AQU CATALUNYA

EX ANTE
ACCREDITATION OF SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMMES*

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Barcelona, 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education in Catalonia comprises university, arts and professional studies. There is scope in this scenario for developing new links between higher education and vocational training. Short Learning Programmes can provide an opportunity to establish bridges between the two educational systems (academic and vocational), as well as to promote lifelong learning.

Short Learning Programmes (SLPs) are a type of course (units, modules, etc.) in a particular subject area that focus on specific needs of society and can form part of longer degree courses.

A **micro-credential** is evidence of a student's learning outcomes after a short learning programme.

SLPs supports continuing professional development and lifelong learning. The SLPs have the following key features:

> At level 2 or 3 under the Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework, and at level 4 or 5 in the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications.

> Credit load: between 4 and 30 ECTS credits.

> ECTS credits earned are recognisable in official qualifications.

> Provider: Catalan universities.

> They are in line with labour market needs.

> Target public: non-traditional students.

At the same time, until now, vocational training for employment has focused on offering levels 1, 2 and 3 of the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP), these being the levels for which this catalogue was established. The real nature of the labour market, however, means that, given the skills required, in many cases lifelong vocational training must be at CNCP levels 4 and 5, which correspond to levels 2 and 3 of the Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MCQES). For this reason, we need to bridge the gap between high-level vocational training and higher education. This is the thinking behind the development of short learning programmes.

1.1. Aim of this guide

This guide is designed to assist those preparing proposals for level 4 and 5 short learning programmes according to the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP), corresponding to levels 2 and 3 of the Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MCQES). At the same time it will serve as an instrument for the external and independent assessment of these proposals by AQU Catalunya.

In addition, programmes of this nature that are assessed using this guide may be recognised within the framework of official qualifications of the Catalan university system, provided they obtain a favourable report. These programmes will also be listed in the Catalan Public Employment Service's catalogue of specialised training courses in order to provide an agile response to the training demands of sectors and employers. These specialised courses would form part of the training offered to workers (employed or not).

1.2. National Qualifications Frameworks

National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) are structures for developing, describing and systematising the relationships between qualifications. An NQF brings together all the official qualifications of a country and arranges them in a clearly defined structure. It is an instrument for developing and classifying qualifications according to a set of criteria for specific levels of learning achieved, based on knowledge, skills and competences, learning outcomes and credit ranges. Its purpose is to integrate and coordinate national qualifications and improve transparency for the labour market and civil society.

This programme takes into account the Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework,[1] as well as the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP). [2]

> **Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MCQES)**

The MCQES adapts the Spanish Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MECES) to meet the current needs of the Catalan university system. The MCQES has been developed in line with the European (EQF and EQF-HE) and Spanish frameworks, with improvements to the structure and definitions used in the benchmark documents (the European framework and MECES).

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[1] <http://www.aqu.cat/doc/doc_31904719_1.pdf>.

[2] Royal Decree 1128/2003, of 5 September, which regulates the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications.

> **Vocational training qualifications**

In Spain, the main job categories are classified into professional families and levels, as established in Royal Decree 1128/2003. The National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP) describes the structure and content of vocational qualifications subject to recognition and accreditation.

> **Relationship between the Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MCQES) and the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP)**.

Figure 1 below illustrates the relationship between the different qualifications frameworks involved, showing how the levels correspond across the Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MCQES), the Spanish Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MECES), the European Qualification Framework (EQF), the Qualification Framework in the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) and the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (CNCP).

CATALAN FRAMEWORK LEVELS	QUALIFICATION				LEVEL MECES	EQF LEVELS	QF-EHEA LEVELS	CNCP LEVELS
	Vocational training cycles	HE study programmes in Arts	University studies					
4			PhD Diploma No specified number of credits 3 years		4	8	Third cycle	n. a.
3		Master's Degree in Arts 120 ECTS 2 years 60 ECTS 1 year	University Master's Degree 120 ECTS 2 years 60 ECTS 1 year	Integrated Bachelor's Degree 360 ECTS 6 years	3	7	Second cycle	5
2B		Bachelor's Degree in Arts 240 ECTS 4 years	Advanced Bachelor's Degree 240 ECTS 4 years	300 ECTS 5 years	2	6	First cycle	4
2A			Bachelor's Degree 180 ECTS					

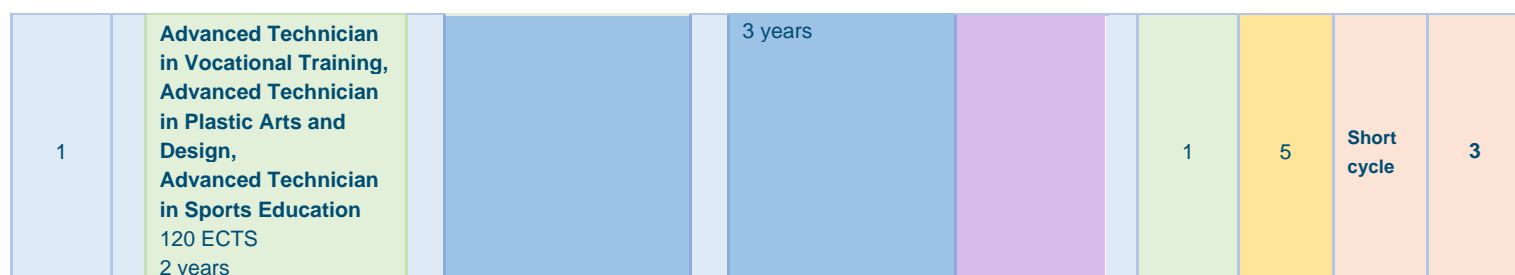| 1 | **Advanced Technician in Vocational Training, Advanced Technician in Plastic Arts and Design, Advanced Technician in Sports Education** 120 ECTS 2 years | | | 3 years | | | | 1 | 5 | **Short cycle** | 3 |

Figure 1. The MCQES, MECES, EQF, QF-EHEA and CNCP qualifications framework levels.

2. ORGANISING AND PLANNING ASSESSMENTS

2.1. Assessment Committees

The involvement of external experts (peer review) helps ensure the validity, reliability and usefulness of external evaluation processes. The reviews are carried out by experts, who are set up as committees that provide scientific-technical and disciplinary guidance, both professionally and as users. AQU Catalunya ensures the composition of its assessment committees is equitable in gender terms.

2.1.1. Ad hoc assessment committee for SLP proposals

AQU Catalunya will set up an ad hoc assessment committee to review proposed SLPs, whose members will include academics, representatives from the professional world and a student. This committee will assess the suitability and appropriateness of the proposed new programme using a scholarly approach. The ad hoc assessment committee will report to the AQU specific assessment committee (CEA) which is responsible for assessing programmes in the field concerned.

