and by the Agency's committee that assesses the standards of degrees and programmes of study (ATP), which drew up the final reports that were sent to the Directorate General for Universities. 183 proposals were evaluated, out of which 142 were evaluated favourably, or 77.6% of the total.

Results of the evaluation of the proposals for recognised postgraduate programmes

	Proposals submitted	Favourable	% favourable
Humanities	38	32	84.2%
Social Sciences	70	52	74.3%
Experimental Science	28	24	85.7%
Health Sciences	27	19	70.3%
Technical subjects	20	15	75.0%
Total	183	142	77.6%

Pilot scheme to adapt degree programmes to the EHEA

AQU Catalunya carried out the monitoring of the projects in the Pilot scheme to adapt degree programmes to the EHEA, which in specific terms involved the monitoring of forty-eight undergraduate degrees and six Master's degrees from the 2004 call for applications and thirty-four undergraduate degrees and two Master's degrees from the 2005 call.

Results of the evaluation of the proposals from the pilot scheme. Undergraduate degrees

	Favourable	Flawed	Unfavourable	No report	Total
2004 Call	18	4	9	17	48
2005 Call	13	5	6	10	34

Results of the evaluation of the proposals in the pilot scheme. Master's

	Favourable	Flawed	Unfavourable	No report	Total
2004 Call	3	1	2	*	6*
2005 Call	-	-	1	1	2

* In anticipation of the eventual accreditation of Master's degrees, no follow-up report was requested for the Master's degrees in the 2004 call. It is worth pointing out that a significant number (around 70%) of these received approval as recognised Masters degrees.

PRO-QU programme

Within the framework of the PRO-QU programme, the aim of which is the continuous improvement of first and second cycle university degree programmes, the Agency completed the evaluation of 12 degree programmes.

Degree programmes evaluated within the framework of the PRO-QU programme

University	Degree programme
UAB	Advertising and Public Relations
	Hotel Management
	Physiotherapy (Gimbernat)
	Physiotherapy (Manresa)
	Chemical Engineering
	Food Science and Technology
	Social Education
UPC	Topography
UPF	Business Sciences
	Tourism
URV	Labour Sciences
UVic	Nursing

Virtual Programme

Within the framework of the Virtual programme, the aim of which is the evaluation of distance learning degree programmes and institutions, approval was given by the Agency's committee that assesses university institutions and activities (ACAU) to the following guides; *Guide to the internal evaluation of distance learning degree programmes: a guide to institutional evaluation*; and the *Guide*

to the internal evaluation of distance learning degree programmes: a guide to degree programme evaluation. The Catalan Open University (UOC) and the degree programmes offered through it are being evaluated with the use of this methodological material.

QUALITY OF RESEARCH AND TEACHING INSTITUTIONS

Library services evaluation programme

The evaluation of library services in Catalan universities was carried out by the Agency with the collaboration of the Catalan University Libraries Consortium (CBUC). Approval was given by the ACAU to the following guides: *Guide to the evaluation of library services and their contribution to the quality of learning and research*; *Guide to the external evaluation of library services and their contribution to the quality of learning and research*; and the *Guide to drawing up external reports*.

All ten universities participating in this evaluation (UB, UAB, UPC, UPF, UdG, UdL, URV, UOC, UVic and UAO) completed the internal evaluation of their respective library services. The external evaluation process was prepared and started by AQU Catalunya.

Annual evaluation report

The Agency has worked on drawing up the annual report, with regard to its accountability to the university community and society and the results of its activity in the different evaluations of institutional quality carried out and completed during the previous year.

The new functions taken on by AQU Catalunya since its restructuring in the framework of the Catalan Universities Act have made it necessary for the contents of the report to be reviewed. In compliance therefore with the agreements undertaken by the Quality Assessment Committee, report number eight will include three sections, the first of which is published on the website:

- The results of the evaluations completed in the Pro-QU programme.
- The results of the different evaluations of university teaching staff.
- A general assessment of the dimensions of the degree programmes assessed in the last five years.

PARTICIPATION IN EUROPEAN PROJECTS

TEEP II

AQU Catalunya continued to participate in the ENQA TEEP II project (Transnational European Evaluation Project) and the evaluation of joint European Master's degrees through to its completion. The evaluation of the ERASMUS MUNDUS EURP Hydro-Informatics and Water Management Programme (Euro-Aquae) was coordinated.

