



Reforming research assessment

# CoARA ACTION PLAN 2025-2029





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# CONTENT

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>7</b>
The Agency .....	7
<b>RESEARCH ASSESSMENT AT AQU .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>STRATEGY AND APPROACH TO CHANGE .....</b>	<b>11</b>
At the individual level .....	11
At the institutional level .....	12
At AQU Catalunya level .....	13
<b>ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>ANNEX 1. CoARA COMMITMENTS.....</b>	<b>20</b>



## INTRODUCTION

The Agency for the Quality of the University System of Catalonia — hereinafter **AQU Catalunya** — signed the *Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment*, promoted by the **Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA)**, in November 2022. The signatory institutions committed to developing an action plan to implement the agreed commitments. This document sets out the action plan that AQU Catalunya has committed to implementing between 2025 and 2029.

## The Agency

### *Legal status*

AQU Catalunya is an independent public body with its own legal personality and the necessary capacity and resources to carry out its functions, fulfil its mission and achieve its goals.<sup>1</sup> It operates objectively and with technical and professional independence, without receiving instructions from public administrations or other institutions in regard to the achievement of its objectives.

### *Purpose*

AQU Catalunya promotes and safeguards the quality of higher education, aligning with international and European standards for academic and social quality, and in compliance with the applicable legal framework. It provides higher education stakeholders with the criteria and benchmarks necessary to achieve optimum standards in their work, while acknowledging society's interest in maintaining a first-class higher education system.

The external processes carried out by AQU Catalunya seek to achieve the following objectives:

- a. Ensure the quality of teaching, research, and innovation within the Catalan university system and other higher education institutions.
- b. Support the maintenance and improvement of Catalonia's university model and its international visibility.

### *Functions*

AQU Catalunya's research and knowledge transfer assessment functions include:

- a. Assessment of individual research activity:

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<sup>1</sup> Generalitat de Catalunya. Departament d'Empresa i Coneixement, '[DECRET 315/2016, de 8 de novembre, pel qual s'aproven els Estatuts de l'Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya](#)', DOGC (7244), 10 November 2016. (*In Catalan*)

- i. At public universities, for the purpose of:
    - Accreditation processes related to the recruitment of permanent academic staff.
    - Allocation of additional salary supplements to teaching staff.
  - ii. At private universities and affiliated centres — both public and private — for internal recruitment and promotion processes.
- b. Assessment of institutional research activity:<sup>2</sup>
- i. Evaluation of research and knowledge transfer activities within the university system.
  - ii. Evaluation, certification, auditing, and accreditation of the quality of universities, their research and innovation centres, and other higher education institutions.
- c. Quality assurance:
- i. Preparation and dissemination of information on quality shortcomings identified in universities, research and innovation centres, and other higher education institutions, with the aim of encouraging continuous improvement.
  - ii. Development of statistical information and indicators on higher education and university research to support the analysis of its state and evolution.

The institutional research assessment function (point b) has not yet been fully implemented; however, we expect to achieve this shortly, following the approval of the **Catalan Science Act**<sup>3</sup> and the **Strategic Plan for Excellence in University Research**<sup>4</sup>.

Assessments of teaching and research staff serve to certify that applicants demonstrate a minimum level of quality and experience in research, knowledge transfer, teaching and, where applicable, scientific leadership and management. This certification, among other uses, qualifies individuals to apply for permanent academic positions within the **Catalan University System (SUC)**. It is important to note that these accreditations do **not** involve peer review of the academic activity, nor are they the sole determining factor for obtaining a university position. They neither rank nor classify applicants and are not used for the awarding of research grants or funding. These responsibilities fall to the universities or other institutions, which manage them in accordance with the current legal framework.

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<sup>2</sup> In research assessments — both of individuals and institutions — AQU Catalunya also includes other activities, such as technology and knowledge transfer and the dissemination of research and its results.