As a general rule, the composition of an ad hoc assessment committee for proposed SLPs will be as follows:

   a) The Chairperson, preferably a professor, appointed from among persons of recognised academic standing.

   b) At least one academic member from the programme's branch of knowledge.

   c) At least two persons of recognised professional standing.

   d) At least one student from the field of knowledge of the SLP.

   e) A methodologist, with the right to speak but not to vote, preferably appointed from among AQU Catalunya's technical staff.

All the members of the ad hoc assessment committee for proposed SLPs are appointed by the Chairperson of the Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee (CAIP).

2.1.2. Specific assessment committees

The Institutional and Programme Assessment Committee (CAIP) has set up five permanent specific assessment committees (CEA) for the verification of Bachelor's and Master's degrees, corresponding to the five branches of knowledge: Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences and Law, Sciences, Health Sciences, and Engineering and Architecture. The CEA are responsible for assessing programmes and institutions

within the VSMA Framework (AQU Catalunya, 2016) and thus for the process of assessment, monitoring, modification and accreditation. Their main function is to assess the suitability and appropriateness of new programmes proposed by the university institutions so that they can be verified by the Council of Universities (http://www.aqu.cat/doc/doc_28232931_1.pdf).

2.1.3. Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee is responsible for ruling on appeals lodged in the assessment processes. In order to rule on appeals, the Committee must have available to it reports from experts in the field or fields of the SLPs involved, preferably from outside the Catalan university system.

2.2. Assessment process

The main phases of the *ex ante* accreditation process are as follows:

1. Submission of the application

2. Review and acceptance of the application

3. Assessment of the proposal

    3.1.   Assessment of the proposal specifications

    The proposal is assigned to an ad hoc assessment committee, which assesses it using the criteria set out in this guide. The ad hoc assessment committee will send its assessment report on the proposal to the relevant CEA, which will prepare the *ex ante* accreditation report on the SLP taking into account said report.

    3.2.   Compliance assessment of the proposal specifications

    In this phase, the ad hoc assessment committee checks that the institution applying to deliver the SLP complies with the specifications in terms of teaching and support staff, its internal quality assurance system and the material resources defined in the proposal. The ad hoc assessment committee will send its assessment report on the proposal to the relevant CEA, which will prepare the *ex ante* accreditation report on the SLP taking into account said report.

4. Issue of the preliminary report

    The CEA issues a preliminary *ex ante* accreditation report, which is sent to the institution that submitted the application.

5. Submission of responses

Ex ante accreditation of short learning programmes

Within a period of approximately twenty days, the institution may submit the responses which it deems appropriate in relation to the preliminary reports, so that the CEA may take them into consideration. The responses must resolve any issues that the CEA flagged in its preliminary report.

6. Assessment of the responses

   The CEA assesses the revised proposal submitted by the institution and determines whether the potential shortcomings detected have been corrected.

7. Issue of the final report

   Once the responses have been evaluated, the CEA issues the final report, which will be sent to the institution. The outcome of the accreditation will be expressed as favourable or unfavourable.

8. Appeal

   The university may lodge an appeal against this decision within one month of the notification date.

9. Issue of the appeal report

   The Appeals Committee will issue the corresponding report within one month.

3. ASSESSMENT SCOPE AND STANDARDS

The aspects to be assessed in order to accredit (*ex ante*) a new SLP proposal are the following:

1. Description of the programme

2. Justification

3. Aim and learning outcomes

4. Student access, admissions and student support

5. Planning

6. Teaching and support staff

7. Material resources and services

8. Internal quality assurance system

3.1. Description of the programme

3.1.1. University and centre

Provide the main details of the applicant institution.

3.1.2. Name

The course name must be a short name that clearly defines the training speciality.

3.1.3. Programme level

Identify the level of the training activity as set out in the MCQES and the qualification level per the CNCP (see figure 1).

3.1.4. Link to the vocational speciality

a. Professional family and professional area

Identify the family and professional area of the training activity.

The lists of professional families and areas are published in annex 1 of Order TMS/283/2019, of 12 March, governing the Catalogue of training specialities in the framework of the vocational training system for employment.

Cross-disciplinary specialities belong to the "Complementary training" family and are detailed on page 6 of the *Informative guide to the Catalogue of specialities* produced by the Catalan Public Employment Service (SOC).

b. Jobs related to this training course

Identify the codes and names of possible related jobs. They must be selected from the list in the "Catalan Classification of Occupations".

3.1.5. Total duration of the course

Identify the total number of ECTS and face-to-face teaching hours of the training activity.

Terminological clarification (EU, 2015)

ECTS credits express the volume of learning based on the defined learning outcomes and their associated workload.

Workload is an estimation of the time the individual typically needs to complete all learning activities such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, work placements and individual study required to achieve the defined learning outcomes in formal learning environments.

One ECTS credit is equivalent to 25 to 30 hours' work.

Guide to the use of ECTS

3.1.6. Teaching format

Before defining each teaching format, the concepts of face-to-face and distance learning need to be clarified.

- **Face-to-face**: Teaching staff and students share a physical space in which teaching takes place, such as classrooms in a teaching centre, university hospitals, laboratories, workshops, factories, a space where field practice is carried out, or other similar spaces.
- **Distance learning**: Teaching takes place without the attendance of students at the teaching centre or in any other physical space.

Face-to-face SLP[3]

More than two thirds of the teaching hours must be face-to-face for an SLP to be defined as a face-to-face course.

Synchronous online activities, in general **theoretical lectures and seminars**, may be considered equivalent to face-to-face teaching activities. In all cases, such synchronous online training must meet the following criteria:

> It must be less than 20% of the total face-to-face teaching hours initially established in the SLP.

> All students must be able to connect and interact.

> Students must be fully informed of the format.

Blended learning SLP

In a blended learning SLP, students are required to be present in the centre or in the space where the teaching takes place for between 1/10 and 2/3 of the teaching hours.

It may combine distance and face-to-face teaching in any form. There are two ways to design blended learning courses:

> Combining modules with face-to-face learning activities and other subjects with distance learning activities.

> Modules combining face-to-face and distance learning activities.

SLPs that do not require students' attendance at the centre but which include compulsory external placements that account for more than 1/3 of the ECTS of the SLP are defined as blended learning courses.

Distance SLP

In a distance SLP, students are not required to attend a centre or other physical space (university hospitals, laboratories, field trips, etc.) where the teaching takes place. In exceptional cases, up to 1/10 of the planned teaching hours may be face-to-face.

