



# STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR THE QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S DEGREES

This document sets out the standards and criteria that will be applied in the quality assessment of university training programmes: validation, monitoring, modification and accreditation.





**AQU CATALUNYA**

# **STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR THE QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S DEGREES**

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the quality assessment of training programmes is to verify that the curriculum is consistent with the discipline(s) of the degree, that they are taught and organised appropriately, and that the students have achieved the expected learning outcomes at the end of their studies. However, this is not the sole purpose. AQU Catalunya's approach to quality assessment should also make it possible to identify degree programmes' strengths, good practices and areas that need to be modified. As such, accountability and assessment for improvement always form a part of AQU Catalunya's assessment programmes. Quality assessment should help institutions to implement training programmes of ever higher quality and academic relevance.

In Catalonia, in accordance with the current legal regulations,<sup>1</sup> the quality assessment of university degrees is carried out through four programmes: verification, monitoring, modification and accreditation (VSMA).

Students stand at the core of university educational activities, and they therefore play an important role in quality assessment. Likewise, both teachers and students must play a fundamental role in the decision-making processes for training programmes.

There must be processes established for degree programmes to ensure they provide quality training, or failing this they must be included within the university's quality assurance processes. The responsibility for these processes must be clearly established and the monitoring of training activities must be continuous and systematic.

This document sets out the standards and criteria for the quality assessment of training programmes, as established by AQU Catalunya in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) 2015<sup>2</sup>, the primary goal of which is to ensure equivalence between the programme taught and European qualification levels.

The manuals, procedures, guidelines, evidence and indicators for each assessment programme are set out in the reference documents (RD).

### Objective

The ultimate aim of quality assessment is to ensure – for the benefit of the user – that training programmes offered by universities meet the formal and administrative

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Universities, [Royal Decree 822/2021](#), of 28 September, establishing the organisation of university education and the procedure for quality assurance (*BOE* no. 233, 29-9-2021, p. 119537-119578).

<sup>2</sup> EHEA Ministerial Conference, [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#) (Brussels: ENQA, 2015).

requirements imposed by the relevant authority, while guaranteeing that the educational standard attained by graduates corresponds to the level certified by the institution.

For each training programme, it must be ensured that:

- It responds, in terms of learning outcomes and learning objectives, to what is explicitly stated in the Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MCQES),<sup>3</sup> in accordance with the level of the degree;
- It has been developed using suitable resources in terms of teaching staff, infrastructure, learning support services and material resources;
- The certificates awarded are subject to suitable, appropriate procedures for assessing student achievement and correspond to the standard require;
- The academic pathways of progression and graduation, as well as employability of graduates, fall in line with the characteristics of the students and the potential afforded by the labour market.

The AQU Catalunya Governing Board approved the Framework for the ex-ante assessment, monitoring, modification and accreditation of recognised degrees (AQU Catalunya, 2016) of which this standards and criteria document forms part.

These STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR THE QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S DEGREES have been drawn up taking into account:

- **International equivalence.** As an acknowledged agency and a member of European quality assurance bodies (ENQA, EQAR), AQU Catalunya must adopt assessment guidelines and criteria in accordance with this status (in line with the ESGs 2015).
- **The involvement of each degree in the assessment of evidence and the determination of measures for improvement.** Internal validation, or self-assessment, is a key part of the process. The improvement plan that organises and schedules the measures that need to be carried out is based on *verifiable* qualitative and quantitative information drawn from an internal quality assurance system.
- **The integration of accountability and continual improvement** as a means of incorporating internal and external requirements.
- Specific attention to students' academic achievements, vital evidence as to the quality of education.
- **The recognition of progress, best practices and outstanding quality** as an

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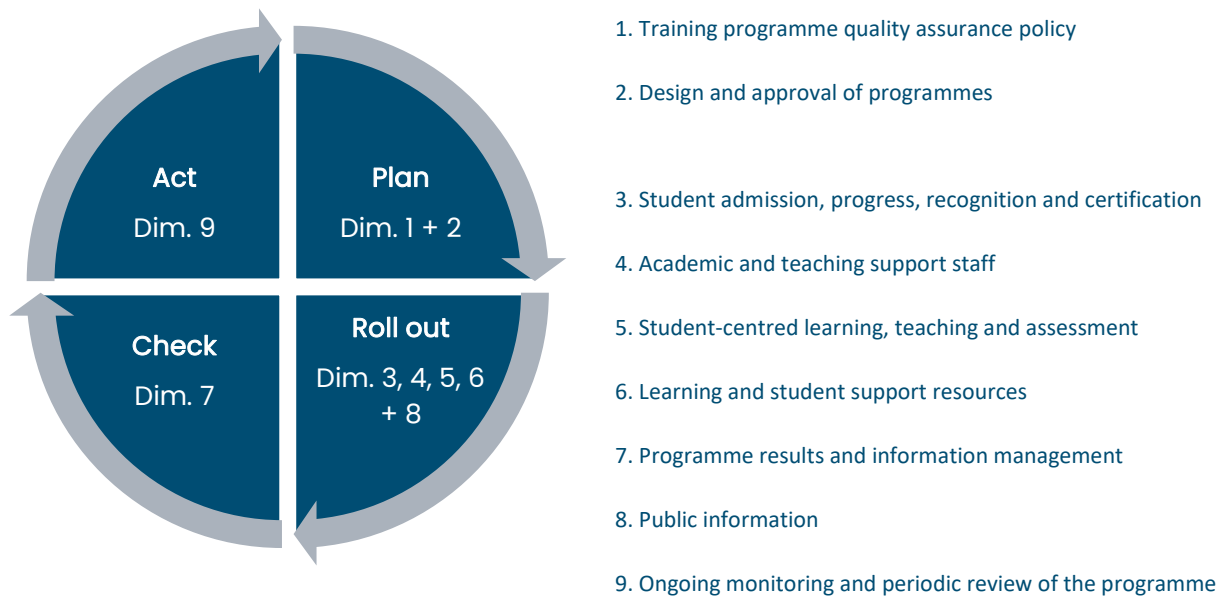
<sup>3</sup> AQU Catalunya, *Marc Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework* (Barcelona: AQU Catalunya, 2019). <[http://www.aqu.cat/doc/doc\\_31904719\\_1.pdf](http://www.aqu.cat/doc/doc_31904719_1.pdf)>.



indication of the promotion of continual improvement of training programmes and internal quality assurance processes.

- **Transparency and disclosure of processes and results**, an essential goal for ensuring the credibility of decisions. This also implies that the defence of institutions is guaranteed concerning final decisions through a pleadings process.

The standards follow a typical continual improvement cycle structure and can be grouped as follows:



**Figure 1.** Degree improvement cycle

**Plan:** every activity starts with its planning, which in degree assessment is established in the quality assurance policies (dimension 1) and in the design and approval of the training programme (dimension 2).

**Roll out:** once the planning is complete, the training programme is implemented in the form of student access, progression, recognition and certification (dimension 3), the assignment of teaching staff to the training programme (dimension 4), the student learning process (dimension 5), the resources made available to students to ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes (dimension 6) and, finally, the information made available to students and society on the training programme and all other related aspects (dimension 8).

