AQU Catalunya
Annual Report 2011

AQU

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per a la Qualitat
del Sistema Universitari
de Catalunya

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ANNUAL REPORT 2011

28 March 2012

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0. INTRODUCTION

AQU Catalunya has been working for fifteen years in support of higher education in Catalonia and, with the initiatives that it has fostered in more recent years, a path based on a strategic vision of the continuous improvement, transparency and accountability of the services provided by the universities and the Agency to society as a whole is now being followed.

Subsequent to its reacquisition of full jurisdiction over the quality assurance (QA) of programmes and awards in Catalonia, in 2011 the Agency started implementation of the VSMA Framework for programme validation, monitoring, modification and accreditation. The regulations stipulate that all quality assurance processes must be managed by the same QA agency, and the Framework will ensure the cyclical, continuous and integrated review of all recognised degree courses. The positive implications of this for higher education in Catalonia are:

- Firstly, Catalan universities will only need to liaise with one agency concerning all QA processes. This will facilitate communication between the universities and the Agency and should lead to simplification of QA procedures, as well as accompanying documentation.

- Another advantage is that it will ensure that all QA processes (ex-ante validation through to accreditation) that recognised degree courses must undergo are coherent. This will in turn make all of the processes more reliable and simpler, as they will all be interconnected through continuous evaluation and review.

- It will also reinforce the strategic vision, transparency, leading role and recognition in society of degree courses and the university, as well as promote the culture of continuous improvement and accountability.

- And lastly, because the objective behind the design of this comprehensive process is the continuous improvement of both degree programmes and universities and to provide the universities with a useful process for reflection and improving the running of degree courses.

The ANNUAL REPORT 2011 is divided up into six sections that deal with the various strategic areas in which the Agency is active:

- **Quality assurance of institutions and programmes of study**: start of the validation, modification and monitoring of recognised programmes; restructuring of the Quality Assurance Commission; management of the AUDIT programme, and consolidation of the Agency's pool of reviewers.

- **Quality assurance of teaching**: managing the assessment of academic staff prior to selection by the universities, and assessment of the merits of teaching staff in teaching, research and management.

- **Knowledge generation**: carrying out of the fourth survey on graduate labour market outcomes, and the coming online of the Winddat webpage with indicators on degree programme development and delivery based on data obtained from the UNEIX information system, in collaboration with the Secretariat for Universities and Research

- **Internationalisation and institutional relations**: activities and projects carried out with REACU (the Spanish body that brings together all of the university quality assurance agencies), the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

- **Strategic management and communication**: coordination and collaboration with the Catalan universities and the social partners.

- **Internal organisation**: the upholding of accountability; review of the quality policy to include information security; upgrading of ICT; and the application of measures to curb and reduce expenditure and optimise the Agency's economic resources.

All of these activities were carried out by those who participated in AQU Catalunya's governing, review and advisory bodies and the Agency's in-house staff.

1. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The Agency has had full competence in all quality assurance processes (validation, monitoring, modification and accreditation) dealing with recognised programmes and awards in Catalonia since 2010.[1] In 2011 the Agency began to carry out the processes involving programme validation, monitoring and modification within the context of the VSMA Framework (a broad framework for the validation, monitoring, modification and accreditation of recognised degree programmes).

Graph 1. How the review of recognised degree programmes is organised

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[1] Royal Decree 861/2010, 2 July, which amended Royal Decree 1393/2007, 29 October, on the academic governance of recognised programmes and awards.

The adoption of the VSMA Framework meant that the structure of the Agency's Quality Assurance Commission (CAQ) had to be modified. The ATP and ACAU review panels (that dealt with programmes and awards, and university faculties and activities, respectively) were abolished. Five special review panels were set up according to areas of knowledge, which are now responsible for carrying out validation (ex-ante accreditation), monitoring, modification and accreditation. The CEMAI review panel (for the assessment of merit-based salary bonuses for university teaching staff) continues to function.

Graph 2. Structure of the Quality Assessment Commission

Chairperson

Six experts from the university community in Catalonia who are also the moderators of the special review panels

Five experts form the international university community

One expert form the university community in Catalonia who chairs the CEMAI panel

CEMAI panel, which assesses the merits of academic staff

Arts and Humanities

Social Sciences and Law

Sciences

Health Sciences

Engineering and Architecture

A seminar-workshop was organised on degree validation, modification and monitoring for people who form part of the CAQ review panels, and an annual timetable was established for these processes to be carried out during the 2011-2012 academic year.

The objectives of the timetable schedule are as follows:

The seminar-workshop was held on 24 January 2011

- To ensure that course proposals are validated subsequent to authorisation by the Inter-university Council of Catalonia's Commission for Academic Programming and Governance, and prior to their being included in the university admissions pre-registration process.

- The coherent distribution of quality assurance processes throughout the year.

1.1. Validation

The Agency produced the *Guide to the formulation and ex-ante accreditation of proposals for Bachelor and Master's programmes,* which is a working document for use by degree programme supervisors in the process of formulating the design of proposals and for quality validation purposes. The guide sets out the requirements laid down in the current regulations and the national criteria and guidelines for the quality assurance of proposals for validation and modification, as agreed and endorsed by the Spanish Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (REACU).

It also prepared the *Guide to the formulation and ex-ante accreditation of proposals for recognised doctorate programmes.* The guide is based on the Report on the validation (ex-ante accreditation) of doctoral programmes included in annex I of Royal Decree 99/2011, 28 January, and is designed as an aid for university management in producing proposals for new doctoral programmes, facilitate the internal revision of proposals by the institution itself and, at the same time, serve as the instrument for the independent external review of proposals by AQU Catalunya.

The purpose behind validation is to assure the quality of proposed designs for recognised doctoral degrees and programmes through an enhancement-based process, encourage proposals for new programmes that are satisfactory in terms of content and form, for the purposes of both quality assurance and for producing the public information associated with recognised programmes, and establish QA procedures for Bachelor, Master's and doctorate degrees that are equivalent and linked, amongst other things.

Seventy-three (73) proposals for the validation of recognised programmes were submitted by Catalan universities: 7 Bachelor and 66 Master's. 72% of the proposals submitted were favourably assessed.

Table 1. Result of validation (ex-ante assessment), according to subject area/review panel

	Favourable	Unfavourable	Withdrew	Total	% favourable
Arts and Humanities	7	2	1	10	78
Social Sciences and Law	14	14	5	33	50
Sciences	3	0	1	4	100
Health Sciences	5	2	0	7	71
Engineering and Architecture	18	0	1	19	100
Total	**47**	**18**	**8**	**73**	**72%**

Graph 3. Result of validation (ex-ante assessment), according to university
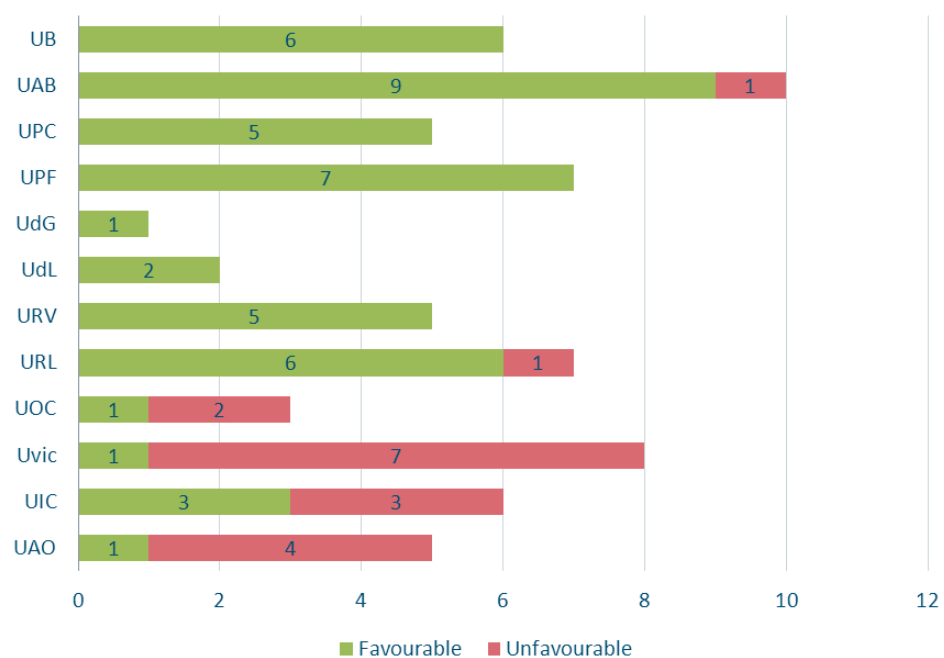
1.2. Modification

The extension of the partnership agreement between ANECA and AQU Catalunya allows for the Agency to assess modifications put forward by Catalan universities to recognised degrees previously validated by ANECA (the Spanish national QA agency). Modifications are evaluated on the basis of the validation methodology.

One hundred (100) proposals for the modification of recognised programmes were received during the year: sixty-nine (69) Bachelors and 31 Masters. The distribution according to university is given in table 3. 88% of the proposals submitted were favourably assessed.

