



Agència  
per a la Qualitat  
del Sistema Universitari  
de Catalunya

## 2009 ACTIVITIES REPORT



Generalitat  
de Catalunya



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# INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the activities carried out by AQU Catalunya during 2009. The most important were the following: in strategic terms, the endorsement of the AQU Catalunya Strategic Plan for 2009-2012; in relation to institutional review and quality assurance, the progressive introduction of internal quality assurance systems through the AUDIT programme, the experimental monitoring programme that is meant to provide a frame of reference in Catalonia for the monitoring of degree programmes and qualifications at the EHEA level, and the review of institutions affiliated with Catalan universities; in relation to academic staff review, the continuation of the ex ante assessment of academic staff selection processes for recruitment to Catalan universities and assessment of the merits of academic staff in research, teaching and management; and in relation to the studies and reports produced by the Agency, the carrying out of studies based on data from the survey on graduate labour market outcomes, and the producing of a pioneer project to analyse the empirical profiles of applicants requesting reference reports for tenure-track posts and research accreditation in the Humanities and Social Sciences, based on the information contained in their curriculum vitae.

Special mention is made of the appointment of Josep Anton Ferré Vidal to the post of Director of the Agency, and the renewal of Maria Lluïsa Hernanz Carbó's post as Chairperson of the CLiC Committee (which deals with collaborating and tenure-track academic staff).

Preparations were made by the Agency during 2009 to carry out the ex ante accreditation of proposals for Bachelor's and Master's degrees, in anticipation of new legislation that will give it the powers to do so itself. Up until now, the Agency has worked jointly with the universities to specify the process for monitoring the introduction of Bachelor and Master's degrees by Catalan universities.

# 1. STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES

## A) International recognition

AQU Catalunya produced the progress report containing the measures carried out during the two-year period from 2007-2009, based on the suggestions made by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) following the Agency's external review in 2008. The report was positively appraised by the ENQA Board, which expressed its "satisfaction with the enhancements introduced by AQU Catalunya".

## B) Pool of reviewers and experts

In order to enhance the organisation of people involved in the Agency's different review and advisory projects, the framework documents for the recruitment, assessment, selection and meta-assessment of experts were established, subsequent to a benchmarking process. Self-instructional training documents for experts were also produced, which include a general training programme, with aspects associated with quality assurance in higher education, and a specific training programme for each project.

## C) Strategic plan

The Board of Management endorsed the AQU Strategic Plan for 2009-2012, the purpose of which is to improve the running of the Agency and bring it into line with the objectives laid down in the Catalan Universities Act (LUC) and according to European standards and guidelines.

The Plan, which defines the Agency's mission and values and establishes its strategic areas for action, sets out the following objectives, amongst others:

- To reinforce the core activities that cover the entire higher education system involving review and evaluation and the carrying out of studies.
- To develop processes to monitor quality in the higher education system.
- To intensify institutional review processes so that internal and external quality assurance mechanisms for programmes and services offered by the universities are dealt with in a more consistent way.
- The development of more integrated models for academic staff review processes.

## 2. INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY REVIEW

### A) Quality assurance systems in the universities

#### AUDIT

Sixty-six (66) faculties and schools in Catalan universities registered for the AUDIT programme in 2009, the object of which is to evaluate the adequacy of the internal quality assurance systems of participating institutions. The programme is run jointly by ANECA, ACSUG and AQU Catalunya.

Table 1. 2009 call for the AUDIT programme: faculties and schools that applied for the ordinary evaluation. The result is pending.

University	Faculty/School
<b>UAB</b>	Faculty of Law
	Faculty of Political Science and Sociology
	Faculty of Economics and Business Studies, Bellaterra
	Faculty of Sciences
	Faculty of Bioscience
	Faculty of Psychology
	Faculty of Education
	Faculty of Communication Studies
	Faculty of Translation and Interpreting
	Faculty of Medicine
	School of Business Studies, Sabadell
School of Computer Studies	
<b>UPC</b>	Barcelona School of Building Construction
	School of Telecommunications Engineering
<b>UdG</b>	School of Nursing
	Faculty of Sciences
	Faculty of Tourism
<b>UdL</b>	Polytechnic School
	School of Nursing
<b>URL</b>	IQS Technical College
<b>UVic</b>	Faculty of Humanities, Translation and Documentation
	Faculty of Education
	Faculty of Business and Communication
	Polytechnic School
	School of Health Sciences

Table 2. 2009 call for the AUDIT programme: faculties and schools that applied for the exportation of positive results from previous evaluations. Positive result.