MIRROR

AQU Catalunya also participated in the closure of the MIRROR project, which was jointly coordinated together with the agencies in Sweden, Finland and Italy since 2005, that involved the comparison of doctoral studies in these four countries from the students' point of view. 1,001 PhD students were interviewed in Catalonia. The analysis of the results is given in the *International Postgraduate Students Mirror* publication.

Collaboration with the Interministerial Council for Research and Technological Innovation (CIRIT)

AQU Catalunya collaborated with the CIRIT through the Interministerial Committee on Research Assessment (CIAR), the objective of which was to set up and coordinate a professional structure to evaluate R+D in Catalonia and the task of carrying out the macro ex post evaluation of the Third Research Plan for Catalonia (TRPC, 2001-2004). An AQU Catalunya ad hoc committee (ACRE) carried out the evaluation of 45 centres sponsored by the TRPC's programme on research centres.

Evaluation in line with the ENQA model

In accordance with the Bergen Communiqué, impetus is given to the participation of AQU Catalunya in the external evaluation programme in line with the model developed by the ENQA, the European quality agencies network, based on the *Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the EHEA*. Proposed for the national-level review of quality agencies, this will involve the Agency being entered into a European register of quality assurance bodies, which will provide an easy way to identify professional and credible agencies working in Europe. AQU Catalunya has begun the internal evaluation process.

Other projects and studies

AQU Catalunya continued work within the framework of the project to foster student participation in the processes involving the evaluation of programmes and institutions. Over 30 students received training in institutional evaluation in summer courses organised by the UAB (for the second time) and the UdL in collaboration with the Agency, and students have progressively begun to take part on committees that evaluate programmes and institutions, as in the case of the library services evaluation programme.

A call for applications was made and resolved for grants to fund projects aimed at the in-depth analysis of the AQU Catalunya database on the graduate placement/employment survey carried out in 2005, with the collaboration of the university social councils of all the public universities in Catalonia. As a result of this call for applications, a series of seven articles was produced, each one dealing with a certain aspect of graduate employment, that form part of the book, *Higher education and employment in Catalonia. Analysis of the employment factors*.

Within the framework of the DISSENY programme, the Agency's work on the Chemical Engineering degree programme was completed with the publication of the *Guide to designing a programme specification. Chemical engineering*.

In addition, ad hoc methodological material was also prepared where required in each project.

TEACHING STAFF AND RESEARCH

ISSUANCE OF PRESELECTION REPORTS, AND RESEARCH AND ADVANCED RESEARCH ACCREDITATIONS FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF TENURE-TRACK AND NON-CIVIL SERVANT, NON-PHD TEACHING STAFF IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

The two 2006 calls for applications for the issuance of preselection reports for the recruitment of tenure-track and non-civil servant non-PhD teaching staff in public universities were organised and completed through the corresponding AQU committee (CLiC), in compliance with Ruling UNI/3707/2005, of 27 December.

These two calls for applications were evaluated by various committees specifically dealing with the various fields of knowledge that are accountable to the CLiC. The results of the calls for applications, with the resolution of appeals still pending, were as follows:

Aggregate results of the calls for applications for the issuance of assessment reports on Tenure-track and Non-civil servant, Non-PhD teaching staff completed in 2006

Non-civil servant	A(*)	CWR	F	UF	AE	AD	AP	TF	TUF	%F
Humanities	103	0	81	19	0	2	1	81	22	78
Social Sciences	176	1	90	58	5	9	13	95	80	54
Sciences	47	0	40	7	0	0	0	40	7	85
Life Sciences	35	1	22	12	0	0	0	22	12	65
Medical and Health Sciences	114	0	74	37	0	0	3	74	40	65
Engineering and Architecture	183	3	135	38	1	3	3	136	44	75
Total	658	5	442	171	6	14	20	448	205	69

(*) A: applications; CWR: closed without resolution; F: favourable; UF: unfavourable; AE: appeals examined; AD: appeals dismissed; AP: appeals pending; TF: total no. favourable; TUF: total no. unfavourable; %F: percentage favourable out of the total.

