

# INTERNAL OPERATING REGULATIONS OF THE CATALAN UNIVERSITY QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY'S INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMME REVIEW COMMISSION

## CHAPTER I. INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMME REVIEW COMMISSION

### Section one. Composition and functions

#### *Article 1*

1. The permanent Institutional and Programme Review Commission (CAIP) is responsible for assessing, certifying and accrediting the institutional quality of higher education institutions.

2. The Institutional and Programme Review Commission (hereinafter, the CAIP) performs the functions assigned to it in the agreement establishing the Governing Board and those set out in the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency's Statutes, as per Law 15/2015 of 21 July. In this capacity, the CAIP is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of all the quality assurance instruments and processes used by the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (hereinafter AQU Catalunya) at the institutional level. Additionally, it seeks to promote and enhance the Agency's work while fostering cooperation and exchange with other institutions, both nationally and internationally.

With regard to the application of quality assurance instruments, the CAIP should promote, as a matter of priority, quality in the key stages of these systems —methodology design, planning, project development and results extraction— as well as impartiality in the issuing of certificates, accreditations and reports.

The review, accreditation and certification procedures must meet the requirements of the applicable international quality standards and norms.

3. Its composition, functions and operation are set out in Law 15/2015, of 21 July, on the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency; the Statutes of AQU Catalunya; the Agreement establishing the Governing Board, and these Regulations.

#### *Article 2*

1. The CAIP is composed of the following members:

- a) The director of AQU Catalunya, who acts as chair.

- b) Up to ten academics with recognised professional experience.
- c) Up to two professionals with recognised standing and experience in the field of quality assurance.
- d) Up to two students enrolled in an undergraduate, postgraduate or doctoral programme at a university in the Catalan Higher Education System.

2. The members of the CAIP shall be appointed by the Governing Board, at the proposal of the chair of the CAIP, for a term of four years, renewable once, provided that the members referred to in Article 2.1.d) of these Regulations maintain their student status. The members of the CAIP are required to serve until their replacements assume office.

Persons holding university management positions within the Catalan Higher Education System, such as rector, vice-rector, dean, director of a centre or equivalent, may not be appointed as members of the CAIP or members of its specific commissions, referred to in Article 7.

3. The CAIP must convene for regular business at least twice per year. An extraordinary meeting can be held if decided by the chairperson or agreed upon by one-third of the members.

### *Article 3*

#### 1. Exercise of duties and substitution of the chairperson of the CAIP:

1.1. In the following situations, the chairperson of the CAIP shall remain in office until the incumbent takes up their duties:

- i. Upon expiry of the term for which they were appointed.
- ii. Upon resignation or withdrawal, which must be communicated in writing and formally accepted by the president of AQU Catalunya.

1.2. The chairperson of the CAIP will be replaced in cases of absence, vacancy, illness, or any other justified reason by the member of the CAIP that they have previously designated to do so. If no member has been designated, the replacement will be the longest-serving member. If two or more members have the same length of service, the oldest member will take over the position.

#### 2. Exercise of duties and substitution of the members of the CAIP:

2.1. In the following situations, among others, the members of the CAIP will continue to serve as acting members until their successors take office:

- i. Upon expiry of the term for which they were appointed.

- ii. Upon resignation or withdrawal, which must be communicated in writing and formally accepted by the chairperson of the CAIP.

#### *Article 4*

The duties of the CAIP are as follows:

- a) To review teaching, research, knowledge transfer and management within the Catalan Higher Education System.
- b) To review, certify, audit and accredit the quality of universities, their research and innovation centres and other higher education institutions.
- c) To review, certify and accredit, in accordance with international academic and social standards, the study programmes that lead to the recognised and non-recognised qualifications awarded by universities and other higher education institutions, as well as to monitor them.
- d) To promote quality assessment and comparison criteria that conform to international standards, particularly in relation to teaching, research and knowledge transfer.
- e) To prepare and disseminate information on any quality issues identified in universities, their research and innovation centres, or other higher education institutions for the purpose of improving said quality.
- f) To foster and advance research and innovation in the models and processes used for quality assurance, certification, and accreditation.
- g) To promote subject-specific reviews and internal quality assurance processes at universities and higher education institutions and to develop external quality assurance and review processes.
- h) To execute the tasks assigned to it by the governing bodies of AQU Catalunya, the ministry responsible for universities, and the universities themselves, following established agreements.
- i) To initiate amendments to the internal operating regulations of the CAIP.

