

EVALUATION PROTOCOL: IMPLEMENTATION OF OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY BACHELOR'S, MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL DEGREES IN THE COMUNITAT VALENCIANA

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**AGÈNCIA VALENCIANA
D'AVALUACIÓ I
PROSPECTIVA**





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Plaça de l'Ajuntament nº6, 4th floor, pta. 6 i 5th floor, pta. 8
46002, València



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AGÈNCIA VALENCIANA D'AVALUACIÓ I PROSPECTIVA

The implementation of official bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree courses in the Valencian Community requires the completion of two previous phases: verification and authorisation. Until now, AVAP can only participate in the authorisation process and it is the state agency ANECA which resolves the verification phase. Therefore, for authorisation, AVAP reviews the criteria applied in the verification. With its incorporation into the EQAR register, it will take on the verification of new degrees.

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Protocol is to establish the criteria and procedure for the evaluation and issuing of the corresponding AVAP report provided for in article 13 of ORDER 86/2010, of 15 November, of the Regional Ministry of Education, which establishes the procedure for the implementation of official university degree, master's and doctorate courses in the universities of the Valencian Region (DOGV of 25 November 2010).

2. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This Protocol applies to all applications admitted for processing by the Directorate General for Universities of the Generalitat Valenciana with a view to the implementation of official university degree, master's and doctorate courses presented by the public and private universities of the Valencian University System, as well as by centres affiliated to universities that do not belong to the Valencian University System but are based in the Valencian Community.

3. RESULT

The result of the evaluation process is a mandatory and non-binding report, with reasons in terms of *favourable* or *unfavourable*, which is sent to the Directorate General for Universities of the Generalitat Valenciana.

4. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Bearing in mind the criteria and guidelines established in the document "*Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*", and in accordance with the provisions of Article 13 of the aforementioned Order 86/2010, there are four evaluation criteria:

1. Adequacy of teaching staff to teach the Bachelor's, Master's or doctoral degree to be introduced.
2. Adequacy of the number of places offered by the university in the degree programme to be implemented to the demand of its socio-economic environment in order to avoid the oversupply of places and the duplication of costs.

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| 3. Degree of labour market integration of graduates. |
| 4. Area of influence of the degree, in such a way that the territorial balance is maintained, in terms of the map of degrees, bearing in mind the needs of Valencian society. |

The relationship between the assessment criteria for the implementation of official university degree, master's and doctoral programmes in the Valencian Region and the criteria for internal quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015)¹ is as follows:

AUTHORISATION CRITERIA	GSR CRITERIA 2015
Criterion 1. Adequacy of teaching staff to teach the Bachelor's or Master's degree to be introduced	1.5. Faculty
Criterion 2. Adequacy of the number of places offered by the university, in the degree programme to be implemented, to the demand of its socio-economic environment in order to avoid the oversupply of places and the duplication of costs.	1.1. Quality assurance policy
	1.2. Programme design and approval
	1.4 Admission, progression, recognition and certification of students
	Information management
Criterion 3. Degree of labour market integration of graduates	1.8. Public information
	1.1. Quality assurance policy
	Information management
Criterion 4. Area of influence of the degree, in such a way as to maintain territorial balance in terms of the map of degree programmes, bearing in mind the needs of Valencian society.	1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes
	1.1. Quality assurance policy
	1.4 Admission, progression, recognition and certification of students

The guidelines to be taken into account for the assessment of each criterion are detailed below:

¹ Adopted by the Conference of Ministers of Education held in Yerevan on 14-15 May 2015. Link to full text: http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

Criterion 1: Adequacy of teaching staff to teach the Bachelor's or Master's degree to be introduced .

Standard: The number of academic staff teaching is sufficient and appropriate, in accordance with the characteristics of the degree and the number of students.

Guidelines to be assessed:

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| a) The academic staff foreseen for the teaching of the degree meets the level of academic qualifications required for the degree and has adequate teaching and research experience, reviewing the information analysed in the verification report. |
| b) The foreseen academic staff is sufficient and has the appropriate dedication for the development of its functions, reviewing the information analysed in the verification report. |

Criterion 2: Adequacy of the number of places offered by the university, in the degree programme to be implemented, to the demand of its socio-economic environment in such a way as to avoid the oversupply of places and the duplication of costs .

Standard: The supply of places avoids oversupply and duplication of costs.

Guidelines to be assessed:

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| a) The supply of places is adequate to the demand of the socio-economic environment. |
| b) Ratio between demand and the number of places offered at Valencian universities for identical or similar degrees already in place |

Criterion 3: Degree of labour market integration of graduates .