**Check:** the degree programme must continuously collect information on the roll-out of training programmes and other related activities in order to monitor their implementation and plan improvement measures if necessary (dimension 7).

**Act:** the degree programme will draw up quality monitoring reports in which it will specify the measures it will take to solve any problems that may arise and to improve the quality of its activity. These actions will be detailed in improvement plans (dimension 9).

These nine dimensions are described in more detail below. For each one, the importance and risks to quality are described, and the standards to be achieved and the criteria for demonstrating their achievement are set out.

# 1. TRAINING PROGRAMME QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

**S1. The activity of the training programme is integrated into the institution's quality assurance strategy and policies. The chain of responsibility is well established and effective, and key stakeholders are involved in decision-making.**

- S1a. The activity of the training programme is integrated into the institution's quality assurance strategy and policies.
- S1b. The chain of responsibility and the parties responsible are clearly identified in the decision-making process.
- S1c. Stakeholders are involved in decision-making.
- S1d. The training programme management team is accountable for the results of its activity.
- S1e. Risks to the training programme have been identified and preventive measures have been foreseen.

Policies and processes are the main pillars of a coherent institutional quality assurance system that involves a cycle of continuous improvement and contributes to the accountability of the institution. These policies promote the development of a culture of quality in which all internal stakeholders take responsibility for quality and are committed to ensuring it in all areas of the institution. To facilitate this, these policies have a formal status and are publicly accessible (**ESG 1.1. Policy for quality assurance**).

Quality assurance policies are normally established at institutional or university level and are therefore an essential part of institutional accreditation.<sup>4</sup> Only when the institution offers a single university bachelor's or master's degree may the quality assurance policies of the institution and the degree programme be the same. Thus, the assessment of the quality assurance policies of the training programmes will focus on the aspects of responsibility, on the implementation of the degree programme and on the application of the institution's quality assurance policies and strategies to the degree programme.

The responsibilities for the correct implementation of the degree's training activities must be clearly established and must be adequate to guarantee the quality of the training. The chain of responsibilities established in the degree programme must allow for appropriate

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<sup>4</sup> AQU Catalunya, *Standards and criteria for the institutional accreditation of university centres* (Barcelona: AQU Catalunya, 2020).

and effective decision-making.

The team responsible for the degree programme must guarantee the correct application of the regulations in force and be accountable for its own performance and for the results of the implementation of the training programme.

There must be effective coordination mechanisms between the subjects and courses in the curriculum and between the subject groups.

The participation of stakeholders in the decision-making process for the degree programme is of paramount importance. For this reason, appropriate mechanisms must be in place to enable their participation, especially that of students and teachers.

## Risks related to quality

Given that institutional policies and strategy facilitate quality assurance, non-inclusion or non-alignment of the training programme with these policies makes it difficult or impossible for the degree programme to guarantee the quality of its educational activities, weakens the academic leadership of both the institution and that of the degree programme, and creates confusion regarding institutional governance.

Inadequate, confused or inoperative decision-making and coordination structures can lead to unclear expectations and requirements for both programme faculty and students, resulting in low satisfaction, mediocre academic results and, ultimately, a lack of prestige and credibility of the degree programme.

It could also lead to insufficient compliance with the legal regulations that apply to training programmes and also with legal obligations regarding respect for diversity, equity and effective equality between men and women, and/or that these are not applied across all areas of the training programme.

Risk analysis should be gradually introduced into training programmes. An inadequate or non-existent analysis of the possible risks that the degree programme may face could put it at a competitive disadvantage compared to other degree programmes and prevent students from receiving adequate training.

## Structure of the dimension

The criteria for checking the achievement of the standard and sub-standards in this dimension are grouped into two blocks: *a*) governance, focusing on the responsibility of the management team, coordination and stakeholder participation, and which is connected to the governance of the institution and the university, and *b*) the implementation of sustainable development regulations and measures.

## 1.1. Degree programme governance

- > Responsibilities are well defined and appropriately assigned.
- > The degree's stakeholders are suitably represented in its decision-making bodies.
- > The decision-making structure allows stakeholder participation and control and ensures parity.
- > Stakeholders have access to the information they need to participate in management bodies.
- > Risks affecting the viability of the degree are effectively identified, managed and mitigated.
- > Suggestions and complaints about the training programme are collected, managed and resolved.

## 1.2. Regulatory implementation and sustainable development

- > The management team correctly applies the regulations in force.
- > The plan for effective equality between men and women (specific to the degree, the centre or the institution) is implemented and adequate.
- > The measures in place enable students with disabilities and special educational needs to follow the curriculum reasonably and to take part in the academic life of the degree programme.
- > Teaching and learning activities are designed to respect and adapt to the diversity of the students (universal design for learning).
- > The degree successfully contributes to the sustainable development of its social and economic environment.

## DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF PROGRAMMES

**S2. The syllabus responds adequately to the subject matter and training objectives of the degree. The learning outcomes correspond to the level of these degrees, in accordance with the Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MCQES). And the roll-out schedule, allocation of ECTS credits to subjects, and teaching staff assigned are appropriate and acceptable.**

- S2a. The name and training objectives of the degree correspond to its content, and are consistent with its discipline and with the corresponding level in the MCQES.
- S2b. The name respects the regulations in force and does not give rise to errors as regards its academic effects, nor to confusion about its content and its professional value.
- S2c. The training programme has been designed taking into account stakeholder feedback, is academically and professionally justified and internationally recognised.
- S2d. The learning outcomes correspond to those established by the MCQES for the educational level of the degree programme.
- S2e. The curriculum is consistent with its discipline(s), learning objectives and learning outcomes, and respects the regulations in force.
- S2f. The roll-out of the degree course is consistent and appropriate in terms of timing, teaching load, coordination and supervision.

As indicated in the ESG, study programmes are at the core of the higher education institutions' teaching mission. They provide students with both academic knowledge and skills, including those that are transferable, which may influence their personal development and which can be applied in their future careers (**ESG 1.2. Design and approval of programmes**).

The degree programme must have a process for designing and approving training programmes that clearly establishes responsibilities and takes current regulations into account.

The design of the training programme can be structurally defined as the content, duration and sequencing of the elements (subjects/courses). The design, however, also includes other aspects of paramount importance, such as the nature of the content, the intended learning outcomes and their sequence of achievement and assessment.

A good training programme design must be the result of the participation of stakeholders,

especially teachers and students, but also other social agents. The design must allow students to achieve the expected learning outcomes progressively and consistently, regardless of the teaching format.

The degree programme must have a programme report that clearly details its registration data, rationale, learning objectives and outcomes, curriculum structure, student workload, teaching methods and assessment approaches.

Curricula must specify the expected learning outcomes in the different subjects and how their achievement will be certified. The learning outcomes must be aligned with the level required by the MCQES and, if published, with the benchmarks for the relevant field. In the case of qualifications that allow entry to a regulated professional activity in Spain, the learning outcomes must also be in line with those established in official regulations.

The curriculum must be rolled out in a way that allows students to reasonably acquire the learning outcomes. The teaching staff assigned, the coordination mechanisms and the quality of the external internship centres must all be appropriate. In the case of simultaneous degree programmes, it must be ensured that students acquire all the learning outcomes of the training programmes involved.