Tenure-track	A	CWR	F	UF	AE	AD	AP	TF	TUF	%F
Humanities	106	0	58	41	0	1	6	58	48	55
Social Sciences	139	0	57	74	1	4	3	58	81	42
Sciences	65	1	47	17	0	0	0	47	17	73
Life Sciences	44	1	19	23	0	0	1	19	24	44
Medical and Health Sciences	61	2	33	21	0	2	3	33	26	60
Engineering and Architecture	66	1	49	12	0	1	3	49	16	75
Total	481	5	263	188	1	8	16	264	212	55

The two 2006 calls for applications for the issuance of research and advanced research accreditations was carried out through the Research Assessment Committee (CAR), in compliance

with Rulings UNI/2475/2005 and UNI/2476/2005, of 27 December, and EDU/3208/2006 and EDU/3209/2006, of 5 October.

These two calls for applications were evaluated by various committees specifically dealing with the various fields of knowledge that are accountable to the CAR. The results of the calls for applications, with the resolution of appeals still pending, were as follows:

Aggregate results of the calls for applications for the issuance of research and advanced research accreditations completed in 2006

Research	A	CWR	F	UF	AE	AD	AP	TF	TUF	%F
Humanities	56	0	24	28	1	2	1	25	31	45
Social Sciences	82	0	36	37	0	9	0	36	46	50
Sciences	71	2	45	22	1	1	0	46	23	67
Life Sciences	52	3	22	26	0	1	0	22	27	45
Medical and Health Sciences	91	3	24	58	2	4	0	26	62	30
Engineering and Architecture	72	4	40	27	0	1	0	40	28	59
Total	424	12	191	198	4	18	1	195	217	49

Advanced research	A	CWR	F	UF	AE	AD	AP	TF	TUF	%F
Humanities	9	0	7	1	0	1	0	7	2	78
Social Sciences	31	1	16	11	0	3	0	16	14	53
Sciences	19	2	13	4	0	0	0	13	4	76
Life Sciences	11	0	6	4	0	1	0	6	5	55
Medical and Health Sciences	38	2	20	15	1	0	0	21	15	58
Engineering and Architecture	17	0	9	7	0	1	0	9	8	53
Total	125	5	71	42	1	6	0	72	48	60

EVALUATION OF TEACHING STAFF IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

AQU Catalunya evaluates the teaching and research activity of teaching and research staff in private universities that have previously signed an agreement with the Agency to this end. The agreement to evaluate the teaching staff of the Catalan Open University (UOC) was signed in 2006.

In order to optimise resources and for there to be greater compatibility between different calls for teaching staff evaluation, the Joint Committee — in charge of teaching staff evaluation at private universities, and made up of members nominated by the CAQ and CAR —, agreed to the setting up of just one period during the year for the submission of applications for all the private universities.

The resolution of all applications received in 2005 was completed and the applications corresponding to the unified 2006 period were evaluated. The results were as follows:

Results of the evaluation of teaching and research staff at private universities

2005 Call	Applications	Positive	Negative	Appeals
Humanities	20	14	6	0
Social Sciences	54	35	13	6
Sciences	5	4	1	0
Medical and Health Sciences	10	7	3	0
Engineering and Architecture	23	12	10	1
Total	112	72	33	7

2006 Call	Applications	Positive	Negative	Appeals
Humanities	25	24	1	0
Social Sciences	74	50	15	9
Sciences	5	5	0	0
Medical and Health Sciences	7	5	2	0
Engineering and Architecture	13	10	3	0
Total	124	94	21	9

EVALUATION OF MERITS IN TEACHING, RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT

Order 405/2006, of 24 October, establishes the salary bonuses of civil servant and non-civil servant teaching and research staff in public universities in Catalonia, which consist of a additional wage allowance for merits in teaching, research and management within the constraints of available budgetary funding. This bonus is an annual amount that is individual and consolidated, allotted by the university council of each university at the proposal of the respective governing board and subject to a favourable evaluation by AQU Catalunya.

Certification and evaluation of merits in teaching and management

In accordance with Order 405/2006, of 24 October, resolutions EDU/3782/2006, of 24 November, and EDU/3814/2006, of 27 November, corresponding to the procedure and certification of the assessment of the individual merits of university teaching staff for teaching and management, were published in the Official Bulletin of the Autonomous Government of Catalonia (DOGC). With regard to the teaching activity of civil servant and non-civil servant teaching and research staff, evaluation thereby lies with the public universities that shall use the respective AQU Catalunya-certified teaching evaluation manuals to do so. The results of this evaluation shall be sent to the Agency to be certified by the Committee that assesses merits and individual activities (CEMAI). As for the managerial activity of civil servant and non-civil servant teaching and research staff, it is the universities that are responsible for carrying out the evaluation, for which CEMAI-approved instructions shall be applied. The results of this evaluation shall be sent to AQU Catalunya to be certified by the CEMAI.

