

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023 - 2025



AQUIB | Agència de Qualitat Universitària de les Illes Balears
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Agency

The Balearic Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (AQUIB) is the entity responsible for the evaluation, accreditation, and certification within the Higher Education and Research system of the Balearic Islands, under the competencies assigned by current legislation. The Agency provides a fast, close, and accessible service to society, always striving for a good relationship with its stakeholders and under the premise of public service as an essential principle on which our management is based.

AQUIB was created as a consortium approved by means of an agreement of the Board of Directors reached on December 13, 2002, achieving the legislative recognition required by the Law 2/2003, of March 20, on the Institutional Organization of the University System of the Balearic Islands. From this point onwards, the Agency began their work with the aim of supporting excellence as an essential foundation for the continuous improvement of the University of the Balearic Islands (UIB).

Progressively, the programs assigned by state and regional regulations to university quality agencies have been consolidated. These include institutional evaluation (of study programmes, services, and affiliated centres at UIB), the assessment of complementary payments for teaching and research staff at the university, and the individual teaching staff accreditation in accordance with the contractual positions outlined in the LOU.

1.2. Background

The plan outlined in this document is the result of an analysis process carried out over the past few months by the team of professionals of the Agency, with the aim of setting AQUIB's strategic objectives for the coming years. While this is the first Strategic Plan developed by the organization, it does not represent a novelty in terms of our working system, as we have been organizing our activities for years following a structured plan, with well-defined management objectives and associated action plans.

Since its establishment in 2003, the Agency has consistently prioritized the continuous improvement of its processes. For over 15 years, its quality management system has formed the foundation of its operations. In 2007, it achieved ISO 9001 certification, which has been subsequently renewed on multiple occasions up to the present day. This system serves as an internal and external assurance of the commitments made by the organization. Within the framework of this management system, internal protocols for planning and leadership have been established, encompassing processes that include contextual analysis, risk management, as well as goal setting and indicators. The Strategic Plan is designed based on this prior experience.

The dynamic environment and the organization's evolution makes necessary a shift in the system's focus, incorporating elements that support strategic planning and direction to align efforts toward common management objectives. Therefore, this Strategic Plan represents the culmination of the work undertaken in recent years, using a new tool that outlines the top priority areas to guide the organization in the near future, ensuring the realization of our vision.

1.3. Goals

The following objectives have been pursued through the work conducted to develop AQUIB'S first Strategic Plan:

- Identify the internal and external factors that impact the development of our activity and our management system.
- Enhance internal management by conducting a self-analysis exercise in which we identify weaknesses and strengths.
- Be prepared for changes in the environment that are beyond the organization's control, as well as to capitalize on potential opportunities identified.
- Establish a starting point for defining improvement objectives for our management system.
- Identify the most critical areas to focus on within our scope of work.
- Set out our key action strategies within a three-year timeframe based on a comprehensive analysis of all aspects.

2. WORK METHODOLOGY

2.1. Workgroup

The development of this 2023-2025 Strategic Plan has been a collaborative effort, involving the entire Agency team. They actively participated in joint working sessions to analyse the organization's current state and its future. Moreover, they played a crucial role in contributing to the formulation and drafting of the Plan.

Additionally, a participatory process was held, engaging various stakeholder groups associated with the Agency to gather their valuable input. In addition to the members of the Board of Directors, an abridged version of the Plan was distributed to select representatives from our key stakeholder groups who possess significant knowledge about the Agency:

- Members from other Agencies (both in leadership and technical roles).
- Members from the University of the Balearic Islands.
- A group of evaluators.
- A cohort of students.
- A group of technical staff from the Administration.

The overarching goal has been ensuring the highest level of participation in this Plan's drafting from all stakeholder groups.

2.2. Phases

The preparation of this Plan included:

- [1] Formation of the working group.
- [2] Definition of the methodology for preparing the Plan.
- [3] Review and redefinition of the mission, vision, and values.
- [4] Internal and external analysis of the Agency.
- [5] SWOT matrix preparation.
- [6] Definition of strategic lines and objectives.
- [7] Creation of an action plan designed to achieve strategic objectives.

[8] Presentation of the draft Strategic Plan to the Board of Directors.

[10] Participatory process: presentation to Stakeholder Groups.

[11] Approval of the Strategic Plan by the Board of Directors.

Pending Phases

Following the approval of the Strategic Plan, its execution begins, with the following pending phases:

[12] Implementation of the action plan to achieve the objectives.

[13] Annual monitoring of the progress of different objectives and related actions.

[14] Final evaluation.

3. MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

AQUIB, as a preliminary step to defining its Strategic Plan, identifies its mission (the reason that justifies the Agency's existence), vision (desired future state), and values (principles and ethics established by the organization and its personnel). While these principles were already defined and integrated, it has been necessary to review and adapt them to the current context of the Agency.