## Risks related to quality

The main risk of poor curriculum design is that the identification and definition of learning outcomes do not correspond to the discipline and level of the degree. This will mean that:

- a*) it is not recognised as equivalent to national or international degrees in the same field, and/or
- b*) the qualification does not correspond to the standard required by the MCQES.

An inadequate structure and/or sequencing of the curriculum will have similar effects, as it may mean that students are unable to achieve all the learning outcomes.

Especially in the case of vocationally-oriented degrees, curricula that do not respond to the needs of society may be in low demand and may jeopardise the employability of their graduates.

The risk to the credibility and prestige of the degree is obvious and will reduce the chances of full and appropriate employment for students, as society will perceive the quality to be inferior. Ultimately, this poor perception could affect other degrees at the centre and the university, and the prestige of the Catalan university system as a whole could be affected.

A poorly designed curriculum will also affect students' possibilities for mobility during their course and during possible future studies.

## Structure of the dimension

The criteria for checking the achievement of the standard and sub-standards in this

dimension are grouped into seven blocks: *a)* the name and characteristics of the qualification, basic registration data at the time of verification that offer a guarantee for students and society; *b)* the academic justification of the degree and its justification in terms of social need, with international benchmarks; *c)* the training objectives and the graduation profile established by the degree programme for training its students; *d)* the learning outcomes that graduates are expected to achieve on completion of the degree; *e)* the basic structure of the curriculum; *f)* the degree approval process and the involvement of the main stakeholders, and *g)* the roll-out of the curriculum.

### 1.3. Title and characteristics of the qualification

- > The name of the degree programme corresponds to its curriculum and is consistent with its discipline and, where appropriate, professional field.
- > The name of the degree programme is compatible with its educational level as set out in the MCQES.
- > The name of the degree programme complies with current legislation.
- > The name of the degree programme does not give rise to errors about its academic effects, nor to confusion about its content or, where applicable, its professional value.
- > The name of the degree programme's mentions or specialisations is consistent with its curriculum, discipline and, where appropriate, professional field.
- > The degree programme has sufficient teaching staff, support staff and material resources and infrastructures to cope with the volume of enrolment resulting from the offer of places.
- > The degree programme has sufficient teaching staff, support staff and material resources and infrastructures to cope with the volume of enrolment resulting from the offer of places for each type of teaching format.
- > The degree programme's field of knowledge is consistent with the curriculum and the expected learning outcomes.
- > The planned teaching formats correspond to the teaching method and the planned training activities and allow all students to achieve the same learning outcomes.
- > The degree programme has adequate human and material resources for teaching in a third language.

### 1.4. Rationale for the degree programme

- > The degree programme has been designed taking into account the opinion of stakeholders and considering the needs of the community in the fields related to the discipline.



- > The degree is of academic, scientific, professional and social interest, and is well aligned with the strategic planning of the university and the Catalan university system.
- > The training programme is internationally recognised.

### 1.5. Training objectives and graduation profile

- > The learning objectives and the graduation profile are well defined, clear and consistent with the discipline of the degree programme and also, where appropriate, its professional field.
- > The learning objectives are aligned and consistent with the intended learning outcomes.
- > The training objectives of the mentions, specialisations and other curricular structures, if there are any, are consistent with the degree, its discipline and, where applicable, its professional field.

### 1.6. Learning outcomes

- > Learning outcomes are consistent with the level and scope of the training programme in accordance with the qualification awarded (MCQES).
- > Learning outcomes are specified in terms of knowledge, skills and competences in accordance with the MCQES.
- > The learning outcomes include all types of learning: knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, assessment and creation.
- > The learning outcomes are consistent with the learning objectives of the degree programme.
- > The learning outcomes are degree-specific, observable and relevant.
- > The learning outcomes can be assessed and are achievable by the student given the time and resources available.
- > The learning outcomes are inclusive and based on a universal design for learning that offers all students an equal opportunity to succeed.
- > The learning outcomes are sufficiently differentiated and there are no overlaps.
- > The gender perspective is included in the learning outcomes.
- > The number of proposed learning outcomes is reasonable (around 25).

## 1.7. Structure of the study programme

- > The content, duration and level of the training programme are suitable for the discipline and are internationally recognised.
- > The training programme is designed taking into account the opinion of stakeholders and the needs of the community in fields related to the discipline(s).
- > The curriculum includes a gender perspective.
- > The training programme is flexible and allows students to follow different curricular paths.
- > Legal regulations are correctly applied, especially in cases where students are qualified for a regulated profession.
- > Student learning outcomes are detailed clearly in the subjects/disciplines and in the training programme.
- > The expected student workload is reasonable, realistic and appropriate.
- > The credits assigned to subjects enable students to achieve the expected learning outcomes.
- > The content of subjects and the results of learning are sufficiently differentiated and no overlaps occur.
- > The type of final degree and master's theses and external internships is consistent with the discipline and level of the qualification.

## 1.8. Approval

- > The training programme has been approved internally following the implemented IQA system processes.
- > Approval of the training programme is carried out in compliance with the internal and governmental regulations in force.
- > The curriculum has been subject to a process of open consultation within the educational community prior to its approval.

## 1.9. Roll-out

- > The curriculum is suitably rolled out in accordance with its implementation schedule.
- > The time sequence set out in the curriculum allows the expected learning outcomes to be achieved.
- > Mechanisms for teaching coordination are appropriate and work correctly.
- > The assignment of the subjects in the curriculum responds adequately to the profile

of teachers and training objectives.

- > External internships are carried out in centres which are appropriate for the training goals to be achieved.
- > Mechanisms for monitoring the adequacy and quality of internship centres are appropriate and work correctly.
- > The sequencing and recognition of credits for degree courses taken simultaneously are adequate and allow students to achieve all the learning outcomes of the degrees involved.

## STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESS, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION

**S3. The student access and admission process is fair, reliable, equitable and public. The mechanisms available within the training programme make it possible to reliably certify students' progress and the achievement of learning outcomes, while at the same time also recognising previously achieved learning outcomes.**

- S3a. The processes implemented for student access and admission ensure fairness, reliability and non-discrimination on the grounds of birth, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, opinion or any other personal or social condition or circumstance.
- S3b. The criteria and requirements for access and admission are clear and public.
- S3c. All students admitted have the appropriate profile to achieve the learning outcomes of the degree and their number is consistent with the number of places offered.
- S3d. The degree follows the students' progress and guides them academically and personally.
- S3e. The degree programme has relevant regulations for the recognition of students' prior learning, and these are properly applied.
- S3f. The degree has adequate procedures for the assessment of student learning outcomes.
- S3g. The degree has a procedure to check that the students' graduation profile corresponds to the expected profile.
- S3h. The certification of students' learning achievements and the passing of credits for the award of the degree is appropriate and complies with current regulations.
- S3i. The degree makes appropriate use of the European Diploma Supplement.

According to the ESG, institutions should consistently apply pre-established and published standards covering all phases of the student "life cycle" – e.g. admission, progression, recognition and certification (**ESG 1.4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**).

Students' experience of higher education begins with the admission process, and it is vital that they know and trust the application of the criteria established for student selection. For this reason, the training programme must have an implemented admission process and

criteria, which must be applied consistently and transparently. If necessary, guidance services should be available that help students understand the requirements and guide them on how to obtain the documentation they must provide.