It should be noted that, beyond the number of teaching hours, and more importantly, the SLP must be designed and implemented around the requirements and teaching methodologies that enable the learning outcomes defined for each format to be achieved according to the established standards.

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[3]The format is calculated based on the average amount of teaching received by the student across all the credits in the course programme (between 4 and 30 ECTS in the case of SLPs).

3.1.7. Places on the course

Include details of the maximum number of participants in the training programme. The number of places will be taken into account in the assessment of the human and material resources (teaching staff and infrastructures) in order to ensure that the training is effective.

Face-to-face courses may have a maximum of 30 students per training activity, with a maximum of 80 students for distance or blended learning courses.

3.2. Justification

3.2.1. Labour market needs

The justification of a proposal is multi-faceted:

> Description of the training needs identified

Reasons this speciality needs to be added to the Catalogue of training specialities:

- Aspects of the professional sector or job that justify the need to develop a new speciality.
- Changes in the functional structures of the sector.
- Mandatory standards or changes in the related legal framework.
- New jobs.
- Increased requirements of the job.
- Need to adapt to new procedures and technological changes (IT, machinery, etc.).
- New social demand or new services in the sector.

> Specific features of the target population that justify the need.

Describe all the aspects that make the speciality suitable for a specific group or what characteristics the group has that make specific training necessary.

> Analysis carried out of the specialities in the Catalogue to confirm that a speciality has not already been registered that contains the approach and content needed for the job.

State that there is no similar speciality, or identify specialities which are related in some way to the same training needs but do not meet the needs detected, due to their length, content, being out of date, etc.

> Expected short- and medium-term employment prospects for students trained in the new speciality.

Detail general employment forecasts for the sector and the expected percentage of job offers.

Specify whether there are any companies or business associations interested in hiring people trained in this speciality and which support this application.

Detail any other factors that favour including the speciality in the Catalogue of training specialities.

3.2.2. The institution's suitability

Describe the institution's links to the professional sector of the proposed speciality.

Describe why it meets the conditions to apply. State whether any other entities or bodies have collaborated in the development of the training programme.

3.3. Aim and learning outcomes

3.3.1. Aim of the programme

The proposal must include the correctly defined **training goal** per the MCQES and within the framework of the CNCP.

3.3.2. Learning outcomes

The proposal must include the **learning outcomes** that are directly derived from the training goal, detailing knowledge, skills and competences.

It must be noted that the MCQES uses the KSC (knowledge, skills and competences) model. This model is based on the concepts of learning outcomes or outputs, regardless of how they are acquired, rather than learning inputs.

1. Knowledge
    a. Types of knowledge
    b. Depth, breadth and diversity of knowledge
2. Skills
    a. Cognitive skills
    b. Creative skills
    c. Problem-solving
    d. Technical and practical skills

> e. Information/communication skills
> **3. Competencies**
>   a. Learning environment
>   b. Professional environment

The MCQES specifies learning outcomes for each levels of higher education, classified by knowledge, skills and competences. Bachelor's degree (level 2 according to MCQES/level 4 according to CNCP) and Master's degree (level 3 according to MCQES/level 5 according to CNCP) qualifications must be designed so they enable graduates to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes specified in the criteria for the corresponding levels and in the descriptors for these qualifications. The MCQES criteria for Bachelor's and Master's degrees are detailed in annex 1.

Glossary

Learning outcomes

Statements about what a learner is expected to know, understand and is able to do after completion of a learning process which leads to a qualification. These are statements of holistic outcomes and not the sum of the outcomes of individual modules.

Knowledge

Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that are related to a field of work or study. Knowledge refers to what a graduate knows and understands and it can be described in terms of kinds of knowledge, breadth, depth and range.

- Theoretical knowledge and concepts are those knowledge requirements relating to or having the character of theory rather than practical application.
- Broad knowledge and/or skills describe a general or extensive area of learning or work.
- Depth of knowledge and/or skills indicates an advanced level of difficulty or complexity. It describes information, problems, situations and theories that are made up of complicated and inter-related parts.

Skills

Skills refer to what a graduate can do. They can be described in terms of kinds and complexity and include cognitive skills, technical skills, communication skills, creative skills, interpersonal skills and generic skills:

- Cognitive skills include the mental skills that are used in the process of acquiring and applying knowledge and include reasoning, perception and intuition.
- Creative skills are those that can lead to innovative, imaginative and artistic outputs.
- Problem-solving is the process of recognising a problem, defining it, identifying alternative plans to resolve the problem, selecting a plan, organising the steps of the plan, implementing the plan and evaluating the outcome.
- Practical knowledge and skills are concrete or hands-on knowledge and skills.
- Technical skills are the operational skills necessary to perform certain work and learning activities.

- Information skills constitute a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognise when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and effectively use the information needed.
- Communication skills are the skills that enable a person to convey information so that it is received and understood and include written and oral skills appropriate for the level of the qualification.

Competences

The ability to apply learning outcomes adequately in a defined context (education, work, personal or professional development). Or, alternatively, the ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. Competence is not limited to cognitive elements (involving the use of theory, concepts or tacit knowledge); it also encompasses functional aspects (including technical skills), as well as interpersonal attributes (e.g., social or organisational skills) and ethical values.

Source: CEDEFOP, *Terminology of European education and training policy*.

The assessment will focus on two main aspects:

a. Ensuring the learning outcome levels comply with the qualifications framework (MCQES/EQF/CNCP) and that of the discipline.

   The learning outcomes, (knowledge, skills and competences) of the training activity must be relevant for the labour market. They must also correspond to the training level stated in the proposal, in accordance with the Catalan Higher Education Qualifications Framework (MCQES), the European Qualification Framework (EQF) and the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications (see Annex 1).

b. Ensuring the correct formulation of learning outcomes

   The list of knowledge, skills and competences to be achieved by the learner must be clearly and coherently formulated.

   The goal of the training course and the learning outcomes must be identical for all learners undertaking the training activity, irrespective of the chosen delivery format.

> **Example of the application of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences)**.
>
> You may consult the benchmark drawn up by AQU Catalunya for <u>Business Administration and Management</u> studies.

3.4. Student access, admissions and student support

3.4.1. Access pathways and entry requirements

Access pathways are determined by the MCQES level of the training activity. In some cases, the institution may set requirements for access to the training activity.