<sup>3</sup> Generalitat de Catalunya. Departament de la Presidència, '[LLEI 9/2022, del 21 de desembre, de la ciència](#)', DOGC 80 (2023).

<sup>4</sup> Generalitat de Catalunya. Departament de Recerca i Universitats, '[ACORD GOV/162/2023, de 25 de juliol, pel qual s'aproven les característiques específiques del Pla estratègic universitari en recerca d'excel·lència](#)', DOGC núm. 8967 (2023).



## *Assessment bodies*

The **Research Assessment Committee (CAR)** is AQU Catalunya’s statutory body responsible for evaluating research and knowledge transfer. The assessments are carried out by specialist committees made up of academic experts in their respective fields.

## RESEARCH ASSESSMENT AT AQU

To date, AQU Catalunya has primarily focused on assessing the research carried out by academic and research staff at Catalan universities. Its experience in terms of institutional-level research assessment has thus far been limited to pilot evaluations conducted in specific university departments.

In neighbouring countries, faculty evaluation has traditionally focused on assessing the quality of research activity based on **quantitative indicators**, particularly for the purposes of recruitment and promotion processes. The availability of bibliometric indicators and the relative homogeneity of university systems have contributed to the predominance of this form of evaluation and, for the past 20 years, the individual accreditation carried out by AQU Catalunya has primarily relied on those indicators — such as the **impact factor** of scientific publications, the research funding attracted and the type of research project — with limited qualitative input. While this approach has produced clear and significant benefits in terms of strengthening research quality in Catalonia, recent developments in higher education systems — such as the emergence of new actors and credential formats, the increased mobility of students and faculty and the proliferation of joint and transnational programmes — have sparked debate over which aspects of teaching and research activity should be taken into account in recruitment and promotion processes.

There has been an ongoing debate, initially within academic circles, on how to improve the assessment of research activity conducted by academic and research staff (PDI). Key initiatives in this area include the **San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)**<sup>5</sup>, the **Leiden Manifesto**<sup>6</sup>, and the **Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA)**<sup>7</sup>. In our context, initiatives such as **Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)**<sup>8</sup>, developed under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 programme, the **National Strategy for Open Access (ENCA)**<sup>9</sup>, and the **Catalan Open Science Strategy**<sup>10</sup> also stand out.

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<sup>5</sup> ‘[San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#)’, *DORA* (blog), accessed 19 February 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Diana Hicks et al., ‘[Bibliometrics: The Leiden Manifesto for Research Metrics](#)’, *Nature* 520, no. 7548 (23 April 2015): 429–31.

<sup>7</sup> Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment, ‘[The Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment](#)’ (CoARA, 19 July 2022).

<sup>8</sup> [Responsible Research & Innovation Tools](#), accessed 25 October 2024.

<sup>9</sup> Government of Spain. Ministry of Science and Innovation, [National Strategy for Open Science \(ENCA\)](#) (Madrid: Government of Spain, 2023).

<sup>10</sup> Comissió Interdepartamental de Recerca i Innovació (CIRI), ‘[Estratègia catalana de ciència oberta](#)’ (Generalitat de Catalunya, 17 January 2024).

Some significant aspects of these approaches have been incorporated into recent Spanish legislation, particularly the **Organic Law on the University System (LOSU)**, **Royal Decree 678/2023**<sup>11</sup>, and the resulting minimum criteria for the accreditation of associate professors<sup>12</sup>, which establish equivalence between civil servant and non-civil servant contracted academic staff (PDI). These frameworks have also influenced various strategies for promoting and strengthening science, technology and innovation, including the **Spanish Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (EECTI 2021–2027)**<sup>13</sup> and the **Government of Catalonia’s Strategic Plan for Innovation and Knowledge Transfer**<sup>14</sup>. The **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**<sup>15</sup> have also influenced the way in which PDI activity — and therefore its assessment — is conceptualised.

