

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

EXTERNAL REVIEW OF AVAP AGAINST THE ESG 2015

NOVEMBER 2026

AVAP
AGÈNCIA VALENCIANA
D'AVALUACIÓ I PROSPECTIVA

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A.
INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1. Introduction

2. Preparation of the self-assessment report (SAR)

3. Higher education in the context of the agency

4. Quality assurance in higher education within the context of the agency

1. INTRODUCTION

The Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting (AVAP) is the body responsible for ensuring the quality of the Valencian higher education and innovation systems. Established by Law 5/2006 of 25 May of the Regional Government on the Creation of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting, AVAP is constituted as a public-law body governed by private law, with its own legal personality and assets and full capacity to act in pursuit of its objectives, attached to the Regional Ministry responsible for universities.

AVAP carries out its functions within the framework of Spanish legislation and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). Since 2022, it has been a member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and is listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). Both statuses are due for renewal from 2027 onwards, for which purpose this Self-Assessment Report has been drawn up; it provides a comprehensive overview of AVAP and demonstrates its alignment with the ESG.

EVIDENCE
Law 5/2006 of 25 May of the Generalitat on the Establishment of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting **Consolidated text – DOGV – Valencian Regional Government** ↗
ENQA membership: **https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/Board-letter-membership-approved_AVAP.pdf** ↗
Registration with EQAR: **https://backend.deqar.eu/reports/EQAR/2023-03_ApprovalDecision_AVAP_A111_I5WKSzE.pdf** ↗

2. PREPARATION OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR)

AVAP submitted its application for renewal as a full member of ENQA in June 2026 and signed the contract with ENQA and the tripartite Terms of Reference between ENQA, EQAR and AVAP in July 2026.

To achieve the objective of renewing its accreditation as a full member of ENQA, AVAP began preparing this self-assessment report in March 2026, with the director of AVAP tasking two members of the agency's technical team, Ivan López and Luis Miguel Martínez, with drawing up a first draft of the report.

Following this draft and the feedback received, in May 2026 AVAP appointed an Advisory Board, comprising 12 members, with the primary mission of assisting, contributing to and supervising the development of the SAR, with the following composition:

Four experts in university quality from the Valencian Community:

- José Miguel Carot Sierra (Professor in the Department of Applied Statistics, Operational Research and Quality – Polytechnic University of Valencia)
- Mónica Rodríguez Gascó (Vice-Rector for Quality, International University of Valencia (VIU))
- Inmaculada Doménech Martínez (Quality Officer, Strategic Development and Quality Unit – Cardenal Herrera-CEU University)
- Amparo Chirivella Ramón (Quality Officer, University of Valencia)

A representative from the Spanish quality agencies:

- Esther Huertas Hidalgo (Head of the Quality Assessment Department at AQU Catalunya)

A member of the AVAP Advisory Board:

- Vicent Botti Navarro (Professor in the Department of Information Systems and Computing and Director of the Valencian University Institute for Research in Artificial Intelligence (VRAIN) – Polytechnic University of Valencia), Chair of the AVAP Advisory Board

A student:

- José Javier Piquero Navalón (University of Valencia), student representative on the AVAP Steering Committee

Five members of AVAP's quality department:

- Javier Oliver Villarroya (Director of AVAP)
- Reyes Giner Escrihuela (Head of the Higher Education Quality Service)
- Sol Rodrigo Giménez (Head of the Financial Management, Human Resources and Regulatory Affairs Department)
- Luis Miguel Martínez Nuévalos (Head of the Internationalisation and University Quality Coordination Unit)
- Iván López (Higher Education Forecasting Officer)

In June 2026, the first draft of the SAR was sent to all AVAP technical staff so that they could make any contributions they deemed necessary.

At the end of that same month of June, a second draft of the SAR was sent to all members of the Advisory Board for their input and suggestions.

Once these contributions had been reviewed and, where appropriate, incorporated, a third draft was sent in July 2026 to all AVAP stakeholders (members of the Steering Committee, the Advisory Board, the Students Commission, the Qualifications Assessment Commission, the Protocols and Resources Commission, and the Institutional Certification and Accreditation Commission; quality managers at all Valencian universities; and, finally, the vice-chancellors and/or directors of all Valencian universities).

In September 2026, a fourth draft was drawn up incorporating the suggestions and contributions made by all AVAP stakeholders, once these had been studied and taken into account.

The following material was primarily used in the preparation of this SAR:

- Protocols and guidelines for AVAP's various procedures, including their corresponding revisions and updates.
- Available statistical data and reports on the various higher education institutions produced by the regional authorities responsible for higher education.
- AVAP's annual activity reports and results reports for the last five years.
- AVAP's Strategic Plan for 2020–2022 (partially) and the 2023–2026 plan (in full).
- A SWOT analysis of the agency's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Evidence gathered during the various evaluation processes carried out by AVAP.
- Contributions from the various stakeholder groups (students, universities, partners, etc.) during the various participatory sessions held.
- Other review reports and SARs from the various ENQA member agencies available in the ENQA database.
- No AI-generated tools of any kind have been used for this SAR.

3. HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE AGENCY

The Spanish legal framework for higher education is based on the Spanish Constitution of 1978, article 27 of which recognises the right to education and to university autonomy. The Spanish University System (SUE, in Spanish) is structured as a decentralised system, with responsibilities shared and distributed amongst the State, the Autonomous Communities (CCAA) and the universities. To ensure the uniformity and coherence of the SUE, it is regulated at national level by Organic Law 2/2023 of March 2023 on the University System (LOSU).

The Sectoral Conference on Education (Educational Body Conference) is the cooperative body that institutionalises collaboration and the coordination of educational policies across the various administrations, with a view to achieving maximum coherence and integration within the Spanish University System.

The organisation of the university system in Spain is governed by Royal Decree (RD) 822/2021 of 28 September, which sets out the organisation of official university education and its quality assurance in line with the general guidelines of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG). Furthermore, official doctoral programmes are governed by the provisions of RD 99/2011 of 28 January.

Law 1/2024 regulates higher arts education institutions, their legal framework and the conditions governing their organisation and operation, whilst also establishing criteria for the recruitment of teaching staff and the planning of study programmes, thereby guaranteeing educational quality and consistency with European standards.

Within the Spanish University System (SUE), two types of universities coexist:

- Public universities, funded by the State, which sets the broad guidelines for their organisation.
- Private universities, which are privately funded and, in some cases, receive both public and private funding.

The establishment, recognition and authorisation of universities are governed, amongst other provisions, by Articles 42, 95 and 96 of Organic Law 2/2023 of 22 March on the University System (LOSU), Articles 4 and 13 of RD 640/2021 of 27 July on the establishment, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions, and Chapters I and III of Title II of Law 4/2007 of 9 February on the coordination of the Valencian University System. To this legislation should be added RD 905/2025 of 7 October, amending, amongst others, RD 640/2021 of 27 July on the establishment, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions.

The university programmes offered within the Spanish university system are as follows:

- Official programmes, the general guidelines for which are established by the State, and which are valid throughout the country. They are designed by the university in accordance with state regulations. These programmes must undergo verification and accreditation processes. Once a programme has been verified, the autonomous community in which it is to be taught must authorise its implementation, and the Spanish Council of Ministers, the Spanish Government, must declare it to be official. Following these procedures, the programme is entered in the Register of Universities, Centres and Degrees (RUCT), which is attached to the Spanish Ministry of Universities.

- Continuing education qualifications/university-designed programmes, which are designed and managed by universities in the exercise of their institutional autonomy. These qualifications are not officially recognised, although they allow universities to respond with greater flexibility to specific educational needs, emerging professional demands or continuing education initiatives.

Official qualifications include study programmes comprising modules organised into specific academic periods, generally semesters. The student's workload is measured in European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits, which quantify the total volume of work a student must complete to pass a module, including theoretical and practical classes, time spent on study and preparation, and time spent on examinations. One ECTS credit is equivalent to between 25 and 30 hours of student work.

Official university education in Spain is structured into three cycles:

- First cycle, the Bachelor's degree, generally lasting four years (240 ECTS credits, 60 credits per year) and which, in some cases, may extend to 300 or 360 credits. Its aim is to provide a general education geared towards preparing students for professional practice.
- Second cycle: Master's degree, the aim of which is to provide students with advanced training of a specialised or multidisciplinary nature, geared towards academic or professional specialisation, or to promote research activity. It lasts between one and two years (60, 90 or 120 ECTS credits).
- Third cycle: Doctorate, designed to provide students with advanced training in scientific research methods, culminating in the student's public defence of an original piece of research (the doctoral thesis).

The Valencian Community offers a variety of higher arts education programmes through institutions such as the Higher Institute of Arts Education (ISEACV) and other centres for higher arts education. These institutions offer bachelor's and master's degree programmes in various artistic disciplines, including drama, visual arts, dance, design and music.

To make this document easier to read, the term 'university system' has been used to refer to the Valencian higher education system, which also encompasses higher education in the arts. Similarly, references to 'university institutions' should be understood as referring to higher education institutions as a whole.

The MECES, or Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, is a system designed to classify and compare university qualifications in Spain. Its main objective is to facilitate the standardisation and recognition of qualifications at European level, ensuring greater academic and professional mobility for students and graduates.

The Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education is structured into four levels. Each level of the MECES corresponds to the following levels of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF):

1. Level 1: Higher Technical Diploma / Level 5 (EQF)
2. Level 2: Bachelor's degree / Level 6 (EQF)
3. Level 3: Master's degree / Level 7 (EQF)
4. Level 4: Doctorate / Level 8 (EQF)

Universities carry out their academic activities through centres (faculties, schools, research institutes, etc.), which may be their own or affiliated, in order to conduct their academic work. Affiliated centres are public or private educational institutions established in a specific geographical area which, having signed an affiliation agreement, are able to offer programmes leading to official qualifications valid throughout the country.

The breakdown of institutions by type, nature and mode of study for each university in the Valencian Community is as follows:

STATISTICS ON UNIVERSITIES, INSTITUTIONS AND DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Institutions

ACADEMIC YEAR	UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE	MIGUEL HERNÁNDEZ UNIVERSITY OF ELCHE	JAUME I UNIVERSITY	POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	CARDENAL HERRERA-CEU UNIVERSITY	CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIANA	VALENCIAN COMMUNITY	SPAIN	% VC / S
2020-2021	8	11	4	16	22	11	8	3	5	**88**	**1.068**	8,2
2021-2022	8	11	4	16	22	11	8	3	5	**88**	**1.072**	8,2
2022-2023	8	11	4	16	22	11	8	3	5	**88**	**1.109**	7,9
2023-2024	8	11	4	16	21	11	9	3	5	**88**	**1.110**	7,9
2024-2025[1]	**8**	**11**	**4**	**16**	**21**	**11**	**9**	**3**	**5**	**88**	**1.121**	**7,9**
BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION												
Own institutions	7	9	4	13	18	11	9	3	5	**79**	**955**	8,3
Affiliated centres	1	2	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	**9**	**166**	5,4
BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION												
Public	8	9	4	13	19	0	0	0	0	**53**	**766**	6,9
Private	0	2	0	3	2	11	9	3	5	**35**	**352**	9,9
Mixed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**3**	0,0
BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION												
Higher Polytechnic College	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	**7**	**57**	12,3
Higher Technical College	0	0	0	7	1	0	0	0	0	**8**	**116**	6,9
University College	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	**6**	**125**	4,8
Faculty	6	7	3	3	17	10	9	2	4	**61**	**733**	8,3
Other institutions	0	1	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	**6**	**90**	6,7

Source: Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities.
Statistics on Universities, Institutions and Degrees.

[1] The number of institutions corresponds to data from the University Information System (SIIU) for the academic year just ended, except for the most recent academic year published, which corresponds to data from September.

Figure 1. Statistics on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

The following tables show the trend in the number of students enrolled at universities in the Valencian Community by Bachelor's, Master's and PhD programmes

STATISTICS ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

New students enrolled on bachelor's programmes

ACADEMIC YEAR	UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE	MIGUEL HERNÁNDEZ UNIVERSITY OF ELCHE	JAUME I UNIVERSITY	POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	CARDENAL HERRERA-CEU	CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA SAN VICENTE MÁRTIR	EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	VALENCIAN COMMUNITY	SPAIN	% VC / S
2020-21	5.539	2.556	2.834	5.357	9.119	2.102	2.312	725	1.598	**32.142**	**359.111**	9,0
2021-22	5.424	2.697	2.912	5.605	9.143	2.311	2.410	881	2.272	**33.655**	**345.108**	9,8
2022-23	5.405	2.633	2.931	6.329	9.049	2.329	2.439	967	2.784	**34.866**	**360.028**	9,7
2023-24	5.573	2.663	2.983	6.558	9.221	2.412	2.506	1.332	3.200	**36.448**	**363.494**	10,0
2024-25	**5.841**	**2.954**	**3.017**	**6.508**	**9.550**	**2.608**	**2.656**	**1.603**	**4.097**	**38.834**	**377.916**	**10,3**
BY GENDER												
Men	2.318	1.428	1.284	3.662	3.511	841	980	602	1.497	**16.123**	**159.791**	10,1
Women	3.523	1.526	1.733	2.846	6.039	1.767	1.676	1.001	2.600	**22.711**	**218.125**	10,4
BY AGE												
Up to 21 years	5.139	2.418	2.639	5.980	8.557	2.190	2.153	1.198	448	**30.722**	**275.419**	11,2
Aged 22 to 25	377	273	249	357	585	280	334	233	891	**3.579**	**37.836**	9,5
26 to 30 years	118	83	69	67	158	80	95	83	832	**1.585**	**19.079**	8,3
Over 30	207	180	60	104	250	58	74	89	1.926	**2.948**	**45.582**	6,5
BY FIELD OF STUDY												
Social and Legal Sciences	3.172	1.247	1.525	761	5.046	849	934	348	1.875	**15.757**	**173.043**	9,1
Engineering and Architecture	1.040	510	714	4.910	445	128	0	151	455	**8.353**	**71.158**	11,7
Arts and Humanities	518	94	233	597	1.080	0	85	49	282	**2.938**	**34.887**	8,4
Health Sciences	603	908	411	0	2.125	1.631	1.531	989	1.301	**9.499**	**75.642**	12,6
Sciences	508	195	134	240	854	0	106	66	184	**2.287**	**23.186**	9,9

Figure 2. Statistics on HEIs' students

Students enrolled on master's degree programmes

ACADEMIC YEAR	UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE	MIGUEL HERNÁNDEZ UNIVERSITY OF ELCHE	JAUME I UNIVERSITY	POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	CARDENAL HERRERA-CEU	CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA SAN VICENTE MÁRTIR	EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	VALENCIAN COMMUNITY	SPAIN	% VC / S
2020-21	2.048	2.234	1.534	5.070	6.024	1.118	1.809	1.082	10.156	**31.075**	**247.251**	12,6
2021-22	2.048	2.125	1.444	6.051	5.894	1.077	1.765	1.384	11.339	**33.127**	**266.923**	12,4
2022-23	2.159	2.218	1.407	6.459	5.760	1.004	1.829	2.131	16.695	**39.662**	**280.012**	14,2
2023-24	2.154	2.748	1.462	6.993	5.834	1.034	1.877	2.212	18.465	**42.779**	**290.236**	14,7
2024-25[1]	**2.297**	**2.765**	**1.515**	**6.804**	**6.354**	**1.073**	**1.916**	**2.241**	**19.304**	**44.269**	**313.189**	**14,1**
BY GENDER												
Men	982	1.119	545	3.976	2.335	351	796	669	6.890	**17.663**	**133.428**	13,2
Women	1.315	1.646	970	2.828	4.019	722	1.120	1.572	12.414	**26.606**	**179.761**	14,8
BY AGE												
Up to 24 years	899	568	552	3.017	2.934	432	713	702	3.253	**13.070**	**97.726**	13,4
25 to 30 years	806	1.070	493	2.522	1.978	347	647	729	6.658	**15.250**	**103.968**	14,7
31 to 40 years	363	684	260	905	971	185	348	496	5.396	**9.608**	**65.969**	14,6
Over 40	229	443	210	360	471	109	208	314	3.997	**6.341**	**45.526**	13,9
BY FIELD OF STUDY												
Social and Legal Sciences	1.243	1.065	715	600	4.080	561	1.150	1.299	12.288	**23.001**	**181.765**	12,7
Engineering and Architecture	462	317	243	4.885	269	113	0	0	1.955	**8.244**	**57.485**	14,3
Arts and Humanities	310	37	248	560	593	32	72	105	659	**2.616**	**22.613**	11,6
Health Sciences	110	1.291	216	223	942	367	621	837	4.288	**8.895**	**40.056**	22,2
Sciences	172	55	93	536	470	0	73	0	114	**1.513**	**11.270**	13,4

Figure 3. Statistics on Masters' students

Students enrolled on doctoral programmes

ACADEMIC YEAR	UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE	MIGUEL HERNÁNDEZ UNIVERSITY OF ELCHE	JAUME I UNIVERSITY	POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	CARDENAL HERRERA-CEU	CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA SAN VICENTE MÁRTIR	EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA	VALENCIAN COMMUNITY	SPAIN	% VC / S
2020-21	1.651	712	882	2.573	4.865	133	300	0	0	**11.116**	**95.797**	11,6
2021-22	1.650	733	902	2.828	4.908	124	302	0	0	**11.447**	**97.749**	11,7
2022-23	1.632	753	923	2.871	4.515	150	309	1	0	**11.154**	**97.227**	11,5
2023-24	1.606	774	931	3.080	4.527	162	331	3	5	**11.419**	**99.422**	11,5
2024-25[1]	**1.667**	**786**	**945**	**2.619**	**4.662**	**191**	**332**	**6**	**19**	**11.227**	**97.695**	**11,5**
BY GENDER												
Men	854	352	411	1.484	2.082	84	160	2	13	**5.442**	**48.494**	11,2
Women	813	434	534	1.135	2.580	107	172	4	6	**5.785**	**49.201**	11,8
BY AGE												
Up to 24 years	104	45	51	77	283	22	10	0	0	**592**	**5.604**	10,6
25 to 30 years	562	332	317	927	1.746	79	92	3	2	**4.060**	**36.408**	11,2
31 to 40 years	428	228	276	804	1.449	43	117	2	8	**3.355**	**28.856**	11,6
Over 40	573	181	301	811	1.184	47	113	1	9	**3.220**	**26.827**	12,0
BY FIELD OF STUDY												
Social and Legal Sciences	558	91	323	211	1.506	37	117	3	0	**2.846**	**25.168**	11,3
Engineering and Architecture	210	177	119	1.424	278	15	0	0	5	**2.228**	**16.563**	13,5
Arts and Humanities	410	15	129	476	564	12	18	0	0	**1.624**	**15.047**	10,8
Health Sciences	173	375	221	0	1.822	127	135	3	14	**2.870**	**25.391**	11,3
Sciences	316	128	153	508	492	0	62	0	0	**1.659**	**15.526**	10,7

Source: Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities.
Statistics on Universities, Institutions and Degrees.