In particular:

Access to degree-level training courses

To access level 2 (MCQES)/level 4 (CNCP) training, students must hold one of the following qualifications:

   a. Official bachelor's degree (level 2, EQF 6; first cycle of the QF-EHEA) or Master's degree (level 3, EQF 7; second cycle of the QF-EHEA) or equivalent.

   b. Advanced technician diploma (level 1, EQF 5; short cycle of the QF-EHEA) or equivalent in the same professional family as the speciality.

   c. CNCP level 3 certificate of professional standards for the same professional family as the speciality.

Access to master level training courses.

To apply for admission to level 3 (MCQES)/level 5 (CNCP) training courses, candidates must hold one of the following qualifications:

   a. Official bachelor's degree (level 2, EQF 6; first cycle of QF-EHEA) or equivalent in the field of the training speciality.

   b. University Master's degree (level 3, EQF 7; second cycle of the QF-EHEA) or equivalent.

3.4.2. Admission

The institution may set admission requirements, such as:

> Required accreditation (academic and/or occupational qualifications or certificates).

  The minimum academic level needed to start the course in accordance with the qualification level of the speciality.

> Professional experience (years and/or professional level)

  Accredited work and professional experience (work contracts, internships or voluntary work) related to the competences linked to the qualification.

> Other

  Description of other specific matters not related to training or experience, but necessary for the practice of the profession. For example: 1) height, where this is a requirement in employment regulations governing the profession, such for qualifications in the fields of transport, leisure or security; 2) the participants' characteristics in the case of specialities aimed at groups with disabilities or at risk of social exclusion.

The institution must also have access and admission procedures which allow it to analyse entrants' profiles in order to ensure training outcomes can be achieved.

3.4.3. Support and guidance for students

Institutions must specify at least:

> The bodies or units responsible for providing these services.

> An indicative plan.

> The main actions to be carried out.

For proposals with more than one teaching format, the support system for each format must be specified. The mechanisms for tutoring and monitoring students must include:

> The tutors' functions and who will be appointed to these roles.

> The procedure to be followed and the criteria for monitoring students' attendance and participation in each subject, course, discussion forum and assignments.

> How often tutors must contact students and, in particular, when alerts are triggered (e.g. when a student fails to complete assignments).

3.5. Planning

3.5.1. Curriculum structure

The institution must define the structure of the programme curriculum.

The scheduling and distribution of the programme's modules, in relation to the ECTS involved, must enable students to achieve the training goal set.

It must be taken into account that the sum of the hours of each training activity must match the ECTS of the module, bearing in mind that one ECTS corresponds to a workload of between 25 and 30 hours.

3.5.2. Training modules

The institution must describe each module of the training programme. For this purpose, the following must be detailed: The distribution of ECTS, goals, content, learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences), teaching format, teaching methods and assessment methods.

The assessment will focus on ensuring each module is consistent with the associated learning outcomes and that the teaching format, and teaching and assessment methods are appropriate.

Certain learning outcomes call for particular types of activities (an example being teamwork skills). At the same time, a given type of learning outcome can only be assessed by a specific type of assessment strategy (the assessment of oral communication obviously requires an oral test).

For each of the units described (modules), state its name, the ECTS study load, how the learning outcomes relate to the teaching formats, and the training and assessment activities planned in order to achieve the overall goals of the training programme.

The units described must be presented in the order in which the modules are to be taught.

The modules must be described following the model in table 1. For proposals with more than one format, separate information must be presented for each of the formats.

A table must be included showing how the modules relate to the programme's learning outcomes (knowledge and skills).

For distance or blended learning modules, the proposing institution must:

> Indicate the measures envisaged to ensure the acquisition of skills related to oral expression and socio-cooperative skills (group work, debates, etc.).

> Take into account the diversity of the student body and the educational model.

> Indicate the mechanisms used to check students' identity in the assessment process.

A key aspect of distance learning is the **teaching materials** used. They must be designed in line with the pedagogical model and must facilitate students' learning process and the achievement of learning outcomes. It is important that these materials are reviewed regularly, to reflect new developments in the subjects. The university must declare that it owns the teaching materials or is authorised to use them.

Table 1. Module details

Module name:[1]

Name:		Code:
ECTS:	Teaching hours:	Order no:
Goal:[2]		
Content:		
Learning outcomes		
Knowledge		
Skills		
Competencies		
Teaching format		
Teaching methods		
Assessment methods		

[1] It is advisable to define blocks of content with a maximum duration of approximately 60 hours.

[2] The order in which the modules MF01, MF02... are taught must be established. When the module is associated with a certificate of professional standards, the module name will be MF00. In the case of specialities not leading to a certificate, they will be named sequentially from M00.

⚠️ **This standard is core to the academic quality of the training activities**.

3.6. Teaching and support staff

The course must have sufficient and appropriate teaching and support staff in line with the nature of the course and the number of students. They must have the experience and training needed to achieve the goals of the training activity, and be sufficient in number and time dedicated to cover the main academic tasks of module delivery and assessment, student-teacher interaction, management of the training activity, etc.

3.6.1. Sufficient and appropriate teaching and staff

Teaching staff are classified under three headings according to their functions and profile:

> Teaching staff responsible for the design of the training course

Teaching staff directly involved in the design of the training courses must be:

- Accredited academics (PhD)
- with teaching and research experience in the discipline.

> Module coordinators and teachers of theoretical content

The coordinating teaching staff must take part in at least 25% of the total teaching hours taught at Bachelor's degree level and 50% in the case of Master's degree level SLPs. They must also be:

- Accredited academics (PhD)
- with teaching and research experience in the discipline (if applicable, technology transfer activities related to the subject can be specified).

> External teaching staff

These teachers regularly work outside the university and contribute their knowledge and professional experience to the SLP. They will participate in a maximum of 75% of the total teaching hours taught on the SLP at Bachelor's degree level and 50% in the case of SLP at Master's degree level, and it will not be necessary for them to have a PhD.

The external teaching staff involved in the course must meet the following key requirements:

- have at least five years' experience working in fields related to the course content,
- not been employed principally outside the field of the SLP in the last two years,
- be directly linked to the business world, either as a salaried employee, self-employed, volunteer or trainee.

Annex 2 details the specific requirements to be met by external teaching staff.

Teaching staff must have methodological training in areas such as trainer training, teaching methodology, ICT resources applied to teaching, classroom management, etc. or have teaching experience within the education system, the business or non-profit

world, of internal training or employment training for the unemployed and workers in employment.

For distance learning courses, the teaching staff must demonstrate they have had at least 30 hours' training or at least 60 hours' experience of delivering this format.