In terms of **multilingualism**, AQU Catalunya is committed to research excellence regardless of the language in which the research is conducted. This is in line with the **Leiden Manifesto**<sup>6</sup> (which defends excellence in research of local relevance), **CoARA Commitments 1, 3 and 6.2**<sup>7</sup> (which promote the assessment of scientific contribution independently of language), and, in particular, the **Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism in Scholarly Communication**<sup>16</sup>, which supports linguistic diversity in research assessment and funding systems. AQU Catalunya, as a contributor to the **Plan to Strengthen the Catalan Language in the University and Research System of Catalonia**,<sup>17</sup> reaffirms that the faculty accreditation system must not penalise research conducted in Catalan. This principle applies to all disciplines but is especially relevant in fields focused on Catalan-related research, where dissemination is often through publications written or edited in Catalan.

One of the elements that helps to make the assessment process more inclusive and context-sensitive is the **narrative description** of the activities undertaken. Applicants for accreditation may include a narrative account in their CV, describing the activities carried out and the quality of the results achieved. This narrative allows academic staff to contextualise their contributions across the different dimensions of assessment — research and knowledge transfer, teaching, leadership and, where applicable, prior professional experience. However, it does not replace the CV or the objective assessment of contributions using demonstrable and verifiable criteria.

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<sup>11</sup>. Ministeri d’Universitats, [Reial decret 678/2023, de 18 de juliol, pel qual es regula l’acreditació estatal per a l’accés als cossos docents universitaris i el règim dels concursos d’accés a places d’aquests cossos](#), Butlletí Oficial de l’Estat, núm. 213, 2023, pàg. 122924-122953. BOE-A-2023-19027.

<sup>12</sup>. Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación, [Criterios de evaluación y requisitos mínimos de referencia de los méritos y competencias requeridos para obtener la acreditación](#). Madrid, ANECA, 2024.

<sup>13</sup> Government of Spain. Ministry of Science and Innovation, [Spanish Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy \(EECTI\) 2021-2027](#) (Madrid: Government of Spain, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> Generalitat de Catalunya. Departament de Recerca i Universitats, [‘Strategic Plan for Innovation and Knowledge Transfer’](#), 11 December 2023.

<sup>15</sup>. Naciones Unidas. Departament d’Afers Econòmics i Socials, [Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). Consulta: 25 d’octubre de 2024.

<sup>16</sup> Federation of Finnish Learned Societies, The Committee for Public Information, The Finnish Association for Scholarly Publishing, Universities Norway, European Network for Research Evaluation in The Social Sciences and the Humanities, [‘Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism in Scholarly Communication’](#) (Helsinki: Federation of Finnish Learned Societies, 2019).

<sup>17</sup> Departament de Recerca i Universitats, [Pla d’enfortiment de la llengua catalana en el sistema universitari i de recerca de Catalunya](#), 1a edició. Barcelona, Generalitat de Catalunya, 2022. (*in Catalan*)

The narrative **complements and qualifies** the assessment of the applicant’s contributions and activities, especially when the quality of a contribution is not directly evident or when the number of contributions falls short of the minimum threshold required for a positive evaluation in a particular dimension. For example, the narrative may help describe a person’s role in multi-authored publications, justify the scientific and/or social impact of a project or publication (e.g., through citations, national or international visibility), or explain the significance of awards, translations, artistic or architectural work, exhibitions, teaching materials, pedagogical innovation, and so forth. It may also be relevant to justify contributions to **citizen science, locally relevant research, open access, or interdisciplinarity**.

Nevertheless, the use of certain **metrics cannot be entirely ruled out**, particularly in disciplines where these are well established. As noted earlier, AQU does not carry out primary evaluations of individual research activity, nor is it responsible for hiring, promotion, or awarding research grants. Instead, its accreditations serve to ensure that individual research activity meets the minimum threshold required to apply for permanent academic positions at universities. Given the high volume of annual applications, the evaluation must responsibly combine narrative and qualitative elements with available metrics to assess the full range of scientific contributions and academic trajectories.