[1] The number of degree programmes corresponds to data from the University Information System (SIIU) for the completed academic year, except for the most recent academic year published, which corresponds to data from September. This results in slight variations compared with previous academic years.

Figure 4. Statistics on Doctoral Programmes' students

The following table sets out the statistics for higher education in the arts in the Valencian Community:

STATISTICS ON NON-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Number of schools. Special-status programmes

ACADEMIC YEAR	ALICANTE	CASTELLÓN	VALENCIA	VALENCIA REGION	SPAIN	% VC / S
2020-21	45	19	86	**150**	**2.017**	7,4
2021-22	45	19	86	**150**	**2.073**	7,2
2022-23	45	19	88	**152**	**2.113**	7,2
2023-24	44	19	88	**151**	**2.097**	7,2
2024-25	**44**	**18**	**88**	**150**	**2.083**	**7,2**
BY OWNERSHIP						
State schools	39	12	42	**93**	**1.481**	6,3
Private schools	5	6	46	**57**	**602**	9,5
BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION						
Art Schools and Higher Schools of Fine Arts and Design	3	2	3	**8**	**133**	6,0
Music Schools[1]	25	10	59	**94**	**475**	19,8
Dance schools	7	3	12	**22**	**71**	31,0
Music and Dance Schools[2 3]	-	-	-	**-**	**938**	-
Schools of Dramatic Art	0	0	1	**1**	**21**	4,8
Official Language Schools	9	3	13	**25**	**331**	7,6
Specialised Sports Training Centres[3]	-	-	-	**-**	**114**	-

Source: Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sport.

Statistics on Non-University Education (Institutions, Enrolment, Graduation and Staff)

[1] They may also provide formal dance education.

[2] This includes centres offering courses that do not lead to academically or professionally recognised qualifications, regulated by the education authorities.

[3] The total does not correspond to the national total, as no data is available for the Valencian Community.

Figure 5. Statistics on special-status institutions

EVIDENCE

Spanish Constitution
https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/1978/BOE-A-1978-31229-consolidado.pdf ↗

Organic Law 2/2023 of 22 March on the University System.
https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2023/03/23/pdfs/BOE-A-2023-7500.pdf ↗

Royal Decree 822/2021 of 28 September, establishing the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality.
https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2021/09/29/pdfs/BOE-A-2021-15781.pdf ↗

Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, regulating official doctoral programmes
https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2011/BOE-A-2011-2541-consolidado.pdf ↗

Act 1/2024 of 7 June regulating higher arts education and establishing the organisation and equivalences of vocational arts education.
https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2024-11613 ↗

EVIDENCE

Royal Decree 640/2021, of 27 July, on the creation, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions.
https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2021-12613 ↗

Law 4/2007 of 9 February on the coordination of the Valencian University System.
https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2007/BOE-A-2007-6118-consolidado.pdf ↗

Royal Decree 905/2025 of 7 October, amending Royal Decree 640/2021 of 27 July on the establishment, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions; Royal Decree 1509/2008 of 12 September, regulating the Register of Universities, Institutions and Qualifications; Royal Decree 1002/2010 of 5 August on the award of official university degrees; and Royal Decree 822/2021 of 28 September establishing the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality.
https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2025-20002 ↗

Statistics on universities, institutions and degree programmes (Valencian Regional Government)
https://pegv.gva.es/es/temas/sociedad/educacion/estadistica-universidades-centros-y-titulaciones ↗

Statistics on Universities, Centres and Degree Programmes (EUCT) Academic Year 2024–2025 (Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities)
https://www.ciencia.gob.es/InfoGeneralPortal/documento/a8889fb8-fdeb-4a99-8e34-0e922395d42e ↗

Correspondence between MECES and EQF
https://www.ciencia.gob.es/Universidades/MECES.html ↗

Statistics on arts education
https://pegv.gva.es/es/temas/sociedad/educacion/estadisticadelasensenanzasnouniversitarias ↗

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE AGENCY

The framework of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the changes introduced to regulations in Spain mean that universities need to establish an Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). Through the IQAS, universities systematically and periodically collect and analyse all relevant information and promote continuous improvement measures.

The Council of Europe, in its recommendation of 12 May 2025 (c/2025/3006), states that quality assurance systems are fundamental to establishing high-quality standards for education and building trust amongst higher education systems and institutions throughout the European Higher Education Area and beyond; they constitute a key component of transnational cooperation and guarantee the quality of higher education, forming the basis of mutual trust that enables transnational cooperation and seamless learning mobility.

The same recommendation adds that higher education institutions must regard the quality of their educational provision as their primary responsibility and must make the attainment of the highest standards a key institutional priority, as well as developing quality assurance strategies and procedures to ensure that this objective is achieved.

The main objective of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) certification for higher education institutions is to build sufficient confidence in the institution and in its ability to provide education that ensures the needs and expectations of its stakeholders are met, particularly those of students and society. This confidence is underpinned by the transparency of public information and accountability. The assessment for IQAS certification must verify that the system is in place and fully operational at the institution responsible for delivering the programmes and that it is adequate to guarantee their quality. Furthermore, IQAS certification demonstrates that the institution has put in place the appropriate mechanisms to ensure the proper functioning of the procedures for verifying, monitoring, modifying and accrediting degree programmes, thereby ensuring their continuous improvement.

In this regard, the procedure for issuing the AUDIT-AVAP certificate complies with the protocol for the certification of internal quality assurance systems at higher education institutions which, at the proposal of the Spanish Ministry of Universities, was approved by the General Conference on University Policy and published in the Resolution of 3 March 2022 of the General Secretariat for Universities (amended by the Resolution of 8 September 2026), which sets out instructions on the procedure for the institutional accreditation of public and private higher education institutions.

Since the agency's last review, the Spanish legal framework governing higher education has undergone a number of reforms:

- Publication of Royal Decree 640/2021, of 27 July, on the creation, recognition and authorisation of universities and university centres, and the institutional accreditation of university centres, which replaces Royal Decree 420/2015, of 29 May, on the creation, recognition, authorisation and accreditation of universities and university centres.
- Publication of Royal Decree 822/2021 of 28 September, establishing the organisation of university education and the quality assurance procedure.
- Publication of Organic Law 2/2023 of 22 March on the University System, which replaces Organic Law 6/2001 of 21 December on Universities, that establishes university quality as a cross-cutting principle

aligned with European standards (ESG). The practical implementation of this principle is achieved through the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions, the verification and monitoring of degree programmes, and the ongoing evaluation of teaching staff by quality assurance agencies.

- Royal Decree 905/2025 of 7 October, amending Royal Decree 640/2021 of 27 July on the establishment, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions; Royal Decree 1509/2008 of 12 September, regulating the Register of Universities, Institutions and Qualifications; Royal Decree 1002/2010 of 5 August on the award of official university qualifications; and Royal Decree 822/2021 of 28 September establishing the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality. (As at the date of publication of this report, this decree has been suspended by the Spanish Supreme Court)

These amendments have been carried out in collaboration with the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU). Furthermore, to consolidate their implementation, training sessions led by experts have been held for universities, which, in turn, have had to adapt their degree programmes and IQASs to the new regulatory framework. The Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU) comprises ANECA and the quality agencies of the Spanish Autonomous Communities, with the aim of facilitating collaboration and contributing to the establishment of common benchmarks. It meets periodically in the form of a general assembly of agency directors, coordinated by a rotating technical secretariat held annually by one agency.

The main changes to this regulatory framework are as follows:

- The simplification of the procedure for reviewing non-substantial modifications (included in the initial accreditation of the programme) and, in the case of institutions with institutional accreditation, notification to the agency is sufficient.
- The harmonisation of the curriculum review cycle incorporates the new timeframes and terminology of the current regulations into the programme accreditation protocol. Previously, the period was 4 years for master's programmes and 6 years for bachelor's programmes and doctoral programmes. Currently, all programmes are renewed every six years, except for 300- and 360-credit Master's programmes, which are renewed every eight years.
- The conditions for institutional accreditation of higher education institutions have been updated to include institutions offering doctoral programmes, as the previous regulations covered only those offering bachelor's and master's programmes.
- The most recent regulatory act to date governing the Spanish university system, Royal Decree 905/2025, introduces a series of measures aimed at strengthening quality requirements in the process of establishing, recognising and authorising universities, with a view to bolstering the confidence of students, their families and the general public in the rigour of their higher education institutions, in the quality of the qualifications they obtain and in the excellence of the research carried out by their research groups, departments or institutes.

EVIDENCE

Council Recommendation of 12 May 2025 on a European quality assurance and recognition system in higher education
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/3006/oj/eng/pdf ↗

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
https://ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/ESG/00/2/ESG_2015_616002.pdf ↗

EVIDENCE

Resolution on the procedure for the institutional accreditation of public and private university institutions, the Protocol for the certification of internal quality assurance systems at university institutions, and the Protocol for the evaluation procedure for the renewal of institutional accreditation of university institutions, approved by the General Conference on University Policy.
https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-3710 ↗

Organic Law 2/2023 of 22 March on the University System
https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2023/03/23/pdfs/BOE-A-2023-7500.pdf ↗

RD 822/2021 of 28 September, establishing the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality.
https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2021/09/29/pdfs/BOE-A-2021-15781.pdf ↗

RD 99/2011, of 28 January, regulating official doctoral programmes.
https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2011/BOE-A-2011-2541-consolidado.pdf ↗

RD 640/2021 of 27 July on the establishment, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions.
https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2021-12613 ↗

Act 4/2007 of 9 February on the coordination of the Valencian University System.
https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2007/BOE-A-2007-6118-consolidado.pdf ↗

RD 905/2025 of 7 October, amending RD 640/2021 of 27 July on the establishment, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions ...
https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2025-20002 ↗

AVAP's IQAS Certification
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/institutional-accreditation/internal-quality-assurance-system-iqas-certification/ ↗

B.
PROFILE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY

5. History, profile and structure of the agency

6. Functions and activities of the agency

5. HISTORY, PROFILE AND STRUCTURE OF THE AGENCY

AVAP's origins can be traced back to the creation, in 2002, of the Valencian Council of Universities and the Valencian Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assessment in the Valencian University System (CVAEC). The latter was established as the autonomous external evaluation body responsible for carrying out the functions set out in the Organic Law on Universities.

In 2006, the developments driven by Spain's accession to the European Higher Education Area, together with the creation of university quality assessment agencies by other autonomous communities and the need for a more flexible organisational model, led to the creation of an agency capable of adequately carrying out the tasks entrusted to it and of being internationally recognised as a university quality assessment agency.

Consequently, in 2006, the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting (AVAP) was established by Law 5/2006 of 25 May of the Valencian Regional Government (Generalitat), with the aim of ensuring the quality and excellence of the Valencian higher education system, innovation and public services through evaluation and forecasting.

AVAP is an autonomous and independent body, with its own legal personality and assets, and full capacity to act in pursuit of its objectives. Although it is entirely independent in its decision-making, it reports to the Regional Ministry of Education, Culture and Universities within the organisational structure of the regional government.

Decree 116/2013 of 6 September of the Consell adapts the Regulations of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting (AVAP) to the provisions of Decree-Law 7/2012 of 19 October of the Regional Government on Measures for the Restructuring and Rationalisation of the Public Enterprise and Foundational Sector of the Regional Government, incorporating as functions of the agency the assessment and accreditation of the quality of centres and entities providing public services, their policies and programmes; a function assumed by AVAP as a consequence of the process of reorganisation and optimisation of the powers assigned to the various bodies comprising the Generalitat's public sector.

Since its inception, the agency's activities have focused on ensuring the quality of the Valencian university system and have expanded in line with European developments in this field, within the framework of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) adopted at the Ministerial Conference of the European Higher Education Area in May 2015. As a result of this commitment, in 2022, AVAP was officially recognised as a member of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), which is the register of agencies that oversee the quality of degree programmes and higher education institutions in Europe and includes those that work in accordance with the common ESG framework to ensure the quality of higher education institutions and degree programmes.

AVAP's inclusion in the EQAR register not only represented recognition of its work but also enabled it to participate actively in the European sphere of quality assurance in higher education, providing it with new opportunities for collaboration and learning with other quality assurance agencies.

More recently, Decree 7/2024 of 9 January of the Regional Government was published, approving the new Organic and Functional Regulations of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting (AVAP), which aims to adapt AVAP's structure and organisation to the changes resulting from its ability to carry out

new tasks, following AVAP's inclusion in the EQAR register of European agencies and updates to the national regulations governing quality management in higher education in the Valencian Community.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF AVAP

AVAP's organisational structure is set out in Decree 7/2024 of 9 January of the Regional Government, which approves the Organisational and Functional Regulations of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting (AVAP) and guarantees its technical and professional independence in the assessment and forecasting the Valencian university system.

AVAP is a public-law body governed by private law, attached to the regional ministry responsible for universities. It is structured around governing bodies, responsible for governance and executive management, and advisory bodies, which incorporate the participation of the university community and provide specialist advice.

1. Governing Bodies

- **Presidency:** This role is held by the head of the Regional Ministry responsible for universities. The President acts as the organisation's highest representative in its dealings with other public and private bodies. The President convenes, chairs and moderates the meetings of the Steering Committee. The President issues resolutions for the implementation of AVAP's programmes.
- **Steering Committee (ST):** A collegiate body responsible for governance and oversight.
- Composition: It comprises the President, one Vice-President, seven social members: two representatives of universities, one of social councils, three experts, one student and one business leader; and four members, appointed by the Valencian Government for a term of three years, the heads of the directorates-general, or, where applicable, the relevant governing body, responsible for higher education, science, budgets and the public sector.
- Operation: It meets in plenary session (at least one ordinary meeting per year) or as a Standing Committee, consisting of the following members of the Steering Committee:
  - The Head of the AVAP's Directorate-General, who shall chair the committee.
  - A representative of the Valencian universities, elected from amongst them by the two members of this group on the Steering Committee.
  - A representative of the social councils of the Valencian public universities.
  - Three experts in the fields of higher education, science and innovation.
  - A student, elected by the Students' Committee.
  - A member of AVAP's technical staff, who shall act as secretary, with a voice but no vote.
- Functions: To define guidelines, approve the annual programme of activities and the draft budget, as well as the budget implementation reports, the annual report and the annual accounts, amongst other matters.
- **Directorate-General:** The Directorate-General coordinates AVAP's activities and fully represents the Steering Committee in relation to the implementation of the agreements it adopts. The Directorate-General also assumes the day-to-day representation, administration and management of AVAP and oversees the general running of the agency and its staff.

2. Advisory Bodies

- **Advisory Board:** This is the advisory body that collaborates with AVAP in developing its strategies, defining and improving procedures, and drawing up its action plans, in order to guarantee the quality of the agency's activities. It is not subject to any hierarchical authority.

The term of appointment shall be two years, renewable for periods of equal duration, and the Board shall consist of ten members:

- The presidency, to be held by an expert in university quality assessment and accreditation, R&D&I programme evaluation and forecasting.
- Four experts in the assessment and accreditation of university quality.
- Four experts in the assessment of R&D&I programmes.
- A representative of AVAP's technical staff, who will act as the Advisory Board's secretary.
- **Student Commission (CE):** This is the consultative body comprising representatives of students from all Valencian universities. Its members shall sign AVAP's code of ethics, undertaking to comply with its principles of independence, objectivity, excellence and transparency. They shall also be entitled to receive from AVAP the information and support necessary to carry out their duties on the council.

Furthermore, in order to carry out its technical functions and facilitate organisational flexibility, AVAP may establish standing or ad hoc committees.

a) Standing committees shall be appointed by AVAP's presidency, on the recommendation of the General Directorate, for a renewable term of three years.

b) Temporary committees shall be appointed by AVAP's General Directorate, and their remit shall be linked to the duration of the work to be carried out.

To manage these tasks, which form part of its alignment with ESG principles, AVAP has established the following technical commissions and committees:

1. Verification Commission (VC)

This is the body responsible for approving the provisional and final reports on the verification or modification of official qualifications awarded by the universities of the Valencian Community, taking into account the draft reports submitted by the Branch Verification Committees.

2. Branch Verification Committees (CVR)

These committees are responsible for assessing and drafting proposals for interim and final reports. The Branch Verification Committees cover the fields of study set out in Annex I of RD 822/2021 of 29 September, which establishes the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality.

AVAP has established six Branch Verification Committees, in accordance with the distribution of fields of knowledge amongst the branches of knowledge proposed by the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU) in the document approved at its meeting on 27 May 2022 (Guidelines and recommendations for the preparation and assessment of modifications to study programmes to adapt their affiliation to fields of knowledge):

- Arts and Humanities Verification Committee.
- Sciences Verification Committee.

- Health Sciences Verification Committee.
- Engineering and Architecture Verification Committee.
- Verification Committee for Social and Legal Sciences I.
- Social Sciences and Law Verification Committee II.

Branch Verification Committees: Where deemed necessary, committees with specific remit may be established to address particular needs falling outside the scope of the Branch Verification Committees.

3. Monitoring Commissions (CS)

These are technical assessment bodies of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting, responsible for the assessment and monitoring of official university programmes taught in the Valencian Community. They shall issue a monitoring report containing a detailed and reasoned analysis of the degree of compliance with each and every one of the criteria and guidelines established for monitoring.

4. External Assessment Committees (CEE)

A technical evaluation body responsible for the assessment required for the renewal of accreditation of official programmes taught in the Valencian Community. It shall carry out a visit to the relevant institution and issue an external assessment report containing a detailed and reasoned analysis of the degree of compliance with each and every one of the criteria and guidelines for the renewal of accreditation.

The remit of these non-standing committees will be discussed in greater detail when addressing ESGs 2.3, 2.4 and 2.6.