Any of the following documents may be submitted to demonstrate this training:

(a) A certificate of professional standards for the teaching of vocational training courses for employment, regulated by Royal Decree 1697/2011, of 18 November, amended by Royal Decree 625/2013, of 2 August, or cumulative partial accreditation of completion of training module MF1444_3 (teaching and tutoring training courses for employment).

b) A diploma issued by the competent employment authority certifying that the trainer has successfully completed at least 30 hours of the training programme for this area on the list of training specialities of the State Public Employment Service.

c) A diploma certifying that the trainer has successfully completed at least 30 hours' training that includes at least the following content:

- General features of distance teaching and learning.
- The functions, skills and competences of the tutor/trainer.
- Tutorial methods, strategies and tools. The e-learning platform.
- Software and computer tools for tutoring students. Communication and assessment for distance learning. The role of social networks in the search for learning resources.

The following are required to accredit experience of teaching in the distance format:

a) For salaried workers

Certification from the Social Security authority (TGSS), the Social Marine Institute or the mutual society to which the person is affiliated, stating the company, the employment category (contribution group) and the period of employment. An employment contract or certification from the company where the work experience was acquired, specifically stating the duration of the contract, the work performed and the period over which it was carried out.

b) For self-employed workers

Certification from the Social Security authority (TGSS), the Social Marine Institute or the mutual society to which the person is affiliated, stating the periods registered for Social Security under the corresponding special regime, the work performed and the period over which it was carried out.

c) For voluntary workers or interns

Certification from the organisation or company where the work was carried out, stating specifically the activities and functions performed, the year in which they were carried out and the total number of hours dedicated to these activities.

3.6.2. Sufficient and appropriate support staff

The issue of teaching support staff does not substantially affect the quality of the design of the proposal. However, at least the following information must be provided:

> academic qualifications,

> post in the institution, and

> professional experience.

3.7. Material resources and services

The material resources and services available for the training activity must be suitable for the training goals and the teaching/learning methods envisaged. The infrastructures available in the training centre and business premises must ensure universal accessibility for people with disabilities and take into account the gender perspective.

3.7.1. Sufficient and appropriate material resources

The requirements to be met by the institution are as follows:

Minimum requirements for spaces, facilities and equipment

The number and type of classrooms needed to provide the training must be considered. In addition, the furniture, material resources, machinery or tools that will enable the students to develop the specified knowledge and skills must be indicated.

> **Training spaces** (Identify the spaces used for each module)

  Write in order the name of each training space required (workshop, classroom, field practice areas, etc.).

  For each space, indicate the surface area in square metres. The minimum admissible ratio of space/student surface area is 2 m^2.

> **Equipment** for each training area

  Describe the equipment needed in each of the aforementioned spaces. All must be furnished appropriately for the number of students, and must have sufficient facilities and work equipment for the course.

The facilities and equipment must comply with the corresponding industrial and health and safety regulations and meet standards on universal accessibility and safety for the participants. If the training is addressed to people with disabilities, the space must be adapted to ensure they can participate equally.

> **Distance format (online training)** or **blended format**

The minimum requirements that the entity must meet in order to guarantee it can teach the speciality using the distance learning format are those described in order TMS/369/2019, of 28 March.

You can also specify whether, in addition to the minimum requirements, other resources are available that favour learning in this format, such as simulators, gamification tools, etc.

Official requirements for the centres

If centres have to comply with other requirements, the regulations governing them must be indicated and described.

> Registered in the Register of Training Entities (Public Employment Services).

> Requirements demanded by other public authorities.

e-learning platform

The e-learning platform used to provide the training must have sufficient capacity to manage the training and guarantee that students are successfully trained, allowing interactivity and cooperative work, and it must meet the technical requirements described in Annex 3.

3.7.2. Suitable partner entities (work placement centres)

The university must submit the signed cooperation agreements. Care must be taken to ensure that these agreements contain clauses that promote equal treatment and opportunities for women and men in the labour market, do not discriminate on grounds of cultural or racial origin or sexual orientation, and include protocols against harassment. In the case of external academic activities, the following aspects must be specified:

> calendar,

> conditions of use of the facilities and

> academic tutor and work placement tutor (functions).

3.8. Internal quality assurance system

Consistent with the trust placed by society in the autonomous management in the universities and the transparency called for within the framework of the EHEA, universities must ensure that their actions are appropriately guided to achieve the objectives associated with the programmes and courses that they deliver. Universities consequently need policies and internal quality assurance systems that have a formal status and are publicly available. The internal quality assurance system (IQAS) is therefore a key instrument for defining the institution's learning activities.

An institution's IQAS must be built on a model of continuous improvement. The institution will need to periodically assess the IQAS's fitness for purpose as the key instrument for the quality assurance and continuous improvement of its programmes. The effectiveness of the IQAS can be demonstrated by the extent to which its processes are implemented and an analysis of the evidence produced of its application, such as degree monitoring reports, IQAS review reports, and strong academic results and student satisfaction over repeated periods of time.

Institutions must therefore report on their IQAS.

4. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

4.1. Final report

To draw up the *ex ante* accreditation report issued by the CEA, these committees will use the assessment report drawn up by the ad hoc assessment committee as their main evidence. The reports may be favourable or unfavourable, in accordance with the criteria set out in this guide.

The report must contain at least the following information:

1. Background to the course.
2. Description of the procedure used, including the experts involved.
3. Result of the *ex ante* accreditation.
4. Result of the assessment for each aspect.
5. Proposals for improvement (recommendations for follow-up measures).

AQU Catalunya will send the final report to the applicant organisation.

The assessment reports are published on the AQU Catalunya reporting portal (http://estudis.aqu.cat/informes) and access will be provided via the European platforms established.

4.2. Labels and certificates

When the assessed training activity obtains a favourable *ex ante* accreditation report, AQU Catalunya will issue a quality label with a unique number. The label is valid for a maximum of six years.

The conditions for its use are set out in the document *Quality labels of AQU Catalunya and conditions for their use* (AQU Catalunya, 2014), approved by the Agency's Governing Board. These labels are published on the page University studies in Catalonia.

4.3. Effects of assessment

The *ex ante* accreditation of an SLP means it is recognised as meeting the minimum requirements for the established level. This accreditation allows the process of registering the training activity in the SEPE's catalogue of training specialities to begin.

5. FOLLOW-UP AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

Once the programme has been accredited, it must be reviewed at least every six years. This review follows the same criteria as those defined in this guide.

Follow-up is mandatory, but is an internal process for the institution.