Evaluation of merits in research

In accordance with Order 405/2006, of 24 October, Resolutions EDU/3781/2006, of 24 November, and EDU/3813/2006, of 27 November, corresponding to the establishing of the procedure and deadlines to submit applications for the research activity of university teaching staff to be evaluated, were published in the Official Bulletin of the Autonomous Government of Catalonia (DOGC). Applications from civil servant and non-civil servant teaching and research staff at public universities may thereby be made to AQU Catalunya for the evaluation of six-year periods of their research activity to be made. The Research Assessment Committee (CAR) approved the specific criteria for this evaluation, which were made public in Resolution EDU/3752/2006, of 24 November. An agreement with the Spanish Commission for the Evaluation of Research Activity (CNEAI) was also signed for the nationwide recognition of the evaluations that it carries out.

Issuance of teaching activity reports

Through the CEMAI, AQU Catalunya issues certifications and evaluations of the teaching activity of teaching staff that, in addition to being one of the requirements set by the university in the open competitions for applications to the categories of tenured and senior teaching staff, allow for participation in programmes for the promotion of teaching staff in public universities in Catalonia. Thirty-one applications were received, of which thirty were favourable and one is still pending resolution.

COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE

Periodic meetings have been held to coordinate with the different committees made up of representatives from Catalan universities, with the aim of detecting the needs and opportunities for improvement of Catalan universities within the new European context of higher education, and to coordinate activities that have jointly been carried out. Particular mention is made of the meetings with the vice-rectors quality committee and those in charge of the quality technical units in Catalan universities.

There has also been active cooperation with other higher education quality evaluation agencies. Within Spain, AQU Catalunya is a founder member of the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU), the purpose of which is to promote inter-agency collaboration to contribute to establishing the conditions for the mutual recognition of their evaluation processes. At the international level, AQU Catalunya has cooperated in particular with the ENQA, within the framework of the process of the quality assurance of quality agencies promoted by the European agencies' network, and also in the European TEEP II project involving the evaluation of joint Master's degrees in Europe.

With regard to exchanges, the annual series of workshops with all of the universities in Catalonia were organised in conjunction with the Universitat Rovira i Virgili for the eighth time, which this time dealt with the accreditation of Master's degrees within the context of the EHEA. One hundred and sixteen participants took part in the workshop, mainly vice-rectors in charge of the accreditation of Master's degrees, the heads of quality technical units and those in charge of current and forthcoming Master's degrees in recognised postgraduate programmes.

AQU Catalunya continued to participate in thirty-nine seminars, congresses and symposia at the Catalan, Spanish and international level, to share experience and information, establish mutually beneficial relations with entities pursuing the same aim, and to accumulate knowledge in the organisation itself.

COMMUNICATION, PROMOTION AND PUBLICATIONS

The Consortium Agency for the Quality of the University System in Catalonia was set up ten years ago under Order 355/1996, of 29 October. In order to celebrate these ten years, AQU Catalunya organised a series of activities, the aim of which was to recognise the efforts by the Administration, the universities in Catalonia and the persons who have collaborated with the Agency in giving impetus to university quality during this period. In this regard, the corporative image of AQU Catalunya has been changed in all the media and instruments used for communication, and the series of quality awards announced and awarded by way of competition to the following projects:

- Quality award to the quality assurance policies in the ISO standard 9001-based quality management system of the UPC's Escola Politècnica Superior in Castelldefels. The project on teaching quality by the Faculty of Legal Sciences, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, received an honourable mention.
- Quality award for the adaptation of degree programmes to the European Higher Education Area to the pilot run to adapt the Universitat Pompeu Fabra's undergraduate degree programme in Linguistic Mediation to the EHEA. The UPC's Escola Politècnica Superior in Castelldefels received an honourable mention.
- Quality award for the implementation of improvements resulting from institutional evaluation processes carried out by AQU Catalunya to the improvements implemented in the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona's Business Sciences General Degree. The Social Education programme at the Universitat de Barcelona received an honourable mention.

These awards were presented on 31 October during the event to celebrate the tenth anniversary of AQU Catalunya at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), where more than 130 people attended, including the various different directors of the Agency during this period of time and the chancellors of the universities and senior government personnel.