5. Programme Assessment Commission (CET)

A permanent technical evaluation body responsible for all matters relating to the accreditation of official degree programmes and qualifications. It produces a report on the renewal of accreditation for all official university degree programmes in the Valencian Community, which is sent to the applicant university, the Council of Universities, the Valencian Regional Government and the Ministry of Universities.

6. Certification and Institutional Accreditation Commission (CCAI)

A permanent technical evaluation body responsible for all matters relating to the certification of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). It produces a certification report on the implementation of the IQAS at each Valencian university centre that requests it.

7. AUDIT-AVAP External Assessment Committees (CEEAA)

The technical evaluation body responsible for certifying the IQAS at higher education institutions based in the Valencian Community. It will carry out a visit to the relevant institution and issue an external assessment report containing a detailed and reasoned analysis of the degree of compliance with each and every one of the criteria and guidelines for IQAS certification.

As with the other non-standing committees, this committee will be dealt with in greater detail when ESG criteria 2.3, 2.4 and 2.6 are addressed.

8. DOCENTIA Commission (CD)

A permanent technical evaluation body with responsibility for matters relating to the DOCENTIA programme. For the certification of the DOCENTIA programme's teaching quality model, an external assessment committee is set up to visit the institution and produce a provisional qualitative report, which serves as further evidence for the final report proposed by AVAP's DOCENTIA Commission. The AVAP DOCENTIA Commission is responsible for carrying out the evaluation and issuing the report. The teaching evaluation models designed by the universities are assessed and, where appropriate, verified by this commission. The aim of this assessment procedure is to verify that the model drawn up by the university complies with the provisions of the DOCENTIA Programme.

9. Protocols and Appeals Commission (PAC)

A permanent technical body responsible for handling all complaints received during the procedures of verification, monitoring and renewal of accreditation for all official degree programmes within the Valencian university system. Furthermore, this commission is responsible for drafting and validating the assessment protocols for the quality assurance activities carried out by AVAP.

AVAP STAFF

AVAP's posts are filled by civil servants within the staffing structure of the Valencian Regional Government. The Directorate-General is responsible for exercising the powers relating to the agency's staff. There are also two departments providing administrative and management support to the various technical areas:

a) Higher Education Quality Service.

b) Financial, Human Resources and Regulatory Affairs Service.

Under the coordination of these two departments, the following staff structure is in place, which we present as an organisational chart by way of summary:

AVAP'S ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

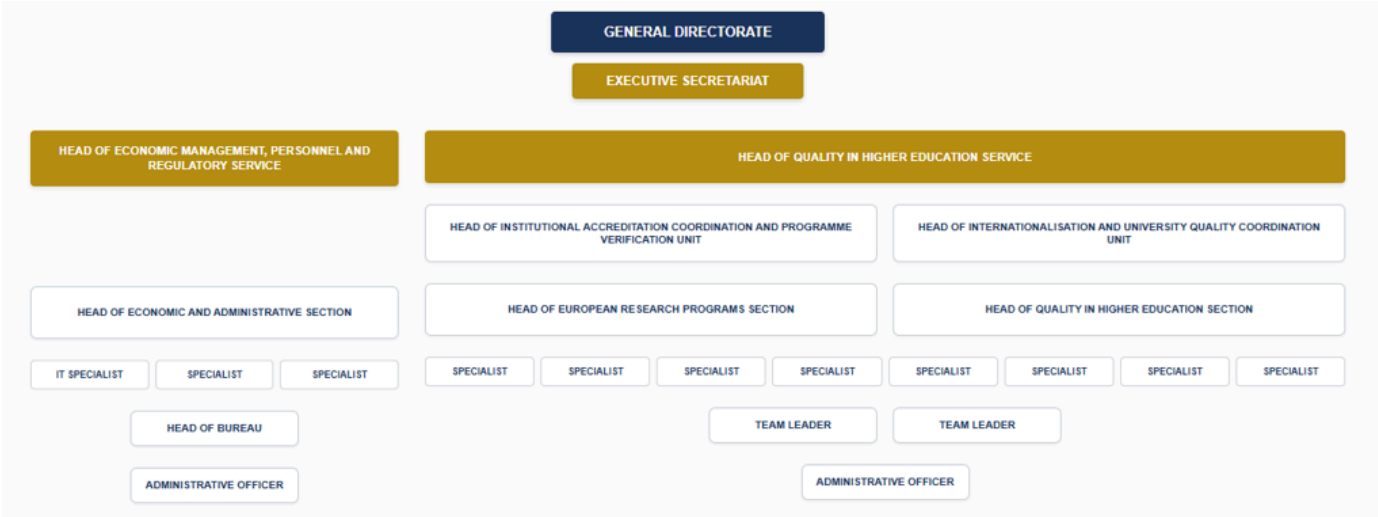

Figure 6. AVAP's organisation and structure

EVIDENCE

AVAP Structure
https://avap.es/es/estructura/ ↗

Governing bodies
https://avap.es/es/estructura/organos-rectores/ ↗

Advisory bodies
https://avap.es/es/estructura/organos-asesores/ ↗

Higher Education Committees and Commissions (drop-down menu)
https://avap.es/es/educacion-superior/ ↗
https://avap.es/es/profesorado/ ↗
https://avap.es/es/idi/ ↗

AVAP staff and organisation chart
https://avap.es/es/transparencia/informacion-institucional/organigrama-de-la-agencia/ ↗

List of AVAP job roles
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/00.-AVAP_RPT-DOGV-2025-07-18.pdf ↗

6. FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY

6.1 Functions

In accordance with Law 5/2006 of 25 May on the establishment of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting (AVAP) and its subsequent amendments, AVAP is responsible for the following general functions within the Valencian higher education system:

a) The accreditation and assessment of higher education institutions and teaching staff, and other related activities.

b) The assessment of technology, research and innovation programmes.

c) Forecasting and analysis of new technological, scientific and academic demands relevant to the Valencian Community.

The specific functions assigned to the agency are set out in detail in Article 3(2) of Decree 7/2024 of 9 January of the Regional Government, approving the Organic and Functional Regulations of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting (AVAP).

6.2 Activities

To achieve the objectives set out in the functions described above, AVAP carries out a series of activities organised into three types of processes:

a) Operational Processes: for activities directly related to the fulfilment of the functions assigned to the agency by the regulations.

b) Strategic Processes: which determine the organisation's broad lines of action and management, as well as its strategic direction.

c) Support Processes: these encompass resource management, financial matters and documentation. Taken together, they provide cross-cutting support for all the agency's activities and ensure its internal functioning.

The following figure summarises the set of actions carried out by the agency which constitute its Internal Quality Assurance System, certified in 2025 to the ISO 9001:2015 standard.

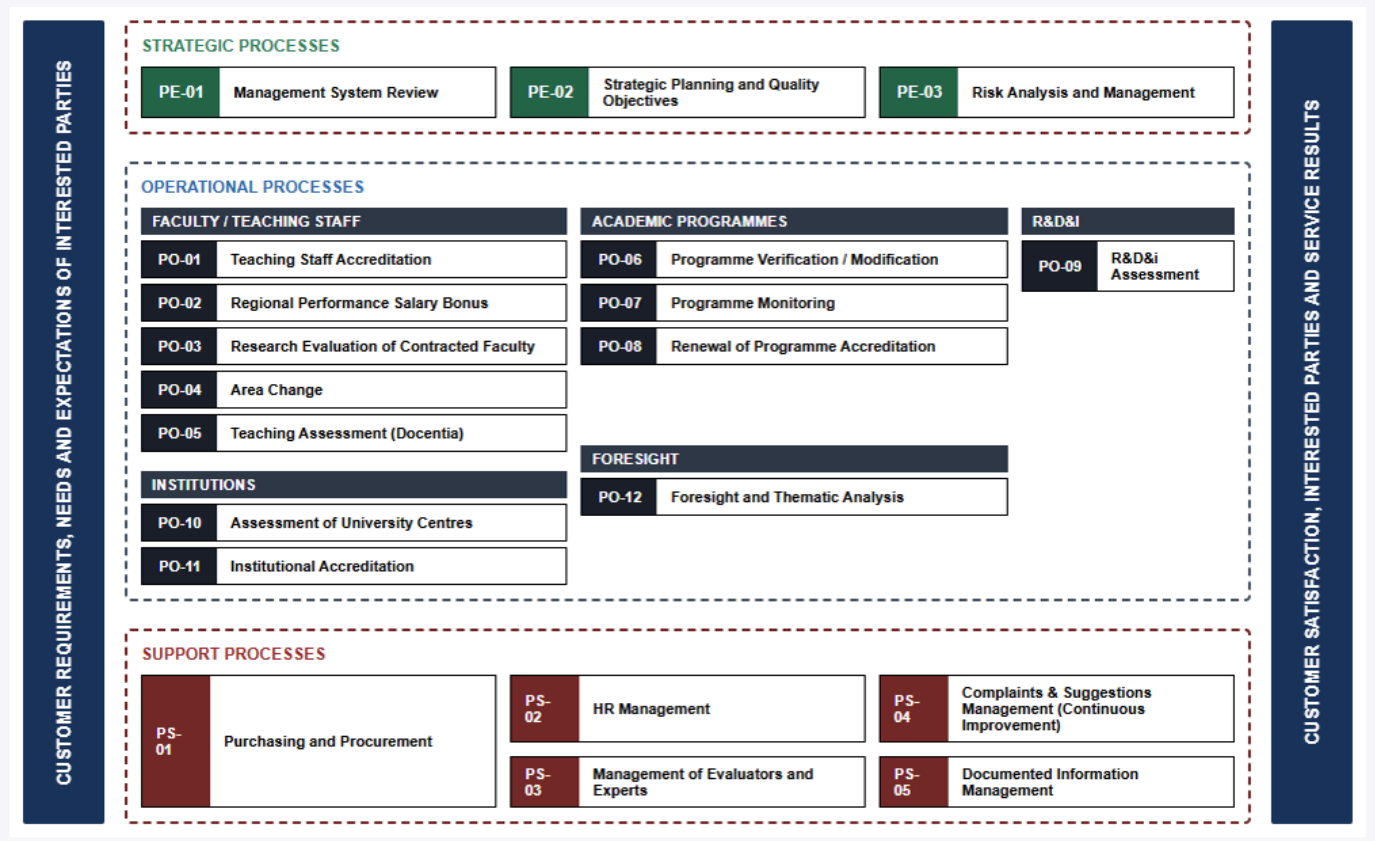

Figure 7. Actions carried out by AVAP which constitute its IQAS (Certified ISO 9001:2015 in 2025)

As regards the Operational Processes that form the core of quality assurance activities within the Valencian higher education system, as mandated by Law 5/2006 of 25 May of the Generalitat on the Establishment of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting (AVAP), we have, first and foremost, those processes directly related to the application of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG):

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Institutional Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions is a process through which institutions can have the accreditation of the degree programmes they offer renewed, by demonstrating that they have implemented their Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS).

In accordance with Article 25 of Royal Decree 822/2021 of 28 September, the quality agencies of the Autonomous Communities must be registered with the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) in order to carry out this certification.

The procedure for issuing the AUDIT-AVAP certificate complies with the protocol for the certification of internal quality assurance systems at higher education institutions, which, at the proposal of the Spanish Ministry of Universities, was approved by the General Conference on University Policy and published in the Resolution of 3 March 2022 of the General Secretariat for Universities (amended by the Resolution of the General Secretariat for Universities dated 8 September 2026), which sets out instructions on the procedure for the institutional accreditation of public and private higher education institutions.

The aforementioned resolution states that, as part of the certification process for the implementation of internal quality assurance systems (IQAS), the responsible agency shall issue a certificate confirming the institution's compliance with the established criteria and the effectiveness of its internal quality assurance system.

Finally, this same regulatory standard stipulates that quality assurance agencies must follow a protocol and, to this end, must draw up a guide to support the process; AVAP complies with this through the publication of the Guide to the Certification of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) AUDIT-AVAP, which can be found on the agency's official website.

Once certification of its Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) has been obtained, the institution must apply for Institutional Accreditation from the Council of Universities, which will then contact the agency with territorial jurisdiction over the institution to commission a binding report on whether or not the institution meets the necessary requirements to obtain institutional accreditation, specifically:

- whether the institution in question has a certified Internal Quality Assurance System
- whether, in addition, it has renewed the accreditation of at least half (50 per cent) of the bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes it offers;
- whether the teaching staff meet the requirements set out in Royal Decree 640/21 (amended by RD 905/2025 of 7 October), relating to the quality of teaching provided at the university
- whether the institution complies with the requirements and stipulations set out in RD 640/21 (amended by RD 905/2025) regarding the availability and characteristics of the equipment and facilities necessary for the proper conduct of teaching activities.

VERIFICATION/MODIFICATION OF CURRICULA

With regard to the verification procedure, it is the responsibility of the quality assurance agencies to draw up a report verifying the quality of the official programme description for Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral programmes, in accordance with the established protocol and in line with the provisions of RD 822/2021, which establishes the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality, as amended by RD 905/2025. In the case of Doctoral Programmes, the reports are drawn up in accordance with the specific protocol and RD 99/2011 of 28 January, regulating official doctoral programmes, as amended by RD 576/2023 of 4 July.

The verification report, which is mandatory, is drawn up by committees comprising independent academic and professional experts of recognised standing, in which student representatives also participate. To this end, AVAP has six Branch Verification Committees, which draw up draft reports that are submitted to the Verification Commission for approval. The Commission is composed of the Chairs and Secretaries of the Branch Committees.

Once issued, the final report is forwarded by the agency to the Council of Universities, which is the body responsible for issuing a decision—favourable or unfavourable—on the verification of the programme. The verification of the programme entails its initial accreditation.

With regard to modifications, this is an administrative procedure that allows universities to make changes to official university degree programmes once they have been verified. Depending on the nature and extent of the changes proposed to official university degree programmes, modifications are classified as follows:

- Non-substantial modifications: minor changes that improve the programme and result from the monitoring carried out by each institution at the intervals established in its internal quality assurance system. For these to be approved, a report must be drawn up and approved by the Programme Verification Commission.
- Substantial modifications: changes that improve the programme and which also result from monitoring or from requirements arising from previous assessment processes, but which go beyond the scope of a non-substantial modification, as they alter elements of the structure, nature and/or objectives of the programme or other aspects of the programme description. The procedure for approving substantial modifications is identical to that for verification.

Both procedures—verification and modification—in the case of AVAP, are covered by the same evaluation protocol, with the Protocol for Official Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes differing from the Protocol for Doctoral Programmes. Furthermore, universities have access to the Support Guide for the preparation of the verification/modification report for official Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes, and the Guide for Doctoral Programmes, amongst other supporting documents.

Finally, with regard to the procedure for the application and assessment of academic programmes with successive pathways in the fields of engineering and architecture (PARS-IA), RD 822/2021 of 28 September, which establishes the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality, regulates, in its ninth additional provision, the possibility for universities to offer, within the scope of their autonomy, academic programmes with sequential pathways — consecutive cycles — in the fields of Engineering and Architecture (PARS-IA), linking a Bachelor's degree programme and a Master's degree programme geared towards professional specialisation, whilst maintaining their structural differentiation and independence, with the aim of strengthening the student's comprehensive education. This provision stipulates that the academic structure proposed by the university for an academic programme of this nature must have been approved by its governing bodies and received a favourable report from the relevant quality assurance agency.

AVAP has a procedure setting out the content of the PARS-IA reports, as well as the criteria for their assessment, which is carried out by the Engineering and Architecture Verification Committee. The reports are submitted to the Programmes Verification Commission for final approval.

To manage the assessments and the production of reports, AVAP has an online platform where the traceability of the entire procedure is recorded.

MONITORING OF PROGRAMMES

Once the degree programmes listed in the Register of Universities, Centres and Qualifications (RUCT) have been implemented, AVAP must monitor compliance with the programme outlined in the curriculum approved by the Council of Universities.

Taking into account the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and the recommendations of the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU), AVAP runs a monitoring programme for official university degree programmes in the Valencian Community.

The assessment committees issue a provisional report, to which allegations may be raised, after which a final report is issued. This report must be made public and forwarded to the university, the regional ministry responsible for higher education and the Council of Universities.

RENEWAL OF PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

The procedure for the renewal of accreditation (ReAcredita) of official degree programmes at Valencian universities (Bachelor's, Master's and PhD) has the following objectives:

- To ensure the quality of the educational programme offered, in accordance with the established qualification levels and the criteria developed by quality assessment agencies.
- To guarantee that the quality of the outcomes achieved in the delivery of official university courses corresponds to the commitments made and verified by the relevant evaluation body.
- To provide recommendations and/or suggestions for improvement regarding the degree programme that support the internal processes for improving the quality of the programme and its delivery, and which must be taken into account in future monitoring and accreditation renewal procedures.
- To review the incorporation into the degree programme's operations of the recommendations included in the reports on the verification, modification, renewal and monitoring of the degree programme's accreditation.

The legislation stipulates that the initial accreditation of official degree programmes must be renewed periodically, either from the date of their verification or from the date of their last accreditation. Such renewal must take place within the following timeframes:

- Official undergraduate degree programmes comprising 240 credits within a maximum period of six years.
- Official undergraduate degree programmes comprising 300 or 360 credits within a maximum period of eight years.
- Official university Master's programmes within a maximum period of six years.
- Official university doctoral programmes within a maximum period of six years.

This period shall be counted from the date on which the degree programme commenced or from the date of renewal of the previous accreditation.

The outcome of the evaluation process for the renewal of accreditation is a reasoned report classed as 'Favourable', 'Favourable with conditions' or 'Unfavourable', which shall be forwarded, where appropriate, to the Council of Universities, amongst others, so that it may issue the relevant decision regarding the renewal of the degree's accreditation.

On the AVAP website, there is an updated protocol guide for the reaccreditation of degree programmes.

ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONS

Through the institution assessment procedure, AVAP draws up a report concerning the establishment of higher education institutions and any changes affecting them (such as changes of name or location, amongst others), as well as their possible closure. Consequently, there is no specific timeframe for processing these applications, as they are submitted on an ad hoc basis.

Law 4/2007 of 9 February of the Generalitat on the Coordination of the Valencian University System, in Article 7, states that authorisation for the establishment, modification and closure, in public universities, and their recognition in private universities, of faculties, technical or higher polytechnic schools, university

schools or polytechnic university schools, shall be agreed by decree of the Regional Government, when university planning or administrative or organisational reasons so require, subject to compliance with a series of mandatory procedures, including a report from AVAP.