Table 3. Result of the evaluation of modifications to degree programmes, according to subject area/review panel

	Favourable	Unfavourable	Withdrew	Total	% favourable
Arts and Humanities	11	6	0	17	65
Social Sciences and Law	44	5	0	49	90
Sciences	2	0	0	2	100
Health Sciences	15	0	1	16	94
Engineering and Architecture	15	1	0	16	94
Total	**87**	**12**	**1**	**100**	**88%**

Graph 4. Result of the evaluation of modifications to degree programmes, according to university
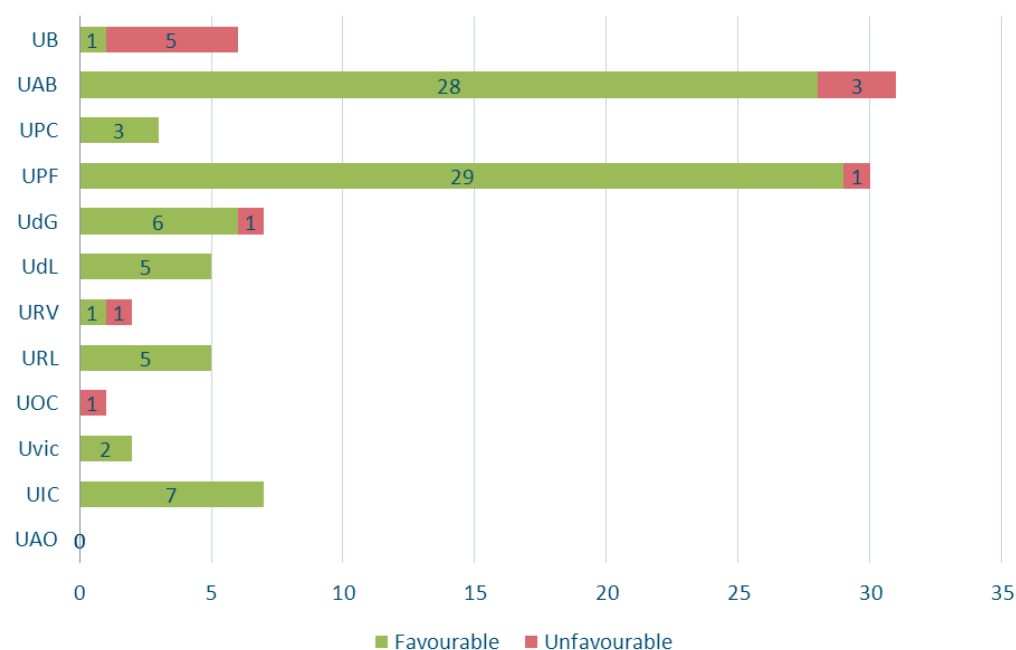
1.3. Monitoring

The monitoring of recognised degrees is carried out in consensus with the universities in Catalonia, and the process is described in the Agency's *Guide to the monitoring of recognised Bachelor and Master's degree programmes*.

The procedure begins with the submission of progress reports, together with a report that each university must submit with an assessment of the delivery of the corresponding programmes and the overall situation of these programmes within the university.

The call for applications in 2011 was made from 1-20 April. The universities confirmed that a total of 327 programmes had analysed programme delivery (203 Bachelors, 124 Masters), which accounts for approximately one third of all Bachelor and Master's degrees introduced and running in Catalonia.

105 progress reports were duly selected and AQU Catalunya issued the final reports on the selected sample of programmes.

Graph 5. Percentage of monitoring reports assessed by AQU on total reports submitted by universities
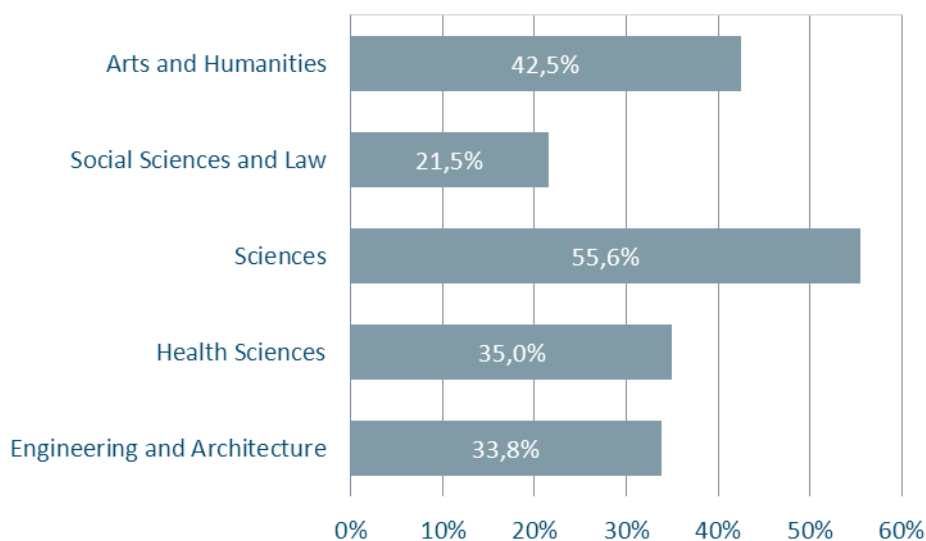
Table 4. Monitoring reports assessed by AQU, according to university and subject area/review panel

	Arts and Humanities		S. Sciences and Law		Sciences		Health Sciences		Engineering and Architecture		Total		% assessed
University	**P**	**E**	**P**	**E**	**P**	**E**	**P**	**E**	**P**	**E**	**P**	**E**	
UB	6	2	21	5	19	5	8	4	2	1	**56**	**17**	**30,4**
UAB	6	2	25	5	6	3	11	5	0	0	**48**	**15**	**31,3**
UPC	0	0	3	1	1	0	1	1	32	10	**37**	**12**	**32,4**
UPF	3	2	12	2	8	3	0	0	3	1	**26**	**8**	**30,8**
UdG	9	3	12	4	1	0	0	0	6	2	**28**	**9**	**32,1**
UdL	5	2	7	1	9	3	1	1	1	0	**23**	**7**	**30,4**
URV	5	3	12	2	5	2	5	3	4	1	**31**	**11**	**35,5**
UOC	2	2	11	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	**15**	**5**	**33,3**
URL	0	0	19	4	3	1	0	0	18	7	**40**	**12**	**30,0**
UVic	3	1	5	1	2	1	1	1	0	0	**11**	**4**	**36,4**
UIC	0	0	7	1	5	3	0	0	0	0	**12**	**4**	**33,3**
UAO	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	**3**	**1**	**33,3**
Total	40	17	135	29	60	21	27	15	68	23	330	105	**31,8%**
% assessed		43		21		35		56		34		32	

P: submitted reports; E: assessed reports

1.4. Accreditation

On the basis of the VSMA Framework and the processes of validation, modification and monitoring that was started in 2011, AQU Catalunya began to reflect on the process of accreditation, especially the site visits. In order for accreditation to be efficient and sustainable, the VSMA Framework provides for all of a faculty's degree courses to be simultaneously reviewed externally by the Agency.

1.5. AUDIT

The purpose of the AUDIT programme, which is implemented jointly by ANECA, ACSUG and AQU Catalunya, is to assess the suitability of faculty and department internal quality assurance systems (IQAS) prior to implementation.

The review of IQAS designs from the call made in 2010 was completed during 2011 and the call for 2011 was made, according to two forms of participation, either the extension of IQAS that were positively assessed in previous calls, or the evaluation of new IQAS.

Table 5. Faculties and schools that applied for the extension of a previous positive assessment

University	Faculty/School
UdG	Facultad de Educación y Psicología
	Escuela Politécnica Superior
	Facultad de Letras
	Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales
	Facultad de Medicina
	Facultad de Derecho
UdL	Facultad de Letras
	Facultad de Derecho y Economía
	Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación
	Facultad de Medicina
	Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingeniería Agraria
UIC	Facultad de Humanidades

Table 6. Faculties and schools that applied for a basic IQAS review

University	Faculty/School
UB	Escuela Universitaria de Enfermería Sant Joan de Déu
UAB	Escuela Universitaria Salesiana de Sarrià
UPC	Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingeniería Industrial de Barcelona
	Escuela Politécnica Superior de Ingeniería de Vilanova i la Geltrú
	Escuela Superior de Agricultura de Barcelona
	Escuela Universitaria de Ingeniería Técnica Industrial de Barcelona
	Escuela Universitaria Caixa Terrassa
	Escuela Universitaria Politécnica de Mataró
	Fundación Politécnica de Catalunya*
UPF	Facultad de Ciencias de la Salud y de la Vida
	Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales
	Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales
	Facultad de Comunicación
	Facultad de Derecho
	Facultad de Humanidades
	Facultad de Traducción e Interpretación
	Escuela Superior Politécnica
URV	Centre de Formación Permanente de la Fundación URV*
URL	La Salle
	Facultad de Educación Social y Trabajo Social Pere Tarrés
	ESADE - Escuela Universitaria de Turismo Sant Ignasi
	Escuela Superior de Diseño ESDi
UAO CEU	Facultad de Ciencias Sociales

* 2010 application call was opened to affiliated centres and foundations.

The heads of faculty that obtained a positive assessment for their IQAS design

In a ceremony held on 15 December, certificates from the AUDIT programme were awarded to the 109 faculties and schools in 24 universities that obtained a positive assessment for their IQAS design in the third call of the programme.

