

# RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE OF THE CATALAN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

## CHAPTER I. INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

### Section one. Composition and functions

#### Article 1

1. The Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee is the permanent committee that assesses, certifies and accredits the institutional quality of higher education institutions.
2. The Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee (hereinafter CAIP, in its Catalan initials), acts with the powers vested in it under the agreement for its creation of the Governing Board and those established by the Statutes of the Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya, in accordance with the provisions of Law 15/2015, of 21 July. In this regard, the CAIP ensures the correct application of the set of quality assurance instruments and processes carried out at the institutional level by the Catalan University System Quality Assurance Agency, hereinafter referred to as AQU Catalunya, and is responsible for promoting and improving the agency, while facilitating cooperation and exchange with other institutions at the national and international level.

With regard to the application of quality assurance instruments, the committee will primarily promote quality in the main phases of these systems, which include the methodology design, planning, project development, and in the achievement of results; as well as impartiality in the issuance of certificates, accreditations and reports.

Assessment, accreditation and certification procedures must comply with the requirements of applicable international quality norms and standards.

3. Its composition, functions and operation are those provided for in Law 15/2015 of 21 July on the Catalan University System Quality Assurance Agency, the Statutes of AQU Catalunya, the agreement of the Governing Board creating the Agency and these rules of procedure.

#### Article 2

1. The Institutional and Program Assessment Committee is made up of the following members:
  - a) The director of the Catalan University System Quality Assurance Agency, who acts as the chairperson.
  - b) Up to ten academics with established professional track records.

- c) Up to two renowned professionals with experience in the field of quality management.
  - d) Up to two undergraduate, postgraduate or doctoral students at a university in the Catalan university system.
2. The members of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee are appointed by the Governing Board, on the proposal of the chair of the Committee, for a period of four years, renewable once and provided they are still students in the case of the members referred to in Article 2.1.d) of these rules of procedure. The members of the CAIP will remain in this role until their successors take office.
  3. The Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee will meet ordinarily at least twice a year. A decision by the chair or the agreement of one third of its members is required for it to meet in an extraordinary session.

### Article 3

1. Acting chair of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee and replacement:
  - 1.1. The chair of the Committee will remain in office until the new incumbent takes office, in the following cases:
    - a) At the end of the term of office for which they have been appointed.
    - b) Due to their resignation, which must be communicated in writing to the chair of the Agency, until such time as it is accepted.
  - 1.2. The chair of the Committee will be replaced in cases of absence, vacancy or illness or on any other justified grounds, by the member of the Committee appointed by the chair of the CAIP. In the event that they have not appointed anyone, the chair will be replaced by the most senior committee member and, if two or more have the same seniority, by the eldest.
2. Acting members of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee and replacement:
  - 2.1. The members of the Commission will remain in office until their successors take office, *inter alia*, in the following cases:
    - a) At the end of the term of office for which they have been appointed.
    - b) Due to their resignation, which must be communicated in writing to the chair of the CAIP, until such time as it is accepted.

### Article 4

The Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee is responsible for the following:

- a) The assessment of teaching, research, knowledge transfer and management of the university system.

- b) The assessment, certification, audit and accreditation of the quality of universities, their research and innovation centres and of higher education centres.
- c) The assessment, certification, monitoring and accreditation, in accordance with international academic and social standards, of the courses leading to the award of official and non-official degrees awarded by universities and other higher education institutions.
- d) The promotion of assessment and benchmarking of quality criteria, in accordance with international standards, especially with regard to teaching, research and knowledge transfer.
- e) The preparation and communication of information on the quality deficits detected in universities, their research and innovation centres and higher education institutions, with the aim of improving their quality.
- f) The promotion of research and innovation on quality assessment, certification and accreditation models and processes.
- g) The promotion of assessments by subject matter and internal quality assurance processes of universities and higher education institutions and the development of external quality assurance and assessment processes.
- h) The duties entrusted to it by the Agency's governing bodies, by the ministry responsible for universities and by the universities themselves, by means of an agreement.
- i) Taking the initiative to modify for the rules of procedure of the Quality Assessment Committee.