RD 905/2025 of 7 October, which, amongst other things, amends RD 640/2021 of 27 July on the creation, recognition and authorisation of universities and university centres, and the institutional accreditation of university centres, sets out the procedure to be followed in Spain by higher education institutions, the competent bodies of the education authorities and quality assurance agencies when an application is made for the creation and establishment of a new university institution.

To date, AVAP has not received any applications to carry out this activity and, as we are in close contact with the regional administration responsible for education, it does not appear that this will happen for the remainder of the year. However, AVAP is preparing a protocol for action based on the aforementioned RD 905/2025, to be implemented should an application be submitted for the creation of a new university within the territory of the Valencian Community.

Article 4.2 of RD 905/2025 stipulates that, in order to initiate the process of establishing or recognising a university or, where applicable, a university centre, and its subsequent authorisation to commence academic activities, a report or supporting documentation must be submitted demonstrating compliance with the conditions and requirements laid down by this RD and, likewise, by the regulations of the Autonomous Community in which the university's headquarters, or, where applicable, the centre's headquarters, would be located. Should the procedure be initiated with the Autonomous Community where the official headquarters is to be located, the latter shall, ex officio, request the mandatory and binding report from its relevant quality assurance agency registered with the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR), in this case AVAP.

AVAP's report will assess the overall quality of the project submitted in accordance with the requirements and criteria set out in RD 905/2025, analysing, amongst other aspects, the quality of the academic provision; the availability, characteristics and suitability of the teaching staff supporting this teaching and research activity, whom the organisation promoting the university project undertakes to recruit; the provision of equipment and facilities for teaching, research and knowledge transfer, as well as for services and administration; and the soundness of the university's multi-annual research and knowledge transfer programme. AVAP has a maximum period of one year from receipt of the application to issue and submit this report to the regional ministry responsible for universities in the Valencian Community.

If AVAP's report is favourable, it shall be forwarded to the relevant body of the Autonomous Community, to the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, and to the applicant seeking the establishment or recognition of the university. If the report from the relevant agency is unfavourable or has not been issued within the timeframe referred to in the previous paragraph, the competent body of the Autonomous Community will issue a decision of rejection, thereby bringing the administrative procedure for the application for the establishment or recognition of a university to an end. The interested party will be notified of this decision and will not be permitted to submit a new application until at least two years have elapsed from the date of notification of that decision.

AVAP is currently working, alongside the other Spanish agencies, on drafting a protocol and a support guide to address this type of evaluation.

Furthermore, in order to comply with the guidelines of RD 905/2025, AVAP is exploring how to establish a committee in accordance with the regulations set out in this Royal Decree.

DOCENTIA

The Programme to Support the Evaluation of University Teaching Staff's Teaching Activity (DOCENTIA) is a programme initially developed in 2007 by the state agency ANECA, in coordination with the regional quality agencies, to assist higher education institutions in developing and implementing their own mechanisms for managing the quality of university teaching staff's activity and to promote their professional development. ANECA, AVAP and the other Spanish agencies have collaborated on the design and updating of this programme, culminating in the current version of the Guide (2025).

For organisational reasons, in recent years it has been ANECA that has carried out the DOCENTIA evaluation process at Valencian universities. However, since early 2026, AVAP has taken on this task in its entirety. To this end, AVAP and ANECA have signed a collaboration agreement, and AVAP is currently responsible for the assessment, monitoring and certification of the teaching evaluation models developed by Valencian universities. The phases involved in the implementation of the DOCENTIA Programme are as follows:

PHASE 1 – DESIGN: The university designs the teaching activity assessment manual in accordance with the DOCENTIA model and submits it to the relevant agency for assessment.

PHASE 2 – EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF THE DESIGNS: The aim is to verify compliance with the specifications and criteria of the DOCENTIA model.

PHASE 3 – MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION: Universities whose designs have been positively assessed begin implementation and submit an annual report to the Agency.

PHASE 4 – CERTIFICATION AND MONITORING OF CERTIFICATION: Once the programme has been fully implemented and the monitoring phase has been successfully completed, universities may apply for certification of their assessment procedures. Once implementation has been certified, the university must submit an annual report on the monitoring of the certification.

PHASE 5 – RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION: Once the certification period has expired, provided the latest monitoring report is favourable.

Certification of a model under the DOCENTIA programme is valid for 6 years. During the first five years, the university will submit annual certification monitoring reports and, in the sixth year, will submit a certification renewal report.

We shall now describe the processes carried out by AVAP that are not directly related to the application of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). These processes fall outside the scope of this forthcoming review and do not compromise the agency's independence:

FORECASTING REPORTS

The aim of forecasting is to provide the various stakeholder groups with objective information that reflects future needs and the possible changes required to meet them within the Valencian university system. This task is carried out by maintaining regular contact with the various stakeholders involved, particularly students, university administrators and teaching staff.

Furthermore, through Thematic Analyses, we extract information from the documentation generated by the agency itself and provide conclusions relevant to the decision-making procedures of the various stakeholders. By applying this information, we can improve the accreditation and certification procedures, making them progressively more efficient, which in turn leads to an increase in the quality of the system.

Given that the objectives are to provide relevant information and increase the efficiency of the Valencian university system, the documentation obtained through both procedures is made available to stakeholders via the AVAP website.

ACCREDITATION OF ACADEMIC STAFF

AVAP's Teaching Staff Assessment Procedure assesses the teaching and research activities of non-civil servant teaching staff prior to their appointment by universities in the Valencian Community.

Currently, AVAP is working on updating the criteria for the role of Permanent Contracted Lecturer (PPL), which replaces that of Contracted Doctoral Lecturer, and on publishing a new call for applications for the evaluation of PPL candidates.

REGIONAL SALARY SUPPLEMENT

AVAP manages the preliminary assessment of merits for additional remuneration linked to individual, teaching, research and management merits, for teaching and research staff – both contracted and civil servants – at the public universities of the Valencian Community.

This assessment is carried out in accordance with the Resolution of 21 January 2011, issued by the President of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting, which establishes the criteria and procedure for the assessment of individual merits for the purpose of determining additional remuneration linked to individual teaching, research and management within the teaching and research staff who are civil servants, as regulated by Decree 174/2002 of 15 October, of the Valencian Government on the Status and Remuneration of Contracted Teaching and Research Staff at Valencian Public Universities and on Additional Remuneration for University Teaching Staff.

Each university may submit individual proposals for the allocation of the additional remuneration supplement, together with the relevant documentation, by 31 July of the year in which the application is made. Once it has been verified that the documentation meets the required criteria, AVAP's assessment committee will carry out an individual assessment of the merits submitted. Finally, within a maximum period of six months from the closing date for the submission of applications, the Directorate-General of AVAP will decide on the applications for assessment, and these decisions will be notified to the proposing universities.

ASSESSMENT OF RESEARCH BY CONTRACTED ACADEMIC STAFF

AVAP, in accordance with the criteria of the state agency ANECA and in line with the instructions agreed upon by the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU), carries out the assessment of research activity (six-year research periods) of teaching and research staff employed at universities and research centres in the Valencian Community.

This assessment is carried out in accordance with RD 1086/1989 of 28 August on the remuneration of university teaching staff and the Order of 2 December 1994, which establishes the procedure for the evaluation of research activity in implementation of the aforementioned RD 1086/1989.

Each university forwards the documentation submitted by applicants to AVAP. The assessment of these individual applications is carried out by committees of specialists in each field of knowledge, in accordance with the applicable regulations and previously established general and specific assessment criteria. Finally, these assessments will be forwarded to the universities so that they may conclude this assessment procedure.

CHANGE OF UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

This is carried out by means of an individual application from a university lecturer, whereby their post is transferred to another department, meaning they come to belong to a new area within the same university.

This change is intended to achieve a better alignment between the teaching provided, the academic's research track record in their field of expertise and the actual structure of the department, without this adversely affecting teaching planning or the rights of other academic staff.

A peer review of the applicant's curriculum vitae is carried out, and an AVAP report is drawn up and sent to the university.

R&D&I ASSESSMENT

AVAP's main role in this area is to assess research, development and technology transfer in programmes run by the Valencian Government, research institutes and other scientific research activities. The assessment is carried out in accordance with the criteria and in compliance with the requirements set out in the call for applications for the grant or funding in question in each case. All applications are categorised by field of knowledge or broad area of study, before being forwarded to the relevant evaluators.

In carrying out their duties, AVAP's technical committees operate within their respective fields with adequate guarantees of technical independence and professionalism. For its part, AVAP regulations stipulate that, based on the profile of the functions assigned to the various temporary and permanent committees that may be established, AVAP shall define the requirements to be met by the members of those committees in terms of their teaching and/or research activities. With regard to the assessment functions assigned to AVAP, experts will be selected to participate anonymously during the assessment procedure and who, as a general rule, will not be working in the Valencian Community.

There are seven assessment committees organised by broad fields of study, following criteria similar to those of the State Research Agency (AEI). Each committee is chaired by one person; secretarial duties are carried out by AVAP's technical staff; and the remaining members act as ordinary members, ensuring that all reasonable subject areas are covered.

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

AVAP has been actively involved in the Greenversity project, a three-year initiative dedicated to integrating the European Green Competences Framework (GreenComp) into higher education. The aim of the project is to equip universities, educators and students with the essential skills and knowledge to lead sustainable transformations in society. By developing a structured framework for implementing GreenComp through training programmes and student initiatives, Greenversity aims to make green skills a fundamental part of higher education across Europe.

AVAP is the only quality assurance agency participating in the project, which is led by the University of Valencia, alongside the Universities of Bourgogne Europe (France), Lucian Blaga of Sibiu (Romania) and Jyväskylä (Finland), as well as partners from other sectors, such as the NGO Santa Casa de Misericórdia Amadora (Portugal) and F6S (Ireland), a networking platform with expertise in European project management processes.

The Greenversity project began in September 2024, and the accreditation protocol for universities and students is expected to be finalised in spring 2027, with the project due to conclude in August 2027.

EVIDENCE

Law 5/2006 of 25 May of the Generalitat on the Creation of the Valencian Agency for Evaluation and Forecasting
Consolidated text – DOGV – Valencian Regional Government ↗

Follow-up Protocol Bachelor's & Masters
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2.-Protocolo-Programa-de-Seguimiento-Grado-y-Master-en-GB.pdf ↗

Follow-up Protocol Doctoral Degrees
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/3.-Protocolo-Programa-Seguimiento-Doctorado-en-GB.pdf ↗

Protocol for the renewal of degrees and masters accreditation
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/4-Protocolo-Programa-Renovacion-Acreditacion-Grado-y-Master-2027-en-GB.pdf ↗

Protocol for the renewal of doctoral degrees accreditation
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/5-Protocolo-Programa-Renovacion-Acreditacion-Doctorado-2027-en-GB.pdf ↗

AVAP functions (drop-down menu)
https://avap.es/es/educacion-superior/ ↗
https://avap.es/es/profesorado/ ↗
https://avap.es/es/idi/ ↗

Greenversity
https://greenversity.eu/ ↗
https://avap.es/es/avap-informa/proyectos-europeos/ ↗

C.
COMPLIANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE ESG

7. Compliance with part 3 of the ESG

7. COMPLIANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE ESG

ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

STANDARD:

Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities as defined in Part 2 of the ESG on a regular basis. They should have clear and explicit goals and objectives that form part of their publicly available mission statement. These should be reflected in the agency's day-to-day work. Agencies should ensure the involvement of stakeholders in their governance and work.

ENQA AGENCY REVIEW 2022

The review panel **recommends** that AVAP ensures that student members are actually represented in all decision-making bodies and that the full composition of each decision-making body is properly reflected on the AVAP website.

With regard to the recommendation made by ENQA's assessment panel during the on-site visit in 2022, we set out below how AVAP has addressed these issues. It should be noted that many of these recommendations were included in the 2024 follow-up report, following the panel's 2022 visit, but some points have been added and updated:

As recommended by the panel, student representation is now guaranteed in all AVAP's decision-making bodies, committees and commissions, as can be seen on the agency's own website, and with the same responsibilities and influence as the other members. It should be noted that, as part of the accreditation renewal process, students are invited to produce an independent report, which is sent directly to the agency and forms part of the evidence submitted.

AVAP's mission, as set out on the agency's own website, is to promote excellence in Valencian higher education and innovation systems through assessment and forecasting, in order to improve the society it serves. To achieve these aims and objectives, Decree 7/2024 of 9 January of the Valencian Government, which approves the Organic and Functional Regulations of the Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting, defines both the general and specific functions of the agency, as mentioned in section 6 of this document.

AVAP is in the final year of its current strategic plan for the four-year period 2023–26, published on the agency's website.

During the second half of 2026, we have been working on the development of the new strategic plan for 2027 to 2030. To this end, we are following a procedure similar to that used for the 2023–2026 plan. The starting point is a proposal from management setting out objectives and actions. Based on these, the AVAP Quality Commission draws up the document which, after being shared with the AVAP Advisory Board, will be ratified by the Steering Committee. The strategic pillars of the new plan represent a continuation of the one that is coming to an end, with a particular emphasis on the fourth pillar, which reflects AVAP's commitment to making a significant contribution to the improvement of the Valencian university system through the analysis of metadata, thereby fostering a culture of quality within the universities.

The actions to be carried out to achieve the strategic objectives of the AVAP Strategic Plan 2023–2026 are as follows:

STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE VALENCIAN AGENCY FOR ASSESSMENT AND FORECASTING 2023–2026

To implement AVAP's Strategic Plan 2023–2026, it has been decided to structure it around four strategic pillars:

Pillar 1. Institutional strengthening

Pillar 2. Quality of the Valencian university system: new tasks

Pillar 3. Quality of the Valencian R&D&I system

Pillar 4. Forecasting, thematic analysis and the Valencian Community's employment observatory

To monitor the extent to which the strategic plan is being implemented, AVAP's Quality Commission reviews the progress of each action on an annual basis, assessing their current status and, where appropriate, proposing measures to complete or redirect them.

By way of summary, we present the applications processed by the agency in relation to its main activities since 2022.

These figures can be found in the annual reports for the various years, which are published on AVAP website:

YEAR	2022	2023	2024	2025
Verification and Substantial Modifications	-	-	104	190
Non-substantial Modifications	-	-	-	35
Monitoring Programmes	22	16	16	65
Accreditation Renewal	152	70	44	246
IQAS Certification	-	-	-	5
Institutional Accreditation	-	-	-	2
Calls R & D	2128	1595	2728	2473
Additional Remuneration Assessment	61	71	115	103
New Staff Recruitment Assessment	1092	1003	-	-
New Programmes Assessment	44	41	26	-
Research Activity Assessment	51	65	33	29

Figure 8. Applications processed by AVAP since 2022

Finally, it is important to note that, as explained in more detail in section 5 (History, profile and structure of the agency), all stakeholder groups are represented on the agency's governing and operational bodies.

Specifically, in the Steering Committee, AVAP's collegiate governing and supervisory body, which is responsible for exercising, subject only to the limitations set out in current legislation and without prejudice to the powers of its chair, all the powers and authority generally required to fulfil its objectives, there are representatives from education authorities, higher education institutions, social councils of Valencian public universities, business and professional sectors, experts in higher education, science and innovation, and student representatives.

For a more detailed analysis of the AVAP's functions as set out in the agency's Organic and Functional Regulations, as well as in the Strategic Plan, please consult the following links.

EVIDENCE

AVAP's Organic and Functional Regulations
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024_ROF_AVAP.pdf ↗

AVAP Strategic Plan 2023–2026
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/PLAN-ESTRATEGICO-AVAP-2023-2026-FINAL.pdf ↗

Decree 7/2024 of 9 January of the Regional Government, approving the Organisational and Functional Regulations of the Valencian Agency for Evaluation and Forecasting:
https://dogv.gva.es/datos/2024/01/12/pdf/2024_156.pdf ↗

Annual Reports
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/results/ ↗

Composition and protocols of AVAP's various committees and commissions:
https://avap.es/en/verification-and-modification/ ↗
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/follow-up-study-programmes/undergraduate-degrees/ ↗
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/certification-renewal-of-study-programmes/undergraduate-degrees/ ↗
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/protocols-and-appeals-commission/ ↗
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/institutional-accreditation/ ↗
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/institutional-accreditation/internal-quality-assurance-system-iqas-certification/ ↗

ESG 3.2 Official status

STANDARD:

Agencies should have an established legal basis and should be formally recognised as quality assurance agencies by competent public authorities

AVAP was established by Law 5/2006 of 25 May of the Generalitat as a public body governed by private law, as provided for in Article 5.2 of the Consolidated Text of the Generalitat's Public Finance Act, with the aim of ensuring the quality and excellence of the Valencian systems of higher education, science and innovation through evaluation, accreditation and forecasting.

AVAP, with its own legal personality and assets and full capacity to act in pursuit of its objectives, is attached to the regional ministry responsible for universities and for the promotion and coordination of research.