Admission onto the training programme must ensure that the profile of the students admitted is the intended one, so that the achievement of the learning outcomes and, therefore, student progression and graduation can be maximised.

Once students have been admitted, it is essential for the degree programme to track, supervise and intervene in their progress. In this regard, tutorial action plans or other guidance programmes, either university-wide or specific to the training programme, can help to ensure the progress of enrolled students.

In accordance with the MCQES, it is necessary to ensure a smooth and appropriate transition of students through the different educational levels. To this end, the recognition of prior learning is essential, as well as favouring students' progress in their studies and promoting mobility. The rules on recognition should also establish the mechanisms and criteria for the recognition of foreign qualifications obtained by students wishing to gain access to studies. Recognition of previous qualifications must comply with the guidelines of the Lisbon Convention.

Finally, graduation represents the culmination of the period of study. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained (European Diploma Supplement and academic record), including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.

## Risks related to quality

The risk of inadequate implementation and application of the admission process and of the requirements for successful completion of a degree has implications not only for student progression but also for society as a whole, as the initial conditions under which the degree was verified are not met.

An inadequate access and admission process can lead to a poor learning experience for students and potential damage to their self-esteem, prospects for future learning and entry into the job market.

Failure to comply with the principle of non-discrimination and other regulations in access to university studies may lead to legal action against the institution and seriously affect its reputation and quality.

An ineffective tutoring and monitoring system can lead to inadequate student progression and even drop-out.

Inappropriate credit recognition may put the student at an academic disadvantage because their prior learning does not match the level of the recognised subject, meaning they need additional support to continue their studies. This could have negative effects on the

standard required in assessments, if the teacher sees the need to keep the progress of the rest of the group in line with that of such students. In the most serious cases this could mean that the degrees awarded do not fully correspond to the relevant level of qualification. The reputation of the centre could be affected in all cases.

On the other hand, failure to recognise prior learning may lead to discrimination, the inability to access studies, academic and financial disadvantages and the inefficiency of the system.

Inadequate certification of students' achievements can affect their employability, progression or job roles, as well as the continuation of lifelong learning.

## Structure of the dimension

The criteria for checking achievement of the standard and sub-standards in this dimension are grouped into four blocks: *a)* the requirements and criteria for student access and admission, which are essential for guaranteeing fairness and impartiality during the selection of students for the studies; *b)* mechanisms to monitor student progression; *c)* the recognition and transfer of credits and prior learning, a fundamental element which should facilitate the mobility of students through the different levels of the education system and which should allow for diverse learning pathways and lifelong learning, and *d)* the certification of achieved learning outcomes.

### 1.10. Access and admission

- > The admission procedure and criteria are appropriate and relevant for the level of the qualifications and the learning outcomes sought.
- > The admission criteria are designed to ensure that students who are admitted have the expected academic profile.
- > In postgraduate degrees training complements are relevant and effective.
- > Responsibility for student admission is defined, complies with the regulations and is appropriate.
- > The admission criteria guarantee equal opportunities, non-discrimination and universal accessibility for people with disabilities.
- > When it is compulsory, the admission procedure ensures that students have reached the required level in a third language.
- > The admission procedure guarantees that, prior to enrolment, students are informed of the criteria for admission, their rights and their obligations.

### 1.11. Progression

- > The regulations concerning continuance on the degree programme are relevant, appropriate and known by the students.
- > There are effective mechanisms to identify and support students who are at risk of not progressing academically.
- > The tutorial action plan and other mentoring and support programmes envisage specific action to ensure a successful transition for first-year undergraduate students.
- > The degree programme maintains, monitors and acts on data and indicators related to students' progress, specified by access route, study format, full or part-time studies, and gender.
- > There are effective plans to detect issues related to mental health, disability, welfare and sexual harassment or any others and students are aware of them.

### 1.12. Recognition and transfer of credits and prior learning

- > The criteria and regulations for credit transfer and recognition are clear, comply with the regulations and are consistent with the intended learning outcomes of the degree programme.
- > The university has defined the process and/or regulations for the recognition of credits between higher education degrees (levels 1 to 4 of the MCQES), which are clear and comply with the current regulations.
- > Students' previous work and professional experience is recognised in accordance with legal regulations and the learning outcomes achieved. This recognition in the subjects or courses of the curriculum is relevant and appropriate.
- > Training programmes take into account students' previous learning of the subjects in the curriculum.
- > The system and criteria for the recognition of credits taken by students through mobility schemes are appropriate.

### 1.13. Certification

- > The certification of students' learning achievements is reliable.
- > The regulations for the issuing of qualifications comply with and are applied in accordance with the legal provisions, and are known to students.
- > An exhaustive record is kept of the certifications and qualifications awarded (including the European Diploma Supplement) and measures are in place to prevent tampering.

## ACADEMIC AND TEACHING SUPPORT STAFF

### **S4. There are a sufficient number of teaching staff for the training programme, and these are competent and suitable and have opportunities for personal and professional development**

- S4a. The academic credentials of the teaching staff are suitable for the teaching required by the training programme.
- S4b. The teaching staff have the necessary accreditation established by regulations.
- S4c. A sufficient number of teaching staff are allocated to handle the roll-out of the degree programme.
- S4d. The training needs of teachers are assessed and the activities scheduled are easily accessible.

The teacher's role is essential in creating a high quality student experience and enabling the acquisition of knowledge, competences and skills. The diversifying student population and stronger focus on learning outcomes require student-centred learning and teaching and the role of the teacher is, therefore, also changing.

Institutions must ensure that their teaching staff are competent. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff (**ESG 1.5. Teaching staff**).

Educational institutions must provide teachers with an environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively. For this purpose and in accordance with the ESG, institutions must:

- recognise the importance of teaching and monitor its quality;
- offer teachers opportunities for professional development and promote it;
- stimulate academic activity to strengthen the link between education and research; and
- encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies.

Those responsible for training programmes should ensure that the teaching staff for each subject or course are appropriate to its nature, discipline and academic level.

The teaching staff assigned to the degree must comply with the legal regulations regarding their profile and accreditation. However, it must be acknowledged that practical realities are much more complex and it is often desirable to involve teachers who meet a particular educational need in a degree or subject (the involvement of experienced professionals, for



example), as long as their participation is guided and supervised by responsible staff who must meet requirements and who, at least, have training up to the level of the qualification for which they teach.

The suitability of teaching staff for each subject must be assessed in relation to their knowledge, teaching skills and qualifications. All teachers must be up to date with scientific developments and in terms of the teaching, learning and assessment of the discipline. The university must have procedures in place for the assessment of teaching staff in terms of teaching quality, in order to detect and remedy possible weaknesses through appropriate training.

## Risks related to quality

Maintaining standards in terms of teaching staff is intended to prevent students from receiving training from inexperienced and/or unskilled staff. In particular, staff's level of qualification and their teaching/professional experience must not be lower than the level of the degree in which they teach.

It could also lead to insufficient compliance with legal obligations regarding the profile and competence of teaching staff.