University	Faculty/School
<b>UB</b>	University School of Nursing
	Faculty of Education
	Faculty of Teacher Training
	Faculty of Pharmacy
	Faculty of Dentistry
	Faculty of Medicine
	Faculty of Mathematics
	Faculty of Geology
	Faculty of Biology
	Faculty of Physics
	Faculty of Economics and Business
	Faculty of Law
	Faculty of Fine Arts
	Faculty of Philosophy
	Faculty of Geography and History
Faculty of Philology	
<b>UPC</b>	Terrassa School of Industrial Engineering and Aeronautics - Barcelona Faculty of Nautical Engineering
	Manresa School of Engineering
<b>URV</b>	Faculty of Arts
	Faculty of Legal Sciences
	Faculty of Education Sciences and Psychology
	Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
	Faculty of Economic and Business Sciences
	Faculty of Oenology
	School of Nursing
	School of Engineering
	School of Chemical Engineering
	School of Architecture
<b>UOC</b>	Economics and Business
	Arts and Humanities
	Information and Communication Sciences
	Computers, Multimedia and Telecommunications
	Psychology and Education Sciences
<b>UIC</b>	Faculty of Education
	Faculty of Communication Sciences
	School of Architecture
	Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
	Faculty of Legal and Political Sciences
	Faculty of Dentistry
	Centre for Advanced Social Studies

The evaluation reports are available on the AQU website.

## SUPPORT

With the SUPORT programme, which is aimed at staff with QA technical units at Catalan universities, the Agency supports the universities in consolidating their internal quality assurance systems and in preparing processes leading to the production, introduction, monitoring and accreditation of degree programmes.

During 2009, priority was given in this programme to visits by staff with QA technical units to universities outside the higher education system in Catalonia, preferentially in other countries of the European Union.

## B) Degree programme quality

### Review programme for recognised degrees (ex ante accreditation)

AQU Catalunya planned the accreditation of recognised degrees and developed a computer platform for the presentation and evaluation of all degree proposals.<sup>1</sup>

### Experimental monitoring programme

Prior to the systematic monitoring of recognised degrees, AQU Catalunya, in collaboration with the Catalan universities, set up an experimental monitoring programme, in which each university can participate with one Bachelor's and one Master's programme.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 3. Degree programmes participating in the experimental programme to monitor the quality of recognised undergraduate and Master's degrees**

University	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree
UB	Bachelor of Information and Documentation	Master's in Water. Interdisciplinary analysis and sustainable management
UAB	Bachelor of Mathematics	Master's in Human Resource Management in Organisations
UPC	Bachelor of Mathematics	Master's in Optometry and Vision Science
UPF	Bachelor of Human Biology	Master's in Legal Science
UdG	Bachelor of Biology	Master's in Business Innovation and Technology Management
UdL	Bachelor of Nursing	Master's in Free Programming Engineering
URV	Bachelor of Tourism	Master's in Synthesis and Catalysis
UOC	Bachelor of Law	Master's in Risk and Prevention at Work
URL	Bachelor of Nursing	--
UIC	Bachelor of Medicine	Master's in Business and Production Systems

<sup>1</sup> According to current legislation, the accreditation of qualifications lies with the Spanish national QA agency, ANECA. A change in the legislation is anticipated, which will enable the Agency to evaluate proposals for new recognised degree programmes.

<sup>2</sup> Universities participating in this programme receive a grant of 1,250 euros for each degree programme, with a maximum of 2,500 euros for each university.

		Management
<b>UAO CEU</b>	Bachelor of Psychology	Master's in Humanistic and Social Studies

### **Certification and accreditation programme for degrees (Bachelor's and Master's) that are specific to university institutions**

This programme was brought to a close after the second call for certification under the Agency's pilot plan to bring degree programmes in line with the EHEA. Certification was to ensure that commitments to programme adaptation were made publicly explicit to both academic staff and students. The process also contributed to the setting in place of new quality assurance mechanisms and was thereby connected with the requirements laid down for the introduction of new recognised degrees.