In addition to regional regulations, AVAP's status as a leading agency in the Valencian Community is reinforced by national regulations, such as Organic Law 2/23 on the University System, which, in Article 5 (The quality of the university system), paragraphs 1 and 2, stipulates that:

> *"1. The university system must guarantee levels of good governance and quality that are comparable with internationally recognised standards, in particular with the criteria and guidelines established for quality assurance within the European Higher Education Area.*
>
> *2. The promotion and assurance of such quality is a shared responsibility of universities, evaluation agencies and the public authorities with competence in this area."*

And, in paragraph 4 of this same Article 5:

> *"5. The functions of accrediting and assessing university teaching staff, institutional accreditation, the assessment of university degree programmes, the monitoring of outcomes and reporting within the university sector, and any other functions assigned to them by national and regional legislation, fall within the remit of the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) and* ***to the evaluation agencies of the Autonomous Communities registered with the European Quality Assurance Register*** *(EQAR), within the scope of their respective competences, all without prejudice to international cooperation agreements in the field of quality assurance, as well as to the role that quality agencies from other Member States registered with EQAR may play within the framework of the European Higher Education Area."*

Similarly, RD 822/2021 of 28 September, which regulates the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality, states in its preamble that, amongst others, quality assurance agencies were consulted during its drafting, and sets out in Article 25 (Quality assurance of official university education):

> *"1 ... official university programmes must be subject to external evaluation procedures in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG)... Universities must share responsibility for quality assurance by developing their internal quality assurance systems and promoting a culture of quality within the university community.*
>
> *2. The external evaluation bodies responsible for carrying out quality assurance procedures within the Spanish university system are the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) and, for their respective territorial areas,* ***the quality agencies of the Autonomous Communities listed in*** *the European Quality* ***Assurance*** *Register for Higher Education (EQAR), having successfully passed an external evaluation in accordance with the ESG.*
>
> *3. The quality assurance procedures covering all study programmes for official university degree programmes are those relating to verification, monitoring and modification, as well as the renewal of accreditation. To this end,* ***the quality agencies*** *shall jointly establish the quality assessment protocols governing these procedures."*

The latest regulatory act governing higher education, RD 905/2025, in Section V of its preamble, referring to the reform of RD 640/2021 on the creation, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions, as well as other

related regulations concerning universities with the same status as a royal decree, states:

> *"Compliance with these logical and reasonable requirements for any public or private university wishing to establish itself with guarantees of financial soundness, success, viability and a commitment to long-term sustainability shall be assessed in two reports prior to the establishment and authorisation of the university institution: the first will be commissioned ex officio by the Autonomous Community; it will be mandatory and binding, and will be drawn up by the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA)* ***or the quality agency corresponding to the Autonomous Community in which the institution is based*** *(thereby strengthening, in practice, the decision-making capacity at regional level to determine whether a new university project meets the required quality standards). This proposal draws on the entire body of experience of the Spanish university system within the European Higher Education Area, in which* ***quality agencies*** *– as in the rest of Europe – have the* ***power to issue binding reports on the quality*** *of a university institution (institutional accreditation), an official programme (verification) or a lecturer's curriculum vitae (accreditation), derived from the respective national regulations but affecting the entire system and all quality assurance agencies in our country****. The autonomy and independence of the agencies in drawing up these reports is the fundamental key to the strength of this system, the true backbone of European university systems."***

EVIDENCE

AVAP's Organic and Functional Regulations
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024_ROF_AVAP.pdf ↗

Organic Law 2/2023 of 22 March on the University System.
https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2023/03/23/pdfs/BOE-A-2023-7500.pdf ↗

Royal Decree 822/2021 of 28 September, establishing the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality.
https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2021/09/29/pdfs/BOE-A-2021-15781.pdf ↗

AVAP's membership of ENQA
https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/Board-letter-membership-approved_AVAP.pdf ↗

RD 640/2021 of 27 July on the creation, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions.
https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2021-12613 ↗

RD 905/2025 of 7 October, amending Royal Decree 640/2021 of 27 July on the establishment, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions
https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2025-20002 ↗

ESG 3.3 Independence

STANDARD:

Agencies should be independent and act autonomously. They should have full responsibility for their operations and the outcomes of those operations, free from third-party influence.

ENQA AGENCY REVIEW 2022

The panel **recommends** AVAP to engage in a discussion with the Regional Government about the current state of organisational independence with a view to reduce the dominant role of the Government representatives in its governance notably the Executive Committee.

The panel **recommends** AVAP to revise the appointment procedure of the Director by the SC, in order to prove more formal independence from the regional government.

The panel **recommends** AVAP to approve Rules of Procedure for each managing and decision-making body that would regulate the decision-making procedure and formally ensure that it is consistent and fully independent.

The panel **recommends** AVAP to develop and publish clear selection principles and application procedure for composing its collegial decision-making bodies, for example, the Accreditation Commission.

With regard to the recommendations made by ENQA's assessment panel during the on-site visit in 2022, we set out below how AVAP has addressed these issues. It should be noted that many of these recommendations were included in the 2024 follow-up report, following the panel's 2022 visit, but some points have been added and updated:

- Following the publication of AVAP's new Regulations on Organisation and Operation, AVAP's Steering Committee – which is the agency's collegiate governing and supervisory body – comprises a majority of members with a technical background, who outnumber those with a political background.
- All AVAP's committees and commissions have their own rules of organisation and procedure, which are published on the website, thereby ensuring the consistency and independence of the various processes.
- AVAP has drawn up and published on its website the selection and application protocols for its decision-making bodies.
- It should be noted that, following the 2023 regional elections, the government of the Valencian Community changed and came to be of a different political persuasion to the one that had appointed AVAP's Director-General in 2019; however, in 2023, the new government confirmed the same Director-General in post until 2027, which reinforces the independent nature of the post as one with a technical rather than a political profile.
- Furthermore, as already mentioned, AVAP's Steering Committee has the option of operating as a Standing Committee, a body in which no member of the regional government is represented and whose functions are essentially, according to Article 8.6 of the AVAP Regulations on Organisation and Operation, to resolve administrative appeals lodged by the General-Directorate.

These measures, together with developments in both the organisation and structure of the agency and its functions, have resulted in a highly satisfactory degree of independence:

ORGANISATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

Following the publication of AVAP's new Regulations on Organisation and Operation, AVAP's Steering Committee – which is the agency's collegiate governing and supervisory body – now comprises a majority of members with technical backgrounds. It should be noted that the external evaluation report carried out by the ENQA panel in 2022 was of great assistance in strengthening the process of formal independence from political influence, which AVAP had already begun but which it had to accelerate in order to comply with the ENQA panel's recommendations.

On 9 January 2024, the Consell, the regional government of the Valencian Community, approved the update to AVAP's organisational and operational regulations (Consell Decree 7/24, AVAP's Organic and Operational Regulations, ROF), which came into force the day after its publication in the DOGV on 16 January 2024. This amendment has marked a genuine turning point in the agency's adaptation to the demanding requirements of higher education in the Valencian Community. The preamble to AVAP's new ROF states that the agency's aim is to ensure the quality and excellence of the Valencian systems of higher education, science and innovation, through evaluation, accreditation and forecasting, and with an organisational model that guarantees independence, objectivity, excellence and transparency.

The agency's restructuring has focused particularly on two key areas: the reorganisation of its staffing structure and the reorganisation of its governing bodies. On the one hand, the human resources and finance departments have been strengthened, as have the regulatory framework particularly given the changes in the new ROF, and the international presence of Valencian higher education, whilst educational quality standards are safeguarded and improved. On the other hand, AVAP has defined its governance structure as follows:

- Presidency
- The Steering Committee, which is AVAP's collegiate body and has general (rather than technical) functions, such as approving the budget and annual accounts, staff organisation, the annual activity plan, etc. The Steering Committee acts either in plenary session or as a Standing Commission. This is one of the main changes to AVAP's procedural rules designed to ensure independence, as this Standing Commission replaces the former Executive Committee and no longer includes any representatives from the regional government; this body is responsible for ruling on appeals against decisions made by the Directorate-General.
- The General Directorate

OPERATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

The purpose of these new regulations has been to adapt AVAP's structure and organisation to the changes brought about following the agency's empowerment to carry out new tasks, as a result of AVAP's inclusion in 2022 in the EQAR register of European agencies, as well as the update to national regulations on the implementation of quality management in higher education in the Valencian Community.

In this context, the concept of quality is constantly evolving in line with new requirements and demands; consequently, the new regulations include the need to make the establishment and restructuring of the various technical committees more flexible, depending on the needs that arise.

Articles 4 and 5 of the new Rules of Procedure place particular emphasis on the fact that, in order to fulfil its objectives, AVAP shall act in accordance with the principles of, amongst others, independence, objectivity, excellence and transparency, carrying out its functions with rigorous independence in evaluation and decision-making processes.

Furthermore, Article 9bis of the law establishing AVAP stipulates that, in carrying out its functions, AVAP shall have two advisory bodies: the Advisory Board and the Students Commission, which are not subject to any hierarchical subordination and perform advisory functions on matters proposed by AVAP's General Directorate from a different perspective.

With regard to the selection and appointment of external collaborators, AVAP agency maintains a database in which anyone involved in university quality management outside the Valencian university system may voluntarily register, provided they meet the requirements set out on the AVAP website. Based on these lists, and based on purely technical criteria depending on the specific needs of each evaluation, AVAP's technical staff contact those who meet the specific requirements in order to form the various committees.

As regards AVAP's own staff, and to further emphasise their independence, Article 13 of the ROF stipulates that AVAP posts shall be filled by civil servants, the management of whom falls within the remit of the regional ministry responsible for the civil service; these civil servants are subject to the code of conduct, the principles of selection and the rules governing access to the civil service as laid down in the regulations governing the public and foundational sector of the Generalitat (Law 4/21 of 16 April of the Generalitat).

One of the key factors that contributes most significantly to guaranteeing the independence of AVAP staff is that civil servants in all Spanish public administrations are subject to a strict protocol on incompatibilities, which undoubtedly constitutes a major strength for the independence of judgement and action of such staff. The rule on incompatibilities for civil servants in Spain is a legal mechanism designed to guarantee transparency, impartiality and exclusive dedication in the performance of public duties. This principle is regulated by Act 53/1984 of 26 December on incompatibilities of staff in the service of public administrations. This legislation sets out the restrictions, exceptions and penalties applicable to prevent conflicts of interest and ensure the proper exercise of public responsibilities.

Law 53/1984 of 26 December on Incompatibilities of Staff in the Service of Public Administrations stipulates, amongst other things, that "the new regulations on incompatibilities contained in this Law are based, as a fundamental principle, on the dedication of staff in the service of Public Administrations to a single post, with no exceptions other than those required by the public service itself, whilst respecting the pursuit of private activities that do not prevent or impair the strict fulfilment of their duties or compromise their impartiality or independence". Thus, as a general rule, this Act stipulates that any public servant, with very few exceptions—which must be duly justified—may only hold a single post at any one time within any public administration; furthermore, their private activities are restricted, and any activity that could jeopardise or compromise their impartiality and independence is prohibited.

INDEPENDENCE OF FORMAL OUTCOMES

Furthermore, all technical decisions relating to both qualifications and institutions are taken by technical bodies responsible for carrying out the assessments. Members of the assessment panels are contacted by AVAP's technical staff and, depending on the profile required for the process to be carried out, various committees and commissions are established, whose members are subsequently appointed by resolution of the General Directorate to carry out the specific task for which they have been selected. As a general rule, and to further guarantee their independence, those selected to form part of these technical commissions

and committees must carry out their work outside the Valencian Community. This process is governed by Articles 18 and 19 of AVAP's Rules of Organisation and Functioning (ROF), which emphasise that, in order to fulfil its technical functions and facilitate the agency's organisational flexibility, AVAP may establish commissions or committees, which may be permanent or temporary.

In carrying out their duties, AVAP's technical committees operate within their respective fields with adequate guarantees of technical independence and professionalism. Depending on the nature of the duties assigned to the various permanent and temporary committees, AVAP defines the requirements that members must meet. Elaborating on this point, Article 3.3 of the ROF stipulates that AVAP, in carrying out its functions to ensure the quality of higher education in the Valencian Community, acts with objectivity and technical and professional independence, without receiving instructions from public administrations or other institutions regarding the fulfilment of its objectives.

Furthermore, all staff who collaborate with AVAP as members of any of its committees or commissions are required to sign the Code of Ethics for Collaborating Staff, approved by AVAP's Steering Committee. This code of ethics sets out the obligation of such collaborating staff to carry out their duties whilst maintaining their independence, objectivity and professional rigour, as well as ensuring the transparency of their activities. The Code of Ethics also requires evaluators to maintain strict confidentiality regarding any information accessed whilst working with the agency, not to delegate their tasks to third parties, to carry out their duties impartially, and to refrain from working with the agency should any of the grounds for recusal set out in AVAP's Code of Ethics apply.

EVIDENCE

AVAP's Organic and Functional Regulations
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024_ROF_AVAP.pdf ↗

Selection of evaluators
https://avap.es/en/external-evaluators/ ↗

Law 5/2006 of 25 May of the Regional Government of the Valencian Community on the Establishment of the Valencian Agency for Evaluation and Forecasting (AVAP).
https://dogv.gva.es/es/disposicio-consolidada?signatura=2887/2006&idioma=es&L=1&url_lista= ↗

Law 4/2021 of 16 April of the Regional Government of the Valencian Community on the Valencian Civil Service
https://dogv.gva.es/auto/dogv/docvpub/rlgv/2021/L_2021_04_ca_DL_2024_04.pdf ↗

Law 53/1984 of 26 December on Incompatibilities of Staff in the Service of Public Administrations.
https://hisenda.gva.es/documents/90598607/171120815/Ley+53-1984+Incompatibilidades.pdf/1ddc72eb-6ed1-492f-b73d-25a0a4019eb3 ↗

AVAP Staff Code of Ethics
Quality Commitment – Valencian Agency for Evaluation and Prospective Studies (AVAP) ↗

ESG 3.4 Thematic analyses

STANDARD:

Agencies should regularly publish reports that describe and analyse the general findings of their external quality assurance activities.

ENQA AGENCY REVIEW 2022

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to strengthen its activities in REACU's joint thematic analyses by contributing AVAP's own reports and communicating their outcomes to AVAP's stakeholders.

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to (re)start thematic analyses at the regional level, to involve regional stakeholders in identifying relevant topics and to communicate the outcomes to them.

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to consider potentials of integrating thematic analyses and foresight activities.

With regard to the recommendations made by ENQA's assessment panel during the on-site visit in 2022, we set out below how AVAP has addressed these issues.

The Forecasting/Thematic Analysis unit was strengthened in 2025 with the appointment of a Forecasting Specialist dedicated almost exclusively to this area. In line with ENQA recommendations, various stakeholder groups were consulted to identify relevant topics suitable for analysis by AVAP. One of the most notable was the introduction of dual degree programmes within the Valencian university system.

The analyses carried out during 2025 are available to stakeholders on the AVAP website.

An example of AVAP's particular interest in this area is the 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, which identifies collaboration with other agencies, both national and international, as one of the strategic objectives of Axis 4 (Forecasting, Thematic Analyses and the Valencian Community Employment Observatory).

AVAP maintains ongoing contact with Valencian universities and stakeholders in quality improvement, as well as with the various Spanish quality agencies and public administrators, in order to address suggestions and topics of interest to be covered in future work. AVAP contributes its own conclusions and regional data drawn from its participation in the various forums it attends.

To carry out this analysis, working sessions were held with both university officials and student representatives, during which the main areas for improvement within the system were identified. Furthermore, data provided by the Integrated University Information System (SIIU) was used to situate the quantitative part of the analysis within the Valencian context. Finally, a series of conclusions were drawn to guide potential changes and improvements in this area. The completion and findings of this work were communicated to the relevant stakeholders, and the final document was published on the AVAP website.

Furthermore, various thematic analyses have been carried out in relation to several official university degree programmes. Specifically, the Bachelor's programmes in Business Administration and Management, Nursing and Early Years Education have been studied. These studies were based on an examination of the final reports on the renewal of accreditation for these degree programmes at the Valencian universities where they are offered. The final result is a working document identifying the main areas for improvement,

with the aim of enabling universities to strengthen these areas, thereby making the accreditation renewal procedure more efficient, which in turn directly contributes to consolidating the quality of the system. The analyses carried out during 2025 are available to stakeholders on the AVAP website.

The conclusions drawn from both activities are not isolated from one another but are interrelated. One of the key findings of the study on dual degree programmes is the need for such programmes to be supervised by quality assurance agencies. This would enable systematic analyses of their implementation to be carried out in the future, allowing them to be compared with the rest of the programmes within the Valencian university system on the basis of a uniform approach.

Under the technical direction of AQU Catalunya, and in collaboration with AQUA (Agència de Qualitat de l'Ensenyament Superior d'Andorra) and the Secretariat for Universities and Research of the Government of Catalonia, within the framework of the Xarxa Vives d'Universitats, AVAP has also participated in the Via Universitària project, a study aimed at identifying the profile of university students, their study conditions and their level of satisfaction with the university and the teaching provided. This initiative comprised four phases, the final one being "Via Universitària: access, learning conditions, expectations and returns from university studies (2023–2025)", in which AVAP also took part; following the preparatory work for the design of the research team and the study, the project concluded with an online survey of all students.

With the University of Valencia as project leader, and alongside other organisations and universities from Portugal, France, Romania, Ireland and Finland, AVAP has actively collaborated on the Greenversity project, a three-year Erasmus+ project dedicated to integrating the European Framework of Competences on Sustainability (GreenComp) into higher education. The aim is to equip universities, educators and students with the essential skills and knowledge to lead sustainable transformations in society. By developing a structured framework to implement GreenComp through training programmes and student engagement initiatives, GREENVERSITY aims to make green competences a fundamental part of higher education across Europe. AVAP's involvement in this project was the topic chosen by the agency for the poster session during the ENQA Members' Forum held in Budapest in April 2026.

EVIDENCE

Work on the implementation of dual degrees:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/DOBLES_GRADOS-EN.pdf ↗

Thematic analyses:
https://avap.es/en/avap-reports/thematic-analyses/ ↗

Via Universitària Project
https://www.vives.org/programes/estudiants/viauniversitaria-2/#resultats ↗

AVAP Strategic Plan 2023–2026
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/PLAN-ESTRATEGICO-AVAP-2023-2026-FINAL.pdf ↗

Greenversity Project
https://greenversity.eu/es/ ↗

ESG 3.5 Resources

STANDARD:

Organisations should have adequate and appropriate resources, both human and financial, to carry out their work.

HUMAN RESOURCES

AVAP's workforce has grown steadily over the last five years, rising from 18 staff members in 2022 to 24 in 2026 – an increase of 33 per cent. If we analyse the breakdown by service, we can see that, compared with the first year of the analysis, the Quality Department has grown from 13 to 18 staff members, an increase of 38 per cent, whilst the Finance Department has grown from 5 to 6, representing a 20 per cent increase. The current workforce is sufficient to carry out all the functions it has taken on.

	STAFF INCREASE				
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Quality Service	13	14	14	15	18
Finance Service	5	4	5	7	6
TOTAL	**18**	**18**	**19**	**22**	**24**

Figure 9. AVAP's staff increase since 2022

The increase in the number of AVAP staff has led to the publication of new organisational and operational regulations in January 2024, which adapt the agency's structure and organisation to the new functions assumed following its inclusion in the EQAR register and to the regulatory changes applicable to higher education in the Valencian Community throughout this period. Furthermore, these regulations reflect the need to allow for greater flexibility in the creation and restructuring of the various technical committees in line with new requirements as they arise. This is reflected in the Regulations and Operating Procedures for these committees, which can be consulted on the organisation's website.

