

Internal Operating Rules of the Commission of Study Programmes Evaluation (CET) and Panel of Experts of AQUIB



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Index

1. COMISSION OF STUDY PROGRAMMES EVALUATION (CET)	3
1.1. COMPOSITION	3
1.2. SELECTION CRITERIA	4
1.3. TENURE AND TERMINATION	5
1.4. FUNCTIONS	5
1.5. OPERATION.....	6
1.6. AGREEMENTS AND MINUTES	6
2. PANEL OF EXPERTS.....	7
2.1. COMPOSITION	7
2.2. SELECTION CRITERIA	8
2.3. SELECTION PROCEDURE	9
2.4. FUNCTIONS	10
3. MODIFICATIONS TO THIS DOCUMENT	11

Table of acronyms and abbreviations

AQUIB	Balearic Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
CET	Commission of Study Programmes Evaluation
EV	Evidence of site visit
IA	Self-assessment report
IAS	Annual self-assessment report
IDS	Final follow-up report
IFA	Final ex post accreditation report
IPA	Provisional ex post accreditation report
IPS	Provisional follow-up report

1. COMISSION OF STUDY PROGRAMMES EVALUATION (CET)

The Commission of Study Programmes Evaluation (CET), acting with complete autonomy and independence, serves as the technical body of the Balearic Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (AQUIB) responsible for accrediting official university programs. Its functions include the evaluation, assurance and enhancement of the quality of the university system in the Balearic Islands. The CET is divided into two subcommissions based on knowledge domains:

- Subcommission for Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences and Law.
- Subcommission for Sciences, Health Sciences, Engineering and Architecture.

1.1. Composition

The appointment of the CET is entrusted to the AQUIB Board of Directors, after consultation with the Advisory Commission. Each subcommission comprises, at a minimum, the following members:

- **Academic representatives.** Teaching and research staff from universities or other higher education and research institutions with recognized academic prestige and experience in university management, external to the Balearic Islands system. A minimum of two-thirds of this group must have prior experience in programme evaluation. Generally, two individuals per knowledge domain included in the subcommission are selected, with the president being chosen from among these representatives.
- **Quality representatives.** Individuals with demonstrated experience in evaluating university quality systems, external to the Balearic Islands' education and research system.
- **Professional representative.** Practicing professionals, preferably with knowledge of external evaluation processes, appointed based on recommendations from the selected professional association.
- **Student representative.** A person with student status, external to the Balearic Islands university system, possessing education and experience in evaluation processes.
- **Secretary.** AQUIB personnel with experience and knowledge of evaluation processes, serving as technical and methodological support for the Commission.

Additionally, AQUIB ensures gender balance in the Commission, whenever possible. The number of individuals per domain forming the CET may be increased, based on anticipated workload, for each knowledge domain. This increase requires a technical report justifying the need for additional members.

1.2. Selection Criteria

The selection of members of the CET is carried out based on the following criteria:

- **Quality of professional activity.** Academic vocals must hold the position of full professor¹. Recognised teaching and research experience is taken into account. For quality and student members, knowledge of university quality management systems is considered.
- **Suitability.** The aim is to ensure the utmost suitability of evaluators based on their association with the knowledge areas of the programmes to be evaluated, thereby guaranteeing representation from various fields of knowledge.
- **Experience in programme evaluation.** Expertise in the Spanish higher education system is considered valuable (legislation, structure, university management, etc.). Proficiency in existing evaluation models, as well as evaluation procedures and techniques are regarded. Previous experience in evaluations for AQUIB is also given consideration.
- **Territorial representation.** It is sought to include individuals from different autonomous communities, external to the higher education system of the Balearic Islands.
- **Conflict of interest.** No CET member can be affiliated or have a current relationship with the university system of the Balearic Islands, such as active joint projects, co-supervision of ongoing doctoral theses, etc., nor can they have had such relationship in the past five years.

¹ Exceptionally, individuals who do not hold the position of full professor may be included, provided there is a justified technical report.

1.3. Tenure and termination

The term of office of the Commission's members is of four years, with the possibility of renewal for an additional period of four years, provided that the conditions of their appointment remain unchanged.

Membership is forfeited for the following reasons:

- a) Completion of their term of office.
- b) Resignation.
- c) Ceasing to meet any of the criteria for which they were selected.
- d) Existence of a conflict of interest.
- e) Non-compliance with the Code of Ethics of the Agency.
- f) Repeated failure to fulfil their duties as a member of this Commission.
- g) Decease.

In cases c), d), e) and f) a resolution from the director of AQUIB is required, following a report from the Guarantees Commission.