In accordance with the LOSU<sup>18</sup>, the evaluation criteria must ensure equality and take into account the **diverse range of professional trajectories** produced by the need to reconcile work and personal life. Therefore, when assessing academic achievements, consideration must be given to any **special circumstances**, such as maternity and paternity leave, medical leave, or other justified personal situations (e.g. disability, family care responsibilities, career breaks, or leave due to gender-based violence or terrorism), that may have led to an irregular academic and research trajectory.

These circumstances must be duly justified and included in the **narrative section** of the applicant’s academic activity, as described above.

## STRATEGY AND APPROACH TO CHANGE

### At the individual level

#### *Strategic Line 1. Reform of the assessment criteria for the accreditation of university teaching staff.*

The strategy to reform the assessment of academic research focuses on recognising diverse trajectories and contributions. This involves incorporating **narrative evidence** to demonstrate the relevance and quality of research, moving away from excessive reliance

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<sup>18</sup> Jefatura del Estado, ‘Ley Orgánica 2/2023, de 22 de marzo, del Sistema Universitario’, Boletín Oficial del Estado(70), March 23, 2023, pages 43267-43339. BOE-A-2023-7500 (in Spanish).

on **bibliometric impact indicators**, recognising scientific contributions regardless of the language in which they were produced, better accounting for **interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research**, and considering the **societal impact** of research results.

**Actions:**

- > **A1.** Review of the accreditation criteria for academic staff
- > **A2.** Public consultation on the new assessment criteria
- > **A3.** Approval of the new accreditation criteria by the CAR
- > **A4.** Presentation and dissemination of the new criteria

***Strategic Line 2. Adaptation of academic staff CVs to the new assessment criteria.***

Once the new accreditation criteria for academic staff have been approved, the next step will be to develop a **new curriculum vitae model** aligned with these criteria. This will include, among other aspects, the introduction of a narrative format, limiting the number of references to the most relevant ones, removing the obligation to include **impact factors and quartile rankings**, broadening the range of acceptable contributions, including **evidence of scientific and managerial leadership**, and highlighting teaching experience and professional activities related to the researcher's field of expertise.

**Action:**

- > **A5.** Development of a new curriculum vitae format

## At the institutional level

***Strategic Line 3. Development of criteria for institutional-level research assessment***

AQU Catalunya will define the criteria for assessing the **excellence of research activities** carried out by the departments and research institutes of Catalan universities and affiliated centres engaged in research, development, and innovation. These criteria must be aligned with the objectives of the **Government of Catalonia's Strategic University Research Plan for Excellence**. The plan aims to recognise, promote, and consolidate research at universities in all scientific fields, encouraging the generation of impactful knowledge, its transfer, and its evaluation.

The approved criteria must comply with the **CoARA principles**. The experience gained during the development of new accreditation criteria for university teaching and research staff should be leveraged to design institutional assessment criteria. Dimensions that could be subject to evaluation include: the quality of research outputs from unit members, the **social impact of the research**, and the **research culture** within the unit.

**Actions:**

- > **A6.** Drafting of a document outlining standards and guidelines for assessing the quality and impact of institutional research
- > **A2.** Public consultation on the new assessment criteria
- > **A7.** Approval of the criteria by the AQU Catalunya Governing Board
- > **A8.** Implementation and evaluation of a pilot programme
- > **A9.** Review of the criteria and the evaluation process

## At AQU Catalunya level

### *Strategic Line 4. Reducing the administrative burden*

AQU is committed to ensuring that individuals undergoing assessment are not required to submit unnecessary documentation. Work will be undertaken to **integrate AQU's assessment systems** with the **electronic abridged CV** of the Ministry of Universities and the **Catalan Research Portal**. In addition, negotiations will be pursued with other bodies responsible for evaluating academic research — especially in relation to **salary supplements** — to ensure mutual recognition of AQU's evaluations and avoid any duplication of processes.