It is important to note that AVAP staff carry out technical visits to other Spanish quality agencies. Since the last ENQA assessment, AVAP staff have visited the madri+d Knowledge Foundation (2023) to attend a session on verification and modification. Similarly, regular online training sessions have been held with other agencies, such as AQU Catalonia (2023) and ACCUEE Canary Islands (2023). In 2024, AVAP also took part in the launch of CoARA's National Chapter Spain, a pioneering initiative aimed at reforming research assessment processes in Spain. These activities continued in 2025 with AVAP's participation in the REACU meeting in Tenerife, with the aim, amongst other things, of sharing best practice experiences amongst all Spanish agencies.

As an example of AVAP's commitment to improving the preparation and training of its staff, coinciding with the Valencian Institute of Public Administration's (IVAP) 2024 call for training for staff of the Valencian Regional Government, the course 'Internal Quality Assurance Systems according to the AUDIT model' was included in the Training Plan, aimed specifically at AVAP's technical staff. This course was finally held in November 2024, and its objectives were:

- To explain the basic principles of quality assurance in the context of higher education institutions.
- To present the main processes involved in the management and development of an internal quality assurance system (IQAS) based on ANECA's AUDIT model.
- To outline the key features that characterise a properly designed and implemented IQAS.
- To provide guidelines to facilitate the attainment and maintenance of external certification.

With regard to the staff profiles that have been recruited by the agency, we would highlight the commitment to enhancing the capabilities of the Quality Service, in line with the recommendations set out in the latest ENQA review for better alignment with the ESG and the expansion of functions resulting from AVAP's inclusion in the EQAR register. Staff growth has gone hand in hand with the expansion of the structure providing financial and administrative support. Below, we detail the profiles of the new staff members who have joined the agency in recent years:

PROFILE OF NEW STAFF	
2023	Higher Education Quality Technician
	Institutional Accreditation Officer
2024	Head of the Financial and Administrative Management Section
2025	Institutional Accreditation Officer
	Higher Education Forecasting Specialist
	University Teaching Staff Assessment Officer
	Economic and Administrative Management Specialist
2026	Head of the Assessment and Coordination Team
	Team Leader, Fixed Budget Coordination

Figure 10. Profile of new AVAP's staff

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

AVAP's budget has seen a steady increase in the resources available to cope with the expansion of its functions and workforce, as shown in the table below. This increase is all the more notable given that it has taken place against a backdrop of expenditure controls imposed by the regional government. With regard to the revenue figures for the last financial year, it should be noted that these figures relate to a financial year that has not yet been finalised. If we take into account the revenue data for financial years that have already been finalised, the increase amounted to 63 per cent over the period 2022–2025.

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Revenue	1,765,030	1,858,000	2,469,007	2,874,362	2,617,920
Expenditure	-1,459,267	-1,777,072	-2,302,177	-2,878,890	Pending

Figure 11. AVAP's revenue and expenditure since 2022

Approximately 65 per cent of AVAP's expenditure consists of staff costs, with the remainder comprising operating costs, which include payments to assessors. Virtually the entire revenue budget of AVAP comes from Valencian public funding.

The regional government's commitment to the agency and the tasks entrusted to it has been consistent since its creation. Both the increase in the agency's funding and the continuity of its director's tenure under regional governments of different ideological orientations are manifestations of the independence enjoyed by AVAP.

EVIDENCE

AVAP jobs:
https://avap.es/es/transparencia/informacion-institucional/organigrama-de-la-agencia/ ↗

2025 budget (extended):
https://hisenda.gva.es/auto/presupuestos/2025/pdf/REF-25-10-x-xxxx-xxxxxxxxx-xxxx-xxxxxx-ES.pdf ↗

AVAP's organisational and operational regulations:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024_ROF_AVAP.pdf ↗

Regulations and operating procedures for the technical committees:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/QA-Handbook.pdf ↗

Notice in the Official Gazette of the Valencian Regional Government regarding the 2024 training programme (in Spanish, page 6040)
https://dogv.gva.es/datos/2024/02/12/pdf/2024_1028.pdf ↗

ESG 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct

STANDARD:

Organisations should have processes in place for internal quality assurance relating to defining, ensuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of their activities.

ENQA AGENCY REVIEW 2022

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to develop a Quality Handbook that would be linked to the principles set by the Quality Policy, describe the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in AVAP's activities and define AVAP's internal indicators for quality and mechanisms for their monitoring.

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to conduct workshops and training activities for its staff and stakeholders on a regular basis.

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to systemize the feedback received during evaluation procedures through establishing an immediate follow-up procedure after every evaluation in order to assess their quality and suggest ways to improve it.

Regarding the recommendations made by the assessment panel during the on-site visit in 2022, we set out below, in general terms, how AVAP has addressed these issues.

With the aim of upholding the agency's commitment to the principles of independence, objectivity, excellence and transparency, alongside technical and scientific competence and compliance with legal regulations, AVAP has developed a Quality Management System that serves as a framework for establishing and planning quality strategies and objectives aligned with the agency's aims and context. This Quality Management System has been certified to ISO 9001:2015, valid until the end of 2026.

Furthermore, AVAP has published its Internal Quality Assurance System Manual, which has been approved by the agency's senior management.

In order to understand and analyse the satisfaction levels of the agency's evaluators and staff, annual surveys are conducted to measure stakeholder satisfaction, providing information on the issues that are important to these stakeholders, as well as the areas they consider critical and in need of improvement. These results are available on the AVAP website.

With regard to the recommendation by the 2022 visiting panel to organise workshops and training activities for AVAP staff and its stakeholders, in addition to what is outlined in the previous section (ESG 3.5 resources), it should be noted that AVAP has signed collaboration agreements with other agencies, specifically with ACPUA (Aragonese Agency for Quality and Forecasting), with the aim of training students in the main evaluation and certification activities.

AVAP also collaborates with CREUP (National Co-ordinating Body of Student Representatives from Public Universities) on training related to the management of quality processes in higher education, with the aim of training students who will subsequently collaborate with AVAP and the other Spanish agencies.

Since its foundation, AVAP has maintained a commitment to quality, continuous improvement, compliance with client, legal and regulatory requirements, and the needs and expectations of its various stakeholders. To this end, a quality management system has been developed for the assessment and forecasting of higher education, research and innovation systems in the Valencian Community, in line with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG 2015).

The establishment of this system is consistent with AVAP's mission, which is to promote excellence in the Valencian higher education and innovation systems through assessment and forecasting. It is regularly audited in accordance with the ISO 9001:2015 standard. The current certification was renewed on 16 February 2024 and remains valid until 17 December 2026, whilst the auditors' visit is scheduled to take place on 11 and 12 November. In addition, partial audits of the system and of process improvement measures are carried out annually.

In accordance with the recommendations set out in the previous external review report, and in line with the provisions of AVAP's Quality Policy, a Quality Manual has been drawn up which sets out all the procedures carried out by the agency. These procedures are described following a standardised structure. This publication, which can be consulted on the AVAP website, ensures the transparency of the processes and of the quality system as a whole. The manual is updated as regulatory changes occur within the agency's sphere of activity, as well as to incorporate improvements to procedures arising from the day-to-day operations of the various departments and their interaction with the various stakeholders, this way ensuring the continuous improvement of AVAP's operations, which is established as one of its fundamental commitments. The body responsible for updating the manual is the AVAP Quality Commission, comprising the Directorate General and the heads of the departments for Higher Education Quality and Financial Management, Human Resources and Regulatory Affairs.

AVAP analyses the satisfaction levels of the evaluators and applicants who work with the agency. To this end, an annual survey is conducted to measure the satisfaction of AVAP's stakeholders, as well as to ascertain their views on the agency's operating environment. This provides information on the aspects that participants appreciate, as well as those they consider critical and which therefore require further improvement.

Furthermore, AVAP has published its Internal Quality Assurance System Manual, in which section FP.D.18 sets out the process for carrying out a systematic analysis of information relevant to the agency, in order to verify the effectiveness and degree of compliance of the system's management, as well as to identify and define areas for improvement and the technical and human resource requirements in the face of potential changes. AVAP's management bodies review the functioning of the Quality Management System at least once a year, holding meetings with the heads of the various departments to ensure its ongoing adaptation, effectiveness and alignment with the agency's strategic direction. Amongst other matters, they analyse stakeholder satisfaction, complaints, suggestions and feedback.

The Quality Manual also sets out the indicators for monitoring and correcting any potential deviations. Given that, following the resolution of all calls for applications, there is a period during which those affected may lodge appeals, the resolution of these appeals has been chosen as an objective means of measuring the quality of the procedures. It has been stipulated that the number of appeals per programme resulting in a decision different from the initial one must not exceed 20 per cent; in other words, at least 80 per cent of initial assessments must be upheld following an appeal, thereby reinforcing the reliability of the procedures.

Furthermore, we must refer to AVAP's Code of Ethics, the latest revision of which was approved by the agency's Steering Committee on 17 December 2025. Notable aspects of its content include the requirement for objectivity, independence and professional rigour in the performance of duties by staff working for AVAP, the maintenance of confidentiality regarding the information to which they have access, and the grounds for recusal from participating in procedures to ensure their impartiality.

AVAP's Code of Ethics is the fundamental reference document governing the conduct of all staff working for the organisation, whether internal or external. Through this code, AVAP ensures ethical and responsible behaviour in the conduct of its activities, for this reason, the agency attaches the utmost importance to compliance with this code, without exception. All persons working for or acting on behalf of AVAP must be familiar with, and commit to respecting and ensuring compliance with, the rules and content of this document.

This code also sets out the promotion of gender equality in the agency's assessment work by seeking parity between men and women on AVAP's governing bodies.

Finally, it should be noted that AVAP does not subcontract any of its assessment activities.

EVIDENCE

Quality Manual:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/QA-Manual.pdf ↗

ISO 9001:2015 Certificate:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/3.1689-1R3-Certificado-ISO-9001-castellano_firmado.pdf ↗

EVIDENCE
AVAP Quality Policy: **https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/AVAP.D.5.2-01-Politica_Calidad_AVAP_2025_firmado.pdf** ↗
Satisfaction surveys **https://avap.es/en/satisfaction-surveys/** ↗
Code of Ethics: **https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Codigo-Etico-Evaluadores-y-Personal.pdf** ↗
AVAP Staff Code of Ethics **Quality Commitment – Valencian Agency for Evaluation and Prospective Studies (AVAP)** ↗
AVAP and ACPUA organise a webinar to train students **https://avap.es/es/webinar-de-formacion-del-estudiantado-en-evaluacion-universitaria/** ↗

ESG 3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies

STANDARD:

Agencies should undergo an external review at least once every five years in order to demonstrate their compliance with the ESG.

As an institution responsible for quality assurance in higher education, AVAP has been an affiliate of ENQA since 2016, becoming a full member after successfully passing its first external review in 2022, and has also been registered with the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) since 2022. Both statuses are due for renewal in 2027, which is why this Self-Assessment Report has been drawn up; it provides a comprehensive overview of AVAP and demonstrates its alignment with the ESG following the implementation of the recommendations and suggestions from the previous external review. Registration with EQAR is a legal requirement under Spanish legislation for evaluation agencies in the Autonomous Communities to be able to carry out their functions.

With regard to organisational governance (ESG 3.3 and 3.1), the agency has strengthened its technical independence by restructuring the Steering Committee to prioritise technical expertise; furthermore, there is no representation from the regional government on its Standing Committee. In addition, student participation has been integrated, with students taking a full part and assuming responsibilities and tasks within all decision-making bodies.

At an operational level, AVAP has increased its workforce by 33 per cent (ESG 3.5), has strengthened its thematic analyses of relevant issues identified by the various stakeholder groups (ESG 3.4) and regularly has its Internal Quality Assurance System certified to ISO 9001:2015.

Regarding assessment methodologies and the implementation of processes (ESG 2.2 to 2.7), AVAP has expanded its responsibilities to include the verification and modification of degree programmes, as well as the certification proceedings of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), which is closely linked to institutional accreditation. Following the incorporation of the suggestions and recommendations from the ENQUA follow-up report in 2024, all members of the various committees, including students, review all the criteria, whilst administrative tasks are left to the agency's staff.

Transparency and consistency (ESG 2.5 and 2.6) have been improved by updating and publishing the protocols for the various procedures on the website and by publishing the various reports on the SIAVAL platform. Finally, the complaints and appeals mechanisms (ESG 2.7) have been improved by assigning responsibility for them to the Standing Committee and the Protocols and Appeals Committee, and by creating a 'Suggestions, Complaints and Compliments' section on the agency's website.

EVIDENCE

ENQA membership:
https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/Board-letter-membership-approved_AVAP.pdf ↗

Registration with EQAR:
https://backend.deqar.eu/reports/EQAR/202303_ApprovalDecision_AVAP_A111_I5WKSzE.pdf ↗

AVAP's Statutes and Rules of Procedure
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024_ROF_AVAP.pdf ↗

AVAP Strategic Plan 2023–2026
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/PLAN-ESTRATEGICO-AVAP-2023-2026-FINAL.pdf ↗

AVAP Quality Policy and Code of Ethics
https://avap.es/en/about-us/quality-commitment/ ↗

ISO 9001:2015 Certificate:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/3.1689-1R3-Certificado-ISO-9001-castellano_firmado.pdf ↗

Quality Manual:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/QA-Manual.pdf ↗

Satisfaction surveys
https://avap.es/en/satisfaction-surveys/ ↗

Visits and meetings with universities
https://avap.es/en/avap-reports/news/ ↗

Composition and protocols of AVAP's various committees and commissions:
https://avap.es/en/verification-and-modification/ ↗
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/follow-up-study-programmes/undergraduate-degrees/ ↗
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/certification-renewal-of-study-programmes/undergraduate-degrees/ ↗
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/protocols-and-appeals-commission/ ↗
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/institutional-accreditation/ ↗
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/institutional-accreditation/internal-quality-assurance-system-iqas-certification/ ↗

AVAP and ACPUA organise a webinar to train students
https://avap.es/es/webinar-de-formacion-del-estudiantado-en-evaluacion-universitaria/ ↗

Access to the SIAVAL platform
https://siaval.avap.es/ ↗

D.
COMPLIANCE WITH PART 2 OF THE ESG

8. Compliance with part 2 of the ESG

8. COMPLIANCE WITH PART 2 OF THE ESG

ESG 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

STANDARD:

External quality assurance should assess the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the ESG.

The Spanish regulations governing the evaluation of academic qualifications and higher education institutions (RD 822/2021 and RD 640/2021, both amended by RD 905/2025) make explicit reference to the ESGs, ensuring that the evaluations carried out by quality assurance agencies are aligned with these European standards. Through REACU, the agencies design and approve the common characteristics and aspects of the assessment protocols to be used in each procedure. Based on these protocols, AVAP incorporates specific guidelines adapted to the Valencian University System into its evaluations where necessary.

The various criteria established for each assessment procedure are structured in accordance with the guidelines and courses of action agreed by all agencies within REACU, whilst taking into account the legal framework and the criteria and guidelines set out in the 2015 ESG.

With the aim of ensuring that universities in the Valencian Community deliver continuous improvement in their internal quality assurance systems, AVAP, through the various assessment procedures it manages, focuses its work on ensuring that higher education institutions and the degree programmes they offer are aligned with Part 1 of the 2015 ESG.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The regulatory framework stipulates that official university degree programmes must undergo external assessment procedures in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), with the aim of ensuring their quality.

RD 822/2021 of 28 September, which establishes the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality, sets out the quality assurance procedures for official university education; the first of these is the verification of the curricula for official degree programmes:

> *"The Council of Universities must verify that the curricula, the successful completion of which entitles students to an official university programme, comply with the guidelines and conditions laid down by this Royal Decree and any other applicable regulations."*

Furthermore, institutional accreditation was introduced into the Spanish university system with the publication of RD 420/2015 of 29 May on the creation, recognition, authorisation and accreditation of universities and university centres, establishing a procedure in this regard, where certification of the implementation of internal quality assurance systems at a higher education institution through a programme such as AUDIT-AVAP is a legal requirement for its institutional accreditation, which in turn leads to the renewal of the accreditation of the official degree programmes awarded by the institution.

VERIFICATION/MODIFICATION PROCEDURE

Spanish regulations require agencies to be listed on the EQAR register in order to have full competence in quality management in higher education. With AVAP's inclusion on the EQAR register, AVAP is the agency of the Valencian Community with full competence for the verification of new degree programmes, the modification of study programmes and institutional accreditation, in addition to all the activities it had previously been carrying out.

Under this procedure, it is the responsibility of the quality agencies to produce a report verifying the quality of the curriculum document for the official university degree programme, in accordance with the protocol established by the relevant agency and in line with the provisions of the aforementioned RD 822/2021.

MODIFICATIONS AND THEIR TYPES

A modification is an administrative procedure that allows universities to make changes to official university degree programmes once they have been verified.

Depending on the nature and scope of the changes proposed to official university degree programmes, modifications are classified as follows:

Non-substantial modifications: minor changes that improve the degree programme and result from the monitoring carried out by each institution at the intervals established in its internal quality assurance system.

Substantial modifications: changes that improve the degree programme and which also result from monitoring or from requirements arising from previous assessment processes, but which go beyond the scope of a non-substantial modification, as they alter elements of the structure, nature and/or objectives of the degree programme or other aspects of the programme description.

Both procedures – verification and modification – are covered by the same evaluation protocol in the case of AVAP.

ALIGNMENT OF CRITERIA CURRICULUM WITH THE 2015 ESG

CRITERIA UPON WHICH THE CURRICULUM IS STRUCTURED	ESG 2015 CRITERIA
1. Description, learning outcomes and justification of the degree programme 2. Outcomes of the teaching and learning process	**1.2 Programme design and approval**
3. Admission, recognition and mobility	**1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**
4. Course planning	**1.3 Student-centred teaching, learning and assessment**
5. Academic and teaching support staff	**1.5 Teaching staff**
6. Learning resources: materials and facilities, placements and services 7. Implementation timetable	**1.6 Learning resources and student support**
8. Internal Quality Assurance System	**1.1 Quality assurance policy** **1.7 Information management** **1.8 Public information** **1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic evaluation of programmes** **1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance**

Figure 12. Alignment of criteria curriculum with the 2015 ESG

MONITORING OF DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Once the degree programmes have been registered in the Register of Universities, Centres and Programmes (RUCT), AVAP must monitor compliance with the programme outlined in the curriculum approved by the Council of Universities.