## Section two. **The chair and the secretary**

### **Article 5**

1. The chair of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee is held by the director of the Catalan University System Quality Assurance Agency.
2. The functions of the chair of the Committee are as follows:
  - a) Representing the Committee.
  - b) Convening, chairing, suspending and adjourning the meetings of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee; setting the agenda; leading the deliberations and casting the deciding vote in the event of a split; approving the minutes and certifications of the resolutions adopted.
  - c) Appointing external experts to issue non-binding reports on issues deemed necessary.
  - d) Appointing the member of the Appeals Committee to replace them in the event of vacancy, absence, illness or any other justified grounds.
  - e) Adjourning meetings on justified grounds.
  - f) Approving the minutes of the meetings of the body.

- g) Complying with and enforcing these Rules of Procedure and exercising any other functions that may be conferred upon them
- h) Any other functions inherent to the chair of a collegiate body, in accordance with the regulations in force, which are expressly entrusted or delegated to them by the Governing Board, or which are assigned to them by these Rules of Procedure, the Statutes or other regulations in force.

#### **Article 6**

1. The Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee appoints, from among the staff of the Catalan University System Quality Assurance Agency, a secretary, at the proposal of the chair of this Committee, who will attend the meetings of the Committee, with the right to speak but not to vote.
2. The functions of the secretary of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee are as follows:
  - a) Convening the meetings by order of the chair.
  - b) Drawing up the minutes of the meeting.
  - c) Making sure that the necessary communications are sent.
  - d) Issuing the relevant certificates.
  - e) Safeguarding and archiving the minutes.
  - f) Providing the members of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee with the information necessary for them to exercise their duties.
  - g) Performing the other duties associated with the secretary of a collegiate body.
3. The minutes of each meeting will be drawn up by the secretary and, once approved, will be countersigned by the chair.
4. The secretary of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee will support this Committee in carrying out its functions.

### **Section three. Specific Committees and ad hoc Commissions of the CAIP**

#### **Article 7**

1. To properly exercise its duties, the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee may agree on the creation of specific permanent Committees and the chair of the CAIP may decide to create temporary ad hoc Commissions or Committees.
2. The CAIP's agreement on the creation of a specific Committee must include at least the following aspects:

- a) The delegated powers.
  - b) The composition, according to the following characteristics:
    - i. The members of the Committee are appointed by the chair of the CAIP.
    - ii. The Committee is made up of a chair, preferably a member of the CAIP, and at least two persons with established professional or academic track records linked to the university community. It must also have a secretary who will preferably be a member of staff of AQU Catalunya.
    - iii. The appointment of members of the Committee is carried out in accordance with the criteria and processes established by AQU Catalunya for the selection of experts.
  - c) Members of the Committee who are not members of the CAIP will be appointed for a period of four years.
  - d) The Committee's operating regime is the same as that established in these rules of procedure for the CAIP.
3. The resolution of the chair of the CAIP to create an ad hoc of temporary Commission or Committee must include at least the following aspects:
- a) The specific assignment.
  - b) The composition of these collegiate bodies will have the same characteristics as in Article 2(b) *i. i ii.*

If the task entrusted to the ad hoc Commission or Committee is to be carried out by more than one commission or committee due to the workload or subject specialisation, the resolution establishing it will establish the common characteristics that the commissions or committees must comply with.

The chair of the CAIP will specify, in an updated list on the Agency's website, the number of active commissions or committees and their composition.
  - c) The deadline of the assignment. The Commission or Committee will be dissolved once the task for which it was created has been completed.
  - d) The operating regime of the Commission or Committee is the same as that established in these rules of procedure for the CAIP.
 

The chair of the CAIP will inform the CAIP of the creation of any temporary or ad hoc Commissions or Committees and will state their purpose and the reasons for their creation.
4. The agreements and resolutions creating the Committees provided for in sections 2 and 3 of this article will be published on the AQU Catalunya website.
5. Any specific Committees created before the constitution of the CAIP must be ratified by this Committee.

6. Specific Committees and temporary or ad hoc commissions or committees may invite other experts at the request of the chair or one of their members, who will have the right to speak but not to vote.