Standard: The employability expectations of future graduates of the degree are appropriate to the socio-economic and professional context of the degree.

Guidelines to be assessed:

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| a) The expected graduation rate is adequate according to the subject area and the cultural, social and economic demand. |
| b) The University has resources to promote the employability of future graduates. |
| c) The fit between the university's graduate competence profiles and the competence demands of the professional world. |

Criterion 4: Area of influence of the degree, in such a way as to maintain territorial balance in terms of the map of degree programmes, bearing in mind the needs of Valencian society.

Standard: The area of influence of the degree maintains the territorial balance of the degree map and responds to the needs of Valencian society.

Guidelines to be assessed:

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| a) The area of influence of the degree maintains the territorial balance of the degree map. |
| b) The area of influence of the title responds to the needs of Valencian society. |

5. ASSESSMENT OF EVALUATION CRITERIA

5.1. Levels

Each of the assessment criteria will be assessed at four levels:

A	Excellent	The standard for the criterion is fully achieved and, in addition, is an example of good practice that exceeds the basic requirements.
B	Satisfactory	The standard corresponding to the criterion is fully achieved
C	Enough	The standard corresponding to the criterion is achieved at a minimum level.
D	Insufficient	The standard for the criterion does not achieve the minimum required level.

5.2. Overall assessment

Taking into account the rating assigned to each criterion, the overall assessment of the report will be in terms of favourable or unfavourable to implementation.

For the purposes of this procedure, an unfavourable report shall be considered as grounds for an unfavourable implementation report:

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| a) a rating of " Poor " in two or more of the criteria |
| b) Adequacy of teaching staff to teach the bachelor's or master's degree to be implemented. |
| c) Adequacy of the number of places offered by the university, in the degree programme to be implemented, to the demand of its socio-economic environment in such a way as to avoid oversupply of places and duplication of costs. |

6. PROCEDURE OF AUTHORISATION

The basic information, the committees and commissions involved and the phases of the evaluation procedure for the implementation of an official university degree in the Valencian Community are detailed below.

6.1 Application for authorisation from the Directorate-General for Universities

Applications shall be submitted to the Department responsible for universities, and shall be addressed to the Directorate General for Universities. The deadline for the submission of applications for authorisation corresponding to courses that are to be introduced from a given academic year onwards shall begin on 1 September of the year prior to the start of the academic year in question and shall end on the fifteenth day of January of the following year.

The procedure shall be initiated by a proposal from the rector of the university concerned.

The application for the introduction of Bachelor's, Master's or doctoral studies shall be accompanied or, where appropriate, must be completed with the following documents:

- a) The corresponding agreement of the Governing Council and the favourable report of the Social Council of the University or corresponding bodies in private universities.
- b) Resolutions of positive verification of the Council of Universities of the courses requested, together with the verification report issued by the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA).

The application and documentation from the universities will be sent to the Agència Valenciana d'Avaluació i Prospectiva (Valencian Agency for Assessment and Foresight) so that it can draw up the corresponding authorisation report.

6.2. Degree Authorisation Committee

The authorisation report will be drawn up by the AVAP Degree Authorisation Committee.

The **Authorisation Committee** is composed of:

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| a) A chairperson with an academic profile and experience in degree verification, authorisation or monitoring processes. |
| b) Several academic members of recognised prestige (up to 6), by branches of knowledge. |
| c) One or one student, trained in evaluation processes. |
| d) A secretary with a technical profile and attached to AVAP, with voice but without vote in the Commission. |

The members of the Qualifications Authorisation Committee are appointed by AVAP's Directorate General and subscribe to the code of ethics, undertaking to comply with its principles of independence, confidentiality, objectivity, excellence and transparency.

6.3. Information on which the assessment is based

In order to assess the criteria and guidelines described above, the Qualifications Authorisation Committee relies on the following set of prior documentary evidence, which may include, if considered necessary, a visit, as well as access to support tools to facilitate its work, such as report models and templates and permanent access to the computer tool managed by AVAP:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The verified report of the degree and the verification report issued by ANECA |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicators from the Integrated University Information System (SIIU) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The indicators developed by AVAP on the basis of the information provided by the university on the qualifications of the teaching and research staff who will teach on the degree programme |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Degree report drawn up on the basis of the requirements established in Order 86/2010, which establishes the procedure for the implementation of official university degree, master's and doctorate courses, including information on demand from the socio-economic environment and a comparison with Valencian universities for identical or similar degrees already implemented. |

6.4. Authorisation report

This report must contain a detailed and reasoned analysis of the degree of compliance with the criteria and guidelines for authorisation, in accordance with the model provided by AVAP.

