



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

# **AQU CATALUNYA ACTIVITIES REPORT 2007**

(SUMMARISED VERSION)

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## PREAMBLE

The activities carried out by AQU Catalunya during 2007 encompassed the following courses of action:

- European quality assurance area
- Institutional quality review
- Teaching staff and research
- Cooperation and exchange
- Communication, promotion and publications
- Quality and the workings of the organisation

The posts of several members of the Agency's managerial and review bodies were also renewed during this period:

- The post of Antoni Serra Ramoneda as AQU Catalunya President was renewed, together with the posts of Enric Argullol Murgadas and Gemma Rigau Oliver as members of the AQU Board of Management.
- The post of Dr. Joan Rodés Teixidor as chairman of the AQU Research Assessment Committee (CAR) was renewed.
- In accordance with the AQU statutes, the Research Assessment Committee (CAR) underwent its most important revamping since it was set up four years ago. At the proposal of the chairman the following people were incorporated: Antònia Agulló Agüero (UPF), Maria Dolors Baró Mariné (UAB), Joaquim Casal Fàbrega (UPC), Luis Castañer Muñoz (UPC), Xavier Freixas Dargallo (UPF), José Eugenio García-Albea Ristol (URV), Roser González Duarte (UB), Enric Herrero Perpiñán (UdL) and Jaume Vilarrasa Llorens (UB). Two new members, Pere Brunet Crosa (UPC) and Maria del Ripoll Freixa Serra (UB), were appointed directly by the Minister for Innovation, Universities and Enterprise, Josep Huguet.

A summary of the main activities developed during the year are summarised below. The complete version of the report is available in Catalan.

# 1. EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE AREA

## ADAPTING THE INTERNAL FUNCTIONING OF AQU CATALUNYA TO EUROPEAN STANDARDS

AQU Catalunya satisfactorily passed the ENQA external review process, in accordance with the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the EHEA.

Recognition by ENQA validates the activities of review, certification and accreditation that the Agency undertakes in Europe and those of quality assurance for both the Administration and the universities that make up the university system in Catalonia. It also contributes to its transparency and accountability to society.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY IN CATALAN UNIVERSITIES

In accordance with the commitment to transparency called for from university institutions within the framework of the EHEA and according to the definition of procedure for the design and introduction of university degrees laid down in Royal Decree 1393/2007, 29 October, regarding the regulation of recognised university degree programmes (Spanish Ministry of Education and Science, MEC), the universities must guarantee that their actions ensure the achievement of the objectives associated with the education that they give. In order to successfully face this challenge, universities need internal quality assurance policies and systems that are both formally established and publicly accessible.

The aim of the AUDIT programme, which was jointly developed by AQU Catalunya, ANECA and ACSUG, is to orientate the design of internal quality assurance policies and systems for university education in higher education institutions, colleges and member institutes, and all of their activities associated with the quality assurance of degree programmes carried out up until the present time have been incorporated, which include the review of programmes, services and teaching staff and analyses of student and graduate satisfaction, labour market and employment outcomes and information to society.

Twenty-four colleges and institutes from Catalan universities submitted the application for accession to AUDIT and executed the agreement for the programme to be implemented in 2008.

## 2. INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY REVIEW

### QUALITY OF DEGREE PROGRAMMES

#### Quality of Master's programmes

AQU Catalunya completed the second review process of applications from recognised Master's degree programmes at Catalan universities for the 2007-2008 academic year, which involved the analysis of 183 programme designs:

Type of Master's	Total	%	Favourable	%	Unfavourable	%
Academic/mixed	111	60.6	86	77.5	25	22.5
Professional	30	16.4	18	60.0	12	40.0
Research	42	23	38	90.5	4	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>183</b>		<b>142</b>		<b>41</b>	

The call for 2007 was launched at the end of the year and eighty (80) designs were submitted.

#### VIRTUAL Programme

The review process of the Open University of Catalonia (UOC) was started within the framework of this programme.

Institutional review and the first round of programme reviews, which included Law and Political Science and studies in Psychology and the Education Sciences, were completed in 2007, and assessment began of degree programmes in Management Computer Studies Engineering, Computer Systems Engineering and the second cycle of Computer Engineering.

### INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY

#### Review programme of colleges and member institutes of Catalan universities

AQU Catalunya began to develop the specific methodology for the review of colleges and member institutes of Catalan universities, which is based on an analysis of each institution's capability to offer degree programmes of quality, adaptation to the new legal frameworks, and coordination between the university itself and the college or member institute. An initial outline of the contents that the review was based on was sent to the university at the end of the year.



## **DEVELOPMENT OF OTHER PROJECTS AND THE CARRYING OUT OF STUDIES**

### **Assessment reports on quality in the university system**

Approval was given to the *2006 Report. Review process of quality in the university system in Catalonia*, which sets out the results of the reviews carried out of university degree programmes.

AQU Catalunya produced the report, *The Catalan public university system 2000-2005: from the perspective of review by AQU Catalunya*, which gives an overview of the strong and weak points of the university system from the point of view of the Agency's experience over a period of almost eleven years.

### **Study on the labour market and employment outcomes of graduates**

AQU Catalunya signed agreements with the Catalan public universities and their social councils, and with the *Universitat de Vic*, to carry out and fund the third review of the labour market and employment outcomes of graduates and graduate assessment of university studies. This contained three surveys this year:

- Graduates 2003-2004 (except in the case of Medicine, where it involved alumni who graduated in 2000-2001).
- Doctorate degree holders 2003-2004.
- Monitoring of Humanities 2000-2001.

### **Project to foster the participation of students in programme and institutional review processes**

AQU Catalunya continued to give impetus to actions aimed at involving students in assessment processes in university education:

- Design of student-orientated courses that deal with ways that students can participate in evaluation processes and the design of study plans.
- Inclusion of students on external review panels.

### 3. TEACHING STAFF AND RESEARCH

#### THE ASSESSMENT OF LECTURER AND COLLABORATING TEACHING STAFF<sup>1</sup>

Two calls were launched and completed in 2007 for the issuing of pre-selection reports for recruitment by the Catalan public universities, one for lecturers and one for collaborating teaching staff.

The aggregate results of the assessment of the applications submitted are as follows:

Collaborating teaching staff (non-civil servant)	TS <sup>2</sup>	TSR	F	U	EA	AD	TF	TU	%F
<b>Humanities</b>	54	1	31	19	0	3	31	22	58
<b>Sciences Socials</b>	112	4	48	49	1	10	49	59	45
<b>Sciences</b>	49	0	35	14	0	0	35	14	71
<b>Life Sciences</b>	16	0	8	8	0	0	8	8	50
<b>Medical Sciences</b>	71	1	44	26	0	0	44	26	63
<b>Engineering and Architecture</b>	89	3	56	25	0	5	56	30	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>58</b>

<sup>1</sup> Organic Law 4/2007, 12 April, which amended Organic Law 6/2001, 21 December, on universities, leaves article 51, concerning the regulation of the post of collaborating teaching staff, with no content. Until the Government passes legislation on the exceptional recruitment of collaborating teaching staff by the universities (as laid down in Transitory Provision two of the Spanish Universities Act), the AQU CLiC Committee (which deals with tenure-track lecturer and non-civil servant collaborating staff) considered it appropriate to not accept applications for pre-selection reports for the recruitment of collaborating teaching staff (Resolution IUE/2218/2007, 13 July, which publicised the CLiC agreement whereby applications for pre-selection reports for the recruitment of collaborating teaching staff would not be accepted by Catalan public universities).

<sup>2</sup> A: applications; CWR: closed without resolution; F: favourable; U: unfavourable, EA: estimated appeals; AD: appeals declined; AP: appeals pending; TF: total favourable; TU: total unfavourable; % F: percentage of favourable out of the total.

Lecturers (tenure track)	A	CWR	F	U	EA	AD	TF	TU	%F
Humanities	86	0	56	15	1	3	57	29	66
Sciences Socials	138	1	50	31	4	23	54	83	39
Sciences	80	2	56	7	1	2	57	21	71
Life Sciences	43	2	14	8	0	3	14	27	33
Medical Sciences	61	5	31	9	1	4	32	24	52
Engineering and Architecture	103	0	81	4	1	6	82	21	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>58</b>

## RESEARCH AND ADVANCED RESEARCH ACCREDITATION

Two calls were launched and completed for the issuing of accreditation for research and advanced research.