Table 4. Programmes certified in the 2009 call

University	Bachelor's degree	Field
UAB	Tourism	Social Sciences
	Teacher: Early Childhood Education	Social Sciences
	Teacher: Primary Education	Social Sciences
	Speech Therapy	Social Sciences
	Nursing	Health Sciences
	Management Information Systems	Technology
UPC	Electronic Engineering (EUP Mataró)	Technology
	Management Computing (EUP Mataró)	Technology
	Mechanical Engineering (EUETI Terrassa)	Technology
	Telecommunications Engineering - Telematics (Mataró)	Technology
UPF	Humanities: Intercultural Studies	Humanities
	Linguistic Mediation	Humanities
	Economy and Finance in the Twentieth Century	Social Sciences
	Business Management in the Knowledge Economy	Social Sciences
	Strategic Planning and Creative Advertising	Social Sciences
	Biology	Sciences
UdG	Organisational Communication	Social Sciences
	Biology	Sciences
	Chemistry	Sciences
	Environmental Sciences	Sciences
UdL	Biotechnology	Sciences
	Human Nutrition and Dietetics	Health Sciences
	Building Engineering	Technologies
URV	Economics	Social Sciences
	Social Education	Social Sciences
UIC	Primary Education	Social Sciences

## C) Institutional quality

### Institutional review programme

Under commission by the Commissioner's Office for Universities and Research (CUR), AQU Catalunya reviewed affiliated institutions in the Catalan higher education system with the main purpose of determining their level of quality and their ability to successfully deal with the short and medium term challenges facing the higher education system in general, such as designing and giving undergraduate and Master's degree programmes, in accordance with the requirements of Royal Decree 1393/2007 of 29 October concerning the new regulation of recognised university degrees.

The programme provides for two levels of evaluation: basic (which is compulsory for all institutions) and advanced (which is optional and offers institutions the possibility of showing the aspects that they most stand out in). The introduction of this advanced level logically

encourages institutions to enhance their quality to levels of excellence in one or more spheres of their activity.

The published results of this evaluation include a table making it possible for the reader to quickly identify each institution's strengths and opportunities for enhancement. The evaluation reports are available on the AQU website.

**Table 5a. Result of the review of affiliated institutions from the 2008 call**

University	School	Report published	Basic level	Advanced level
<b>UB</b>	Catalan School of Cinema and Visual Communication	February	Substantially compliant	•
	School of Public Relations	November	Substantially compliant	
<b>UAB</b>	Eina, School of Design and Art	February	Compliant	
	Massana Municipal School of Art and Design	February	Substantially compliant	
<b>UPC</b>	Image Processing and Multimedia Technology Centre	February	Compliant	•
<b>UPF</b>	U. del Mar School of Nursing	February	Substantially compliant	•
<b>UdG</b>	School of Tourism and Hotel Management, Sant Pol de Mar	February	Substantially compliant	•
	Garbí School of Physiotherapy	February	Substantially compliant	
	School of Tourism, CETA	February	Compliant	
	School of Tourism, Euroaula	February	Substantially compliant	
<b>UdL</b>	School of Labour Relations	February	Substantially compliant	
<b>URV</b>	CESDA School of Aviation	November	Substantially compliant	
<b>URL</b>	School of Design	April	Compliant	•

Table 5b Result of the evaluation of affiliated institutions from the 2009 call

University	School	Report published	Basic level	Advanced level
<b>UB</b>	National Institute of Physical Education of Catalonia	November	Substantially compliant	•
	University School of Tourism CETT	December	Compliant	
	Sant Joan de Déu University School of Nursing	January 2010	Substantially compliant	•
<b>UAB</b>	School of Business Studies	November	Substantially compliant	
	Tomàs Cerdà School of Computer Studies	November	Partially compliant	
	Salesian School, Sarrià	November	Substantially compliant	•
	Manresa School of Health Sciences	January 2010	Compliant	
	Sant Pau School of Nursing	January 2010	Substantially compliant	
	Gimbernat School of Nursing and Physiotherapy	January 2010	Substantially compliant	
	School of Tourism and Hotel Management	February 2010	Compliant	•
<b>UPC</b>	Red Cross School of Nursing	February 2010	Partially compliant	
	Caixa Terrassa School of Business Studies	November	Substantially compliant	
	Mataró Technical College	November	Substantially compliant	•
	Igualada School of Engineering	November	Substantially compliant	•
	Barcelona School Of Engineering	November	Substantially compliant	
<b>UPF</b>	School of Business Administration	November	Partially compliant	
	School of International Trade	November	Substantially compliant	
	Maresme School of Business Studies	November	Substantially compliant	
<b>UdG</b>	Elisava School of Design	February 2010	Substantially compliant	
	ERAM School of Audiovisual and Multimedia Studies	December	Partially compliant	
	Mediterrani School of Tourism	December	Substantially compliant	
<b>UdL</b>	Formàtic Barna University School	January 2010	Substantially compliant	
	Catalan National Institute of Physical Education	November	Substantially compliant	•
<b>UVic</b>	BAU School of Design	February 2010	Compliant	

## **D) Other projects**

### **Programme to promote student participation in programme and institutional review processes**

The course was given three times during 2009, at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), the Ramon Llull University, the Technical University of Catalonia and the International University of Catalonia (at these latter two institutions, the course was given jointly). AQU Catalunya participated in the funding and delivery of each course, in which fifty-two students received the training and who now may be appointed by the Agency to take part in external quality review processes.