Taking into account the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and the recommendations of the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU), AVAP runs a monitoring programme for official university degree programmes in the Valencian Community. Through this programme, analyses and reports are produced for the various stakeholders involved in the implementation and development of new degree programmes, as a contribution to ensuring their quality.

ALIGNMENT OF PROTOCOL FOR THE MONITORING OF OFFICIAL BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S PROGRAMMES IN THE VALENCIAN COMMUNITY WITH ESG 2015

CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF MONITORING	ESG 2015 CRITERIA
Criterion 1. Organisation and delivery	**1.2 Programme design and approval** **1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment** **1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**
Criterion 2. Information and transparency	**1.8. Public information**
Criterion 3. Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)	**1.1 Quality Assurance Policy** **1.7 Information management** **1.9 Continuous monitoring and periodic review of programmes** **1.10 External cyclical quality assurance**
Criterion 4. Academic Staff	**1.5 Teaching Staff**
Criterion 5. Support staff, material resources and services	**1.6 Learning resources and student support**
Criterion 6. Learning Outcomes	**1.2 Programme design and approval** **1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment**
Criterion 7. Satisfaction and performance indicators	**1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment** **1.7 Information management** **1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes** **1.10 External cyclical quality assurance**

Figure 13. Alignment of Protocol for the monitoring of official bachelor's and master's programmes in the Valencian Community with ESG 2015

ACCREDITATION RENEWAL

The Programme for the renewal of accreditation (ReAcredita) of official university degree programmes and Master's programmes in the arts aims to verify whether the learning outcomes of the programme are adequate and ensure that the programme can continue to be delivered until the next renewal of accreditation.

The legislation stipulates that the initial accreditation of official degree programmes must be renewed periodically from the date of their verification or from the date of their last **accreditation.**

CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION RENEWAL	ESG 2015 CRITERIA
Criterion 1. Organisation and delivery	**1.2 Programme design and approval** **1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment** **1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**
Criterion 2. Information and transparency	**1.8. Public information**
Criterion 3. Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)	**1.1 Quality assurance policy** **1.7 Information management** **1.9 Continuous monitoring and periodic review of programmes** **1.10 External cyclical quality assurance**
Criterion 4. Academic Staff	**1.5 Teaching Staff**
Criterion 5. Support staff, material resources and services	**1.6 Learning resources and student support**
Criterion 6. Learning Outcomes	**1.2 Programme design and approval** **1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment**
Criterion 7. Satisfaction and performance indicators	**1.7 Information management** **1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes** **1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance**

Figure 14. Alignment of accreditation renewal criteria with ESG 2015

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

Institutional Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions is a procedure through which institutions can renew the accreditation of the degree programmes they offer, by demonstrating the implementation of their Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS).

Institutional accreditation was introduced into the Spanish higher education system with the publication of RD 420/2015 of 29 May on the creation, recognition, authorisation and accreditation of universities and higher education institutions, establishing a procedure in this regard, where certification of the implementation of a university institution's internal quality assurance systems through a programme such as AUDIT-AVAP is a legal requirement for its institutional accreditation, which in turn leads to the renewal of accreditation for the official degree programmes offered by the institution.

This activity focuses specifically on verifying the effectiveness of universities' Internal Quality Assurance Systems and their alignment with the standards set out in Part 1 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

To obtain institutional accreditation, universities must meet the following requirements (as expanded by RD 905/2025, amending Royal Decree 640/2021)*:

- To have renewed the initial accreditation of at least half of the official Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate degree programmes they offer, in accordance with the general procedure set out in RD 822/2021 of 28 September, which establishes the organisation of official university education.
- Hold certification of the implementation of its internal quality assurance system, issued by Spanish quality agencies listed in the EQAR register.

- Comply with the requirements relating to teaching staff that are directly linked to the quality of teaching delivered at the institution *.
- Comply with the requirements and specifications set out regarding the availability and characteristics of equipment and facilities necessary for the proper delivery of teaching activities *.

(*) These two requirements are set out in RD 905/2025, which was suspended in October 2026 by the Spanish Supreme Court

IQAS CERTIFICATION

The main objective of the certification of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) at higher education institutions is to generate sufficient confidence in the institution and in its capacity to provide education that ensures the needs and expectations of students and society are met. This confidence is underpinned by the transparency of public information and accountability.

The aim of the assessment for IQAS certification is to verify that the system is in place and operational at the institution responsible for delivering the degree programmes covered by the IQAS, and that it is suitable for ensuring their quality.

IQAS certification demonstrates that the educational institution has ensured the proper functioning, as a minimum, of the operational mechanisms that form part of the processes of verification, monitoring, modification and accreditation of degree programmes, which ensure their continuous improvement.

ALIGNMENT OF THE CRITERIA ASSESSED IN THE CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM (IQAS) OF HEIS WITH 2015 ESG

GENERAL CRITERIA AUDIT-AVAP	ESG 2015 CRITERIA
Criterion 1. Quality policy and objectives	**1.1 Policy for quality assurance**
Criterion 2. Quality assurance of study programmes	**1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes** **1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance**
Criterion 3. Student-centred teaching	**1.2 Programme design and approval** **1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment** **1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**
Criterion 4. Academic/research and teaching support staff	**1.5 Teaching staff**
Criterion 5. Resources and services	**1.6 Learning resources and student support**
Criterion 6. R&D&I and knowledge transfer Criterion 7. Links with the wider community Criterion 8. External dimension of the centre	
Criterion 9. Publication of information on the development of activities and programmes	**1.7 Information management** **1.8 Public information**
Criterion 10. Maintenance and updating of the IQAS	**1.1 Quality assurance policy**

Figure 15. Alignment of criteria AUDIT-AVAP certification procedure for IQAS with 2015 ESG

DOCENTIA

Under the current framework of the Spanish university system, universities are responsible for ensuring the training and competence of their teaching staff. They must develop procedures for assessing their performance, as well as for their training and development, thereby guaranteeing their qualifications and teaching competence.

The DOCENTIA Programme consists of a set of guidelines and recommendations for universities to develop a model for assessing the quality of teaching, aimed at ensuring the training and competence of university teaching staff through an evaluation of their teaching activity, with a view to promoting their recognition and professional development. These models are certified by the state agency ANECA and the regional agencies.

The DOCENTIA Programme draws on the recommendations for quality assurance in higher education institutions set out in the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area'. Furthermore, the programme's design has taken into account the standards established by internationally recognised organisations in the field of staff evaluation, such as The Personnel Evaluation Standards, drawn up by The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation.

To assess the programme designs, monitor their implementation and certify the assessment procedure, documentation and tools have been developed by integrating and updating the programme's existing documentation, whilst also adhering to the ESG 2015 Criteria and Guidelines for Quality Assurance.

From a European perspective, DOCENTIA can be understood as the mechanism through which a university demonstrates that it meets the ESG 1.5 standard ('Teaching staff'), using an evidence-based, transparent, participatory and continuous improvement-oriented evaluation process. Its scope, however, goes beyond this standard, as it contributes to the implementation of student-centred learning (ESG 1.3), the systematic use of information for decision-making (ESG 1.7) and the continuous review and improvement of degree programmes (ESG 1.9). In this way, DOCENTIA becomes a structural element of the Internal Quality Assurance System and a key component enabling Spanish universities to demonstrate their alignment with the principles of the European Higher Education Area.

ALIGNMENT OF THE CRITERIA OF DOCENTIA ASSESSMENT WITH 2015 ESG

CRITERIA FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF DOCENTIA	ESG 2015 CRITERIA
Integrating staff assessment into institutional quality policy and the university's strategy	1.1 Quality Assurance Policy
	1.2 Programme design and approval
Evaluation of teaching methodologies, learning activities, student assessment and addressing students' needs	1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment
	1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
Assessment of teachers' competence, qualifications, performance, training, innovation and professional development	1.5 Teaching staff
Assessment of the use of teaching resources and support needs to ensure teaching is carried out effectively	1.6 Learning resources and student support
Collection, processing and analysis of indicators, surveys, reports and evidence relating to teacher assessment	1.7 Information management
Publication of teacher assessment forms, procedures, results and improvement measures	1.8 Public information
Using the DOCENTIA results to review and improve the teaching provided on degree programmes	1.9 Continuous monitoring and periodic review of programmes
External assessment of the design, implementation, monitoring and certification of the DOCENTIA model	1.10 External cyclical quality assurance

Figure 16. Alignment of the criteria of DOCENTIA assessment with 2015 ESG

EVIDENCE

Royal Decree 822/2021 of 28 September, establishing the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality.
https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2021/09/29/pdfs/BOE-A-2021-15781.pdf ↗

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
https://ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/ESG/00/2/ESG_2015_616002.pdf ↗

AVAP verification and modification processes (Protocol for verification and modification)
https://avap.es/en/verification-and-modification/ ↗

AVAP monitoring processes (Bachelor's and Master's degrees + PhDs)
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/follow-up-study-programmes/ ↗

AVAP Institutional Accreditation
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/institutional-accreditation/ ↗

Institutional accreditation procedure and SAIC certification protocol
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/BOE-A-2022-3710-consolidado.pdf ↗

EVIDENCE

Royal Decree 905/2025 of 7 October, amending Royal Decree 640/2021 of 27 July on the establishment, recognition and authorisation of universities and higher education institutions, and the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions;
https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2025/10/08/pdfs/BOE-A-2025-20002.pdf ↗

IQAS AVAP Certification
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/institutional-accreditation/internal-quality-assurance-system-iqas-certification/ ↗

AVAP Teaching Programme
https://avap.es/en/teaching-staff/docentia-program/ ↗

DOCENTIA: Support Programme for Evaluating the Quality of University Teaching Staff (ANECA)
https://www.aneca.es/en/teaching-quality-assurance-system ↗

ESG 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose

STANDARD:

External quality assurance should be defined and designed specifically to ensure it is fit for purpose in achieving the aims and objectives set for it, whilst taking into account relevant regulations. Stakeholders should be involved in its design and continuous improvement.

ENQA AGENCY REVIEW 2022

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to take an active position in developing its assessment methodologies with genuine involvement from stakeholders, in particular, the higher education institutions, and following the strategic priorities set for the education policy in the Valencian region.

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to develop an internal procedure that would allow them to discuss the methodologies for the assessment of degrees, the guidelines and protocols internally and externally, through a transparent procedure.

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to include questions related to assessment methodologies in its surveys to the higher education institutions and experts involved in assessment processes and to use the feedback for improvement of its methodologies.

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to ensure full representation of its stakeholders in the establishment of the Committee of methodologies, protocols and appointments.

With regard to the recommendations made by the assessment panel during the on-site visit in 2022, we set out below how AVAP has addressed these issues.

In Spain, there is a legal framework governing all activities of quality agencies relating to quality assurance, and it is within REACU (the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies) that the Spanish legal framework is discussed and the foundations laid for all matters relating to quality assurance in higher education. As regards the Valencian Community, AVAP is the body responsible for approving the specific protocols for the Valencian Autonomous Community.

AVAP has established the Protocols and Appeals Commission, which is the body responsible for reviewing and validating all the agency's protocols, notifying all parties involved in advance and publishing them on the AVAP website.

The Protocols and Appeals Commission is a collegiate body whose members are experts with extensive academic and professional experience in the field of quality assurance in higher education. It is composed of the following individuals:

a) A chairperson with an academic background in law and experience in quality assurance processes. They must be a university academic staff member holding a doctorate, regardless of their administrative status

b) A variable number of academic members, at least one of whom must be from the field of law, with experience in quality assurance processes. At least two-thirds of these must be university teaching staff holding a PhD, regardless of their administrative status. The remaining one-third shall consist of experts of recognised standing and proven professional track record.

c) At least one student member from a Bachelor's, Master's or PhD programme, with experience in quality assurance processes.

d) A secretary with a technical background attached to the AVAP, with a voice but no vote.

The process of drawing up the guidelines and protocols begins with the formation of working groups comprising evaluators (quality experts and students) and agency staff, who draft both documents. In a second phase, this draft is sent to the Vice-Chancellors for Academic Affairs and the Quality Departments of the universities so that they may submit any comments they deem appropriate within a specified timeframe. Finally, both documents are returned to the agency for review and final drafting by the working group, followed by final approval by the Protocols and Appeals Commission. The procedure concludes with the publication of this documentation on the AVAP website. This process ensures the criteria of transparency, openness and the participation of the various stakeholders.

AVAP designs its assessment protocols taking into account legal requirements and the expectations of its stakeholders. To this end, AVAP considers:

- The workload and cost this will entail for the institutions.
- The need to support institutions in improving quality.
- The need for institutions to demonstrate their improvement.
- The need to provide clear information on the results.

At AVAP, we are aware that institutions have a busy schedule and we do not wish to overburden them. To assist them in this regard, as part of the assessment procedures we prepare a template with a proposed timetable, which the university completes, making any appropriate suggestions, and returns to us; this simplifies and facilitates the coordination of the documentation preparation process. Furthermore, the universities ensure that they send us sufficient information to evaluate the degree programme. Through these procedures, AVAP verifies continuous improvement in the universities' quality systems, with a particular emphasis on the quality of the degree programmes assessed. The aim is to analyse, on the basis of evidence and indicators, what has been achieved in relation to the evaluation standards and guidelines and, where applicable, the reasons why these have not been met and the improvement actions undertaken to rectify the situation or those planned (improvement plans).

In this section, it is worth highlighting the role of the AVAP Advisory Board, which is the consultative body that works alongside the agency in developing its strategies, defining and improving procedures, and drawing up its action plans, in order to ensure the quality of the agency's activities. The Advisory Council is not subject to any hierarchical authority and performs advisory functions on matters referred to it by the head of AVAP's Directorate-General.

With regard to stakeholders, AVAP regards their views as a fundamental pillar for the continuous improvement of each and every one of the agency's activities and, in recent years, has strengthened its commitment to ensuring they can participate in decision-making.

In this regard, AVAP holds regular meetings with all Valencian universities at least once a year, as well as making individual visits to each one and holding meetings with the vice-chancellors and staff in the quality departments. Comprehensive information on this matter is available on the AVAP website.

Furthermore, AVAP's technical staff regularly respond to all enquiries received from the universities to assist with the appropriate and consistent drafting of documentation.

AVAP also meets with student representatives from Valencian universities and, at national level, with those from CREUP. As a result of these meetings, and in what we consider to be an innovative development, AVAP incorporates student reports, in accordance with the guidelines provided by AVAP on the accreditation of official degree programmes in the Valencian Community. The first of these reports, specifically on the Bachelor's Degree in Data Science offered by the University of Valencia, was published in September 2023. Since then, this has formed part of the list of evidence to be submitted for degree programmes, marking the first in a series of collaborations between AVAP and student representatives from Valencian universities.

AVAP takes a particular interest in gauging the level of satisfaction amongst evaluators and stakeholders, in order to analyse the results of the various evaluation processes and to implement improvements or new strategies that will enable the agency to better fulfil its objectives. To this end, AVAP conducts annual surveys to measure stakeholder satisfaction and gather different perspectives, so that they can provide feedback on what they consider to be weaknesses, suggestions, new initiatives and threats that members of the various committees and collaborators believe are relevant to the agency's mission. This is very useful for encouraging continuous improvement, and modifications have been made to the IT platform for managing degree programmes assessment to incorporate these satisfaction surveys.

Furthermore, AVAP has published its Internal Quality Assurance System Manual, in which section FP.D.18 sets out the process for carrying out a systematic analysis of information relevant to the agency, in order to verify the effectiveness and degree of compliance of the system's management, as well as to identify and define areas for improvement and the technical and human resource requirements in the face of potential changes. AVAP's management bodies review the functioning of the Quality Management System at least once a year, holding meetings with the heads of the various departments to ensure its ongoing adaptation, effectiveness and alignment with the agency's strategic direction. Amongst other matters, they analyse stakeholder satisfaction, complaints, suggestions and feedback.

EVIDENCE

Protocols and Appeals Commission
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/protocols-and-appeals-commission/ ↗

EVIDENCE

AVAP verification and modification procedures
https://avap.es/en/verification-and-modification/ ↗

Assessment Protocol for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes in Art Education in the Valencian Community
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Protocolo-para-verificacion-grado-y-master_con-ISEACV-en-GB.pdf ↗

Procedure for monitoring AVAP bachelor's and master's programmes
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/follow-up-study-programmes/undergraduate-degrees/ ↗

Procedure for the renewal of AVAP degree accreditation
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/certification-renewal-of-study-programmes/undergraduate-degrees/ ↗

Guide to SAIC Certification by AVAP
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/AUDIT-AVAP-GUIA-PROTOCOLO-CERTIFICACION-SAIC_ENGLISH_THIRD_version.pdf ↗

AVAP Activity Report 2023
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/memoria-actividades-2023-1.pdf ↗

AVAP satisfaction surveys
https://avap.es/en/satisfaction-surveys/ ↗

AVAP ISO 9001 Certificate
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/3.1689-1R3-Certificado-ISO-9001-castellano_firmado.pdf ↗

ESG 2.3 Implementing processes

STANDARD:

External quality assurance should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. It includes:

- *A self-assessment or equivalent*
- *An external assessment, normally including a site visit*
- *A report resulting from the external assessment*
- *Consistent follow-up*

ENQA AGENCY REVIEW 2022

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to establish a site visit for authorization of new study programmes and foresee specific cases when site visit would be applicable in study programme follow up-procedure.

With regard to the recommendation made by the assessment panel during the on-site visit in 2022, we set out below, in general terms, how AVAP has addressed these issues.

Since the ENQA panel's previous visit, AVAP has begun carrying out the verification of qualifications and the review of modifications proposed by universities – tasks previously undertaken by the national agency ANECA – following the same protocol. The protocol stipulates that, in order to carry out these assessment procedures, AVAP must establish committees and commissions comprising academic staff, university students and professionals; this has already been done and is fully operational.

Similarly, another of the new activities that AVAP has been carrying out since the previous visit is the certification procedure for the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of the institutions, which is closely linked to the institutional accreditation procedure. As with the procedures for verifying and modifying degree programmes, a separate committee is established for each of the IQAS certification processes so that, subsequently, an Institutional Certification and Accreditation Commission may issue the decision.

The operating protocols for all these committees and commissions, in both procedures, have been published and are living documents, regularly updated as part of the agency's continuous improvement system, and aligned with the ESGs.