3.1. Mission

The Balearic Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (AQUIB) focuses its efforts on enhancing the quality of Higher Education and Research in the Balearic Islands. This is achieved through evaluation, certification, and accreditation in the areas of teaching, research, knowledge management, and knowledge transfer, all in accordance with international quality standards.

3.2. Vision

AQUIB'S vision is to be a reference in terms of quality in the higher education and research due to its contribution to continuous improvement and the development of society. To achieve this, full membership in ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) and registration in EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education) will enable the development and enhancement of synergies with other national and international institutions.

3.3. Values

The current values of AQUIB, which are part of its Code of Ethics, are as follows:

- **Autonomy:** respecting the autonomy of all the institutions with which the Agency collaborates.
- **Transparency:** conducting its activities in a clear manner and providing information about its management.
- **Independence:** operating with full autonomy in achieving its mission, vision, and objectives.
- **Commitment to quality, innovation, and excellence:** these are fundamental pillars of AQUIB'S working culture, which promote continuous improvement in all our activities.
- **Integrity:** building trust through responsible actions of the organization and all its members.
- **Stakeholder focus:** managing operations with a dedicated focus on meeting the needs and expectations of all stakeholders.
- **Rigor:** carrying out activities based on accuracy and technical precision.
- **Efficiency in management:** achieving our objectives through ethical, economic, and equitable use of resources.
- **Social Responsibility:** committing to sustainable development and being aware of our impact on society.
- **Social responsibility:** assuming commitments to sustainable development and being aware of our impact on society.

4. SWOT ANALYSIS

Through the SWOT analysis, the Agency has carried out an internal and external analysis of the organization to identify its current weaknesses, threats, strengths, and opportunities.

WEAKNESSES

- **W1:** high turnover of the Agency's personnel
- **W2:** partial compliance with international standards in operations
- **W3:** non-functional website
- **W4:** need to enhance external communication: increasing awareness about the Agency among the general public

THREATS

- **T1:** not being a full member of ENQA and not being registered in EQAR
- **T2:** staff drain due to difficulties in replacing personnel
- **T3:** excessive administrative bureaucracy stemming from legislation
- **T4:** limited diversification in terms of funding sources

STRENGTHS

- **S1:** high expertise
- **S2:** implemented quality management system and work methodology
- **S3:** personnel's capacity to adapt to changes, including regulatory and political shifts
- **S4:** sufficient resources for organizational growth, including infrastructure and human resources
- **S5:** established relationships with stakeholder groups.
- **S6:** availability of information technology tools

OPPORTUNITIES

- **O1:** staff stabilization
- **O2:** full membership in ENQA and registration in EQAR will enable the Agency to acquire new competencies
- **O3:** participation in international projects and networks
- **O4:** expansion of activities at both national and international levels
- **O5:** strengthening collaborative activities with REACU

5. STRATEGIC LINES

After analysing the relationships between internal and external factors and creating the organization's SWOT matrix, a series of ideas are derived based on the following principles:

- Seizing the opportunities that arise.
- Being prepared to face possible threats in the environment.
- Enhance the Agency's strengths.
- Working to improve identified weaknesses.

AQUIB's Strategic Plan consists of six strategic lines, which represent the priority areas of action where the Agency's management will focus over the next three years. These lines are composed of a series of strategic objectives. Therefore, in the coming years, the establishment of objectives and action plans will be directly linked to these overarching management lines.

STRATEGIC LINES

- SL1** Internationalization: aligning the Agency's strategy with international standards and criteria.
- SL2** Quality management systems: promoting continuous improvement and excellence in management.
- SL3** Increasing the Agency's autonomy and independence.
- SL4** Use of communication tools to improve the Agency's visibility and positioning.
- SL5** Promoting quality in higher education.
- SL6** Adapting and optimizing resources.

6. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Each of the chosen strategic lines consist of a set of strategic objectives that are integral to the Agency's strategy for the next three years.

SL1 Internationalization. Aligning the Agency's strategy with international standards and criteria

Objective 1.1: achieve international recognition and accreditation for the Agency.

Objective 1.2: foster collaboration with other organizations and engage in international projects.

Objective 1.3: extend our international operations and activities.

SL2 Quality management systems. Promoting continuous improvement and excellence in management

Objective 2.1: optimize work processes and tools.

Objective 2.2: become benchmarks in our field of operation.

Objective 2.3: promote transparency in our activities.

Objective 2.4: foster sustainable development as an integral element of our management.

SL3 Increasing the Agency's autonomy and independence

Objective 3.1: ensure the autonomy and independence of the Agency.

Objective 3.2: establish new organic commissions.

Objective 3.3: diversify funding sources.

SL4 Use of communication tools to improve the Agency's visibility and positioning

Objective 4.1: promote external and internal communication.

Objective 4.2: enhance the visibility of the Agency.

SL5 Promoting quality in higher education

Objective 5.1: collaborate with other organizations in need, based on our own knowledge and expertise.