## Structure of the dimension

The criteria for checking achievement of the standard and sub-standards in this dimension are grouped into three blocks: *a)* the profile of the teaching staff in terms of their credentials, fields of knowledge, research activity and teaching and professional experience, in order to ensure the most suitable teaching staff for each subject/course; *b)* an adequate number of teaching staff to enable the curriculum to be rolled out appropriately, and *c)* their training, to guarantee they are up to date in terms of teaching methods and subject knowledge.

### 1.14. Profile

- > The teaching staff responsible for the degree programme and subjects have relevant teaching and research merits.
- > In the case of university master's degrees, the teaching staff have relevant research merits.
- > Associate teaching staff have professional experience in the field of the degree subject.
- > The percentage of teachers with doctorates teaching on the degree programme is at least that established in the regulations.
- > In degrees taught in private centres (integrated within or affiliated to the university),

the percentage of doctoral and accredited doctoral teaching staff is at least that established by the regulations.

- > The teaching staff responsible for the degree and the subjects are from the centre or university awarding the degree and, preferably, are full-time staff.
- > The teaching staff who teach on the training programme have at least the same level of training or an equivalent qualification.
- > The teaching staff who teach on the training programme includes equal proportions of women and men.
- > The teaching staff involved in online teaching have knowledge and experience of online and blended teaching formats, and of the use of technologies for virtual learning.

#### **1.15. Number of staff**

- > A sufficient number of teaching staff are assigned to the degree programme for the normal implementation of the training programme.
- > The teacher/student ratio, for both for face-to-face teaching and blended or online learning, is at least that established by the regulations.
- > The percentage of full-time teaching staff is at least that established in regulations.

#### **1.16. Training**

- > The teaching staff on the degree programme are up to date with the latest general developments in university teaching and those specific to the teaching of their discipline.
- > Staff have access to and participate in training activities of a general nature and specific activities for their discipline.
- > Teaching staff have access to the opinions of students about the quality of their teaching and have opportunities to improve it.

## STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

**S5. The training programme encourages students to take an active role in the learning process. This approach is reflected in the teaching method and activities and in the student assessment.**

- S5a. The teaching methods and activities are satisfactorily aligned with learning outcomes.
- S5b. The teaching-learning process respects and caters for students' diversity and needs, allowing for flexible learning paths, fostering their autonomy and promoting mutual respect in the teacher-student relationship.
- S5c. Assessment systems and criteria are varied, promote student participation and are relevant to certifying and distinguishing learning outcomes.
- S5d. Bachelor's and master's degree final projects and external work placements are monitored and assessed with relevant and appropriate criteria.

Student-centred learning and teaching play an important role in stimulating student motivation, self-reflection, and involvement in the learning process. This means careful consideration of the design and delivery of study programmes and the assessment of results (**ESG 1.3.) Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment**).

Student-centred learning and teaching brings about a paradigm shift in which the needs of students, as a group and as individuals, are addressed and they are encouraged to participate constantly in the learning process. Teachers facilitate this active participation inside and outside the classroom.

The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and addresses the diversity of students and their needs, while allowing for flexible learning pathways.

The centre must ensure that the content of the subjects and learning activities are up to date with the latest knowledge and research in the discipline in question. Both content and activities must respect student diversity and promote effective equality between men and women.

The centre's teaching staff are expected to use different teaching methods flexibly. These methods must allow students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential. Student autonomy should be encouraged within a framework of mutual respect.

With regard to assessment, and considering its importance for students' progression and professional future, the assessment criteria and methods and grading criteria need to be published in advance. Teachers should apply those most appropriate for the assessment of learning in their discipline. Assessment allows students to demonstrate, and staff to verify, the extent to which expected learning outcomes have been achieved. The assessments given to students should include relevant analysis and also help to improve student learning.

## Risks related to quality

There is a risk that the teaching methods and activities used in the training programme will not be adequate to achieve the expected learning outcomes, negatively affecting the value of the qualification.

Inappropriate assessment methods and criteria may lead to the certification of learning outcomes that have not been achieved or to some learning outcomes being prioritised over others, resulting in incorrect certification of the degree. This also includes the detection of unacceptable practices, such as fraud or copying.

Allowing students to graduate when they have not achieved learning outcomes can cause problems in their subsequent careers. This implies that society is losing properly trained human capital and puts it at a competitive disadvantage. The same applies to the centre and the university: by failing in its commitment to student training, it loses prestige and, as a result, its power to attract new students is diminished.

## Structure of the dimension

The criteria for checking the achievement of the standard and sub-standards in this dimension are grouped into two blocks: *a)* the teaching method and training activities implemented by the degree programme to ensure the acquisition of the learning outcomes, and *b)* the assessment that enables certification of the achievement of the learning outcomes.

### 1.17. TEACHING METHOD AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

- > The learning and teaching strategy for the degree is framed within the centre's strategy and is shared and known by teaching staff and students.
- > The students are aware of the teaching method and learning activities that are used in different subjects and disciplines.
- > The teaching method is appropriate for the educational level and discipline of the degree.
- > In the case of university master's degrees, the methodologies and learning activities enable students to acquire advanced knowledge, skills and competences, and

provide knowledge of research methods applicable to the field of work or learning or the corresponding professional practice.

- > Teaching and learning activities encourage student autonomy and promote mutual respect in the teacher-student relationship.
- > Teaching and learning activities are organised to promote the progressive and consistent achievement of expected learning outcomes.
- > Learning activities and teaching methods are designed to guarantee equivalent learning outcomes for all students, regardless of the teaching format provided.
- > Learning activities promote appropriate intellectual reflection at the level of the subject/course that the student is studying.
- > The approach, objectives and planning of bachelor's and master's final-year projects are relevant and appropriate to the discipline(s) of the degree and its educational level.
- > The degree has effective measures to ensure the quality of external work placements, the practicum and other forms of integrated learning.
- > The training activities and teaching method demonstrate the degree's interest in teaching innovation.
- > There are suitable regulations regarding mobility and agreements have been signed with other institutions that allow the mobility of the students on the training programme.
- > The mobility measures are adequate and consistent with the learning objectives and learning outcomes of the degree programme.
- > There are appropriate planning, monitoring and assessment mechanisms for the degree programme's mobility measures.
- > Appropriate information is collected and analysed to ensure the continued effectiveness of its teaching method approach.
- > Teaching methods and activities take into account and respect student diversity (origin, race, sex, sexual identity, religion, opinion or any other personal, social or cultural considerations).

## 1.18. ASSESSMENT

- > Assessment regulations and processes are explicit, transparent and accessible to all stakeholders.
- > The evaluation methods and criteria are consistent with the learning outcomes being evaluated, they can confirm that all specified learning outcomes are achieved and that the grades awarded reflect the different levels of student achievement.

- > Student assignments are relevant and consistent with the teaching method and activities and the format of course delivery.
- > Students receive timely information on assessment of their work, an analysis of the level attained and suggestions for improvement to guide them in their academic progression.
- > The degree programme makes appropriate use of the procedures implemented in the centre to check the identity of students in on-site and, especially, online assessment activities.
- > The degree programme adequately implements its centre's mechanisms to prevent, identify and respond to unacceptable academic practices – copying, plagiarism, etc. – and these are known to students.
- > The assessment activities are adapted to the type of student, especially those with disabilities or other special educational needs.
- > The integrity and security of the assessment process is ensured and adequately monitored.

## LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT RESOURCES

### **S6. The degree programme has or has access to adequate and effective guidance services and resources for student learning.**

- S6a. The material resources available are adequate for the number of students, the characteristics of the degree programme and its educational format.
- S6b. The available teaching and learning support infrastructures respond appropriately to students' learning needs.
- S6c. The academic guidance services provide adequate support for the learning process, and the professional guidance services facilitate entry into the labour market and/or professional development.

According to the ESG, "Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning and student support resources are provided." (**ESG 1.6. Learning and student support resources**).

The degree programme is expected to have a range of resources that contribute to student learning. The types of resources are very varied: teaching infrastructure (classrooms, laboratories, clinical facilities, animal supply facilities, etc.), libraries, study spaces, computer infrastructures, documentation, tutoring services, guidance for students with disabilities, advice on financial aid, career guidance and placement, residential life, sports, etc.

The resources offered must take into account the needs of a diverse student population as well as the shift towards student-centred learning and flexible learning and teaching formats. In this regard, access to learning resources should not involve unexpected barriers, costs or technological requirements for students, including those with special needs.

When learning resources are part of an e-learning management system, all users must have timely access to the system and must have been properly trained.

Student support resources should be consistent with the learning objectives and expected learning outcomes. They must also guarantee quality, accessibility and information for students.

Administrative and support staff play a crucial role in providing support services. Therefore, they must be qualified and they must also have opportunities to develop their competences.

### **Risks related to quality**

The supply or use of poor quality teaching resources (material that is irrelevant, obsolete, lacking in rigour, etc.) will result in students not achieving the expected learning outcomes

and being at a disadvantage in their professional and personal future compared to graduates of similar training programmes. The same can be said of inadequate, obsolete or derelict teaching infrastructures.

Inadequate student support services will lead to a poor educational experience that can bring about low academic performance, drop-out, and even personal problems for students.

These shortcomings will significantly affect the image of the degree programme, as well as that of the centre and the university, and will reduce its prestige and potential to compete with other similar programmes.

## Structure of the dimension

The criteria for checking the achievement of the standard and sub-standards in this dimension are grouped into two blocks: *a)* the teaching facilities and infrastructures, and *b)* the learning support services and resources that the degree programme makes available to its students so that they can achieve the learning outcomes and improve their educational experience.

### 1.19. Facilities and infrastructures

- > The facilities and the rest of the educational infrastructures available, whether belonging to the centre or to partner entities, are sufficient in relation to the number of students and are appropriate for carrying out the training activities of the degree programme.
- > The technological facilities and infrastructure are adapted to the characteristics and needs of students, especially those with disabilities.
- > The capability of the technological infrastructure, especially if the degree programme is offered online, is sufficient to support all students, is permanently accessible and allows adequate interaction between teaching staff and students.
- > The technological infrastructure is secure and reliable.
- > The technological infrastructure respects the privacy of students and teaching staff.
- > The technological infrastructure allows students to be identified unambiguously.
- > Students and faculty are satisfied with the functioning, adequacy and quality of the facilities and other teaching infrastructures.

### 1.20. LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES AND RESOURCES

- > Learning support services and resources are sufficient and consistent with the discipline, teaching method and learning needs of the training programme.
- > Students have access to all the teaching materials recommended in the subjects



included in the curriculum, either physically or online.

- > The degree programme or the centre have programmes for academic guidance and incorporation into the labour market that are effective and appropriate to the discipline and teaching format.
- > There are sufficient staff in charge of support services, they are qualified to carry out their work and have opportunities for training.
- > The learning support services and resources respect the diversity of students and ensure equal access.
- > Students are satisfied with the degree programme's learning support services and resources.

## PROGRAMME RESULTS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

**S7. The degree programme collects information for the analysis and improvement of its training activities and the processes of its IQA system. The results of the training programme are adequate both with regard to the achievement of the learning outcomes and the indicators of academic performance, satisfaction and finding employment.**

- S7a. The degree programme has an IQA system or quality assurance processes, which are in place and are continuously reviewed and improved.
- S7b. The processes are adequate and efficient and allow proper monitoring and improvement of its activities.
- S7c. Students attain the intended learning outcomes.
- S7d. The academic results and satisfaction and job placement indicators for the training programme are adequate and consistent with those obtained for similar degrees in the same discipline.

“Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities” (**ESG 1.7 Information management**).

The degree programme must be able to demonstrate that it achieves its training and operational objectives. In order to know what works well and what needs attention in the degree programme, it is essential to have a system that collects and analyses data on the implementation of the academic activity.

The degree programme should have an IQA system or, failing this, effective processes for managing all aspects of student learning, as well as effective processes for collecting and analysing information on curricula and other activities (see dimension 9): Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of the programme).

It is essential that data and indicators are collected on the performance, profile, evolution, success and drop-out of students and their satisfaction with the degree they are taking and with the learning and support resources, the satisfaction of graduates with their studies, the satisfaction of the teaching staff, and the professional careers of graduates. The information can be collected using different methods and the accessibility, cost and significance of the results obtained must be taken into account. It is important that this information is compared to that for other similar degree programmes.

The training programme must be able to demonstrate that students achieve the intended learning outcomes and that these outcomes are consistent with the discipline(s) of the programme.

## Risks related to quality

Inefficient or inappropriate information management may result in the training programme not having up-to-date quantitative and qualitative information or in incorrect information. In both cases, the analysis and improvement of the programme will be affected, resulting in a significant loss of quality. The end result of such mismanagement will be lessened ability to attract new students due to loss of prestige and, ultimately, a decrease in competitive potential.

The same can be said if the academic results, satisfaction levels and employment outcomes of students are significantly poorer than the average for other similar degrees in the same disciplines and the objectives set in accordance with the profile of students and the characteristics of the educational format.

Failure of students to achieve the intended learning outcomes means a failure of the implementation of the training programme, of its teaching methods and activities and of the assessment system. This failure is a breach of the "contract" established with society for the training of students and for their professional development.

## Structure of the dimension

The criteria for checking the achievement of the standard and sub-standards in this dimension are grouped into two blocks: *a)* the results of the training programme, both in terms of the achievement of the learning outcomes and their coherence with the MCQES, and the indicators regarding academic aspects, satisfaction and job placement, and *b)* the implementation of the IQA system and the information carried management carried out by the degree programme.

### 7.1. Outcomes of the training programme

- > The learning outcomes achieved by students graduating from the training programme correspond to the intended outcomes, to the training objectives of the degree and to the corresponding MCQES level.
- > The indicators of academic results are consistent with the type of students and equivalent qualifications.
- > The data collected and the indicators generated are compared with similar Catalan university system and international degrees.
- > Indicators are appropriately segmented by access route and profile, gender, country

of origin and cohort.

- > The degree programme regularly monitors the evolution of academic performance indicators and other data on the implementation of the training programme.
- > The satisfaction of students, graduates and teaching staff is satisfactory and consistent with the satisfaction results for degree programmes in the same field.
- > Job placement indicators are consistent with the type of students and equivalent qualifications.