ANNEX 1. MCQES SPECIFICATIONS FOR LEVELS 2A AND 2B (BACHELOR'S DEGREE) AND 3 (MASTER'S DEGREE)

DESCRIPTION OF QUALIFICATION TYPE FOR THEDEGREE (LEVEL 2A, 180 ECTS)

Objective	The bachelor's degree (level 2A) equips individuals to apply a broad and coherent body of knowledge in a variety of contexts in order to pursue a professional activity and to undertake further learning.
Knowledge	**Types of knowledge** > Demonstrate a systematic understanding of the theory, concepts and methods pertaining to the field (or fields) of learning, and understand the different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories on which they are based. > Understand the history, traditions and nature of the academic field, as well as its place in society. **Depth, breadth and diversity of knowledge** > Have advanced and specialised knowledge and a critical perspective of the principles, theories, problems, processes, tools and methods of a profession, an area of knowledge or a broad scientific field. > Understand the limitations of current knowledge and be familiar with the sources of new knowledge, and be able to integrate the concepts in a variety of areas. > Have a broad knowledge of the important issues, theories, problems, processes, tools and methods of the subject area. > Reproduce, analyse and apply knowledge in different contexts in a way that demonstrates a professional and scientific approach to the profession or subject area. > Demonstrate a critical understanding of the materials contained in advanced textbooks, and be able to use journals and major academic sources related to the discipline (e.g. peer-reviewed articles).
Skills	**Cognitive skills**

> Critically review, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge.

> Apply critical thinking and judgement in developing new interpretative frameworks.

> Reproduce, analyse and apply knowledge in different contexts in a way that demonstrates a professional and scientific approach to the profession or area of knowledge.

> Recognise the limitations of existing knowledge, both in professional practice and in the area of knowledge, and take action to address them.

Creative skills

> Demonstrate initiative and judgement in planning, problem-solving and decision-making in professional practice and/or study.

> Ability to evaluate evidence, arguments and hypotheses to arrive at sound judgements when creating and developing ideas and tangible products.

> Use diagnostic skills and creativity across a range of functions relating to a wide variety of contexts.

Problem-solving

> Identify and analyse complex problems in professional practice or an area of knowledge and solve them tactically, strategically and creatively, selecting and using appropriate information.

> Apply academic knowledge and relevant research and development results to practical and theoretical problems and make informed decisions.

> Have the ability to refine and use appropriate knowledge, methods and skills to address complex problems that have a limited definition.

> Evaluate actions, methods and results and their implications.

Technical and practical skills

> Be able to use the established methods of analysis and research in a discipline, and recognise their limitations in determining results and drawing conclusions.

	> Demonstrate the ability to collect and interpret data from the relevant field of study to inform judgements that may involve reflections on relevant scientific, social or ethical issues. **Information/communication skills** > Apply communication skills to present a clear, coherent and independent account of knowledge and ideas. > Use information and communication technologies, and the foreign languages needed in the professional field. > Demonstrate the ability to search for, collect and critically interpret relevant information in order to formulate answers to well-defined questions in the main field of study.
Competencies	**Learning environment** > Reflect on own academic practice and adjust it under supervision. > Seek out, evaluate and reference information on the subject matter and present it in a way that sheds light on the issue. > Plan and carry out tasks and projects of a diverse nature over time, individually or as part of a group, and in accordance with ethical requirements and principles. > Assume responsibility for defining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes; take significant or supervisory responsibility for the work of others in defined areas of work. > Work effectively under supervision in a peer-to-peer relationship with skilled professionals; manage multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups. > Learn to work in variable and unfamiliar learning contexts; learn to manage learning tasks independently, professionally and ethically. > Take the initiative in identifying and addressing learning needs and interact effectively in a learning group. > Develop the learning skills necessary to pursue studies in a more autonomous manner. **Professional environment** > Assume responsibility and accountability for personal and collaborative learning and professional practice within general parameters.

	- Possess the qualities necessary to work in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making in complex and unpredictable circumstances. - Analyse and carry out complex professional tasks. - Communicate with colleagues, specialists and non-specialists, supervisors and clients in a context-specific and appropriate manner, using the conventions of professional practice. - Work with colleagues, specialists and non-specialists, supervisors and clients. - Be familiar with new thinking and innovation processes. - Share responsibility for the management of processes and the professional development of individuals and groups. - Express a personal, internalised and global world view that shows solidarity with others.

DESCRIPTION OF QUALIFICATION TYPE FOR THE HIGHER DEGREE (LEVEL 2B, 240 ECTS)

Objective	The advanced degree (level 2B) qualifies individuals to apply a body of knowledge to a specific context in order to exercise a professional activity and acts as a pathway for further research and learning.
Knowledge	**Types of knowledge** > Have a systematic understanding of the theory, concepts and methods pertaining to a field (or fields) of learning, and understand the different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories on which they are based. > Understand the principles and methods of research and be familiar with the research and development work being carried out in the field in question. > Know the history, traditions and nature of the academic field and its place in society. **Depth, breadth and diversity of knowledge** > Have advanced and specialised knowledge and a critical perspective of the principles, theories, problems, processes, tools and methods of a profession, area of knowledge or broad scientific field. > Understand the limitations of current knowledge and be familiar with the sources of new knowledge; and be able to integrate the concepts in a variety of areas. > Be aware of the latest developments in the field of study or work. > Have a broad knowledge of key topics and theories; demonstrate a detailed understanding and knowledge of one or more specialist areas, some situated at the current frontiers of the field(s). > Reproduce, analyse and apply knowledge in different contexts in a way that demonstrates a professional and scientific approach to the profession or area of knowledge. > Have a critical understanding of the materials contained in advanced textbooks, and be able to use journals and major academic sources related to the discipline (e.g. peer-reviewed articles).

Skills	**Cognitive skills** > Critically review, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge to identify and offer solutions to complex problems with intellectual independence. > Apply critical thinking and judgement in developing new interpretative frameworks. > Reproduce, analyse and apply knowledge in different contexts in a way that demonstrates a professional and scientific approach to the profession or area of knowledge. > Recognise the limitations of existing knowledge in professional practice or the area of knowledge and take action to address them. **Creative skills** > Demonstrate initiative and judgement in planning, problem-solving and decision-making in professional practice and/or study. > Be able to evaluate evidence, arguments and hypotheses to arrive at sound judgements when creating and developing ideas and tangible products. > Use diagnostic skills and creativity across a range of functions relating to a wide variety of contexts. **Problem-solving** > Identify and analyse complex problems of professional practice or area of knowledge, and solve them tactically, strategically and creatively, selecting and using appropriate information. > Apply academic knowledge and relevant results of research and development work to practical and theoretical problems and make informed decisions. > Have the ability to refine and use appropriate knowledge, methods and skills to address complex problems that have a limited definition. > Evaluate actions, methods and results and their implications. > Be able to solve problems, some of which may be imminent or at the cutting edge of a discipline. **Technical and practical skills**