## CHAPTER II. OPERATING REGIME OF THE INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

### Article 8

#### *Notice of meetings*

1. The Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee of the Catalan University System Quality Assurance Agency may meet face-to-face, remotely or as a combination of the two. Valid electronic media include email, audio and video conferences, among others.
2. Notice of meetings of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee will be given to the members at least forty-eight hours in advance, except in cases of urgency deemed necessary by the chair, which must be stated in the notice of the meeting. The notice of the meeting will preferably be sent by electronic means and it must state the agenda, the conditions under which the meeting will be held, the connection system, and must be accompanied by the documentation necessary for the deliberation and adoption of resolutions, without prejudice to the fact that this documentation may be available on a website, the accessibility and security of which must be guaranteed.
3. For the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee to be considered validly constituted, the presence of the chair and the secretary, and that of at least half of its members, is required.
4. In urgent cases, notice of the meeting will be sent at least twenty-four hours in advance by any means which allows acknowledgement of receipt. In these cases, once the agenda has been discussed, the collegiate body must unanimously decide, through the members present, whether the matter is urgent. If it is not deemed to be urgent, the meeting must be convened in accordance with paragraph 1.
5. For remote meetings, the availability of electronic means during the meeting, the identity of the members attending and the content and time allowed for speaking must be guaranteed, as must the interactivity and intercommunication between the members in real time or allowing for successive interventions in a virtual forum within the time limits set by the chair. Remote meetings will be held at the headquarters of the Catalan University System Quality Assurance Agency.

## Article 9

### *Resolutions and minutes*

1. The resolutions of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee of the Catalan University System Quality Assurance Agency will be adopted when there is a simple majority. In the event of a split, the chair will have the casting vote
2. Minutes must be drawn up for each meeting and record the location of the meeting; the day, month, year and start time; the attendees, a brief description of the issues discussed, the incidents, the conclusions; the resolutions adopted, and the time the meeting is adjourned.
3. Members who disagree with the resolution may submit a dissenting vote in writing within seventy-two hours, which will be incorporated into the text of the resolution. In this case they are exempt from any liability that may arise.
4. The minutes must be approved there and then or at the following meeting, signed by the secretary and authorised with the approval of the chair. Members must be given access to the minutes in electronic format in order to consult the content of the adopted resolutions.
5. The minutes of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee, once approved and signed, will be published on the Agency website. In all cases, the application of the regulations on transparency and on personal data protection, and AQU Catalunya's assessment, certification and accreditation procedures will be guaranteed.

## CHAPTER III. Abstention and Recusal

### Article 10

1. The CAIP acts with rigour, quality and objectivity in its proceedings, and its activities are governed by the principle of transparency and independence with respect to the methods, criteria and results of its actions.
2. Members of the CAIP who have a personal interest in any of the matters to be dealt with by the Committee will inform the chair so that the latter may determine whether that member should abstain from voting. Failure to abstain in the appropriate cases will give rise to liability.
3. The chair of the CAIP may order members to abstain in a specific matter if they find themselves in any of the situations indicated above.
4. The actions of the members of the CAIP in which there are grounds for abstention will not necessarily imply the invalidity of the decisions in which they have taken part.
5. With regard to recusal, the provisions of the current regulations shall apply.

## **CHAPTER IV. Legal system and procedure for challenging the decisions of the CAIP and its specific Committees**

### **Article 11**

1. The decisions of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee are formalised by means of a resolution and exhaust all available administrative remedies.
2. The decisions of the CAIP may be subject to appeal before the Agency's Appeals Committee. The resolution issued exhausts all available administrative remedies.
3. The decisions of the specific Committees may be subject to appeal before the Appeals Committee. The resolution issued exhausts all available administrative remedies.

## **CHAPTER V. REFORMING THE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

### **Article 12**

1. Amendments to these Rules of Procedure may be requested at the initiative of the chair of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee or of the majority of its members.
2. The proposed amendment must include an alternative text.
3. The favourable vote of two thirds of the legal number of members of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee is necessary for any agreement modifying these Rules of Procedure to be valid.

*Rules of Procedure approved by agreement of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee on 18 March 2016.*