## 7.2 IQA and information management

- > The IQA system for the degree programme, or the centre-wide system, has an effective information collection process that takes into account the data and indicators needed to assess adequate implementation of the training programme.
- > The degree's IQA system has an adequate and effective review process in place.
- > The review and improvement of processes is carried out taking their results into account.
- > There is an updated improvement plan that is adequate and effective for reviewing the IQA system and the training programme.
- > The centre's IQA system has an effective document management system that ensures the proper functioning of its processes.

## PUBLIC INFORMATION

### **S8. The degree programme suitably informs all stakeholders about the characteristics of the training provided.**

- S8a. The degree programme publishes accurate, complete, updated and accessible information on the characteristics of the training programme and its delivery.
- S8b. The degree programme publishes information on academic results and student and teacher satisfaction, as well as on the results of internal and external assessment processes.

Transparency of information is repeatedly mentioned in communiqués from European education ministries, for example in the Bergen Communiqué (May 2005), in which the ministers state that they wish to “establish a European Higher Education Area based on the principles of quality and transparency”. The importance of transparency is reflected throughout the European standards and guidelines. ESG Standard 1.8 thus states that “Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible” (**ESG 1.7. Information management**).

The guidelines in this standard state that “Information on institutions’ activities is useful for prospective and current students as well as for graduates, other stakeholders and the public. Therefore, institutions provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer and the selection criteria for them, the intended learning outcomes of these programmes, the qualifications they award, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students as well as graduate employment information.”

The degree programme must also inform prospective and current students about the cost of the ECTS credits for which they are enrolled and the other costs associated with enrolment, the accreditation status of the programme, the complaints and suggestions process, and the people (with email addresses), services or communication channels they can contact in case of need.

The publication of information ensures transparency and facilitates accountability.

### **Risks related to quality**

Public information plays a key role in building trust, which means attracting more new students. Incomplete or unreliable information implies a competitive disadvantage and

damage to the image of the degree programme and the institution that offers it.

Poor information does not allow students (present or future) to make appropriate and relevant decisions. Misinformed decisions can lead to drop-out, poor academic performance, and dissatisfaction, increasing the number of complaints. They therefore affect the academic life of students and their professional future, and lead to a loss of trust and image for the degree programme and the institution that offers it.

## Structure of the dimension

The criteria for checking the achievement of the standard and sub-standards in this dimension are grouped into two blocks: *a)* the quality of the information, and *b)* the content of the information offered by the degree programme to its educational community and society in general.

### 1.21. Quality of information

- > The degree programme publishes relevant information for its stakeholders and, in particular, for enrolled and potential students.
- > Public information is accessible to all stakeholders (students, faculty, families, and society at large) and is adapted to their different profiles.
- > The public information available is updated, well structured and comprehensive, and is true.
- > Public information takes the gender perspective into account and does not display any sex bias.
- > Public information is adapted to students with disabilities and special educational needs.
- > Where applicable, the information published is appropriate for attracting foreign students and directing them to the relevant guidance services.

### 1.22. Content of information

- > Updated information is provided on conditions for access, admission criteria, complementary training and, if necessary, the price of ECTS credits and other expenses related to enrolment.
- > All the teaching regulations, the IQA system and other regulations or policies on gender equality, non-discrimination, promotion of diversity, treatment of disability, etc. are published.
- > Information on curricula includes the subjects or disciplines, work load (ECTS), roll-out schedule, teaching methods and activities, bibliographic resources, and activities

and criteria for assessment.

- > The names of the teaching staff in charge of the subjects or courses are published, with contact details and a short curriculum vitae.
- > The academic results of the last five years are published.
- > Students have access to information on mobility, learning resources and other support services.
- > Students are informed about the mechanisms for complaints and suggestions.
- > Information is published about the satisfaction of graduate students and faculty.
- > Details of the institutional accreditation of the centre and/or its degrees are published and updated.

## ONGOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME

**S9. Training programmes are reviewed and improved periodically. The review results in an improvement plan that is kept up to date. The planned actions are communicated to all interested parties.**

Once the curricula have been implemented and rolled out, "Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned" (**ESG 1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes**).

"Continuous improvement" is a fundamental aspect of the quality assurance of academic programmes. Continuous improvement is normally based on a reflective feedback cycle involving monitoring, review and consequent improvements based on evidence of the implementation of the training programme, and should include all aspects that are part of the STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR THE QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S DEGREES. The monitoring of the training programme is linked to the IQA system processes in which the degree is included.

Reflection on the implementation of the programme's activities, processes and mechanisms should lead to an evidence-based improvement plan. The improvement plan must be realistic: it must be possible for the actions it includes to be completed in the period between the approval of the plan and the subsequent follow-up. The improvement plan must identify the person or role (not collegiate bodies) responsible for its execution, the objectives sought through the actions, the time needed to achieve them and their priority with respect to the rest of the actions in the plan, the expected results, the indicators associated with the action and the objective values of these indicators in order to be able to assess the degree of achievement of the intended objectives. The improvement plan is a living document which must always be based on evidence, the analysis of which is the cornerstone of the next monitoring cycle of the training programme.

The monitoring must check that the degree programme maintains at least the level of quality set out in the standards of this document. It is also advisable that the degree programme compares its results with other similar degrees, either from the same institution or from other universities (see dimension 7: Programme results and information management).



## Risks related to quality

Inadequate monitoring and review will result in curricula that are not up to date with scientific and pedagogical developments in the discipline, affecting the prestige, credibility and competitiveness of the degree programme.

An assessment based on inappropriate evidence on the implementation of the degree programme will compromise the improvement of the training activity and other aspects related to student training. It will lead to a significant loss in the quality of the training programme, which could lead to lessened ability to attract new students due to loss of prestige and, ultimately, a decrease in competitive potential.

## Structure of the dimension

The criteria for checking the achievement of the standard in this dimension are included in a single group dedicated to monitoring and review.

### 1.23. Monitoring and review

- > The curriculum is periodically reviewed to update it in line with the latest scientific and educational developments in the discipline.
- > The implementation of the training programme is regularly reviewed.
- > The review of the implementation of the training programme results in an improvement plan which is relevant and appropriate and which prioritises the actions to be carried out according to their importance.
- > The review is carried out considering the most relevant data and indicators on the roll-out of the training programme.
- > The monitoring and review of the training programme is carried out with the participation of stakeholders, especially students and teaching staff.

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- > [Royal decree 22/2015](#), of 23 January, establishing the requirements for issuing the European supplement to the degrees regulated by Royal Decree 1393/2007, of 29 October, establishing the organisation of official university education and amending Royal Decree 1027/2011, of 15 July, establishing the Spanish Qualifications Framework for higher education. *BOE* no. 33, of 7 February 2015.
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- > [Royal Decree 640/2021](#) of 27 July on the creation, recognition and authorisation of universities and university centres, and institutional accreditation of university centres. *BOE* no. 179, of 28 July 2021.
- > [Royal Decree 822/2021](#) of 28 September establishing the organisation of university education and the procedure for quality assurance. *BOE* no. 233, of 29 September 2021.
- > [Universal Design for Learning Guidelines](#). CAST Professional Publishing, 2018.
- > [Yerevan Communiqué](#). European Ministerial Conference on Higher Education. Yerevan, 14-15 May 2015.