The student selection process was also started for new Quality Assessment Committee (CAQ).

### **International project: Quality Assurance for the Higher Education Change Agenda**

AQU Catalunya, together with seven other agencies (AQA from Austria, ACQUIN and ASIIN from Germany, NVAO from the Netherlands and Flanders, NOKUT from Norway, ARACIS from Rumania and HQAA from Greece), completed its participation in the international project, Quality Assurance for the Higher Education Change Agenda (QAHECA), coordinated by the EUA and in which twenty-one higher education institutions participated. The aim of the project was to explore quality assurance activities that support and promote innovation in higher education, such as the planning, design, delivery and review of degree programmes.

## 3. REVIEW OF ACADEMIC STAFF

### A) Pre-recruitment assessment programme for academic staff

#### Contracted (non-tenure) academic staff

In order to be admitted to contracted academic staff selection processes for recruitment at the public universities in Catalonia, candidates must be in possession of a favourable reference report, in the case of the categories of tenure-track and non-PhD teaching staff, and research accreditation or advanced research accreditation for the categories of senior lecturer and professor, respectively.<sup>3</sup>

The private universities in Catalonia and AQU Catalunya signed an agreement to include the review of academic staff at these institutions under the same terms in the processes involving the issuance of preliminary reports for tenure-track staff, research accreditation and advanced research accreditation.

Table 6. Results of the 2009 calls for non-PhD lecturers<sup>4</sup>

Field of knowledge	TA	CWR	F	UF	EA	AR	AP	TF	TUF	%F
Humanities	7	5	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	50
Social Sciences	30	5	16	7	0	0	2	16	9	64
Sciences	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	100
Life Sciences	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Sciences	141	4	116	19	1	0	1	117	20	85
Engineering and Architecture	42	11	16	9	0	4	2	16	15	52
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>77</b>

<sup>3</sup> Act 1/2003 of 19 February concerning the universities in Catalonia (Catalan Universities Act), articles 46, 47, 48 and 49.

<sup>4</sup> TA, total applications; CWR, closure without resolution; F, favourable; D, unfavourable; EA, estimated appeals; AR, appeals rejected; AP, appeals pending; TF, total favourable; TUF, total unfavourable; %F, percentage that was favourable out of the total.

Table 7. Results of the 2009 calls for tenure-track staff

Field of knowledge	TA	CWR	F	UF	EA	AR	AP	TF	TUF	%F
Humanities	110	1	77	27	0	2	3	77	32	71
Social Sciences	189	1	83	74	1	11	19	84	104	45
Sciences	109	2	80	23	0	3	1	80	27	75
Life Sciences	96	0	40	47	1	4	4	41	55	43
Medical Sciences	73	3	41	25	0	1	3	41	29	59
Engineering and Architecture	132	0	85	38	0	4	5	85	47	64
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>58</b>

Table 8. Results of the 2009 calls for research accreditations

Field of knowledge	TA	CWR	F	UF	EA	AR	AP	TF	TUF	%F
Humanities	61	2	30	22	1	6	0	31	29	53
Social Sciences	63	3	35	20	0	0	5	35	25	58
Sciences	49	2	32	15	0	0	0	32	15	68
Life Sciences	39	1	22	15	0	1	0	22	16	58
Medical Sciences	65	0	27	33	0	5	0	27	38	42
Engineering and Architecture	83	1	59	21	0	2	0	59	23	72
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>59</b>

Table 9. Results of the 2009 calls for advanced research accreditations

Field of knowledge	TA	CWR	F	UF	EA	AR	AP	TF	TUF	%F
Humanities	8	0	4	4	0	0	0	4	4	50
Social Sciences	16	0	10	6	0	0	0	10	6	63
Sciences	23	0	14	9	0	0	0	14	9	61
Life Sciences	11	0	6	5	0	0	0	6	5	55
Medical Sciences	27	1	17	8	1	0	0	18	8	69
Engineering and Architecture	26	0	6	17	0	3	0	6	20	23
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>53</b>

## Teaching accreditation certification

Eighty-one applications for the teaching accreditation certificate were received in 2009, of which eighty were granted.

