AQU
AQU CATALUNYA

Cross-sectional report on Design
Executive summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2020, AQU Catalunya drafted the *Cross-sectional Assessment Report on Design*. Cross-sectional reports aim to analyse the state of official programmes and generate valuable information about our system, beyond the results of the assessments carried out for all official programmes.

The report provides a snapshot of university education in Catalonia on bachelor's degrees in Design (see Figure 1) and arts higher education (EAS) programmes in this field, both with the same MECES (Spanish Framework for Higher Education Qualifications) level,[1] in order to contribute to its improvement. This is one of the few fields in which two educational pathways are available. Despite being equivalent, the characteristics of these programmes show notable differences. Within this field there are four main mentions or specialisations: graphic, product, interior and fashion design.[2] In recent years, numerous degree programmes have appeared in the field of digital design and animation. Although they are not part of the field of Humanities, such programmes have expanded and enlarged the sector, thus exerting a clear impact on the system's offer as a whole.

Figure 1. University centres offering design[3] programmes in Catalonia

Degree type	Degree programme	Centre ownership	Centres
Bachelor's degree	Design (Arts and Design)	Public	Faculty of Fine Arts – UB
		Private, affiliated to a public centre	Massana School of Art – UAB
			Elisava – UPF
			EINA – UAB
			BAU – UVic
			UNIBA – UB
		Private	ESDi – URL
	Digital Design and Animation	Private, affiliated to a public centre	ESUPT – UPF
			CITM – UPC
			ENTI – UB
		Private	UOC

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[1] Royal Decree 1027/2011, of 15 July, establishing the Spanish Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (

[2] Design degrees that do not belong to the field of Humanities, such as Industrial Design Engineering, are not included.

[3] Degree catalogue.

Executive summary of the cross-sectional report on Design

The main conclusions of the cross-sectional report are laid out below, broken down by blocks of indicators.

Figure 2. Main conclusions regarding the design programmes

Assessed dimension	Main conclusions
Access and enrolment	> The total number of university places is sufficient, but proportionally there are not enough at public centres. > These programmes have a much higher rate of women than the Catalan university system as a whole, although there is a balanced number of men and women in Digital Design and Animation.
Faculty	> Design faculty outperform the Catalan university system and the field of Humanities in terms of accreditation, except for the category of full professor. > Although the accreditation results are positive, the number of applications submitted is not very high.
Academic outcomes	> Efficiency and performance on design programmes are higher than in the field of Humanities and the Catalan university system overall. > These indicators are worse for distance learning, a trend also seen in other programmes.
Satisfaction results	> Creativity, teamwork and critical thinking are the most highly rated skills on design programmes, considerably exceeding the Catalan university system average. > Graduates' level of satisfaction with the education received falls short of the Humanities and Catalan university system averages.
Labour results	> Within the field of Humanities, design graduates show higher levels of employment. Likewise, there is a better fit between the education received and workplace needs. > However, the proportion of graduates who are self-employed or have a lower income is higher than in the Catalan university system overall.
Degree assessment	> The Faculty of Fine Arts and ESDi passed the accreditation process with an "accredited" rating. The remaining centres have been conditionally accredited.