	> Be able to use the established methods of analysis and research in a discipline, and recognise their limitations in determining results and drawing conclusions. > Have the ability to collect and interpret data from the relevant field of study to inform judgements that may involve reflections on relevant scientific, social or ethical issues. **Information/communication skills** > Apply communication skills to present a clear, coherent and independent account of knowledge, ideas, problems and solutions to a range of audiences. > Use information and communication technologies, and the foreign languages needed in the professional field. > Demonstrate the ability to search for, collect and critically interpret relevant information in order to formulate answers to well-defined questions in the main field of study.
Competencies	**Learning environment** > Reflect on one's own academic practice and adjust it under supervision. > Seek out, evaluate and reference information on the subject matter and present it in a way that sheds light on the issue. > Plan and carry out tasks and projects of a diverse nature over time, individually or as part of a group, and in accordance with ethical requirements and principles. > Plan and execute a project and/or academic and research work with a certain degree of independence. > Accept responsibility for defining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes; assume significant or supervisory responsibility for the work of others in defined areas of work. > Work effectively under supervision in a peer-to-peer relationship with skilled professionals; manage multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups. > Learn to work in variable and unfamiliar learning contexts; learn to manage learning tasks independently, professionally and ethically.

	> Take the initiative in identifying and addressing learning needs and interact effectively in a learning group. > Develop the learning skills necessary to pursue studies more autonomously. **Professional environment** > Assume responsibility and accountability for personal and collaborative learning and professional practice within general parameters. > Possess the qualities necessary to work in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making in complex and unpredictable circumstances. > Analyse and carry out complex professional tasks. > Communicate with colleagues, specialists and non-specialists, supervisors and clients in a context-specific and appropriate manner, using the conventions of professional practice. > Work with colleagues, specialists and non-specialists, supervisors and clients. > Be familiar with new thinking and innovation processes. > Share responsibility for the management of processes and the professional development of individuals and groups. > Express a personal, internalised and global world view that shows solidarity with others.

UNIVERSITY MASTER'S DEGREE (LEVEL 3) QUALIFICATION TYPE DESCRIPTOR

Objective	The university master's degree enables individuals to apply a body of advanced knowledge in a variety of contexts for professional practice, research or study and acts as a pathway for further learning.
Knowledge	**Types of knowledge** > Have (significant) specialised and advanced knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice, including newly developed fields, which extend/enhance the knowledge linked to the degree level. > Possess advanced knowledge of the principles and methods of research applicable to the field of work or learning or in the relevant professional practice. **Depth, breadth and diversity of knowledge** > Demonstrate a critical understanding of a wide range of theories, principles and concepts, including the most important ones, in relation to the subject area, scientific field or professional field. > Demonstrate a broad and detailed knowledge and critical understanding of some of the most important current issues, topics and specialisms in the subject area, scientific field or professional field. > Have the conceptual knowledge necessary to critically evaluate current research or developments in the discipline concerned, assess their methodologies and, where appropriate, propose new approaches/hypotheses.
Skills	**Cognitive skills** > Demonstrate a mastery of theoretical knowledge and reflect critically on the theory, its applications or professional practice. > Analyse and deal critically with diverse sources of information and use them to structure and formulate academic arguments. > Generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts on an abstract level, applying the cognitive, technical and creative skills acquired. > Be able to integrate knowledge and manage complexity when formulating judgements, often with incomplete or limited information, including, where appropriate, a reflection on the

	social and ethical responsibilities linked to the solution proposed in each case.
	Creative skills
	> Demonstrate originality in developing and/or applying ideas, generally in academic, professional, technological and/or artistic contexts.
	> Be able to analyse, interpret and critically evaluate complex information, theories and concepts in order to generate modified conceptions.
	Problem-solving
	> Identify and analyse complex problems in the area of knowledge, scientific field or professional practice, and solve them in a tactical, strategic and creative way.
	> Have the ability to solve problems in new and poorly defined environments, including multidisciplinary contexts related to the field of study in question.
	Technical and practical skills
	> Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the techniques applicable to one's own work involving advanced work or research, including an appreciation of the limitations of these techniques.
	> Be able to plan and execute significant research or innovation work.
	Information/communication skills
	> Communicate clearly and unequivocally ideas and conclusions, as well as the underlying knowledge and logic, to specialised and non-specialised audiences, in a context-appropriate manner and using the conventions of the professional field.
	> Be able to disseminate research results that contribute to knowledge to specialised and non-specialised audiences.
Competencies	**Learning environment**
	> Demonstrate skills and abilities for constant development, largely in a self-directed or autonomous manner.
	> Be able to work in a team with peers.

	> Be able to develop one's activities with social responsibility, intellectual honesty and scientific integrity.
	Professional environment
	> Be able to act autonomously in planning and carrying out tasks in the professional or equivalent field; including demonstrating originality in tackling and solving problems that may arise.
	> Have the qualities necessary to manage circumstances requiring judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments.
	> Assume responsibility for the results of one's own or others' study or work, as well as for the professional development of individuals and groups.
	> Work with specialists and non-specialists, supervisors and clients.

ANNEX 2. REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTERNAL TEACHING STAFF ESTABLISHED BY THE CATALAN PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE (SOC)

Requirements for trainers and tutors

These are the minimum necessary requirements that trainers and tutors must meet in order to correctly deliver the training speciality.

These requirements include knowledge and techniques related to the speciality and training or experience in teaching or pedagogical methodology.

The requirements for experts must be in line with the qualification level of the speciality, and must include mastery of the knowledge and techniques related to the speciality. Fulfilment of the requirements must be demonstrated via the corresponding academic qualification or certificates approved by the competent authorities, and/or via professional experience by means of accredited work contracts, certification from the company, association or entity, or accrediting documents from the Social Security authority (TGSS), the Social Marine Institute or the mutual society to which the person is affiliated.

Trainers must have methodological training in areas such as trainer training, teaching methodology, ICT resources applied to teaching, classroom management, etc., or have teaching experience within the education system, the business or non-profit world, of internal training or training for employment for the unemployed and workers.

Certificates of professional standards must meet the requirements stated in article 13 of Royal Decree 34/2008, of 18 January, regulating certificates of professional standards.

On courses taught via the distance format, the trainer must meet at least the requirements described in point 6.4 (Training and experience in the distance format) and, in the case of certificates of professional standards, the requirements stated in order ESS/1897/2013, of 10 October.