1.4. Functions

Commission members are tasked with the following primary functions:

General	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Attend and actively participate in scheduled meetings. b) Harmonise the analyses of the study programme with a cross-sectional vision. c) Ensure compliance with the quality procedures of AQUIB.
President	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Represent the respective subcommission. b) Coordinate the assigned subcommission and its activities. c) Sign the relevant reports. d) Sign the meeting minutes.
Presenter	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) For accreditation renewal, analyse the Evidence of site visit (EV) and the study programme dossier to draft the Provisional ex post accreditation report (IPA). b) For the follow-up process, analyse the Annual assessment report (IAS) and the study programme dossier to conduct the primary evaluation. c) Draft the Provisional follow-up report (IPS). d) In case of objections to the IPA or IPS, analyse and make necessary changes to issue the Final ex post accreditation report (IFA) and the Final follow-up report (IDS). e) Present the reports to the CET.

Reviewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) For accreditation renewal, review the IPA and the IFA drafts prepared by the presenter and, if necessary, make contributions. b) For follow-up, analyse the IAS and the study programme dossier to conduct a preliminary evaluation.
Student representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide a curricular/academic perspective to other CET members, offering insights from the student's point of view.
Quality representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Support the evaluation of criteria related to quality assurance, review, and improvement of the programme.
Technical secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Set the agenda, send relevant documentation and record meeting minutes. b) Coordinate subcommission meetings c) Provide a technical perspective in the analysis of the degree program that is cross-cutting across all programs.

1.5. Operation

The CET's work is carried out mostly through virtual meetings and, if necessary, in-person meetings of the subcommissions. The technical secretariat organizes the meetings. The agenda, the location and mode of the meeting, as well as the date and time of start and end, must be specified in the invitation. The following members attend these meetings:

Follow-up meetings	Ex post accreditation meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two academic representatives (presenter and reviewer). - Student representative. - Quality representative. - President. - Secretary (AQUIB personnel). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All academic representatives. - Student representative. - Professional representative. - President. - Secretary (AQUIB personnel).

1.6. Agreements and Minutes

The presence of the president, secretary and at least half of the subcommission's members is required for the subcommission to be validly formed for the purpose of holding sessions and making decisions. A simple majority vote among the attendees is used to reach agreements. The secretary participates with a voice but without a vote, and in the event of a tie, the president has the casting vote.

The subcommission secretary must prepare minutes for each session. These minutes should include: the attendance record, the location and format of the meeting, the start and end date and time, the agenda, names of the evaluated programs —if applicable—, the agreements reached, and any incidents. The minutes must be approved in the same or the following session and signed by the secretary, with the approval of the CET president. They are distributed electronically to the other members, who may express their agreement or objections using the same means. For approval purposes, if affirmative, it is considered approved in the same meeting.

2. PANEL OF EXPERTS

2.1. Composition

AQUIB selects the Panel members based on the characteristics of the group of programmes to be evaluated, as described in section "2.2 Panel Selection Criteria" of this document. The Panel members act on behalf of the Agency. Therefore, their actions must follow the guidelines of the Agency's Code of Ethics, the rules of this internal procedure, and the instructions provided in the various guidelines made available by the Agency. They are also obligated to respect the confidentiality of the information to which they have access and not disclose deliberations, data or information related to the visited programmes.

Generally, the Panel of Experts consists of:

- **President.** An individual with experience in external programme evaluation processes as a member of an AQUIB Panel and/or other university quality agencies. This member should be an academic with recognized prestige in the scientific-technical field of the programme under consideration. Among other qualifications, they should have experience in designing and managing university programmes, as well as implementing quality assurance systems in the university context.
- **Variable number of academic members.** Depending on the number and heterogeneity of the academic field of the programmes to be evaluated, the number of academic members is determined. In any case, they must be academics in the scientific-technical field of the considered programme or professionals engaged in activities related to the programme's scientific-technical field. Experience in external evaluation processes of programmes as a member of an

AQUIB Panel or another quality agency is valued.

- **Student representative.** University students currently enrolled in an official programme, or those who have completed one within the last two years, in the knowledge area or possessing knowledge of the subject area under evaluation. Preferably, they should have participated in some improvement activity within the university where they are currently studying or have completed their studies.
- **Secretary.** A technical member of AQUIB with experience as a secretary in evaluation and/or accreditation processes of AQUIB and/or having received specific training on the said process.
- **International academic or professional representative.** Optionally, when deemed necessary, AQUIB incorporates an international member. This member joins on an equal footing with the rest of the panel members.