**Actions:**

- > **A10.** Review of the academic staff accreditation application processes
- > **A11.** Interconnection with government databases
- > **A12.** Recognition of evaluations conducted by other organisations

### *Strategic Line 5. Community engagement*

AQU takes on a leadership role within the academic community to drive change in research assessment. A range of actions will be implemented to involve the **Catalan academic and research community** in research assessment processes — both at the individual and institutional levels — by giving them a voice through:

- > **A2.** Public consultation on the new assessment criteria
- > **A13.** Publication of reports, position statements, news and events relating to research assessment, with particular emphasis on its reform, open science, and research integrity
- > **A14.** Organisation of public events to discuss the processes involved in reforming research assessment

### *Strategic Line 6. Expert committees and training of AQU staff*

AQU is committed to training the members of its evaluation committees on the changes introduced to the assessment criteria, particularly in recognising diverse academic trajectories, avoiding gender bias, incorporating qualitative elements such as narratives, and promoting open and responsible science. Several actions are foreseen:

#### **Actions:**

- > **A15.** Initial training on the reform of assessment criteria
- > **A16.** Ongoing training through:
  - Internal documentation and external resources on international trends
  - Specific modules on particular aspects of research assessment
  - Regular refresher courses on evaluation procedures

The provision of training for technical staff on the changes introduced will also be essential. Two types of training are proposed:

- > **A17.** Targeted training for staff in the Academic Staff Assessment Unit (APR)
- > **A18.** General training for other AQU staff members

In addition, regular refresher training activities will be scheduled for APR staff.

### *Strategic Line 7. Monitoring of the system and publication of results*

AQU conducts regular monitoring of its assessment processes and their outcomes. It reports annually to the Agency's Governing Board and publishes the conclusions. Feedback from universities on the performance of evaluation processes is collected and incorporated into the analysis, and improvement plans are developed where necessary.

AQU will also establish internal communication channels to disseminate **CoARA's principles**.

#### **Actions:**

- > **A19.** Creation of a dedicated section on research assessment reform and the monitoring of the CoARA Action Plan within the AQU Catalunya website
- > **A20.** Annual report to the Governing Board on academic staff accreditation (and future institutional assessment)
- > **A21.** Annual monitoring of compliance with the CoARA Action Plan

### *Strategic Line 8. Participation in CoARA working groups and the Spanish National Chapter*

AQU aims to be an active member of the **Spanish National Chapter of CoARA** and to explore participation in working groups and relevant debates linked to its evaluation activities. The

agency will also seek collaboration with other entities that promote **research integrity, open science**, the **recognition of diverse academic trajectories** and **non-discrimination**.

**Action:**

- > **A22.** Participation in the Spanish National Chapter, the Catalan Learning Community, and other groups and stakeholders focused on research assessment

***Strategic Line 9. Promoting Open Science in research assessment***

AQU will promote and encourage **open science** in its assessment processes by incorporating it into its evaluation criteria. It will explore how best to align with the principles of the **Catalan and Spanish Open Science Strategies**.