The aggregate results of the assessment of the applications submitted are as follows:

Research	A	CWR	F	U	EA	AD	AP	TF	TU	%F
Humanities	74	3	40	24	1	4	2	41	28	55
Social Sciences	74	1	27	32	0	6	8	27	38	36
Sciences	87	3	59	19	1	2	3	60	21	69
Life Sciences	46	2	14	25	0	3	2	14	28	27
Medical Sciences	131	9	35	63	0	16	8	35	79	27
Engineering and Architecture	79	6	46	20	1	3	3	47	23	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>44</b>

Advanced research	A	CWR	F	U	EA	AD	AP	TF	TU	%F
Humanities	13	0	6	3	1	1	2	7	4	54
Social Sciences	33	1	16	9	1	5	1	17	14	52
Sciences	28	1	17	10	0	0	0	17	10	61
Life Sciences	8	1	2	3	0	0	2	2	3	25
Medical Sciences	42	3	20	18	1	1	1	21	17	50
Engineering and Architecture	24	0	13	9	0	2	0	13	11	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>52</b>



## THE ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH STAFF IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

The five private universities in the Catalan university system (Open University of Catalonia, *Universitat Ramon Llull*, *Universitat de Vic*, *Universitat Internacional de Catalunya* and *Universitat Abat Oliba CEU*) signed the corresponding agreements with AQU Catalunya for the assessment of their teaching staff. The 2007 assessment of teaching staff in private universities was the last to be carried out according to the criteria approved in 2005; from 2008 onwards, the assessment of these teaching staff will be included in the calls for lecturer, assistant professor and full professor. The results of the 2007 were as follows:

	A	CWR	F	U	EA	AD	TF	TU	%F
<b>Humanities</b>	18	0	11	7	1	3	12	6	67
<b>Social Sciences</b>	67	0	36	31	0	8	36	31	53
<b>Sciences</b>	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	100
<b>Life Sciences</b>	4	0	1	3	0	0	1	3	25
<b>Medical Sciences</b>	7	0	2	5	1	3	3	4	43
<b>Engineering and Architecture</b>	22	0	12	10	1	3	13	9	59
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>55</b>

## THE ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING STAFF MERITS

### Certification of the assessment of teaching staff merits

The introduction in Catalan public universities during 2003-2006 of AQU Catalunya-certified teaching assessment models represented a step forward in this area. On the basis of the general criteria approved by the Inter-university Council of Catalonia and instruction from AQU Catalunya, the universities have developed the instruments that by now have allowed them to assess more than three thousand teachers.

Merits in teaching are assessed by the universities according to five-year base periods, with six periods being the maximum that can be favourably assessed. The relevant reports are referred to the Catalan QA agency, which certifies them and thereby validates the results issued by the universities. The results of the 2007 calls were as follows:

Potential applicants	Total applicants	%	Positive	%	Negative	%	Favourable/potential
2,217	1,205	54	1,205	97	39	3	54

## Assessment of the merits in research of teaching staff (six-year base period)

AQU Catalunya began the assessment of research by teaching and research staff at Catalan public universities for the purposes of salary bonus increments granted by the regional authorities. The applicants' merits in research are assessed directly according to six-year base periods on the basis of the assessment criteria for research applied by the National Research Assessment Commission. The outcomes of the 2007 calls were as follows:

Civil servant staff	A	CWR	F	U	EA	AD	TF	TU	%F
Humanities	196	20	171	3	0	2	171	5	87
Social Sciences	265	15	225	12	1	2	226	14	85
Sciences	255	24	229	2	0	0	229	2	90
Life Sciences	119	19	100	0	0	0	100	0	100
Medical Sciences	163	30	89	3	0	0	130	3	80
Engineering and Architecture	282	23	249	9	0	1	249	10	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,280</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>1,104</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1,105</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>86</b>

Contracted staff	A	CWR	F	U	EA	AD	TF	TU	%F
Humanities	105	11	49	21	2	22	51	43	54
Social Sciences	90	8	58	13	3	8	61	21	74
Sciences	165	16	131	16	0	2	131	18	88
Life Sciences	126	13	108	1	2	2	110	3	97
Medical Sciences	84	5	60	8	4	7	64	15	81
Engineering and Architecture	168	7	125	19	1	14	126	33	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>80</b>