1.6. Student body

AQU Catalunya continued to promote the series of courses in university quality assurance. These courses enable students to obtain knowledge, understanding and skills that allow them to become involved in the running of QA systems and in their university's quality assurance and enhancement procedures. The UAB, UPC, URV and the UOC universities all participated.

Graph 6. Number of students who received training through courses in university quality assurance (2005-2011)
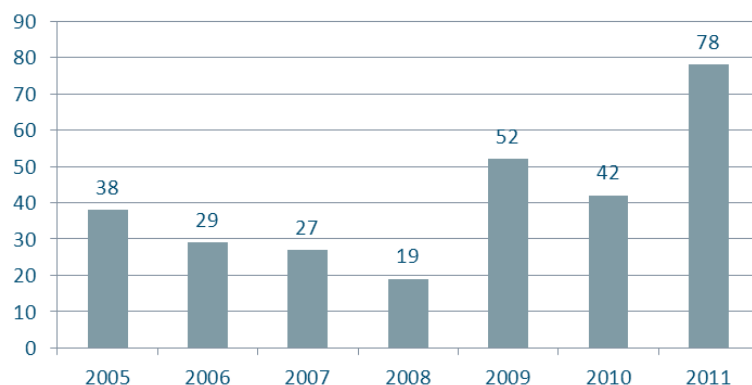
Graph 7. Number of students who received training through courses in university quality assurance, according to the universities that participated in the programme (2005-2011)
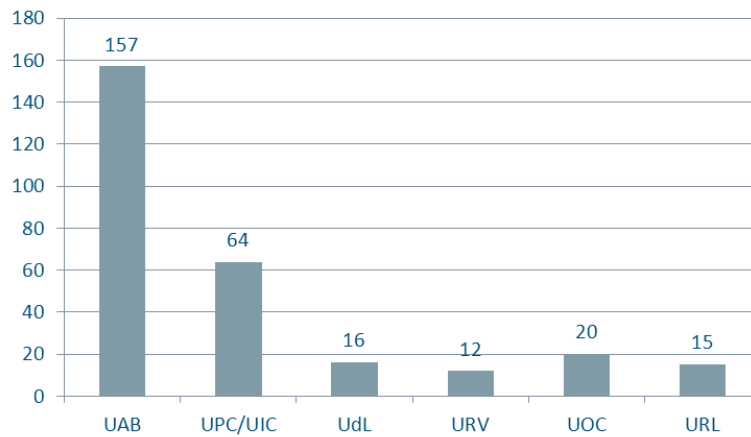
1.7.   The Agency's pool of reviewers

AQU Catalunya includes external experts, individuals of renowned standing in academic and/or professional circles, and students in its review processes, all of whom are selected on the basis of independence, objectivity and no-conflict-of-interest. The external experts are selected from the Agency's pool of reviewers.

In 2011 fifty (50) curriculums from academics, eight (8) from professionals and five (5) from students were submitted.

115 reviewers (55% of which were external to the higher education system in Catalonia) participated in institutional review processes in 2011, and 240 experts were involved in the quality assurance of teaching.

Graph 8. Number of experts who sent a cv, according to the profile (2005-2011)

Legend: ■ CV academic ■ CV student ■ CV professional
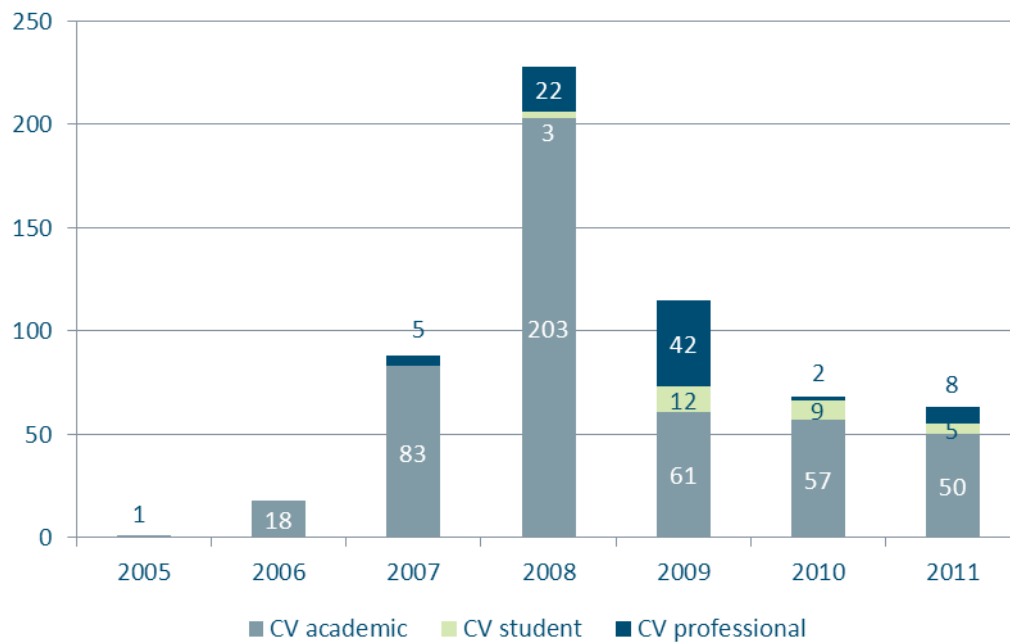
2. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF TEACHING

1. The assessment of academic staff prior to selection by the universities

In order to apply for selection for a contract teaching post at a public university in Catalonia, applicants must already be in possession of a favourable pre-selection report for the categories of collaborating and tenure-track staff, and an accreditation in research or advanced research for the categories of assistant professor and full professor, respectively.[2] The CLiC Commission (which deals with tenure-track and collaborating staff) and the Research Assessment Commission (CAR) both make two calls for applications every year for each of these positions.

An agreement signed between the private universities in Catalonia and AQU Catalunya covers the assessment of staff under the same terms for the issue of reports for tenure-track staff and accreditations in research and advanced research.

1.1. Reports for tenure-track and collaborating staff

The outcomes of the calls made in 2011 were as follows:

Table 7. Results[3] of the second call in 2010 for collaborating lecturer reports

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
Social Sciences	8	2	2	4	0	0	2	4	33
Experimental Sciences	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health Sciences	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Sciences	15	2	9	4	0	0	9	4	69
Engineering and Architecture	4	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Total	**31**	**9**	**11**	**10**	**0**	**1**	**11**	**11**	**50%**

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[2] Articles 46, 47, 48 and 49, Law 1/2003, 19 February, on the Universities in Catalonia (LUC, the Catalan Universities Act).

[3] TS: total applications; TSR: closed/no decision; F: favourable; D: unfavourable; RE: appeals accepted; RD: appeals dismissed; RP: appeals pending (see other tables); TF: total favourable; TD: total unfavourable; %F: percentage of favourable out of the total (excluding those closed with no final decision).

Table 8. Results of the first call in 2011 for collaborating lecturer reports

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	8	1	3	4	0	0	3	4	43
Social Sciences	11	1	10	0	0	0	10	0	100
Experimental Sciences	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	50
Health Sciences	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Sciences	24	3	15	5	0	1	15	6	71
Engineering and Architecture	7	2	4	1	0	0	4	1	80
Total	**54**	**9**	**33**	**11**	**0**	**1**	**33**	**12**	**73%**

Graph 9. Applications for collaborating lecturer reports (2003-2010)
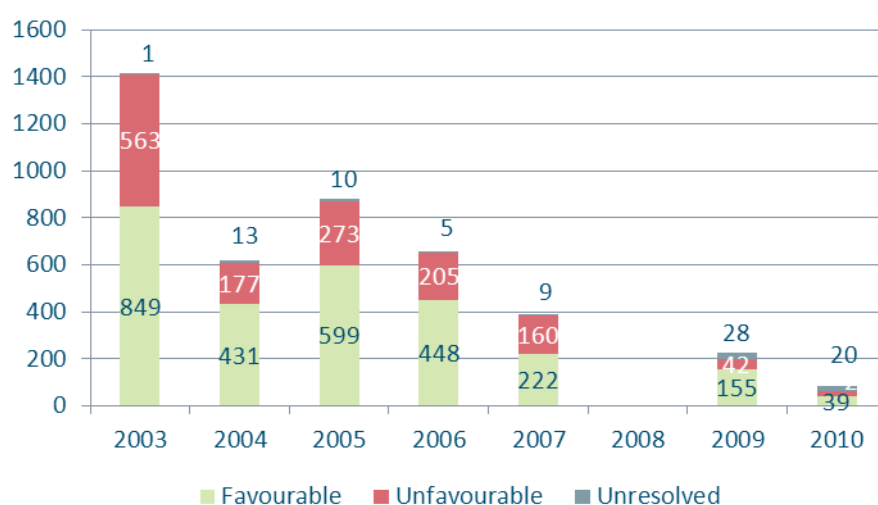
Graph 10. Applications for collaborating lecturer reports, according field of knowledge
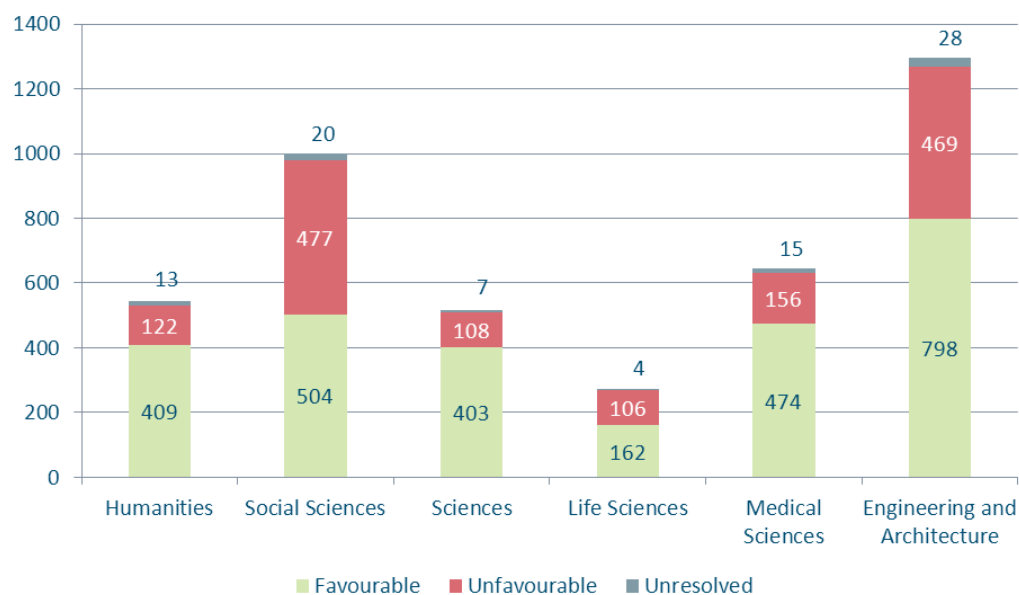