With regard to the communication of its activities, AQU Catalunya has continued to update its website, which received 155,159 hits, an increase of 33% in relation to the same period last year, and 226,706 file downloads were registered. The five documents most downloaded during the year were:

- 2004 Report (44,358)
- *The process for issuing reports for tenure-track and non-civil servant non-PhD teaching staff* (26,290)
- The process for issuing research and advanced research accreditation (13,713)
- *Higher education and employment in Catalonia* (4,534)

- Teaching staff career pathways (4.234)

AQU Catalunya prepared and distributed the four editions of the quarterly *Information bulletin on university quality* in printed and electronic formats, the aim of which is to provide in-depth information of the Agency's activities. A total of 3,500 printed copies are distributed to people in the university community, and the electronic format is sent to more than 3,000, as well as the media. *AQU News*, which is monthly, has the same distribution and gives the main news posted on the Agency's website for the month plus a renowned expert's opinion on more in-depth issues, together with links to documents and websites considered to be of special interest. Sixty subscription applications were received by *AQU News* during 2006.

The publications that AQU Catalunya edited and, where appropriate, printed and distributed, included the following documents:

- *Guidelines for preparing a programme specification. The case of Psychology* (January 2006), on-line edition in English.
- *Guía para el diseño de un perfil de formación. El caso de Psicología* (January 2006), on-line edition in Spanish.
- *Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (abril 2006), printed edition in Catalan.
- *AQU Catalunya. 2005 Activities Report* (June 2006), printed edition.
- *Guia per al disseny d'un perfil de formació. Enginyeria Química* (June 2006), printed edition in Catalan.
- *Guía para el diseño de un perfil de formación. Ingeniería Química* (September 2006), on-line edition in Spanish.
- *Guidelines for preparing a programme specification. Chemical Engineering* (September 2006), on-line edition in English.
- *Where are we headed with postgraduate studies? Universitat de Girona, 19 and 20 October 2005* (September 2006), printed edition in Catalan.
- *2005 Report. The process of assessing quality in the university system in Catalonia* (first part, November 2006), on-line edition in Catalan.

In terms of methodological material, the following documents were published:

- *Guia d'avaluació dels Serveis Bibliotecaris i la seva contribució a la qualitat de l'aprenentatge i de la recerca* (January-February 2006), in Catalan and Spanish.
- *Guia d'avaluació externa dels Serveis Bibliotecaris i de la seva contribució a la qualitat de l'aprenentatge i la recerca* (June 2006), in Catalan and Spanish.
- *Guia per a l'elaboració de la dimensió acadèmica de les propostes de màsters dels programes oficials de postgrau d'implantació el curs 2007-2008* (August 2006), in Catalan.

- *Guia d'avaluació del Programa de centres de recerca del III Pla de recerca de Catalunya* (October 2006), in Catalan and Spanish.
- *Guia d'avaluació interna dels ensenyaments de formació virtual. Guia d'avaluació de les titulacions* (November 2006), in Catalan.
- *Guia d'avaluació interna dels ensenyaments de formació virtual. Guia d'avaluació institucional* (November 2006), in Catalan.

An informative leaflet, *Degree programme quality is also assessed!*, was also published for the Higher Education and Employment Week (Saló de l'Ensenyament).

QUALITY AND FUNCTIONING OF THE ORGANISATION

With regard to human resources, the Management and the AQU Catalunya workers' representative completed the negotiations and signed the Rules and working conditions of the employees at AQU Catalunya, which was implemented, amongst other things, in the call for applications and subsequent resolution for the providing of fourteen permanent position jobs, which were previously on a temporary basis.

With regard to the fundamentals of quality, on May 22, AQU Catalunya renewed the certification on its ISO 9001:2000-based standard quality management system, which has a total of nineteen processes (three strategic, five operative and eleven support) that contain a total of forty nine procedures, twenty five documents and twenty five working instructions.

With regard to information technologies, continued impetus has been given to the development of the GESTA specific management software package. An invoicing module has been implemented that automates payment processing and control processes, and the management and control operations of institutional evaluations and teaching staff evaluations have been extended. On the basis of these, the AQU Catalunya extranet has been developed and implemented, enabling the members of the teaching staff committees to undertake distance evaluations of the teaching staff dossier technical reports. Given that it is synchronised with the database of the GESTA internal management programme, this new tool facilitates and speeds up the evaluation handling process. The information systems (software, hardware, networks and communications) have also been consolidated, in accordance with the Law on Data Protection.