**Action:**

- > **A23.** Inclusion of open science in the assessment criteria

## ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Action	Strat. line	AQU Strat. Plan	CoARA Commit.	Dept.	Starting year	Final Year	Goals	Indicators
A1. Review of the accreditation criteria for academic staff	SL1	L1 (Goal 1.4) L2 (Goal 2.2)	C1 / C6.2 (partially C2 / C3)	APR	2024	2025	To establish accreditation criteria for associate professors and full professors that comply with current regulations and align with the CoARA commitments, the Leiden Manifesto, and the Helsinki Declaration.	- Results of the public consultation (institutional diversity, number of participants, positive/negative feedback, overall satisfaction) - Approval date
A2. Public consultation of new criteria	SL1/3/5	L1 (Goal 1.2, 1.4)	C6.1/C6.2	APR	2024	2029	To engage the academic community of Catalan universities in the process of developing the criteria	- Number of contributions received - Institutional diversity
A3. Approval of the new accreditation criteria by the CAR	SL1	L1 (Goal 1.4)	C6.2	APR	2025	2025	To have the new criteria approved during the first quarter of 2025	- Approval date
A4. Presentation and dissemination of the new criteria	SL1	L1 (Goal 1.4)	C7 / C9	APR	2025	2025	To disseminate the new criteria through presentations at Catalan universities throughout 2025	- Publication date - Number of sessions - Number of attendees (men/women) - Diversity of institutions
A5. Development of a new curriculum vitae format	SL2	L1 (Goal 1.4) L3 (Goal 3.2)	C6.2	APR	2025	2025	To have a new CV format that includes a narrative of the academic career, does not require impact factors or quartiles, and broadens the range of assessable contributions	- Approval date - Degree of compliance with CoARA commitments.
A6. Drafting of a document outlining standards and guidelines for assessing the quality and impact of institutional research	SL3	L1 (Goal 1.2) L2 (Goal 2.2)	C4/C 6.1	New	2025	2029	To prepare a document with criteria and procedure for the evaluation of university research quality, committed to the CoARA principles.	- Approval date - Degree of compliance with CoARA commitments



## CoARA Action Plan 2025–2029

Action	Strat. line	AQU Strat. Plan	CoARA Commit.	Dept.	Starting year	Final Year	Goals	Indicators
A7. Approval of the criteria by the AQU Catalunya Governing Board	SL3	L1 (Goal 1.2)	C 6.1	New	2025	2029	Support from the Governing Council for the evaluation strategy and criteria	- Approval date - Governing Board comments
A8. Implementation and evaluation of a pilot programme	SL3	L1 (Goal 1.2)	C 6.1	New	2025	2029	Test the evaluation model in a small group of representative units	- Stakeholder satisfaction / Focus groups (number of attendees [men/women], institutional diversity, etc.) - Satisfaction of the evaluation committees
A9. Review of the criteria and the evaluation process	SL3	L1 (Goal 1.2)	C6.1 / C10	New	2025	2029	Review the model, taking into account the results of the pilot	- A follow up report - An improvement plan
A10. Review of the academic staff accreditation application processes	SL4	—	C5/C6.1	APR	2025	2025	Simplify the application process, especially in terms of documentation	- Applicant satisfaction
A11. Interconnection with government databases	SL4	L3 (Goal 3.2)	C5/C6.1/C6.2	APR	2025	2026	Access existing information held by the administration	- % of interconnected services
A12. Recognition of evaluations conducted by other organisations	SL5	L3 (Goal 3.2)	C6.1/C6.2	APR	2025	2025	Avoid duplication and generate cost savings for individuals and the agency	- Number of recognised evaluations
A13. Publication of reports, position statements, news and events relating to research assessment, with particular emphasis on its reform, open science, and research integrity	SL5	L2 (Goal 2.1)	C7	AQU	2025	2029	Become a driving force for the paradigm shift in research evaluation in Catalonia	- Number of published documents (position papers, news items, social media posts, articles in the AQU newsletter, etc.)
A14. Organisation of public events to discuss the processes involved in reforming research assessment	SL5	L2 (Goal 2.1)	C8	AQU	2025	2029	Disseminate the new evaluation culture and gather feedback from the stakeholders involved	- Number of public events (minimum 2) - Number of attendees (men/women) - Diversity of institutions - Attendee satisfaction