### **Section two. Chairperson and secretary**

#### *Article 5*

1. The CAIP is chaired by the director of AQU Catalunya.
2. The duties of the chairperson of the CAIP are as follows:

- a) To represent the CAIP.
- b) To convene, chair, suspend and adjourn CAIP meetings; set the agenda; lead discussions; break deadlocks with their casting vote; and approve the minutes and certifications of the agreements adopted.
- c) To appoint external experts to issue non-binding reports on matters considered necessary.
- d) To designate a CAIP member to replace them in the event of vacancy, absence, illness or any other justified reason.
- e) To suspend meetings for justifiable causes.
- f) To approve the minutes of the body's meetings.
- g) To comply with and enforce these Regulations and perform any other duties assigned to them.
- h) To respond to requests addressed to the CAIP that merely require a verification of facts and the application of current regulations, provided that the resolution does not involve review, accreditation, or certification functions.
- i) To carry out any other duty incumbent upon the chair of a collegiate body under the current legislation, expressly entrusted or delegated to them by the Governing Board, or conferred on them by these Regulations, the Statutes or other current legislation.

### *Article 6*

1. The CAIP appoints a secretary from among AQU Catalunya's personnel, as proposed by the chair of the CAIP. The secretary will attend CAIP meetings, having the right to express their opinion but not to vote.

2. The duties of the secretary of the CAIP are as follows:

- a) To call meetings at the chairperson's request.
- b) To prepare the minutes of each meeting.
- c) To handle necessary communication tasks.
- d) To issue relevant certificates.
- e) To keep and file the minutes.
- f) To provide CAIP members with the information they need to fulfil their duties.
- g) To carry out any other duty incumbent upon secretaries of collegiate bodies.

3. The secretary shall draw up the minutes of each meeting, which, once approved, must be signed by the chairperson.
4. The secretary of the CAIP shall assist the CAIP in coordinating its functions.

### Section three. The CAIP's specific and *ad hoc* commissions

#### *Article 7*

1. To fulfil its responsibilities, the CAIP may decide to establish specific permanent commissions, and the chairperson of the CAIP may permit the formation of temporary *ad hoc* commissions or committees.
2. Should the CAIP resolve to establish a specific permanent commission, the agreement should include the following minimum requirements:
  - a) Its delegated functions.
  - b) Its composition, adhering to the characteristics below:
    - i. The members of the commission shall be appointed by the chairperson of the CAIP.
    - ii. The commission must consist of a chairperson, who should preferably be a member of the CAIP, and at least two other members of recognised academic or professional standing with links to the university community. It must also have a secretary, who should preferably be a member of the AQU Catalunya staff.
    - iii. The appointment of commission members shall adhere to the criteria and processes established by AQU Catalunya for appointing experts.
  - c) Commission members who do not form part of the CAIP shall be appointed for a term of four years, renewable once.
  - d) The commission shall operate in accordance with the provisions set out in these Regulations governing the operation of the CAIP.
3. Should the chairperson of the CAIP resolve to establish a temporary *ad hoc* commission or committee, the agreement should include the following minimum requirements:
  - a) Its specific task.
  - b) The composition of these collegiate bodies must have the same characteristics as those set out in Article 2.b.i and ii.

If the task assigned to the *ad hoc* commission or committee must be carried out by more than one commission or committee due to the workload or specialised nature

of the subject matter, the resolution establishing the commission or committee shall set out the common characteristics that the commissions or committees must share.

- c) The time frame in which the assignment must be completed. The commission or committee shall be dissolved once the task for which it was created has been completed.
- d) The commission or committee shall operate in accordance with the provisions set out in these Regulations governing the operation of the CAIP.

The chairperson of the CAIP shall inform the CAIP about the establishment of any temporary *ad hoc* commissions or committees, detailing their purpose and the reasons for their creation.

4. Any specific committees created prior to the establishment of the CAIP shall be ratified by the CAIP.

5. Specific committees and temporary *ad hoc* commissions or committees may invite other experts to participate at the request of the chair or one of its members. These experts shall have the right to express their opinion but not to vote.