Legend: ■ Favourable ■ Unfavourable ■ Unresolved

Table 9. Results of the second call in 2010 for tenure-track lecturer reports

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	54	0	30	18	1	5	31	23	57
Social Sciences	64	3	33	17	3	8	36	25	59
Experimental Sciences	34	2	22	9	0	1	22	10	69
Health Sciences	30	0	13	15	0	2	13	17	43
Medical Sciences	29	0	20	8	0	1	20	9	69
Engineering and Architecture	60	0	47	10	1	2	48	12	80
Total	**271**	**5**	**165**	**77**	**5**	**19**	**170**	**96**	**64%**

Table 10. Results of the first call in 2011 for tenure-track lecturer reports

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	47	0	36	10	0	1	36	11	77
Social Sciences	100	1	46	40	1	12	47	52	47
Experimental Sciences	46	0	35	10	0	1	35	11	76
Health Sciences	32	0	13	17	0	2	13	19	41
Medical Sciences	36	1	18	14	1	2	19	16	54
Engineering and Architecture	55	0	44	10	0	1	44	11	80
Total	**316**	**2**	**192**	**101**	**2**	**19**	**194**	**120**	**62%**

Graph 11. Applications for tenure-track lecturer reports (2003-2010)

Favourable | Unfavourable | Unresolved
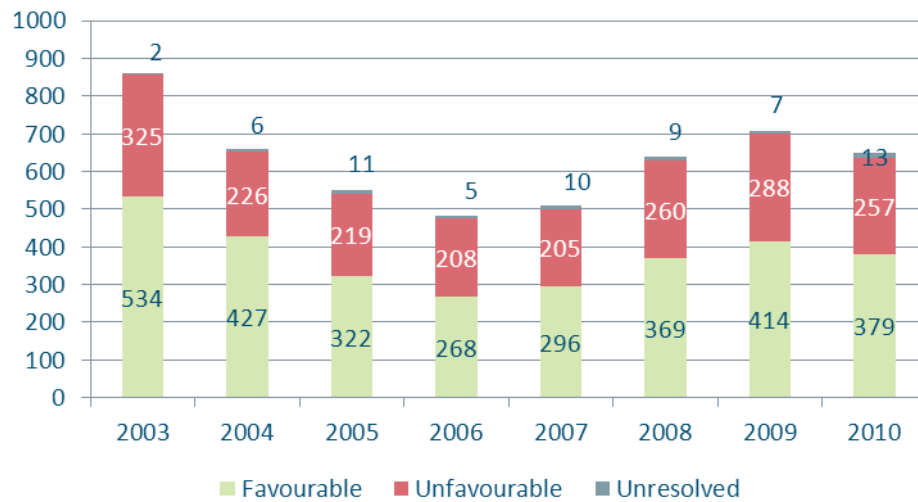
Graph 12. Applications for tenure-track lecturer reports, according to field of knowledge (2003-2010)

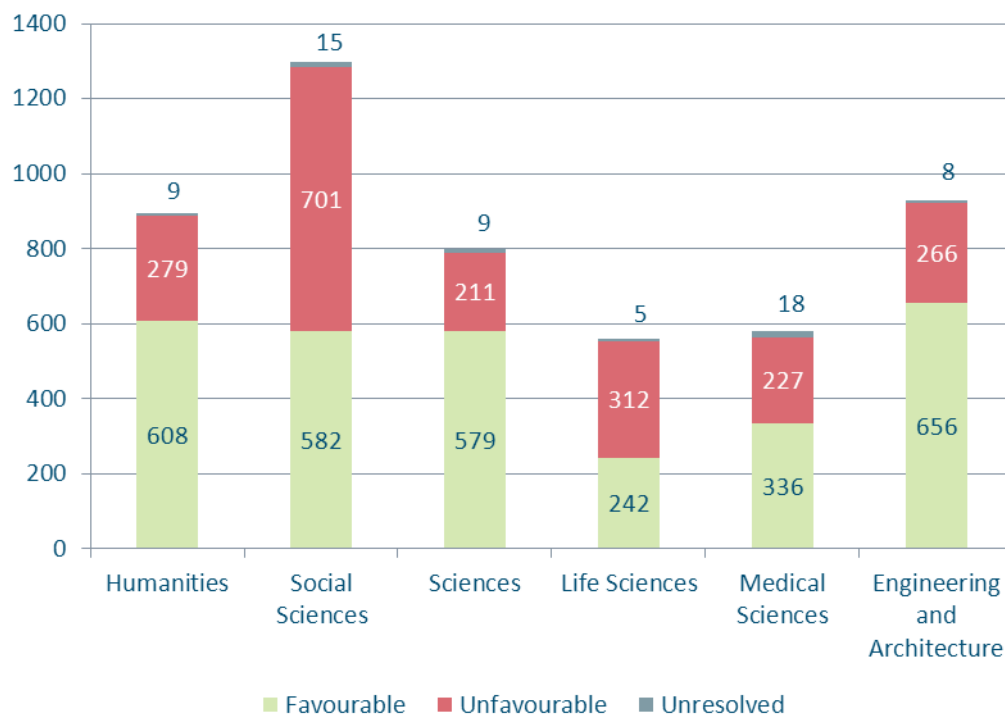Favourable | Unfavourable | Unresolved

Table 11. Applications received in the second call in 2011 for collaborating lecturer and tenure-track lecturer reports

Field of knowledge	Collaborating staff	Junior Lecturer
Humanities	2	37
Social Sciences	8	79
Experimental Sciences	0	29
Health Sciences	0	21
Medical Sciences	39	35
Engineering and Architecture	1	43
Total	**50**	**244**

1.2. Accreditations in research and advanced research

The outcomes of the calls made in 2011 were as follows:

Table 12. Results of the second call in 2010 for research accreditations

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	28	0	12	8	1	7	13	15	46
Social Sciences	32	1	16	9	0	6	16	15	52
Experimental Sciences	19	2	15	1	0	1	15	2	88
Health Sciences	9	0	5	3	0	1	5	4	56
Medical Sciences	29	2	16	9	0	2	16	11	59
Engineering and Architecture	32	1	23	7	0	1	23	8	74
Total	**149**	**6**	**87**	**37**	**1**	**18**	**88**	**55**	**62%**

Table 13. Results of the first call in 2011 for research accreditations

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	RP	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	33	3	11	13	5	0	1	11	14	37
Social Sciences	50	0	31	13	6	0	0	31	13	62
Experimental Sciences	31	3	19	8	1	0	0	19	8	68
Health Sciences	13	3	8	2	0	0	0	8	2	80
Medical Sciences	17	0	9	8	0	0	0	9	8	53
Engineering and Architecture	42	4	26	10	1	1	0	27	10	71
Total	**186**	**13**	**104**	**54**	**13**	**1**	**1**	**105**	**55**	**61%**

Graph 13. Applications for research accreditations (2003-2010)