## Certification of the assessment of the merits of teaching staff in administration

AQU Catalunya began the certification of administration work by civil servant and contracted teaching and research staff in Catalan public universities for the purposes of salary bonuses granted by the regional authorities. In this process, the universities assess their teaching staff by

allocating accumulative points on the basis of the posts held (according to the score obtained, applicants are put into a bracket, each one associated with an emolument) and the assessment reports referred to the Agency, which certifies them, thereby validating the results issued by the universities. Merits in administration are assessed according to five-year base periods. The results of the calls in 2007 were as follows:

No. base periods assessed	Favourable	Unfavourable	1 <sup>st</sup> base period	2 <sup>nd</sup> base period	3 <sup>rd</sup> base period	4 <sup>th</sup> base period
1,502	1,501	1	1,089	303	98	11

## Certification/assessment of teaching competency

The certification and/or assessment of the teaching competency of teaching staff, in addition to being one of the requirements that, where applicable, universities may set in competitions for appointment to the categories of assistant professor and full professor, also qualifies for participation in teaching staff promotion programmes in public universities in Catalonia.

Seventy-eight applications were received, all of which were resolved favourably.

## REPORTS

### Annual assessment report on quality in the university system

For the accountability of all of the assessment processes involving university teaching staff, the report *University teaching staff in Catalonia: details of accreditation and recruitment policies (2003-2006)* was produced.

## 4. COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE

### COOPERATION IN QUALITY

#### Cooperation with QA agencies and associations

AQU Catalunya fulfilled the role of the Technical Secretariat of the Spanish universities QA agencies network (REACU). The matters dealt with in the meetings held throughout 2007 were coordination between and the mutual recognition of the agencies with regard to Bachelor and Master's degrees, the assessment of interuniversity Master's degrees, the process of harmonising contracted teaching staff, and the exchange of databases on experts.

AQU Catalunya, together with Akkreditierungsrat (Germany), QAA (UK), Hetac (Ireland), Finheec (Finland), Estonian Higher Education Accreditation Centre (Estonia), Fachhochschulrat (Austria) and a representation from Croatia, forms part of the ENQA workgroup on the coordination of the second study on quality assurance processes implemented in member QA agencies.

Together with the NVAO, the EUA and the OAQ, the Agency forms part of the ENQA Internal Quality Steering Committee, which maintains active discussion between the different agencies on issues associated with internal quality.

AQU Catalunya also participates in the European QAHECA project (the Quality Assurance for the Higher Education Change Agenda) which is coordinated by the EUA, the German agency ACQUIN, the HEA (UK) and the National University of Maynooth (Ireland). The aim of QAHECA is to explore quality assurance processes in education and learning and to develop original operational recommendations in parallel with control and accountability mechanisms.

#### Cooperation with other institutions and agencies

A contract was signed with the *Universidad de Guadalajara* in Mexico for the external review of six degree programmes in the fields of the Social Sciences and Technology: Administration, Accountancy, Tourism, Law, Civil Engineering and Services, and Computer Engineering.



## EXCHANGE

### Workshops

An informative event, “The design and assessment of Bachelor degrees. Examples in Europe”, was held at the Technical University of Catalonia (UPC) on 21 May 2007 to find out in a direct way the experience with this process in other European countries.

The annual series of workshops with the Catalan universities, which was organised by the Agency for the ninth time on 23 October 2007, was held this year at the UdL. This year’s workshops focused on the mechanisms and experience of designing study plans for new Bachelor degree programmes within the framework of the EHEA.

AQU Catalunya collaborated in the organisation of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) conference “The benefits of the mutual recognition of accreditation and quality assurance decisions”, held in Barcelona on the 10 and 11 December, which was organised by ANECA, the UPC and the European Commission.

### Exchange

AQU Catalunya participated in 38 seminars, congresses and workshops in Catalonia, Spain and abroad, sharing experiences and information, creating mutually beneficial relations with entities that seek the same aim, and accumulating knowledge within the Agency’s organisation.

## 5. COMMUNICATION, PROMOTION AND PUBLICATIONS

### COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION

The AQU Catalunya website received 151,573 visits and the number of registered users was consolidated over the last two years. There were 106,135 file downloads, particularly of the following documents (in Catalan): *Procés d'emissió d'informes per a professorat lector*, *Procés d'emissió de les acreditacions de recerca i de recerca avançada*; *La trajectòria del professorat a les universitats catalanes*; and *Informe 2004. Procés d'avaluació de la qualitat del sistema universitari a Catalunya*.