## B) The merit-based assessment of academic staff

The allocation of salary bonuses to both contracted and public service academic staff at the public universities in Catalonia is dependent on the assessment of individual merits in teaching, research and management.<sup>5</sup>

### Assessment of the merits in research

The Agency directly assesses individual merits in research on the basis of the established procedure and criteria. The specific criteria for evaluating research work by teaching and research staff at public universities in Catalonia were revised and publicised.<sup>6</sup>

Table 10. Results of the 2009 call for public service teaching and research staff<sup>7</sup>

Field of knowledge	TA	CWR	F	UF	EA	AR	AP	TF	TUF	%F
Humanities	62	8	51	2	0	0	1	51	3	94
Social Sciences	113	4	101	7	0	0	1	101	8	93
Sciences	95	6	88	1	0	0	0	88	1	99
Life Sciences	49	0	49	0	0	0	0	49	0	100
Medical Sciences	96	11	79	5	0	0	1	79	6	93
Engineering and Architecture	142	15	127	0	0	0	0	127	0	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>96</b>

Table 11. Results of the 2009 call for contracted teaching and research staff

Field of knowledge	TA	CWR	F	UF	EA	AR	AP	TF	TUF	%F
Humanities	70	3	38	13	3	13	0	41	26	61
Social Sciences	73	7	39	19	2	6	0	41	25	62
Sciences	70	2	63	3	0	1	1	63	5	93
Life Sciences	62	1	55	3	0	3	0	55	6	90
Medical Sciences	53	9	42	2	0	0	0	42	2	95
Engineering and Architecture	124	9	76	22	0	17	0	76	39	66
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>76</b>

<sup>5</sup> Decree 405/2006, whereby endorsement was given to the Regulation covering salary bonuses of public service and contracted teaching and research staff at public universities in Catalonia.

<sup>6</sup> Resolution 3750/2008 of 9 December, whereby the specific criteria for the evaluation of research work by teaching and research staff at public universities in Catalonia for the allocation of salary bonuses were publicised.

<sup>7</sup> In the assessment of merits in research, the results refer to assessment periods and not the applicants. TA, total applications; CWR, closure without resolution; F, favourable; D, unfavourable; EA, estimated appeals; AR, appeals rejected; AP, appeals pending; TF, total favourable; TUF, total unfavourable; %F, percentage that was favourable out of the total.

Table 12. Results of the 2009 call for teaching and research staff at private universities

Field of knowledge	TA	CWR	F	UF	EA	AR	AP	%F
Humanities	28	0	14	4	0	0	10	50
Social Sciences	62	0	35	20	0	0	7	56
Sciences	13	0	10	3	0	0	0	76
Life Sciences	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	100
Medical Sciences	8	0	8	0	0	0	0	100
Engineering and Architecture	24	1	11	5	0	0	7	46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>58</b>

### Agreement with the University of Extremadura

AQU Catalunya and the University of Extremadura signed an agreement for the evaluation of the research work by the university's contracted teaching and research staff over an indefinite period. 28 applications were received in 2009, of which thirteen (13) were favourable, with five appeals pending resolution.

### Certification of the assessment of merits in teaching

AQU Catalunya accredited the assessment process given in the teaching assessment handbooks for public universities in Catalonia, which were certified in 2008. The accreditation of the handbooks is valid until 31 December 2012. The universities apply the handbook guidelines in the assessment of merits in teaching of academic staff for retributive bonuses for teaching granted by the regional authorities, and the evaluation reports are sent to the Agency for the results to be certified.

Table 13. Results of the 2008 call for certification of the assessment of merits in teaching

Potential applicants	Total applicants	%	Positive	%	Negative	%	% favourable/potential
2,360	1,222	52	1,188	97	34	3	50

The number of potential applicants includes teaching staff from previous calls with the option to participate in the 2008 call.

### Certification of the assessment of merits in management

The Catalan universities assess the individual merits in management of their public service and contracted academic staff using instructions endorsed by AQU Catalunya and the Directorate General for Universities. Once academic staff have been assessed, the evaluation reports are sent to the Agency for certification of compliance.



**Table 14. Results of the 2008 call for certification of the assessment of merits in management**

<b>Periods evaluated</b>	<b>Favourable</b>	<b>Unfavourable</b>	<b>1st period</b>	<b>2nd period</b>	<b>3rd period</b>	<b>4th period</b>
<b>344</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>34</b>

The information in the table refers to the assessment periods and not people.