Favourable ■ Unfavourable ■ Unresolved
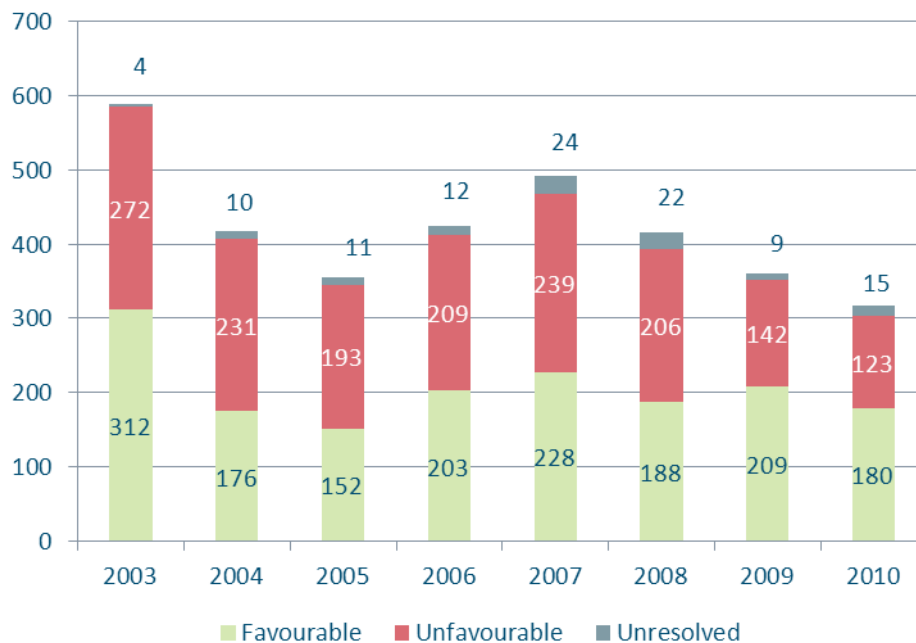
Graph 14. Applications for research accreditations, according to field of knowledge (2003-2010)

Favourable ■ Unfavourable ■ Unresolved
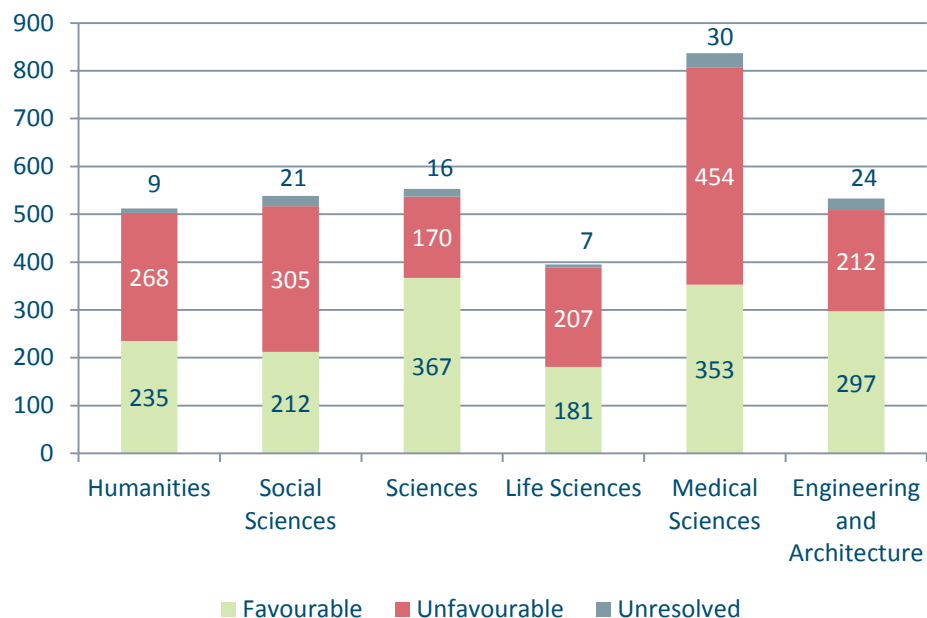
Table 14. Results of the second call in 2010 for advanced research accreditations

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	4	0	1	2	0	1	1	3	25
Social Sciences	11	1	4	6	0	0	4	6	40
Experimental Sciences	9	1	5	3	0	0	5	3	63
Health Sciences	4	0	3	1	0	0	3	1	75
Medical Sciences	11	0	8	2	0	1	8	3	73
Engineering and Architecture	13	2	4	2	1	4	5	6	45
Total	**52**	**4**	**25**	**16**	**1**	**6**	**26**	**22**	**54%**

Table 15. Results of the first call in 2011 for advanced research accreditations

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RP	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	5	0	3	2	0	3	2	60%
Social Sciences	5	0	1	2	2	1	2	20%
Experimental Sciences	5	0	5	0	0	5	0	100%
Health Sciences	4	0	3	1	0	3	1	75%
Medical Sciences	6	0	4	1	1	4	1	67%
Engineering and Architecture	10	0	7	3	0	7	3	70%
Total	**35**	**0**	**23**	**9**	**3**	**23**	**9**	**66%**

Graph 15. Applications for advanced research accreditations (2003-2010)

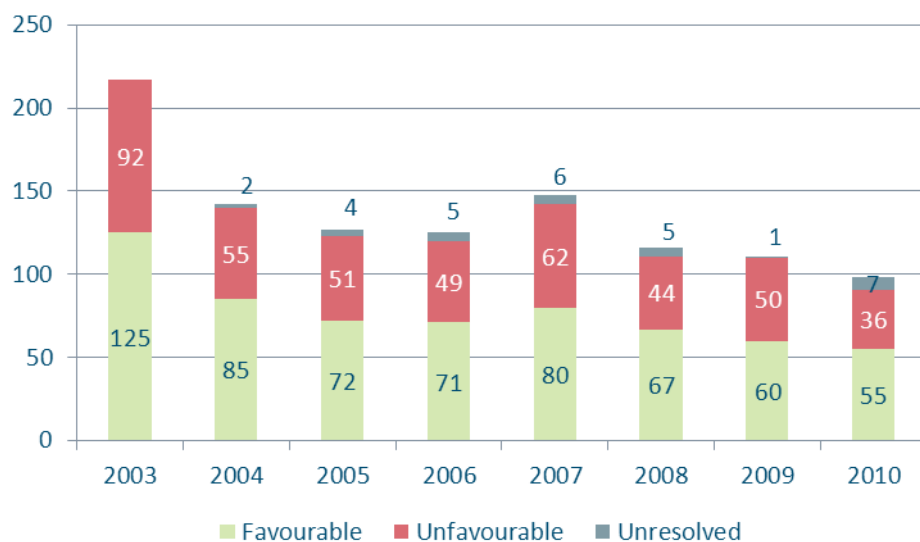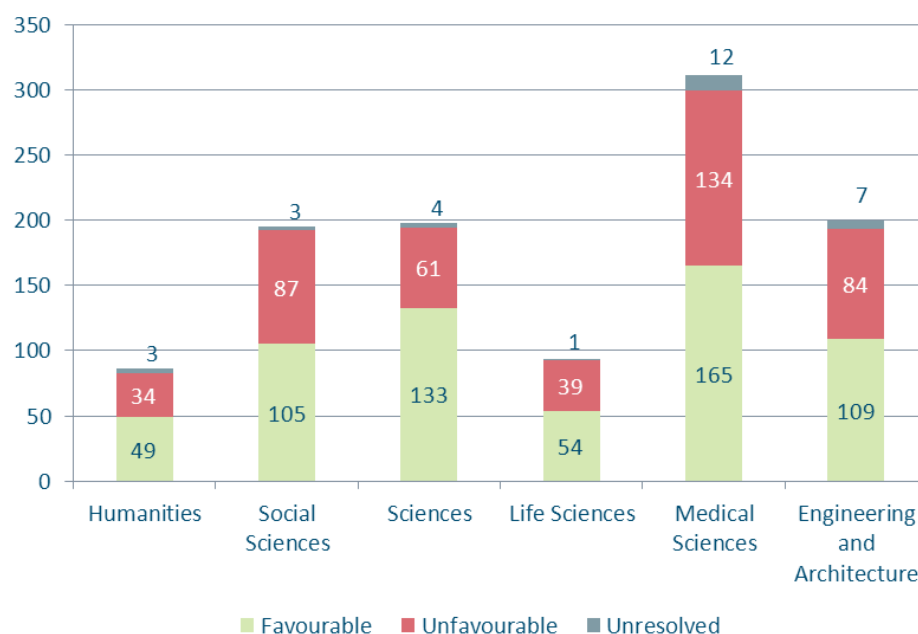**Graph 16. Applications for advanced research accreditations, according to field of knowledge (2003-2010)**

Favourable Unfavourable Unresolved

Table 16. Applications received in the second call in 2011 for research accreditation and advanced research accreditation

Field of knowledge	Research	Advanced research
Humanities	11	1
Social Sciences	50	9
Experimental Sciences	22	9
Health Sciences	20	1
Medical Sciences	17	7
Engineering and Architecture	31	6
Total	**151**	**33**

1.3. Teaching assessment certificates

The teaching assessment certificate serves as recognition for an applicant's compliance with a series of teaching prerequisites and is valid in competitive examinations for access to university teaching posts.

Fifty-seven (57) applications were received in 2011, of which fifty-six (56) were ruled as being favourable and one was closed with no final decision.

2. Assessment of merits in research, teaching and management

The allocation of salary increases to public service and contract teaching and research staff at public universities in Catalonia is based on the assessment of individual merits in teaching, research and administration.[4]

2.1. Merits in research

Merits in research are assessed directly by the Agency according to an established procedure and criteria. Assessments carried out by the Spanish Research Assessment Commission (CNEAI) for the same purpose are also recognised through a signed agreement.

The specific criteria for the evaluation of research by teaching and research staff at public universities in Catalonia for calls for applications made during the year were revised for 2011 and notice was given of the same.[5] As of 2011, public service and contract teaching and research staff applying for the assessment of merits in research can also request assessment for premiums on research and technology transfer.