Editions number 31 to 34 of the *Quarterly information bulletin on university quality* were published, with issues being dealt with including the reform of the Spanish Universities Act; the implications of Decree 405/2006 for universities, the Administration and AQU Catalunya; assessment of the teaching and research competence of civil servant and contracted teaching and research staff; recognised postgraduate programme review; the review and recognition of new degrees in Europe; and considerations concerning the Royal Decree that regulates recognised university degree programmes. Twelve editions of the monthly online bulletin, *AQU News*, were issued. During 2007, seventy-five subscription applications were received.

The two bulletins were sent to approximately 3,500 people in the Catalan university community, as well as the media.

### PUBLICATIONS

During 2007, AQU Catalunya edited and, where appropriate, printed and distributed the following documents (in Catalan, unless otherwise specified):

- *Educació superior i treball a Catalunya: anàlisi dels factors d'inserció laboral* (April 2007), printed edition, 2,000 copies
- *El sistema universitari públic català 2000-2005: una perspectiva des de l'avaluació d'AQU Catalunya* (June 2007), printed edition, 2,000 copies
- *AQU Catalunya, 10 anys de compromís amb la qualitat universitària* (July 2007), printed edition, 1,000 copies
- *Acreditació de màsters. Universitat Rovira i Virgili, 14 i 15 de novembre de 2006* (June 2007), printed edition, 1,000 copies



- *AQU Catalunya. 2006 Activities Report (July 2007)*, electronic edition (a summarised version available in Spanish and English)
- *Informe 2005. Procés d'avaluació de la qualitat del sistema universitari a Catalunya* (book printed December 2007), printed edition, 1.500 copies
- *Informe 2006. Procés d'avaluació de la qualitat del sistema universitari a Catalunya* (part one, December 2007), electronic edition

In addition, a total of eleven guidebooks were published, the majority of which are also in Spanish and English, on the assessment of distance learning programmes; the design and implementation of an institutional model for the assessment of teaching competence of teaching staff in Catalan public universities; producing the academic dimension of designs for recognised Master's programmes to be introduced in the 2008-2009 academic year; and the review of R+D institutes.

## 6. QUALITY AND THE FUNCTIONING OF THE ORGANISATION

### THE FUNDAMENTS OF QUALITY

The draft version of the new AQU Catalunya Code of Ethics was reviewed by renowned experts, which completed the drawing up of this document, now pending approval by the Board of Management.

AQU Catalunya satisfactorily passed the follow-up audit of its quality management system, following renewal of its ISO 9001:2000 certificate in 2006.

A complaints and suggestions mailbox was started on the AQU Catalunya website in June. Around 5,000 telephone enquiries and more than 1,100 e-mail requests for information were received throughout the year, together with eighteen requests received via the complaints and suggestions mailbox.

### INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

The development of a new design for the website was contracted.

The adaptation and implementation of the economic and financial information system for public enterprises of the Government of Catalonia (KIT) was contracted.

The Agency's own software was activated for processes to assess: the salary bonus increments for research of civil servant and contracted teaching staff at Catalan universities; the system for assessing teaching staff dossier appeals; and improvements made in the invoicing module and teaching staff module.

A broadening of the extranet in the teaching staff module was developed and implemented by incorporating the assessment of research base periods and the assessment of appeals.



## BUDGET

During 2007, AQU Catalunya implemented the following budget:

<b>Definitive budget. Income</b>	<b>Amount in €</b>
Revenue	46,047.30
Current grants-in-aid received	3,118,879.33
Capitalisations	32,010.00
Capital grants-in-aid received	0.00
Variation of financial assets	131,600.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,328,536.63</b>

<b>Definitive budget. Expenditure</b>	<b>Amount in €</b>
Staff salaries	1,359,932.39
Expenditure on current assets and services	1,571,798.67
Financial expenditure	10.00
Current transfer subsidies	256,838.60
Current investments	139,956.97
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,328,536.63</b>

The Government of Catalonia's Subdirector General for Financial Control (Ministry of Economy and Finance) carried out the financial audit for the 2006 fiscal year. According to the final report, the annual accounts give evidence, in all significant aspects, of the accurate image of the assets and financial situation of AQU Catalunya.