## 4. STUDIES AND REPORTS

### A) Reports on the higher education system in Catalonia

#### Analysis of the results of the third survey on the labour market outcomes of graduates from Catalan universities<sup>8</sup>

##### Employment outcomes of Humanities graduates

One of the objectives of the third AQU Catalunya survey on graduate labour market outcomes was to monitor the graduate population in the Humanities. During 2009, an analysis was made of the quality of the labour market outcomes of Humanities graduates who, in the second survey (2005), had been mismatched in terms of their job situation and university studies (education-job match). The report of findings will be published during 2010.

##### Gender and employment in Catalonia

On the basis of the results of its third survey on graduate labour market outcomes, a report was produced on *Gender and graduate employment in Catalonia*, with the support of the Catalan Women's Institute.<sup>9</sup>

##### The Catalan universities as a factor of equity and professional mobility

Under commission from AQU Catalunya, Dr. Jordi Planas and Dr. Sandra Fachelli (with the GRET Education and Employment Research Group at the UAB) carried out an analysis of the relationships between family status, academic background and professional career outcomes in 2008 of graduates who completed their studies and were awarded their degrees from Catalan universities in 2004.

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<sup>8</sup> The study (2008) was based on the analysis of a sample of 53% of the graduate population of the 2003-2004 cohort (12,553 people) from the seven public universities in Catalonia (University of Barcelona/UB, Autonomous University of Barcelona/UAB, Technical University of Catalonia/UPC, Pompeu Fabra University/UPF, University of Girona/UdG, University of Lleida/UdL and the Rovira i Virgili University URV), the University of Vic (UVic) and the Open University of Catalonia (UOC).

<sup>9</sup> *Institut Català de les Dones*

### **Education-job match**

Dr. Enric Corominas, Dr. Carme Saurina and Dr. Esperança Villar, from the University of Girona, under commission by AQU Catalunya, began to study the match between the university studies and career outcomes of three cohorts of graduates in Catalonia, using the data from the Agency's various surveys of graduate labour market outcomes.

### **UNeix Programme**

AQU Catalunya and the Ministry of Innovation, Universities and Enterprise (DIUE), through the CUR, collaborate in maintaining and updating the UNeix website and related dissemination requirements, especially those resulting from the Agreement by the Board of the Inter-university Council (CIC), which appear on the website as publicly available indicators for the monitoring of recognised degrees that the CUR and AQU Catalunya and the universities are responsible for.

### **AHELO**

AQU Catalunya was invited by the OECD to participate in the *Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes* (AHELO) study. The aim of the study, which has been approved by the OECD Ministers responsible for higher education, is to analyse the feasibility of the external assessment of the learning outcomes of graduates from higher education institutions in different dimensions of general and specific competences that university students have to acquire.

### **Report on the state of external review and quality assurance in Spanish universities**

For the second consecutive year, AQU Catalunya and the twelve other quality assurance agencies in Spain produced the *Report on the state of external review and quality assurance in Spanish universities*, which complies with the principle of transparency and whereby QA agencies are accountable for their review programmes, as laid down by the European standards and guidelines.

## **B) Studies**

### **Competence assessment reference guides for the accreditation of recognised university degree programmes**

Within the context of the accreditation processes for recognised university degree programmes that are being setting up in the Catalan higher education system, AQU Catalunya has coordinated the production and publication of eleven reference guide books for use by academic staff to assess the competences acquired by students. The guides cover the different fields of knowledge.

**Table 15. List of the competence assessment reference guide books**

<b>Guides</b>
Guide to competence assessment in the Humanities
Guide to competence assessment in the Social Sciences
Guide to competence assessment in Social Education
Guide to competence assessment in the final year project of the Bachelor's in Social and Legal Sciences
Guide to competence assessment in teaching practicum in Education
Guide to competence assessment in the Sciences of Physical Activity and Sport
Guide to the assessment of scientific competence in the Sciences, Mathematics and Technology
Guide to competence assessment in laboratory work in Sciences and Technology
Guide to competence assessment in Medicine
Guide to competence assessment in Engineering and Architecture
Guide to competence assessment in the final year project of Bachelor degrees and the Master's dissertation in Engineering

## **Studies on the higher education system in Catalonia**

With the aim of obtaining a better understanding and diagnosis of the higher education system in Catalonia and to generate precise, contextualised frames of reference on points of special interest and social relevance, AQU Catalunya coordinated the carrying out and publication of five studies.