## ANNEX. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STANDARDS AND ESG

ESG	Dimension	Sub-dimensions	Standard	Sub-standards
1.1. Quality assurance policy	1. Training programme quality assurance policy	1.1. Degree governance 1.2. Regulatory implementation and sustainable development	S1. The activity of the training programme is integrated into the centre's quality assurance strategy and policies. The chain of responsibility is well established and effective, and key stakeholders are involved in decision-making.	—S1a. The activity of the training programme is integrated into the institution's quality assurance strategy and policies. —S1b. The chain of responsibility and the parties responsible are clearly identified in the decision-making process. —S1c. Stakeholders are involved in decision-making. —S1d. The training programme management team is accountable for the results of its activity. —S1e. Risks to the training programme have been identified and preventive measures have been foreseen.
1.2. Design and approval of programmes	2. Design and approval of programmes	2.1. Title and characteristics of the degree programme 2.2. Rationale for the degree programme 2.3. Training objectives and graduation profile 2.4. Learning outcomes 2.5. Structure of the study programme 2.6. Approval 2.7. ROLL-OUT	S2. The syllabus responds adequately to the subject matter and training objectives of the degree. The learning outcomes correspond to the level of these degrees, in accordance with the Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MCQES). And the roll-out schedule, allocation of ECTS credits to subjects, and teaching staff assigned are appropriate and acceptable.	—S2a. The name and training objectives of the degree correspond to its content, and are consistent with its discipline and with the corresponding level in the MCQES. —S2b. The name respects the regulations in force and does not give rise to errors as regards its academic effects, nor to confusion about its content and its professional value. —S2c. The training programme has been designed taking into account stakeholder feedback, is academically and professionally justified and internationally recognised. —S2d. The learning outcomes correspond to those established by the MCQES for the educational level of the degree programme. —S2e. The curriculum is consistent with its discipline(s), learning objectives and learning outcomes, and respects the regulations in force. —S2f. The roll-out of the degree course is consistent and appropriate in terms of timing, teaching load, coordination and supervision.

Standards and Criteria for the Quality Assessment of University Bachelor's and Master's Degrees

<p><b>1.4. Student admission, progress, recognition and certification</b></p>	<p>3. Student admission, progress, recognition and certification</p>	<p>3.1. Access and admission 3.2. Progression 3.3. Recognition and transfer of credits and prior learning 3.4. Certification</p>	<p>S3. The student access and admission process is fair, reliable, equitable and public. The mechanisms available within the training programme make it possible to reliably certify students' progress and the achievement of learning outcomes, while at the same time also recognising previously achieved learning outcomes.</p>	<p>—S3a. The processes implemented for student access and admission ensure fairness, reliability and non-discrimination on the grounds of birth, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, opinion or any other personal or social condition or circumstance.</p> <p>—S3b. The criteria and requirements for access and admission are clear and public.</p> <p>—S3c. All students admitted have the appropriate profile to achieve the learning outcomes of the degree and their number is consistent with the number of places offered.</p> <p>—S3d. The degree follows the students' progress and guides them academically and personally.</p> <p>—S3e. The degree programme has relevant regulations for the recognition of students' prior learning, and these are properly applied.</p> <p>—S3f. The degree has adequate procedures for the assessment of student learning outcomes.</p> <p>—S3g. The degree has a procedure to check that the students' graduation profile corresponds to the expected profile.</p> <p>—S3h. The certification of students' learning achievements and the passing of credits for the award of the degree is appropriate and complies with current regulations.</p> <p>—S3i. The degree makes appropriate use of the European Diploma Supplement.</p>
<p><b>1.5. Teaching staff</b></p>	<p>4. Academic and teaching support staff</p>	<p>4.1. Profile 4.2. Number of staff 4.3. Training</p>	<p>S4. There are a sufficient number of teaching staff for the training programme, and these are competent and suitable and have opportunities for personal and professional development</p>	<p>—S4a. The academic credentials of the teaching staff are suitable for the teaching required by the training programme.</p> <p>—S4b. The teaching staff have the necessary accreditation established by regulations.</p> <p>—S4c. A sufficient number of teaching staff are allocated to handle the roll-out of the degree programme.</p> <p>—S4d. The training needs of teachers are assessed and the activities scheduled are easily accessible</p>
<p><b>1.3. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment</b></p>	<p>5. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment</p>	<p>5.1. Teaching method and training activities 5.2. Assessment</p>	<p>S5. The training programme encourages students to take an active role in the learning process. This approach is reflected in the teaching method and activities and in the student assessment.</p>	<p>—S5a. The teaching methods and activities are satisfactorily aligned with learning outcomes.</p> <p>—S5b. The teaching-learning process respects and caters for students' diversity and needs, allowing for flexible learning paths, fostering their autonomy and promoting mutual respect in the teacher-student relationship.</p> <p>—S5c. Assessment systems and criteria are varied, promote student participation and are relevant to certifying and distinguishing learning outcomes.</p> <p>—S5d. Bachelor's and master's degree final projects and external work placements are monitored and assessed with relevant and appropriate criteria.</p>

Standards and Criteria for the Quality Assessment of University Bachelor's and Master's Degrees

<p><b>1.6. Learning and student support resources</b></p>	<p>6. Learning and student support resources</p>	<p>6.1. Facilities and infrastructures 6.2. Learning support services and resources</p>	<p>S6. The degree programme has or has access to adequate and effective guidance services and resources for student learning.</p>	<p>—S6a. The material resources available are adequate for the number of students, the characteristics of the degree programme and its educational format. —S6b. The available teaching and learning support infrastructures respond appropriately to students' learning needs. —S6c. The academic guidance services provide adequate support for the learning process, and the professional guidance services facilitate entry into the labour market and/or professional development.</p>
<p><b>1.7. Information management</b></p>	<p>7. Programme results and information management</p>	<p>7.1. Outcomes of the training programme 7.2. IQA system and information management</p>	<p>S7. The degree programme collects information for the analysis and improvement of its training activities and the processes of its IQA system. The results of the training programme are adequate both with regard to the achievement of the learning outcomes and the indicators of academic performance, satisfaction and finding employment.</p>	<p>—S7a. The degree programme has an IQA system or quality assurance processes, which are in place and are continuously reviewed and improved. —S7b. The processes are adequate and efficient and allow proper monitoring and improvement of its activities. —S7c. Students attain the intended learning outcomes. —S7d. The academic results and satisfaction and job placement indicators for the training programme are adequate and consistent with those obtained for similar degrees in the same discipline.</p>
<p><b>1.8. Public information</b></p>	<p>8. Public information</p>	<p>8.1. Quality of information 8.2. Content of information</p>	<p>S8. The degree programme suitably informs all stakeholders about the characteristics of the training provided.</p>	<p>—S8a. The degree programme publishes accurate, complete, updated and accessible information on the characteristics of the training programme and its delivery. —S8b. The degree programme publishes information on academic results and student and teacher satisfaction, as well as on the results of internal and external assessment processes.</p>
<p><b>1.9. Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes</b></p>	<p>9. Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of the programme</p>	<p>9.1. Monitoring and review</p>	<p>S9. Training programmes are reviewed and improved periodically. The review results in an improvement plan that is kept up to date. The planned actions are communicated to all interested parties.</p>	

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