Requirements for professional practice

If the trainer must have specific professional qualifications or licences, these must be identified, and the rules governing them must also be detailed.

Ex ante accreditation of short learning programmes

Accreditation of experts' experience in distance training

> For distance learning courses, the trainer must demonstrate they have had training or experience in delivering this type of course and in the use of the associated IT and communication tools, have had at least 30 hours' training or at least 60 hours' experience of delivering training in this format. The following documents may be submitted as accreditation of this training or experience.

The trainer must hold one of the following in order to accredit the training received:

(a) A certificate of professional standards for the teaching of vocational training courses for employment, regulated by Royal Decree 1697/2011, of 18 November, amended by Royal Decree 625/2013, of 2 August, or cumulative partial accreditation of completion of the training module MF1444_3 (teaching and tutoring training courses for employment).

b) A diploma issued by the competent employment authority certifying that the trainer has successfully completed at least 30 hours of the training programme for this area contained in the list of training specialities of the State Public Employment Service.

c) A diploma certifying that the trainer has successfully completed at least 30 hours' training that includes at least the following content:

— General features of distance teaching and learning.

— The functions, skills and competences of the tutor/trainer.

— Tutorial methods, strategies and tools. The e-learning platform.

— Software and computer tools for tutoring students. Online communication and assessment. The role of social networks in the search for learning resources.

The following are required to accredit experience of teaching in the distance format:

a) For salaried workers.

Certification from the Social Security authority (TGSS), the Social Marine Institute or the mutual society to which the person is affiliated, stating the company, the employment category (contribution group) and the period of employment. An employment contract or certification from the company where the work

experience was acquired, specifically stating the duration of the contract, the work performed and the period over which it was carried out.

b) For self-employed workers

Certification from the Social Security authority (TGSS), the Social Marine Institute or the mutual society to which the person is affiliated, stating the periods registered for Social Security under the corresponding special regime, the work performed and the period over which it was carried out.

c) For voluntary workers or interns

Certification from the organisation or company where the work was carried out, stating specifically the activities and functions performed, the year in which they were carried out and the total number of hours dedicated to these activities.

ANNEX 3. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE E-LEARNING PLATFORM AND ONLINE MATERIALS ESTABLISHED BY THE SOC.

The e-learning platform to be used to provide training activities must have sufficient capacity to manage and guarantee the training of the students, allowing interactivity and cooperative work, and **it must meet the following technical requirements**:

> Compatibility with SCORM and IMS standards.

> Performance levels (i.e. the number of students supported by the platform, the server's response speed to users and loading time of web pages or file downloading) that must:

— Support all the participants in the training activities provided by the training centre or entity, guaranteeing a minimum hosting capacity equal to the total number of students in these actions, assuming 40% of the student body will be using the system concurrently.

— Have sufficient transfer capacity so that real time audiovisual communications do not suffer any delays; the server on which the platform is hosted must have a minimum bandwidth of 100 Mbps, sufficient for downloading and uploading.

> 24/7 operation.

> It must be technologically compatible and interoperable with any IT infrastructure or operating system, database, popular Internet browser or web server; The platform functions must be usable with compatible plug-ins and viewers. If additional supports for advanced functionalities need to be installed, the platform must provide access to these supports free of charge.

> The tools and resources necessary to manage, administer, organise, design, deliver and assess training activities via the Internet must be integrated into the platform. Specifically, the platform must have the following:

— Tools to facilitate collaboration and communication between all the students, both asynchronous (forums, boards, mail, lists, etc.) and synchronous (messaging system, chat, videoconferencing, etc.).

— Content development, management and integration tools.

— Tools for monitoring training, checking on students' progress and assessing learning.

— Administration and management tools for students and the training activities.

> The platform must contain IT tools that allow the Public Employment Service of the competent authority to automatically monitor and control the training provided, in accordance with the data model and transmission protocol established on said body's website, in order to audit the training centres' and institutions' activities and evaluate the quality of said training.

⸻ To do this, the Public Employment Service of the competent authority may automatically connect to the e-learning platforms as frequently as it so determines. The platforms must therefore have the IT capacity to allow this (SOAP connection protocol).

⸻ Notwithstanding the above, to allow the regular monitoring of the training provided for certificates of professional standards, it will be mandatory to give the Public Employment Service of the competent authority access to the platform, via an address and identifying credentials, with administrator permission, but no authority to modify data.

⸻ The platform must offer levels of accessibility and interactivity that comply at least with priorities 1 and 2 of UNE Standard 139803:2012 or subsequent updates, as stipulated in chapter III of Royal Decree 1494/2007, of 12 November.

⸻ The platform must display the institutional image of the Public Employment Service of the competent authority and the entities designated by it, following its guidelines on corporate image.

⸻ A user support service must be available to provide technical support, maintain the technological infrastructure, and to deal with and resolve students' technical queries and incidents in a structured and centralised manner. This service must be available to students throughout the length of the course, with morning and afternoon operating hours. It must be accessible by telephone and electronic messaging, and its response time must not exceed two working days.

Online learning materials

The online learning materials for students must be available for the whole course in multimedia format (with a consistent structure and functionality), and must be in line with the training programme for this speciality listed in the Catalogue of training specialities. This multimedia content must meet the following requirements:

> It must contain at least the content specified in the corresponding training programme listed in the Catalogue of training specialities.

> It must cover both the knowledge and the practical skills and abilities included in the learning goals of the aforementioned training programme so that the

materials, as a whole, allow students to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

> It must be organised by means of indexes, maps, tables of contents, diagrams, epigraphs and easily distinguishable headings, and be ordered pedagogically to facilitate comprehension and retention.

> The content must not be merely informative. It must be practically applicable through learning activities (which can be self-assessed or assessed by the tutor-trainer) relevant to professional practice, which serve to verify the learning progress of students, monitor their learning difficulties and provide them with the appropriate support.

> It must not be exclusively textual: it should regularly contain a variety of resources (necessary and relevant), including static and interactive resources (images, graphics, audio, video, animations, links, simulations, articles, forum, chat, etc.).

> It must be possible to expand or complement the resources by adding content that students can access and consult at will.

> The content must include summaries or syntheses and glossaries that identify and define basic, relevant or key terms or vocabulary to aid learning comprehension.

> The content must include activities (exercises, questions, assignments, problems, cases, tests, etc.) to assess the acquisition thereof and measure students' performance and achievements.

Online classrooms

> Technology and equipment required

The proposal must include a description of the tools and technology required to enable the tutor-trainer and the students to interact concurrently and in real time in a virtual learning environment via a synchronous communication system.

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