A second call for applications for the assessment of merits in research of public service teaching and research staff was made in December 2011 to conform to the timetable of the CNEAI.[6]

Table 17. Results of the 2010 call for public service teaching and research staff at public universities

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	70	3	62	5	0	0	62	5	93
Social Sciences	149	10	133	6	0	0	133	6	96
Experimental Sciences	88	0	88	0	0	0	88	0	100
Health Sciences	48	0	48	0	0	0	48	0	100
Medical Sciences	85	9	74	1	0	1	74	2	97
Engineering and Architecture	100	2	95	3	00	0	95	3	97
Total	**540**	**24**	**500**	**15**	**0**	**1**	**500**	**16**	**97**

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[4] Decree 405/2006, 24 October, which established additional benefits for both public service (civil servant) and contract teaching and research staff at public universities in Catalonia.

[5] Resolution IUE/4114/2010, 22 December.

[6] Resolution ECO/1742/2011, 12 July.

Table 18. Results of the 2011 call for public service teaching and research staff at public universities

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	40	4	32	4	0	0	32	4	89
Social Sciences	76	7	65	4	0	0	65	4	94
Experimental Sciences	73	3	70	0	0	0	70	0	100
Health Sciences	32	3	29	0	0	0	29	0	100
Medical Sciences	23	2	21	0	0	0	21	0	100
Engineering and Architecture	81	8	70	3	0	0	70	3	96
Total	**325**	**27**	**287**	**11**	**0**	**0**	**287**	**11**	**96**

Table 19. Results of the 2011 call for contracted teaching and research staff at public universities

Field of knowledge	TS	TSR	F	D	RE	RD	RP	TF	TD	%F
Humanities	40	1	18	13	0	0	8	18	21	46
Social Sciences	105	3	70	18	0	3	11	70	32	69
Experimental Sciences	56	2	49	4	0	0	1	49	5	91
Health Sciences	61	1	52	3	0	1	4	52	8	87
Medical Sciences	27	1	22	2	0	1	1	22	4	85
Engineering and Architecture	119	5	88	17	0	0	9	88	26	77
Total	**408**	**13**	**299**	**57**	**0**	**5**	**34**	**299**	**96**	**76**

AQU Catalunya signed agreements concerning the assessment of the work of researchers at the following institutions:

- Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (Technical University of Catalonia): two (2) applications were received, both of which were given a positive ruling.

- Institut Nacional d'Educació Física de Catalunya: twenty-four (24) applications were received, of which eleven (11) were given a positive ruling, five (5) were given a negative ruling, three (3) were without a ruling, and the rest are pending an appeal.

- Universidad de Extremadura: twenty-two (22) applications were assessed, of which five (5) were closed without a ruling and twelve (12) were given a positive ruling. There are two (2) still pending an appeal.

2.2.   Merits in teaching and management

The model used for the **quality assurance of teaching** is set out in the handbooks for teaching assessment at public universities, which are accredited by AQU Catalunya for the period covering 2009-2012. According to the prevailing legislation (decree), the Agency shall certify all reports that deal with the merits of academic staff in teaching issued by the universities.

Table 20. Results of the 2010 call for certification of the assessment of merits in teaching

Potential applicants	Actual total applicants	%	Positive	%	Negative	%	% favourable/ potential
2.209	1.583	71,66	1.446	97,37	39	2,63	97,37

The number of potential applicants includes academic staff from previous calls with the option to participate in the 2010 call.

In the case of the private universities, and within the framework of the DOCENTIA programme, the process was set in motion of monitoring the application of the respective teaching assessment handbooks certified by the Agency in 2008. The private universities submitted their self-reports on monitoring, which will be reviewed in 2012.
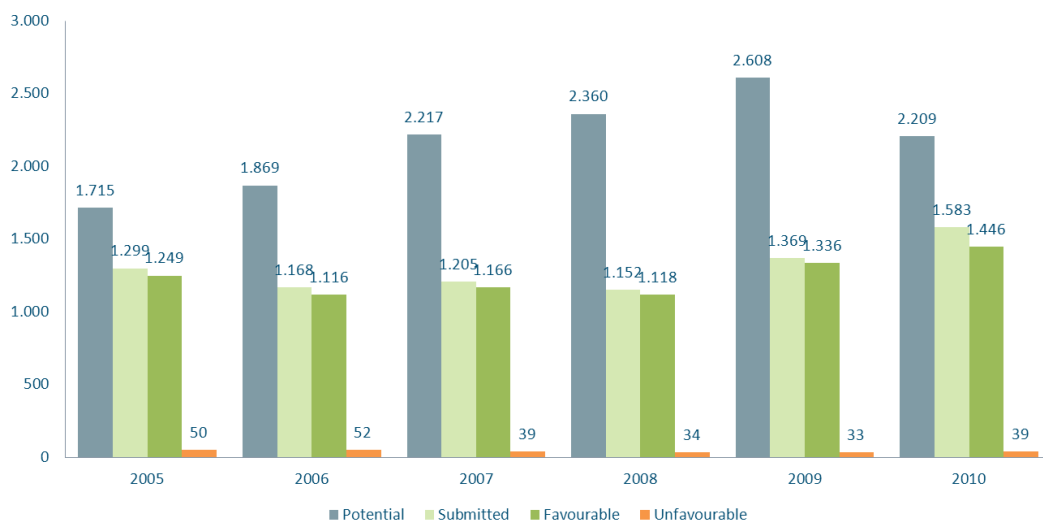
Catalan universities assess the **individual merits in management** of both public service and contract academic staff, using the corresponding instructions endorsed by AQU Catalunya and the Directorate General for Universities.

Table 21. Results of the 2010 call for certification of the assessment of merits in management premium
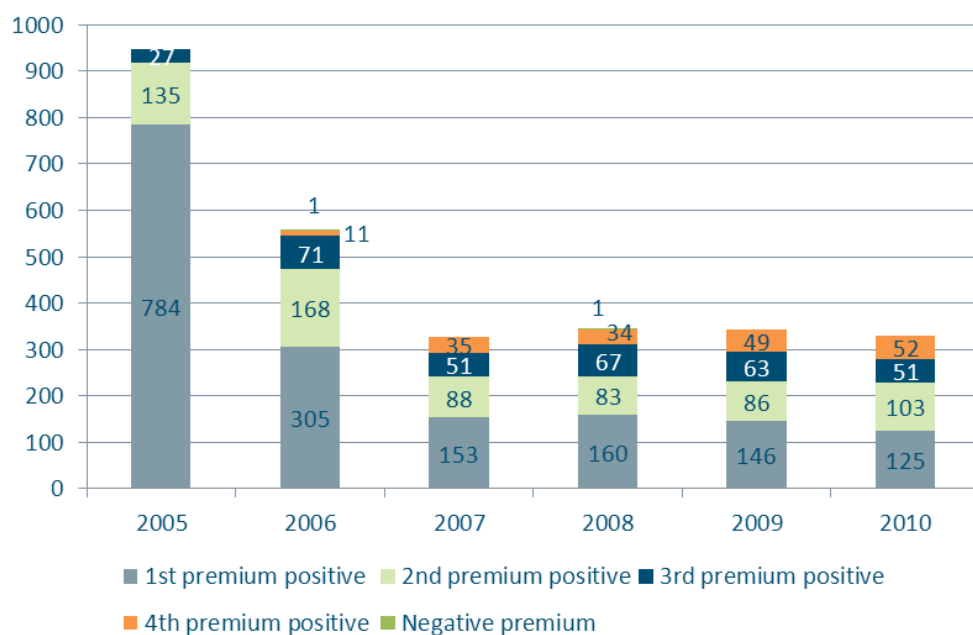
Periods assessed	Favourable	Unfavourable	1st period	2nd period	3rd period	4th period
331	331	0	125	103	51	52

The information in the table refers to periods of externally assessed skills in management, not people.

Graph 17. The assessment of merits in teaching (2005-2010)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Potential	1.715	1.869	2.217	2.360	2.608	2.209
Submitted	1.299	1.168	1.205	1.152	1.369	1.583
Favourable	1.249	1.116	1.166	1.118	1.336	1.446
Unfavourable	50	52	39	34	33	39

■ Potential   ■ Submitted   ■ Favourable   ■ Unfavourable

Graph 18. The assessment of merits in management (2005-2010)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1st premium positive	784	305	153	160	146	125
2nd premium positive	135	168	88	83	86	103
3rd premium positive	27	71	51	67	63	51
4th premium positive		1	35	34	49	52
Negative premium		11		1		

■ 1st premium positive   ■ 2nd premium positive   ■ 3rd premium positive

■ 4th premium positive   ■ Negative premium

3. KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

1. Higher education system in Catalonia

1.1. The 2011 survey on graduate labour market outcomes

AQU Catalunya carried out the fourth study on the labour market outcomes of graduates from Catalan universities, which stands out because of the participation this time in the survey of all of the universities in Catalonia, and because it represents the most extensive analysis of this type ever made in the European Union. The study, which was based on a sample of 16,182 out of a total population of 28,616 graduates who completed their studies at the end of the 2006-2007 academic year, was based on three more specific surveys:

Graduates 2006-2007. To analyse the job quality of the graduate population in the 2006-2007 cohort and their assessment of their studies at university three years after graduation.