**Table 16. List of studies**

<b>Studies</b>	<b>State</b>
A model for analysing the quality of degree programme teaching from the students' point of view at four Catalan universities (UAB, UB, UPC, URV)	Completed
Student drop-outs from Catalan universities	Completed
Study on the academic performance of students during their first year at university	Completed
The academic performance of first-year Law students at the University of Barcelona: an analysis of the outcomes and the causes	Completed
On the entry into work from Vocational Training	Under way

## **Sectoral studies on academic staff: CV analysis in the Humanities and Social Sciences**

AQU Catalunya has been working since July 2009 on the profiles of people who have applied for reference reports for tenure-track teaching posts and research accreditation in the Humanities and Social Sciences, using the information contained in their curriculums vitae (around 5,000 curriculums were sent in 2003), the aim being to establish an empirical data base for use in review and evaluation work by the various commissions and committees.

## **5. COOPERATION, EXCHANGE AND COMMUNICATION**

AQU Catalunya participated actively through its members in approximately thirty activities and events (seminars, workshops and congresses) during 2009.

### **A) Cooperation in quality assurance**

#### **Coordination with the Catalan universities**

##### **Review of the UAB's International Relations Service**

AQU Catalunya collaborated with the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) in designing and implementing an external review process of the university's international relations. This complies with the objectives established in the recent Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education objectives that were established in the Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education (Leuven-Louvain, 28-29 April 2009), namely, for European higher education institutions to internationalise their activities and promote academic mobility (students, trainee researchers, teachers, etc.).

#### **Cooperation with other higher education QA agencies, associations and other bodies**

##### **The Sixth ENQA General Assembly**

AQU Catalunya continues to form part of the ENQA Board, together with nine other European agencies, and was the host for the Sixth ENQA General Assembly held in Barcelona on 28-29 September at the Technical University of Catalonia (UPC). The meeting brought together around a hundred directors and heads of European higher education QA agencies.

## **ECA**

The Agency completed its projection within Europe in 2009 with its membership to the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA).

## **IQA-ENQA**

AQU Catalunya continued to participate in the ENQA workgroup that analyses the internal quality systems used by European QA agencies to enhance the exchange of experience.

## **International reviews**

AQU Catalunya carried out the international review of the Faculty of Law at the *Universidad de San Martín de Porres* (USMP), in Lima, Peru, and the *Centro Universitario de la Costa Sur de la Universidad de Guadalajara*, Mexico. The result was the first quality accreditation at both institutions, the validity of which is one year in the case of the USMP and two years for the institution at the University of Guadalajara, from 1 January 2010 onwards.

# **B) The organisation of workshops and seminars**

## **ENQA discussion on the training of experts for agency reviews**

AQU Catalunya collaborated with ENQA in the organisation in Barcelona, on March 17, of a meeting on the external review of the agencies that comprise ENQA and those that wish to join. Around thirty university professors, agency representatives and independent advisers with experience in the review of higher education QA agencies participated in the meeting, which dealt with agency review procedures, the use and interpretation of the European standards, the drawing up of the final reports and training procedures for new reviewers.

## **URL 2009 workshop: “The design and implementation of internal quality assurance systems”**

Within the framework of the AUDIT programme, AQU Catalunya organised a workshop entitled “The design and implementation of internal quality assurance systems”, at the Vice-chancellor’s office of the Ramon Llull University on 1 July. Around twenty people participated, the majority of whom were deputies to the Vice-chancellor for quality, members of QA technical units and heads of university faculties and schools in Catalonia. Both international and Spanish examples of good practices in the implementation of internal quality assurance systems were presented.

## **UB 2010 Workshop: “Research assessment in the Humanities and Social Sciences”**

Within the framework of the series of workshops organised together with the Catalan universities, AQU Catalunya organised the “Research assessment in the Humanities and Social

Sciences” workshop, which was held at the University of Barcelona in January 2010. More than 400 people registered for the workshop, which was more than the Agency had anticipated.

## C) The announcement of activities

### Web

During 2009, the AQU website tracking figures were as follows:

- 125,371 visits.<sup>10</sup>
- 628,931 pages visited.<sup>11</sup> The pages most visited were those referring to the issuance of pre-selection reports for recruitment to tenure-track posts at public universities and for research accreditation.
- 18.827 files downloaded.<sup>12</sup>

The pages most visited were the home page and those with information on university academic staff review processes. The documents with the highest number of downloads dealt with the formalities of submitting applications for teaching staff review and evaluation.