## CoARA Action Plan 2025–2029

Action	Strat. line	AQU Strat. Plan	CoARA Commit.	Dept.	Starting year	Final Year	Goals	Indicators
A15. Initial training on the reform of assessment criteria	SL6	L3 (Goal 3.3)	C7	APR / New	2025	2029	Have experts trained in the new evaluation criteria for academic staff and institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of trained experts</li> <li>- Training sessions</li> <li>- Attendee satisfaction</li> </ul>
A16. Ongoing training	SL6	L3 (Goal 3.3)	C7	APR / New	2025	2029	Keep evaluators' competencies up to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of training sessions</li> <li>- Participant satisfaction</li> </ul>
A17. Targeted training for staff in the Academic Staff Assessment Unit (APR)	SL6	L5 (Goal 5.1)	C7	APR	2025	2025	Train staff in the new criteria and their application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of people trained</li> <li>- Number of training sessions (including refresher and update sessions)</li> <li>- Satisfaction with the training</li> <li>- Assessment of the training's impact in the workplace</li> </ul>
A18. General training for other AQU staff members	SL6	L5 (Goal 5.1)	C7	APR	2025	2025	Provide knowledge about the new paradigms in research evaluation and the changes introduced in the criteria applied by AQU.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of staff trained</li> <li>- Number of training sessions</li> <li>- Attendants' satisfaction</li> </ul>
A19. Creation of a dedicated section on research assessment reform and the monitoring of the CoARA Action Plan within the AQU Catalunya website	SL7	L2 (Goal 2.1)	C10	Direction	2025	2025	Disseminate the actions carried out by AQU in compliance with the commitments made to CoARA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation date</li> </ul>
A20. Annual report to the Governing Board on academic staff accreditation (and future institutional assessment)	SL7	L2 (Goal 2.1)	C10	APR / New	2025	2029	Understand the results of applying the new criteria and establish improvement plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The annual report</li> <li>- Governing Board's opinion</li> </ul>
A21. Annual monitoring of compliance with the CoARA Action Plan	SL7	L2 (Goal 2.1)	C9 / C10	AQU	2026	2029	Evaluate the degree of compliance and propose improvement actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The annual report</li> <li>- Governing Board's opinion</li> <li>- The improvement plan</li> </ul>

## CoARA Action Plan 2025–2029

Action	Strat. line	AQU Strat. Plan	CoARA Commit.	Dept.	Starting year	Final Year	Goals	Indicators
A22. Participation in the Spanish National Chapter, the Catalan Learning Community, and other groups and stakeholders focused on research assessment	SL8	L2 (Goal 2.1)	C8	AQU	2025	2029	Exchange experiences and shared visions on evaluation.	- Number of meetings - Number of joint actions
A23. Inclusion of open science in the assessment criteria	SL9	—	C6	APR / New	2024	2029	Incorporate open science into evaluation processes and explore ways to incentivise it.	—

## ANNEX 1. CoARA COMMITMENTS

The CoARA commitments constitute the core principles guiding the reform of research assessment, which organisations and individuals pledge to uphold upon joining the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA). These commitments seek to move away from a system overly dependent on metrics towards a more nuanced and qualitative approach to evaluating research. The following are the 10 core and supporting CoARA commitments:

### *Core commitments*

1. Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research
2. Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators
3. Abandon inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular inappropriate uses of Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and h-index
4. Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations in research assessment

### *Supporting commitments*

5. Commit resources to reforming research assessment as is needed to achieve the organisational changes committed to
6. Review and develop research assessment criteria, tools and processes
  - 6.1. Criteria for units and institutions. With the direct involvement of research organisations and researchers at all career stages, review and develop criteria for assessing research units and research performing organisations, while promoting interoperability
  - 6.2. Criteria for projects and researchers. With the direct involvement of researchers at all career stages, review and develop criteria, tools and processes for the assessment of research projects, research teams and researchers that are adapted to their context of application
7. Raise awareness of research assessment reform and provide transparent communication, guidance, and training on assessment criteria and processes as well as their use
8. Exchange practices and experiences to enable mutual learning within and beyond the Coalition
9. Communicate progress made on adherence to the Principles and implementation of the Commitments

10. Evaluate practices, criteria and tools based on solid evidence and the state-of-the-art in research on research, and make data openly available for evidence gathering and research

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

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