Doctorates 2006 and 2007. To analyse the job quality of the population of doctorate degree holders who read their theses in 2006 and 2007 and their assessment of their doctoral programmes three years afterwards.

Gender monitoring 2001. To analyse any gender-based differences and inequalities in the graduate population regarding their employment outcomes ten years after graduation.

The main new development in the latest survey was the inclusion of the private universities and also twenty-two (22) affiliated institutions in the study.

The findings of the study are as follows:

- 89% of all graduates were either employed or steadily self-employed.

- 3 out of every 100 were either taking further studies or were not looking for work.

- 8% were in forced unemployment, which, although this figure was high, was much lower than the general unemployment rate and also lower than that of people of an equivalent age without university studies.

- Half of those who were employed had a fixed-term contract and over 80% had graduate-level job responsibilities, although not always linked to the specific degree required to obtain the job.

- In relation to graduate satisfaction with undergraduate studies, 73% of the survey respondents would take the same degree if they had to start over again. This percentage ranged between 67% in Engineering and Architecture to 82% in Health Sciences.

1.2. Indicators and an overview of Catalan universities

AQU Catalunya did the ground work to set up a relevant and efficient catalogue of indicators for the monitoring and accreditation of recognised degree courses.

This information, which is available on the Winddat webpage, gives indicators and statistics on programme delivery at Catalan universities and offers a versatile tool in particular for the academic community, but also for use by society in general. On the one hand, it has been designed to give teaching staff and academic coordinators the necessary information for the analysis and monitoring of programmes of study and for decision-making. On the other, it is designed to guide students (both those who wish to go to university and those who are already at university) by providing data on the trend of academic outcomes in courses they are interested in.

The Winddat webpage provides information on the seven public universities in Catalonia and the University of Vic. Details on all of the universities in the higher education system in Catalonia will be added progressively, and the webpage is expected to be up and running by early 2012.

2. Workshops, seminars and events

AQU Catalunya organised three events in 2011 to present the findings of the fourth survey on the labour market outcomes of graduates from Catalan universities.

- **Presentation of the findings of the study to Catalan universities** (11 July). The purpose was to disseminate the findings that feed the indicators that will be used later on in the monitoring of recognised degree programmes.

- **Research with the graduate labour market outcomes database** (13 July). This event also saw the presentation of AQU Catalunya's database on labour market outcomes, the procedure for the assignment and use of data by interested researchers and research groups in Catalonia, and the Agency's key research priorities.

- **Graduate labour market outcomes and education-job match: competition at the international level** (16 November). The Fundació Cercle d'Economia and AQU Catalunya organised this round table workshop, the aim of which was to publicise and disseminate the findings of the survey to the public and also to initiate a debate on the subject of the education-job match of graduates in business and industry as a value in competition at the international level.

Members of the round table on "Graduate labour market outcomes and education-job match: competition at the international level"

4. INTERNATIONALISATION

1. Institutional relations

ENQA

AQU Catalunya has been a full member of European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) since the European association was founded in 2000. The Catalan Agency currently has one representative on the ENQA Board, the executive body that coordinates the European Association of QA agencies, who, on behalf of ENQA, also sat on the Steering Committee of the European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF) in 2010 and 2011.

ECA

In 2010 AQU Catalunya joined the ECA, which aims for the mutual recognition of accreditation and quality assurance decisions.

AQU Catalunya organised the fourteenth workshop of the ECA on 20-21 June 2011 at the Pompeu Fabra University. The members of the ECA dealt with matters relating to the management of the consortium, including the budget and the annual report. Bilateral mutual recognition agreements were also signed between OAQ (Organ für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung der Schweizerischen Hochschulen, Switzerland) and ÖAR (Austrian Accreditation Council, Austria), and between OAQ and NVAO (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie, the Netherlands and Flanders/Belgium accreditation body).

2. International projects

Internationalisation

ERANET-MUNDUS (2011 onwards). Erasmus Mundus ERANET-MUNDUS. A project coordinated by the University of Barcelona (UB), the aim of which is to promote mobility and establish links between universities in Russia and the European Union.

AQU has been commissioned to develop a specific methodology for the external review of the Study Abroad programmes at Catalan universities. The Agency is working with the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) in connection with this project.

Cooperation

DIES ASEAN-QA (2011 onwards). Joint capacity building project in Southeast Asia. This project promotes the regional development of QA systems, the main objectives being the quality assurance and enhancement of programmes of study, the recognition of credits and qualifications on the basis of a series of principles of quality assurance and standards, and to improve university management, all through the sharing of experience. AQU Catalunya participates on behalf of ENQA.

JISER-MED (2011 onwards). Joint innovation and synergies in education and research. A project coordinated by the University of Barcelona (UB) that seeks to promote the Erasmus Mundus objectives within the context of countries in the Mediterranean and contribute to the development of a Euro-Mediterranean area of higher education and research.

AQU Catalunya collaborates with ANECA in the development of quality assurance matters.

TEMPUS BiH (2007 onwards). TEMPUS in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A European Community programme designed to provide support to non-member countries for the development of higher education. The main objective of the project is to develop a university QA system for Bosnia and Herzegovina based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). AQU participates in this project as a trainer of reviewers and university QA management and coordinates the external review of seven university programmes of study.

Innovation

Life Long Learning (2010 onwards). FLLLEX. The Impact of LifeLong Learning Strategies on Professional Higher Education. A project promoted by EURASHE (European Association of Institutions in Higher Education) and structured in the form of the consortium consisting of 24 partners from ten different countries. AQU participates in this project on behalf of ENQA. The project focuses on the review of policies that deal with lifelong learning in higher education institutions. AQU Catalunya has been in charge of preparing the methodology for the self-evaluation of these policies and strategies by universities.

JOQAR (2010 onwards). Joint programmes: Quality Assurance and Recognition of degrees awarded. A European project coordinated by the ECA that aims at promoting multilateral recognition between agencies and the integration of external QA and accreditation of joint programmes by quality assurance/accreditation agencies (QA/A agencies) with international recognition by recognition bodies (ENIC-NARIC). Inter-university study programmes offered in Europe are to be reviewed in this project, one of which is coordinated by the University of Barcelona (UB).

ETRAIN (2010 onwards). European Training of QA Experts. An ECA project with the overall aim of facilitating the sharing of trained, knowledgeable, and internationally experienced experts who will be better equipped to participate in QA procedures

Benchmarking

QPP (2011 onwards). Quality Procedures in European Higher Education: Visions for the future. A third survey conducted by ENQA of quality procedures in European higher education. Coordinated by AQU Catalunya, the survey focuses on good practices in external quality review processes, user orientation and exploring the priorities in this field at the European level.

5. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

1. External review of AQU Catalunya in accordance with the European standards and guidelines

ENQA accepted to coordinate the second international external review of AQU Catalunya. The intention of the Agency in again submitting to the process of an international external QA review was twofold: on the one hand, to maintain the status resulting from the first international review in 2007 and, on the other, to be in possession of an effective instrument for moving ahead in the continuous enhancement of its activities from an international standpoint.

ENQA has two set types of review. Type A review evaluates the agency's compliance with ENQA membership criteria and with the ESG (external programme review activities) while a Type B review evaluates other aspects in addition to the ENQA membership criteria and the ESG, such as specific demands of national legislation, particular statutory functions or follow-up on previous review.

AQU Catalunya applied for a type B review. The review began in the third quarter of 2011 with the drawing up of the Agency's self-evaluation report. It is anticipated that the site visit of the international external review panel from ENQA will take place during the spring of 2012.

The granting/reconfirmation of full membership to ENQA following the external review facilitates mutual recognition agreements concerning reviews carried out by the Agency with other national and international agencies and institutions. In accordance with Spanish regulations, only those agencies in the Autonomous Communities (regions) that have passed the international review, are full members of ENQA and registered with EQAR, can carry out validation (ex-ante accreditation).

2. Governing and QA bodies

The governing bodies of AQU Catalunya, the Board of Management and the Standing Committee, met to supervise and endorse all actions by the Agency.

Meetings of the Quality Assurance Commission were held in order for it to be informed about and supervise work carried out in relation to programme review and the QA schedule over the next few years. It also endorsed the methodological material for degree course validation and

monitoring, as well as for institutional review in cases where foreign programmes and awards are offered in Catalonia.

Meetings of the CLiC Commission, which deals with tenure-track and collaborating staff, were held to supervise the various tasks carried out by the special review panels and to work on the concept of recognised studies, adapt the criteria of several review panels, improve the wording of and grounds for unfavourable reports, and finalise and approve the calls for applications regarding the assessment of tenure-track and collaborating staff.

Meetings of the Research Assessment Commission (CAR) were held to supervise the various tasks carried out by the special review panels, enhance certain aspects of the review process and finalise and approve the calls for applications regarding the assessment of research and advanced research.

3. Advisory bodies

Meetings of the AQU Student Commission were held to deal with the validation (ex-ante accreditation) of recognised programmes and the activity of students on the special review panels, analyse the information that is made public in monitoring and supervise the development and delivery of the series of courses for training students in university quality assurance.