Objective 5.2: enhance stakeholder engagement in the Agency's processes.

Objective 5.3: add value to the university system.

SL6 Adapting and optimizing resources

Objective 6.1: streamline human resources management.

Objective 6.2: enhance the management of information technology tools.

7. DEPLOYMENT OF THE ACTION PLAN

SL1 Internationalization: aligning the Agency's strategy with international standards and criteria		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	INDICATOR
1.1. Achieve international recognition and accreditation for the Agency.	Ensure adherence to the criteria and guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)	% ESG compliance
	Oversee the process for the Agency to attain full membership in ENQA and registration in EQAR	% expected calendar compliance
1.2. Foster collaboration with other organizations and engage in international projects.	Monitor potential calls, activities, and international projects, while exploring potential collaborations	Number of calls for international activities and projects analysed
		% of the calls for international activities and projects analysed that are compatible with the Agency
1.3. Extend our international operations and activities.	Evaluate the feasibility of expanding our international activities	Number of identified international expansion activities
SL2 Quality management systems: promoting continuous improvement and excellence in management		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	INDICATOR
2.1. Optimize work processes and tools.	Develop new protocols and guides required for executing the Agency's actions	% completion of the planned guides and protocols
	Enhance existing protocols and guides	% reviewed protocols and guides compared to the planned ones
	Establish a performance evaluation system for external experts	Implementation of a performance evaluation system
2.2. Become benchmarks in our field of operation.	Promote and disseminate quality research models	Number of quality research models the Agency adheres to
		Number of dissemination actions (related to research quality models)
	Encourage the exchange of technical knowledge among Spanish university quality agencies	Number of initiatives to promote the exchange between agencies
		Number of agency exchange initiatives carried out
2.3. Promote transparency in our activities.	Support the implementation of training initiatives in specific subjects	Number of specific training actions or tutorials conducted
	Expand the volume of information accessible to our stakeholder groups	% documentation published or shared compared to the planned amount
2.4. Foster sustainable development as an integral element of our management.	Conduct a self-assessment of the Agency's transparency level	% improvement in self-assessment of transparency level
	Incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as a reference in our management	% annual objectives aligned with the SDGs
	Define and implement an internal environmental management system	Implementation of an environmental management system

SL3 Increasing the Agency's autonomy and independence		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	INDICATOR
3.1. Guarantee the autonomy and independence of the Agency	Amend the current Statutes to adapt them to the needs of the Agency	Modified statutes
3.2. Establish new organic commissions	Establish an Advisory Commission	Advisory Commission established
	Establish a Guarantees Commission	Guarantees Commission established
3.3. Diversify funding sources	Explore lines of work and activities that enable access to other funding sources	Number of initiatives with additional funding opportunities identified
SL4 Use of communication tools to improve the Agency's visibility and positioning		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	INDICATOR
4.1. Promote external and internal communication	Develop and implement an internal and external communication procedure	Communication Procedure
	Continuously improve and update website content	Web content update (bi-annual content review)
	Communicate and disseminate the results of the Agency's activities	Number of activities to disseminate our actions
4.2. Enhance the visibility of the Agency	Create profiles and manage content on social media profiles	Social media profiles created
		Increase in social media followers
	Create an institutional video for the Agency	Creation of institutional video
	Participate in forums, congresses, conferences, etc.	Number of forums, congresses or conferences attended
SL5 Promoting quality in higher education		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	INDICATOR
5.1. Collaborate with other organizations in need, based on our own knowledge and expertise.	Carry out collaboration and support activities for other organizations based on our experience	Number of collaboration actions and/or support for other entities
5.2. Enhance stakeholder engagement in the Agency's processes.	Implement participatory processes to encourage stakeholder involvement	Number of participatory processes with interest groups
	Incorporate international members in the evaluation processes	Annual increase in the number of international evaluators in the bank of evaluators
		Number of international evaluators on panels
5.3. Add value to the university system.	Develop an internal protocol for conducting thematic analyses	Thematic analysis protocol
	Conduct thematic analyses	Number of thematic analyses carried out

SL6 Adapting and optimizing resources		
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	INDICATOR
6.1. Streamline human resources management.	Adjust the organizational structure and job profiles to meet the real needs of the Agency and support the development of new projects or programs	Revised and adapted organizational chart
		Adequate and updated profiles
6.2. Enhance the management of information technology tools.	Solidify the utilization of available information technology tools.	Degree of adaptation of AVATIT and AVAPRO tools
	Develop new tools to align with emerging requirements.	Number of new IT tools

8. MONITORING AND MEASUREMENT

AQUIB's Strategic Plan has a duration of three years, and regular progress monitoring will be carried out for the various action plans. For this purpose, indicators associated with different objectives have reference threshold values that provide information on the degree of compliance with established parameters. Annually, a progress report for the different objectives will be generated, and the definition of these objectives will be reviewed as necessary.