### eButlletí

The Agency's *eButlletí* on-line journal publication is distributed by e-mail to more than 5,000 subscribers in the university community in Catalonia, the European agency network, QA experts and the media.

A subscription campaign in 2009 led to 1,650 new subscribers.

### Promotional documents

AQU Catalunya participated in the Higher Education and Employment Week (*Saló de l'Ensenyament*) from 18-20 March and distributed three thousand bookmarks with information on the studies on graduate labour market outcomes that the Agency carries out every three years.

## D) Publications and corporate image

One of the more well-known of AQU Catalunya's activities is its publication of papers and reports from the activities and studies that it carries out. Thirty-three (33) publications were released, including methodological material, studies and competence assessment guides, all of which are available from the AQU website.

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<sup>10</sup> A visit is a series of actions that begins when a visitor views the home page and ends when he/she leaves the website or when the inactivity time limit expires.

<sup>11</sup> Any page viewed.

<sup>12</sup> The number of times that a visitor downloaded a specified file.

## 6. INTERNAL ORGANISATION

### A) Human resources

Five announcements of staff recruitment were made: three internal ones, of a temporary nature, to regularise five temporary posts, and two external ones, to cover two permanent posts and one temporary one.

In accordance with the provisions of the Agency's Strategic Plan concerning human resources, a document with the job responsibilities and skills of all AQU staff was drawn up and completed during the year, and the procedure for carrying out an organisational review survey for the Agency's staff was planned and established.

Negotiations were also completed with worker representatives concerning the second version of the Working Rules and Conditions of AQU staff. The new document was approved by the Ministry of Economy and Finances and the Secretariat for Public Administration on 28 July and signed on 30 September.

### B) Information and communications technologies

Within the scope of administration, an extranet was introduced for the submission and checking of reports on Bachelor and Master's degree programmes and for the review of the AUDIT programme; a consultancy review and analysis were made of the intranet to optimise the handling of documents and to improve communication and internal efficiency, and the basis was set in place for its implementation; the defining of a platform for the selection, training, review and monitoring of experts who collaborate with AQU Catalunya was begun, which will provide support for defined strategic activities; and a portal was defined and developed for the handling of suggestions, applications, complaints, enquiries and internal incidents corresponding to the various subject mail boxes (information systems, human resources, internal quality, etc.).

As far as ICT systems were concerned, new infrastructures for on-line servers, communications, storage, back-up copies and the Agency's security were set up to allow for growth over the next few years on a par with new technological developments, to ensure the efficient handling of the technological resources, and to define and implement systems policies in line with the stipulations of prevailing legislation on data protection (LOPD) and also stemming from the data security audit. Having its own infrastructure (i.e. being independent from the Ministry of Innovation, Universities and Enterprise/DIUE), the Agency has achieved complete autonomy in



terms of the procurement and administration of its data processing services and its establishing associated policies.

## C) Internal quality

ISO 9001:2008 certification of AQU Catalunya's quality management system for university quality assurance and review, specifically for institutional review and university academic staff review, was renewed. Certification renewal involved adaptation to the requirements of the new version of the ISO 9001 standard that was published in November 2008.

The internal workings of the Agency have been maintained with activities being programmed on a project basis, which gives for greater traceability, more control and multidisciplinary participation in each activity that is undertaken.

## D) Economic management

### Financial and accounting management

2009 saw the consolidation of all the processes and projects that were started in 2008 involving the kit used by public enterprises under the Generalitat de Catalunya (Government of Catalonia), which is based on the SAP R/3 programme, cash pooling (a unified system used by the Generalitat de Catalunya to maximise its credit and debit positions), and project accounting and economic management.

The definitive budget for 2009 was as follows:

Table 17. Definitive income

Recognised income and assets	Amount in €
Charges, sale of assets and services	106,862.34
Current transfers	3,181,950.93
Additions to capital	5,539.82
Variation in financial assets	113,258.72
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,407,611.81</b>

Table 18. Definitive expenditure

Recognised expenditure and liabilities	Amount in €
Staff salaries	1,841,398.98
Expenditure on current assets and services	1,330,935.40
Financing expenses	87.60
Current transfers	69,694.86
Current investments	104,355.18
Retained earnings 2009	61,139.79
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,407,611.81</b>

The financial audit corresponding to the 2008 financial year was carried out by the Catalan Ministry of the Economy and Finance's Subdirectorate General for Financial Audit.