AQUIB advocates for gender equality in the Panels, whenever possible. The Agency provides the university with the Panel composition as well as a brief CV for each member, excluding the secretary. The university's agreement with the appointed members must be confirmed. In the event of disagreement, the university can raise a motivated objection through the procedure made available by the Agency. In this case, AQUIB reviews the stated reasons and, if deemed necessary, adjusts the composition of the Panel of experts designated for the programme evaluation visit. Once the university's acceptance is received, AQUIB notifies the Panel members of their appointment, assigning them the programme(s) to be evaluated.

2.2. Selection Criteria

The selection of members of the Panel of experts is carried out based on the following criteria:

- **Territorial representation.** Efforts are made to include evaluators from different autonomous communities in the Panel. Members cannot belong to or have had a connection with the university system of the Balearic Islands in the last five years.
- **Conflict of interest.** No Panel member can be affiliated or have a current relationship with the university system of the Balearic Islands, including shared active projects, co-supervision of ongoing doctoral theses, etc. This restriction applies to the last five years.

- **Diversity of universities.** The goal is to have Panel members from different universities, and where possible, some members should belong to institutions with similar characteristics to the university under evaluation.
- **Previous knowledge.** Panel members are expected to be familiar with the Spanish higher education system, including legislation, structure, university management, etc. They should also have knowledge of existing evaluation models, as well as evaluation procedures and techniques.
- **Prior experience with AQUIB.** Experience in evaluations conducted by the Agency and past performance in such evaluations are regarded as valuable.

2.3. Selection Procedure

AQUIB process for selecting Panel members is guided by transparency, alignment of individuals with their roles, and their specific training in the methodology of the accreditation renewal evaluation programme. Considering these principles, the selection of Panel members proceeds as follows:

- a) Review the profile of evaluators for the selection and composition of the Panels.
- b) Choose evaluators for the Panels according to the programmes to be evaluated.
- c) Extend invitations to potential evaluators and receive their acceptance to participate in the Panel.
- d) Communicate the Panel composition to the university and provide opportunity for recusal according to the established procedure.
- e) In case of recusal, AQUIB reviews the reasons and, if necessary, appoints an alternative member, which is communicated to the university.
- f) Officially appoint evaluators by the director of AQUIB.
- g) Provide training for evaluators.

2.4. Functions

The primary functions assigned to individuals on the Panels are as follows:

General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Read AQUIB's <i>External evaluation guide for ex post accreditation of official university study programmes</i> and the <i>Self-Assessment guide for ex post accreditation of official university bachelor's and master's study programmes</i>. b) Analyse the programme's Self-Assessment report and introduce relevant information into the evaluator support tool provided by the Agency. c) Propose potential dates for the on-site visit and collaborate in designing the proposed visit agenda. d) Share insights on the analysis of the Self-assessment report to determine the guidelines for the upcoming visit. e) Document the interviews and, as guided by the president, pose questions to the stakeholders. f) Share and discuss the overall and most relevant conclusions derived from the visit. g) Draft evaluations and justifications, communicating them to the president and secretary of the Panel. h) Participate in the drafting of the Site visit evidence.
President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Represent the Panel. b) Serve as interlocutor with the university during the visit. c) Determine the work plan and assign tasks among Panel members. d) Lead the Panel, coordinating its actions. e) Lead interviews with stakeholders and discussions within the Panel. f) Take responsibility for the completion of tasks associated with the external evaluation process. g) Oversee and coordinate the creation of the Evidence of site visit (EV). h) Sign and submit the EV to AQUIB.
Academic representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide an academic, professional or international perspective on the programme. b) Assess specific characteristics of the program that require evaluation. c) Collaborate in the analysis, discussion and drafting of the EV.
Student representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Offer a student perspective on the program. b) Collaborate in the analysis, discussion and drafting of the EV.

Technical secretary

- a) Act as a point of contact with the university before the visit..
- b) Agree on evaluation dates in consensus with the university, following consultation with Panel members, and adhere to the accreditation renewal programme schedule.
- c) Propose and reach a consensus with the university on the visit agenda.
- d) Ensure that the visit aligns with the guidelines of the *External evaluation guide for ex post accreditation of official university study programmes*.
- e) Provide a technical perspective in the programme analysis.
- f) Harmonize contributions from all Panel members and collaborate in drafting the EV following the established protocol.
- g) Document and communicate any incidents during the process to AQUIB.
- h) Assist the president in coordinating the drafting of the EV.

3. MODIFICATIONS TO THIS DOCUMENT

Any modification to this regulation must be approved by the Criteria Commission.