The assigned member of the Authorisation Committee drafts a report, which is reviewed by each committee member for suggestions and proposals. The person responsible for the report incorporates the suggestions and proposals made and finalises the drafting. The chairman of the committee reviews the final draft of the report and signs it, sending it to AVAP within a maximum period of seven days.

Once the report has been finalised and after verification by AVAP technicians that it meets all the requirements and includes a congruent assessment of all the criteria, the authorisation report is sent to the university, which will have a period of 5 working days to communicate any factual errors in the drafting of the report that may have led to an erroneous conclusion.

Reportable factual errors must have the following characteristics:

- 1) simple elementary mistakes of names, dates, arithmetic operations, or transcriptions of documents;
- 2) the error is to be assessed solely on the basis of the information contained in the file;
- 3) the error is obvious and clear, without the need to rely on interpretations of applicable legal rules;
- 4) there is no fundamental alteration in the meaning of the act (since there is no material error where its assessment involves a value judgement or requires an operation of legal qualification);

If the university wishes to report factual errors, it must use the form provided for this purpose by AVAP. Factual errors will be reviewed by the Authorisation Committee, which will have to modify the report if necessary, or indicate in writing that it is not necessary to modify the report, stating the reasons.

After reviewing factual errors, if any, or after the 5 working day period for reporting factual errors without such errors, the Clearance Report will be published.

Subsequently, if it considers it appropriate, the university may submit appeals on the result of the report within 20 working days. The university may provide clarifications on the deficiencies detected, as well as provide an improvement plan that seeks to remedy them.

Once the appeals, if any, have been assessed, AVAP will propose a final report, which may be favourable or unfavourable to the authorisation, and will send it to the applicant university.

7. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

The complaints and appeals procedure allows an institution that has undergone a review process by AVAP to express dissatisfaction with the conduct of the process or those conducting it (complaints procedure) or to challenge the formal outcome, i.e. the renewal decision (appeals procedure).

The complaints procedure can be found in detail on AVAP's website <https://avap.es/es/avap-informa/sugerencias-quejas-y-felicitaciones/>.

The response to complaints, suggestions and/or acknowledgements will correspond to the person in charge of the Directorate General of AVAP, as the responsible body. The processing of complaints, suggestions and/or acknowledgements will be the responsibility of the person in charge of the Higher Education Quality and Innovation service, or the Prospective Management and Public Services service, with regard to those that affect units and services within its remit.

Once the complaint, suggestion and/or thanks have been submitted, the body in charge of processing it shall open an informative file, carrying out the enquiries and diligences it considers pertinent. Among the actions to be carried out, it shall obtain the appropriate information from the unit or service directly affected.

In relation to the appeals procedure, the university may lodge an appeal against the Authorisation Report within 20 working days.

AVAP will provide the university with a model for appeals. Once the university has sent them to AVAP, the latter will bring them to the attention of an independent commission, to ensure that they are resolved by a body other than the one that issued the report.

The body in charge of reviewing and responding to appeals is the Protocols and Appeals Commission, which is the responsible collegiate body designated by AVAP and whose Rules of Organisation and Operation can be consulted on our website.

The members of the Protocols and Appeals Commission are appointed by AVAP's Directorate General and subscribe to AVAP's code of ethics, pledging to comply with its principles of independence, confidentiality, objectivity, excellence and transparency.

The university, if it so wishes, may make clarifications or appeals regarding the deficiencies detected, as well as provide an improvement plan that seeks to remedy them. This improvement plan must be specific, showing objectives, persons responsible and monitoring indicators, including a timetable for the implementation of the modifications to be made within a period of no more than two years.

The Protocols and Appeals Commission is composed of:

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| a) A chairperson with an academic profile and experience in degree verification, authorisation, monitoring or accreditation processes. |
| b) A variable number of academic and/or professional members with experience in university quality assurance processes, preferably from the field of legal sciences. |
| c) A student member, trained in evaluation processes. |
| d) A secretary with a technical profile attached to AVAP, with the right to speak but not to vote. |

Once the appeals have been received, they are assessed by the Protocols and Appeals Committee, which, where appropriate, studies whether the improvement plan makes it possible to remedy the deficiencies found in a reasonable time, taking into account the impact of the deficiencies indicated in the report.





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Plaça de l'Ajuntament nº6, 4th floor, pta. 6 i 5th
floor, pta. 8. 46002, València

962939390 - avap@gva.es