## CHAPTER II. RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMME REVIEW COMMISSION

### *Article 8*

#### *Convening of meetings*

1. AQU Catalunya's CAIP may meet in person, remotely or in a hybrid format. Valid electronic means include email, audio conferences, and video conferences, among others.
2. The members of the CAIP must be notified of its meetings at least forty-eight hours in advance unless the chairperson deems there to be an urgent matter, which must be stated in the Notice of Meeting. The meeting should preferably be convened electronically, stating the agenda, the conditions under which the meeting will be held, and the method of connection. This notification should be accompanied by any documentation necessary for the discussion and adoption of resolutions, without prejudice to this documentation being available on a website, which must be guaranteed.
3. For the CAIP to be considered duly convened, the chairperson, secretary, and at least half of its members must be present.
4. Should the need to call an urgent meeting arise, said urgent meeting shall be called at least twenty-four hours in advance by any means that allows for proof of receipt. In such cases, once the agenda has been reviewed, the collegiate body must unanimously agree

that there is indeed an urgent matter that justifies the convening of an urgent meeting. If it is deemed that there is no urgent matter, the meeting shall be convened as per the provisions of section 1.

5. In remote meetings, it must be possible to guarantee the availability of electronic means. In addition, the identity of the members attending must be confirmed, the content and timing of their statements recorded, and interactivity and communication between them in real-time or through successive interventions in a virtual forum within the time limits set by the chair must be facilitated. Remote meetings shall be understood as being held at AQU Catalunya's headquarters.

## *Article 9*

### *Agreements and minutes*

1. The agreements reached by AQU Catalunya's CAIP shall be adopted by a simple majority of votes. In a deadlock, the chairperson shall have the casting vote.
2. Minutes shall be taken at each meeting, reflecting the place of the meeting; the day, month, year and time it started; those attending; a brief description of the issues discussed and any incidents or conclusions; the agreements adopted; and the time at which the meeting was adjourned.
3. Members who disagree with the majority decision may submit a dissenting opinion in writing within seventy-two hours, which must be included in the agreement's text. In such cases, they shall be exempt from any potential liability.
4. The minutes must be approved at the meeting they document or the subsequent meeting. They must also be signed by the secretary and approved by the chair. Members should also have electronic access to the minutes so they can review the content of the adopted resolutions.
5. Once approved and signed, the minutes of the CAIP shall be published on the AQU Catalunya website. In all cases, compliance with regulations on transparency, personal data protection, and AQU Catalunya's review, certification and accreditation procedures must be ensured.

## CHAPTER III. Abstention and recusal

### *Article 10*

1. The CAIP upholds rigorous standards of quality and objectivity in all its processes; furthermore, its work in terms of methods, criteria and results is governed by the principles of transparency and independence.
2. Any CAIP member with a personal interest in any of the matters to be addressed by the CAIP must inform the chairperson, who will decide whether that member should abstain from voting. If a member fails to abstain when doing so is appropriate, they may be held liable for any consequences resulting from their participation in the voting process.
3. The chairperson of the CAIP may instruct persons who find themselves in the aforementioned circumstance to abstain from a specific matter.
4. The participation of CAIP members who have grounds for abstention shall not necessarily invalidate the decisions they partake in.
5. With regard to recusal, the provisions of the current regulations shall apply.

## CHAPTER IV. Legal framework and process for appealing decisions made by the CAIP and its specific commissions

### *Article 11*

1. The decisions taken the CAIP are formalised by agreement and conclude the administrative process.
2. Appeals against the decisions taken by the CAIP may be brought before AQU Catalunya's Appeals Commission. The decision handed down by the Appeals Commission concludes the administrative process.
3. Appeals against the decisions taken by the specific commissions may be brought before the Appeals Commission. The decision handed down by the Appeals Commission concludes the administrative process.

## CHAPTER V. REFORM OF THE REGULATIONS

### *Article 12*

1. Amendments to these Regulations can be proposed by the chairperson of the CAIP or by a majority of its members.



2. Any proposed amendment must include an alternative text.
3. A two-thirds majority of the statutory number of CAIP members is required to approve any agreements on amendments to these Regulations.

*An amendment to these Regulations was approved by the Institutional and Programme Review Commission at its meeting on 30 April 2025 and ratified by the president of the Governing Board and of the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency by delegation on 8 May 2025, in accordance with the provisions of Resolution ECO/2852/2015, of 9 December, announcing the delegation of the powers of the Governing Board of the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency to the president of AQU Catalunya (DOGC no. 7018, 15.12.2015).*

*Amended by the Institutional and Programme Review Commission on 30 April 2025.*

*Amended by the Institutional and Programme Review Commission on 28 June 2018.*

*Approved by the Institutional and Programme Review Commission on 18 March 2016.*