4. Catalan universities and the social partners

AQU Catalunya held meetings with:

- the vice-rectors responsible for quality and academic governance to deal with the validation and modification of recognised programmes, together with the corresponding timetable, and also non-recognised degrees (degrees unique to specific institutions), and also to present the Winddat webpage.

- the vice-rectors responsible for research and doctoral studies to present the Guide to the formulation and ex-ante accreditation of proposals for recognised doctorate programmes.

- the vice-rectors responsible for teaching to monitor the DOCENTIA programme.

5. Communication

Publications

AQU Catalunya released ten publications, which included the review guides for the validation of proposals for recognised programmes, the programme monitoring handbooks, the guides for institutions offering foreign programmes and awards in Catalonia, and the report on the findings of the fourth survey on the labour market outcomes of graduates from Catalan universities.

Website

The AQU Catalunya website was maintained and kept up to date and now consists of 2,340 pages (872 in Catalan, 857 in Spanish and 611 in English), 954 pictures and 2,867 documents.

The number of website visits was consolidated at around 107,000, and more than 73,000 documents were accessed. The documents most consulted were those connected with academic staff assessment processes.

The Agency also developed a specific application for publishing external reports on programmes of study and institutions. Review reports produced by the Agency since 2008 on degree courses, on the one hand, and faculties and universities, on the other, are now available on the website.
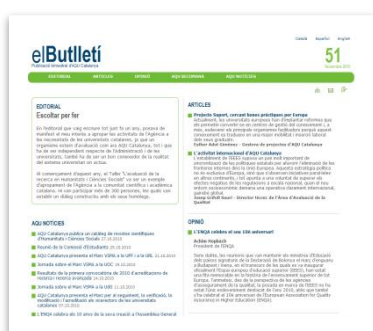
The e-newsletter (elButlletí)

Six issues (editions 52 to 57) were produced of the e-newsletter (elButlletí), the Agency's bi-monthly publication in Catalan, Spanish and English that gives in-depth information on activities and projects that are carried out, together with the opinion of the participants. The e-newsletter is sent out to more than 5,700 subscribers.

Graph 19. Subscribers to the e-newsletter *elButlletí* 2011

- Agencies
- Universities
- Media
- Private/corporate enterprise
- Government
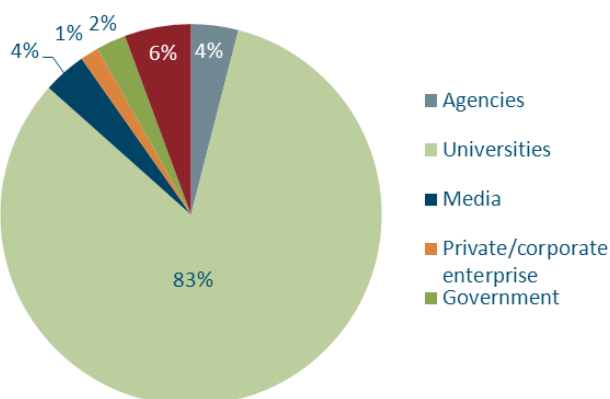
Media

A press conference was held to present the findings of the fourth survey on the labour market outcomes of graduates from Catalan universities.

During 2011 there were 28 citations referring to AQU Catalunya in the press and appearances in broadcast media.

6. INTERNAL ORGANISATION

1. Accountability and internal quality

1.1. Internal quality and information security system

The Agency's quality policy was revised, with information security now being included.

The commitments of AQU Catalunya to quality comprise:

- External review of the Agency in accordance with the European standards for quality assurance.

- The internal quality management system based on ISO 9001, the internationally recognised standard for quality management.

The Agency's commitments to information security comprise:

- Adoption of the necessary measures to ensure the security of information, with the aim of protecting the interests and rights of users of the Agency's services.

- Compliance with prevailing legislation concerning personal data protection and intellectual and industrial copyright.

- Establishing conditions of trust in the use of electronic media and continuous provision of services through information systems that comply with prevailing legislation and current security standards.

In response to the new quality and information security policy, the Agency's Quality Committee was renamed the Quality and Security Committee, and a Security Monitoring Committee has been set up.

In 2011 the Agency again successfully passed the external audit for ISO 9001:2008 certification.

2. Information and communication technologies / ICT

In the area of management IT, AQU Catalunya implemented the following actions:

- Development and coming on-line of the webpage with published reports and integration of the data with the portal of the Generalitat de Catalunya, Why and what to study at a Catalan university? (Why study at the Catalan universities and what's on offer there?)

- The coming on-line of the new version of the extranet to handle the application software for monitoring programmes of study (VSMA Framework).

- Coordination of the development of the Winddat website.

- Definition of the specifications of the new AQU Catalunya web portal (extranet), which will include the management of processes stemming from programme and institutional review, and the accreditation of both academic staff and the management of experts.

- Launch of the intranet migration project: transfer of contents, new developments for workflows for formalities and projects, and the incorporation of new uses for the intranet.

- Adaptation of the graduate labour market outcomes web page to the new requirements of the fourth survey.

In the area of computer information systems, the following actions were carried out:

- Restructuring and security of the entire AQU Catalunya network.

- Migration of corporate mail to the new platform and implementation of the internal mail server.

- Migration of desk-top equipment to laptops.

- Documentation for all AQU Catalunya infrastructure, covering hardware, services and processes.

3. Human resources

In addition to the director and the manager, the Agency's staff totalled 41 people (31 female and 10 male) with an average age of 37.2, of which 26 had a permanent contract, 14 were interim staff and there was one (1) work and services staff member.

In addition, AQU Catalunya had the support of one innovation and methodology coordinator and one review adviser. There were also four student trainees, through agreements with universities and vocational training institutions.

Pursuant to Instruction 1/2011 concerning the application of specific measures as regards staff laid down in Decree 109/2011, 11 January, the Agency reduced payroll expenditure (staff wages) by 6% and the number of staff by 5%.

The staff training scheme was redesigned and organised with a specific policy and series of rules, which will run for a period of four years (2011-2015), together with a list of annual training

actions. All Agency staff took some kind of training activity in 2011, and thirty (30) programmed training activities were run.

The formalities of staff ticket restaurant vouchers and the social welfare fund were processed. In accordance with Law 6/2011, 27 July, concerning the budget of the Generalitat de Catalunya for 2011, no contributions were made to the pension plan.

4. Financial and accounting management

The 2011 financial year was marked by efforts to optimise resources, through negotiation with suppliers and improved efficiency in project development, and to increase revenue, with the search for new sources of funding in order to carry out the maximum number of activities possible. It is important to note that budgets for the 2011 financial year were not endorsed until July, and there was a reduction of 12.78% and 10%, respectively, in the current and capital transfers received from the competent government department with jurisdiction over universities, in comparison to the previous year.

AQU Catalunya applied Instruction 1/2011 concerning the application of specific measures as regards staff laid down in Decree 109/2011, 11 January, which consisted, amongst other things, of the 6% reduction in staff wages and a 5% reduction in the number of staff. An Accord, 15 November 2011, together with an Instruction, 16 November 2011, of the Catalan Government, which established a reduction in the amount of the bonus for senior management for the month of December, were also applied.

The budgetary supervision of projects was also consolidated as a tool for improving management of the Agency's economic resources.

The financial audit for 2010 was carried out from October to December by an external firm assigned by the Catalan Government's Public Accounts Department (Sub-directorate General for the Financial Audit of Government Entities)[7]. Just one dispensation was detected in the audit report, and it was resolved in January 2012. The report also points out that internal audit control had improved in relation to the previous year.

Table 22. Budget revenue 2011

Recognised income and assets	Initial budget	Actual amount in €
Charges, sale of assets and services	65.210,00	61.051,36
Current transfers	2.981.170,42	3.005.573,23
Additions to capital	44,00	2.761,86
Variation in financial assets	88.935,74	88.935,74
Total	3.135.360,16	3.158.322,19

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[7] Subdirecció General de Control d'Empreses i Entitats Públiques de la Intervenció General de la Generalitat de Catalunya

Table 23. Final expenditure 2011

Recognised expenditure and liabilities	Initial budget	Actual amount in €
Staff salaries	1.769.079,82	1.852.385,21
Expenditure on current assets and services	1.268.764,60	1.221.844,48
Financing expenses	10,00	21,99
Current transfers	8.570,00	39.890,40
Current investments	88.935,74	88.342,63
Total	**3.135.360,16**	**3.202.484,71**

A breakdown of the expenditure budget for each of the strategic areas in which the Agency is active was as follows:

Table 24. Final expenditure 2011 according to strategic category

Strategic category	Amount in €	% on budget
I. Quality assurance of institutions and programmes	667.052,90	20,83
II. Quality assurance of teaching	513.318,02	16,03
III. Knowledge generation	329.379,28	10,29
IV. Internationalisation	73.887,28	2,31
V. Strategic management and communication	274.322,70	8,57
VI. Internal organisation	1.344.485,13	41,97
Total	**3.202.445,33**	**100,00**

5. Legal aspects

AQU Catalunya reviewed the diagnosis of its compliance with prevailing legislation regarding data protection (LOPD, Spanish acronym), and it redefined and registered its personal record files with the Catalan Data Protection Authority (APDCAT). It also reviewed its plan for compliance with the National Security Framework (ENS), as laid down in the regulations on the quality assurance of academic staff and recognised programmes and awards.