The procedures for the verification, monitoring, modification and accreditation of new degree programmes and the renewal of accreditation follow the same pattern, owing to their characteristics and objectives. This section discusses the similarities and differences between these procedures, whilst also highlighting the specific features of the IQAS certification procedure, which is closely linked to the institutional accreditation of higher education institutions.

The evaluation of the AVAP standards and guidelines set out in the guides and protocols for the various assessment procedures carried out is based on the following evidence:

1. **Self-assessment report**: The report is drawn up by the institution under assessment, and, through it, the institution must demonstrate that the results achieved meet the objectives for which the programme was designed and comply with quality standards. The structure and content of this report and the supporting evidence must conform to the model specified by AVAP. The aim is to carry out an analysis, based on the evidence and indicators, of the results in relation to the assessed standards and guidelines and, where applicable, the reasons why they have not been fully achieved, as well as the improvement actions undertaken or planned (improvement plan) to achieve them.

The self-assessment report is drawn up by universities for the purposes of monitoring and renewing accreditation. A template for this report, which includes the structure and content, is available on the AVAP website.

With regard to the assessment processes of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), AVAP may request a self-assessment report from the institution if the External Assessment Committee deems it appropriate in certain cases, in addition to a series of indicators linked to the IQAS and the records generated by the system.

1. **External assessment, including a site visit**: In accordance with a schedule agreed between AVAP and the university in question, the selected committee of experts proposes an agenda for the visit to the university, at least ten days in advance, specifying the date and time of the meetings to be held with the degree programme's stakeholders (management team, degree programme coordinators, teaching

staff, students, administrative and support staff, graduates, employers, etc.) and the facilities to be visited. The university must return the agenda, duly completed, within five days of receipt.

In accordance with the itinerary, the committee carries out the visit to the institution whose degree programme is to be evaluated. The visit lasts for a maximum of three days and may include the external evaluation of several degree programmes. In addition to reviewing the evidence and visiting the facilities, the committee holds the scheduled meetings with the degree programme's stakeholders, as well as a hearing open to the entire university community. As a general rule, no individual may attend more than one interview.

With regard to quality assessment activities, the verification and modification of degree programmes is a documentary procedure, as until the university receives approval, it may not yet have allocated facilities or teaching staff to the programme. The follow-up assessment is also documentary in nature, as it verifies the extent to which the programme has been implemented in accordance with the provisions set out in its report.

With regard to the IQAS certification processes, taking into account the documentary evidence and the information gathered, the AUDIT-AVAP External Evaluation Committee (CEEAA) carries out an on-site visit to the institution, the main objective of which is to gain first-hand knowledge of the level of implementation and operation of the institution's IQAS as a whole, and the institution's own capacity to guarantee the quality of the training programmes falling within the scope of the IQAS. This visit lasts for a minimum of one day and a maximum of three days.

1. **External assessment report**: With regard to the accreditation renewal procedure, at the end of the visit the members of the external evaluation committee share their preliminary conclusions for the drafting of the External Evaluation Report. This report must provide a reasoned assessment of the degree of compliance with the standards and guidelines, in accordance with the template provided by AVAP.

This report is based on the evaluation of:

a) The programme report drawn up by the university

b) The evidence provided by the university

c) The visit to the premises where each degree programme is delivered, which includes interviews with stakeholders associated with the degree programme.

AVAP provides the evaluators with a document setting out the aspects to be considered, which serves as a guide to the elements that must be assessed for each standard and guideline.

The chair of the External Assessment Committee coordinates the drafting of the External Evaluation Report. Once all the information, evidence and impressions have been gathered, a draft evaluation report is produced and sent to each committee member for suggestions and proposals. The chair incorporates these suggestions and proposals from the committee members and signs the final external evaluation report.

The Programme Assessment Commission then reviews the external evaluation report and issues the internal report, which it sends to the university. The university has a period of 15 days to submit appeals and, after reviewing them, the Accreditation Commission issues the final report; however, it is the Council of Universities that verifies/accredits the programmes and authorises any modifications.

With regard to the monitoring of study programmes, the committee draws up the initial report, which is signed by the chair and sent to the university, which may submit appeals, if applicable. If there are no appeals, or if they have been resolved, the general directorate of AVAP signs the final report.

4. **Systematic monitoring**: AVAP monitors the assessments carried out in accordance with regulations established at national level. The timeframe for this monitoring depends on the type of assessment procedure. For the renewal of bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programmes, AVAP carries out the procedure described over a period of six years.

STAGES AND SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE IQAS CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE/INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

With regard to IQAS certification procedures, prior to the evaluation panel's visit, the institution must provide AVAP and the evaluation committee with preliminary documentation, which may include a self-assessment report, should the panel deem it appropriate.

AVAP provides the members of the panel (CEEAA) with a template for the visit report, which the committee must follow and which may contain, in addition to the relevant rationale, strengths, good practices, weaknesses, recommendations and requirements. The members of the committee must reach a consensus on this visit report, which is validated by the committee chair and must be made available to AVAP within one month of the visit.

Subsequently, the Institutional Certification and Accreditation Commission (CCAI), based on the report drawn up by the CEEAA, will prepare the corresponding certification report, which will be sent to the applicant centre; the centre will then have 15 working days to submit any relevant appeals, if applicable. The final certification report will be issued by the CCAI with a favourable or unfavourable verdict.

In the case of IQAS certification procedures, should the CCAI's final report be unfavourable, the centre will have six months to rectify the shortcomings identified in the certification report. If, ultimately, the centre has not rectified the deficiencies, the institution will not be able to reapply for IQAS certification until at least one year has elapsed since the unfavourable notification.

Once the IQAS implementation certificate has been obtained, AVAP will implement a mechanism to monitor the resolution of the weaknesses identified in the initial audit report, based on monitoring and/or the conduct of an interim audit, on which the continued validity of the certificate may, where applicable, depend.

This process is set out – although not yet finalised – in the AVAP guide to IQAS certification, as the agency began carrying out this type of assessment in 2025. It is expected to be developed and published in the guide during the first half of 2026, and we can confirm that this monitoring will take place three years after the IQAS implementation certificate is issued.

With regard to the institutional accreditation procedure, the regulations governing it are RD 640/2021 and the Resolution of 8 September 2026, which sets out instructions on the procedure for the institutional accreditation of public and private university institutions and publishes the Protocol for the certification of internal quality assurance systems at university institutions. These two regulations incorporated the amendment made by RD 905/2025 to the application process for institutional accreditation of higher education institutions; specifically, that, in addition to the requirement for certification of the

implementation of the IQAS and the institution's renewal of at least half of all the degree programmes on offer, the institution had to meet two new requirements relating to the quality of teaching staff and the suitability and consistency of the institution's infrastructure and equipment.

On 8 October, the Spanish Supreme Court annulled RD 905/2025; consequently, at the time of writing this report, there is no clear legislation on the matter of institutional accreditation. In any event, the procedure is as follows:

If the institution considers that it meets the current requirements for institutional accreditation, it submits an application to the ministry responsible for universities, specifically the Council of Universities. The Council of Universities requests the relevant quality assurance agency – in this case, AVAP – to draw up a report on the applicant institution's compliance with the required criteria. The body responsible for drawing up the report is the Institutional Accreditation Unit, comprising the Director-General, the Head of the unit responsible for institutional accreditation and a quality officer from AVAP. At this stage, the unit verifies that the institution holds the IQAS implementation certificate and that it has renewed the accreditation of at least 50% of the degree programmes it offers – including bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees – and issues a binding report to the Council of Universities. Should the two requirements added by RD 905/2025 come back into force, AVAP – whilst being able to carry out any checks it deems appropriate regarding the content of the documentation submitted with the application – would also include an assessment of those two requirements in its report.

Finally, at the first meeting of the Council of Universities following receipt of AVAP's report, the Council shall issue its ruling on whether or not to grant institutional accreditation.

STAGES AND SPECIFIC FEATURES OF DOCENTIA

The details of the DOCENTIA programme have been set out in full in the Section 6. Functions and activities of the agency. As a reminder, we have included the different stages of the programme:

PHASE 1 – DESIGN: The university designs the teaching activity assessment manual in accordance with the DOCENTIA model and submits it to the relevant agency for assessment.

PHASE 2 – EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF THE DESIGNS: The aim is to verify compliance with the specifications and criteria of the DOCENTIA model.

PHASE 3 – MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION: Universities whose designs have been positively assessed begin implementation and submit an annual report to the Agency.

PHASE 4 – CERTIFICATION AND MONITORING OF CERTIFICATION: Once the programme has been fully implemented and the monitoring phase has been successfully completed, universities may apply for certification of their assessment procedures. Once implementation has been certified, the university must submit an annual report on the monitoring of the certification.

PHASE 5 – RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION: Once the certification period has expired, provided the latest monitoring report is favourable.

TABLE OF AVAP'S PROCEDURES AND THE DIFFERENT PROCESSES INVOLVED IN EACH ACTIVITY

ASSESSMENT PROCESS	SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (OR EQUIVALENT)	EXTERNAL VISIT	PUBLICATION OF EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT	CONSISTENT MONITORING
Verification / Modification	X (Degree Report)		X	X
Monitoring	X		X	X
Accreditation Renewal	X	X	X	X
IQAS Certification	X *	X	X	X **
Docentia	X	X	X	X

*(if the CEEAA deems it appropriate) / ** (not yet implemented, but provided for in the guidance document)

Figure 17. AVAP's procedures and their different processes

EVIDENCE

Report templates
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2.2-Anexo-II-Modelo-de-informe-de-evaluacion-externa.pdf ↗

AVAP verification and modification processes
https://avap.es/en/verification-and-modification/ ↗

Procedure for monitoring AVAP bachelor's and master's programmes
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/follow-up-study-programmes/undergraduate-degrees/ ↗

Procedure for the renewal of AVAP degree programme accreditation
https://avap.es/en/higher-education/official-university-degrees/certification-renewal-of-study-programmes/undergraduate-degrees/ ↗

IQAS Certification Guidance and Protocol
https://avap.es/es/educacion-superior/acreditacion-institucional/certificacion-del-saic/ ↗

Resolution of the Secretary General of Universities on the Institutional Accreditation Procedure
https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2026-19254 ↗

DOCENTIA Programme (ANECA)
https://www.aneca.es/en/teaching-quality-assurance-system ↗

ESG 2.4 Peer-review experts

STANDARD:

External quality assurance should be carried out by groups of external experts that include one or more student members.

ENQA AGENCY REVIEW 2022

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to develop a consistent training strategy that would foresee a possibility for a regular training for all evaluators and a specific training for evaluators engaged in assessment procedures.

The review panel **recommends** AVAP urgently to reconsider the role of student members in expert groups – specifically, to remove the responsibility for administrative issues and redistribute the overall responsibilities for assessing the criteria.

The review panel **recommends** the introduction of student members in all assessment procedures currently implemented or to be implemented by AVAP.

With regard to the recommendation made by the assessment panel during the on-site visit in 2022, we set out below how AVAP has addressed these issues.

It should be noted that, following the panel's visit in 2022, there were changes to the allocation of tasks amongst the members of the various committees and commissions responsible for carrying out AVAP assessment activities. Following these changes, which have been published in our protocols, all committee members must verify that the assessed universities meet the criteria and standards as set out in the ESGs; consequently, all committee members now review all criteria, thereby relieving the student of the administrative tasks previously assigned to them.

It should also be noted that all assessment procedure panels currently include a student amongst their members.

At AVAP, we work to ensure excellence in higher education in the Valencian Community. To this end, we have external, independent and prestigious experts, appointed in each case by the agency to carry out their duties. These experts carry out their work in other Spanish autonomous communities, to ensure maximum independence in the assessment procedure.

The assessment work carried out by AVAP necessitates the continuous updating of the team of external collaborators who undertake quality assessment tasks in higher education. The criteria for selecting evaluators are based on the ESG and the Principles for the Selection of Experts agreed by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

As set out in Article 9 of the Law establishing AVAP, the agency requires the collaboration of external evaluators for evaluation, accreditation and certification tasks. These evaluators are appointed by field of knowledge or specialism. As external advisers, they are not considered AVAP staff and are appointed by AVAP's General Directorate for an indefinite number of assignments, receiving financial compensation in accordance with the number and type of evaluations carried out.

AVAP provides the information, resources and training necessary to carry out the assessment work. It should be noted that the call for applications for evaluators is open on a continuous basis, meaning that any interested individual who meets the required criteria may submit their application at any time of the year. The selection process and requirements for AVAP evaluators are published on the agency's website (see evidence: selection of evaluators). All evaluators undertake to comply with the code of ethics, which ensures the absence of any conflict of interest. It should also be noted that all panel members, including students, have the same rights and obligations.

AVAP selects committee members taking into account their connection to the degree programme to be assessed and their experience in assessment procedures. On the SIAVAL platform, AVAP has a database set up to filter for the required profile for each type of evaluation. In the case of institutional-level evaluations, their experience in assessing quality systems is taken into account. In all assessment procedures, AVAP notifies the university of the composition of the assigned committee, accompanied by a brief CV for each member. The university has a period of five days to exercise, where appropriate, its right to challenge any of the members selected by the agency, which reinforces the objective of having independent evaluators.

Once this period has elapsed, AVAP proceeds with the appointment and final constitution of each committee, which are composed of:

- A chairperson, with an academic background and experience in verification, monitoring and accreditation procedures or, in the case of institutional evaluations, experience in quality assurance procedures.
- A variable number of academic members, to be determined according to the number of degree programmes to be assessed and the diversity of the academic field, with experience in procedures relating to the verification, modification, monitoring and renewal of degree programme accreditation as members of evaluation committees. Similarly, in procedures relating to the assessment of quality assurance systems, experience in this field is required.
- One student member, preferably from the same field of knowledge or discipline as the degree programmes to be assessed, with training in evaluation and quality assurance procedures.
- A member with a technical background, who has experience in the implementation and operation of quality assurance systems, university management or the European Higher Education Area.

The committees may also include members who are professionals in the scientific and technical field of the degree programmes to be assessed. Furthermore, in some cases (renewal of accreditation), the university may request that foreign experts with experience in evaluation participate in the process.

Committee members are selected for each evaluation by AVAP's technical staff; their formal appointment is made by the AVAP's General Directorate through a resolution, and their role is limited exclusively to the work to be carried out. Subsequently, committee members sign the agency's code of ethics, agreeing to comply with the principles of independence, confidentiality, objectivity, excellence and transparency.

As for the members of the various commissions, their term of office is three years; the selection process is similar to that for the committees, also drawing on the SIAVAL platform's database, such that they are selected by AVAP's technical staff, proposed by the General Directorate, and formally appointed by the AVAP Presidency.

AVAP has signed collaboration agreements with other agencies, specifically with ACPUA, with the aim of training students in the main activities of university evaluation and certification. The aim of this training is not only to foster a culture of quality amongst higher education students, but also to develop, in a stimulating and cooperative manner, the European standards for student participation in university evaluation visits and processes.

AVAP also collaborates with CREUP (Co-ordinating Body of Spanish Representatives of Public Universities), an association representing over one million students, on training related to the management of quality processes in higher education, with the aim of training students who will later collaborate with AVAP and the other Spanish agencies.

Finally, it is important to note that evaluators who work with AVAP have often done so on more than one occasion and are therefore considered to be adequately trained. In any case, the agency's technical staff hold meetings with the evaluators before, during and after they have carried out their tasks, whatever these may be, and are always available to clarify any queries that may arise, thereby ensuring that the evaluators are clear about the criteria and guidelines to be followed at all times during the assessment.

All the various Branch Verification Committees and the Verification Commission, in terms of their composition, appointment and compliance with AVAP's code of ethics, follow the pattern set out above. The above also applies to the Programmes Assessment Commission.

The composition and functions of the Protocols and Appeals Commission (PAC) is set out in its own protocol. This commission includes staff from outside the agency and which will be responsible for drawing up a report at the request of the Council of Universities, in the event of an appeal by a university regarding the report on the renewal of accreditation for official university qualifications, or in the event of an appeal by a university concerning the verification of new qualifications or the monitoring of existing ones. Furthermore, in the evaluation procedures for the certification of institutions' IQAS , in the event of disagreement with the final certification report issued by the Commission for Certification and Institutional Accreditation, the institution may lodge an appeal with the PAC , which shall be the body responsible for resolving it, thereby concluding the administrative procedure. This commission is further developed in ESG 2.7 Complaints and appeals.

EVIDENCE

Selection of AVAP evaluators
https://avap.es/es/avap-informa/seleccion-de-evaluadoras-y-evaluadores/ ↗

AVAP Evaluator Code of Ethics
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Codigo-Etico-Evaluadores-y-Personal.pdf ↗

Regulations of the Protocols and Appeals Commission
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ROF-Comision-de-Protocolos-y-Recursos.pdf ↗

Regulations of the Branch Verification Committees and the Programmes Verification Commission
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ROF-COMITES-DE-VERIFICACION-DE-RAMA-Y-COMISION-DE-VERIFICACION-DE-TITULOS.pdf ↗

Accreditation Renewal Protocol
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/4-Protocolo-Programa-Renovacion-Acreditacion-Grado-y-Master-2026.pdf ↗

Regulations of the External Evaluation Committee
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ROF-Comite-de-Evaluacion-Externa.pdf ↗

Regulations on the organisation and functioning of the Protocols and Appeals Commission:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ROF-Comision-de-Protocolos-y-Recursos.pdf ↗

Regulations of the Institutional Certification and Accreditation Commission
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/ROF-Comision-de-Certificacion-y-Acreditacion-Institucional.pdf ↗

Regulations of the Programmes Assessment Commission
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ROF-Comision-de-Evaluacion-de-Titulos.pdf ↗

ESG 2.5 Criteria for outcomes

STANDARD:

Any outcomes or judgements made as a result of external quality assurance should be based on explicit and published criteria that are applied consistently, irrespective of whether the process leads to a formal decision.

ENQA AGENCY REVIEW 2022

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to develop and publish written bylaws on the decision-making process for different decision-making bodies, particularly describing the process of changing the findings of expert teams.

The review panel **recommends** AVAP to offer mandatory training to all incoming members of their decision-making bodies and to offer possibilities for continuous professional development to all members of decision-making bodies, possibly in cooperation with other quality assurance agencies in Spain.

AVAP has developed guidelines and protocols for all assessment procedures arising from the agency's remit. These documents serve a dual purpose:

a) To set out the guidelines which evaluators must follow .

b) To make these guidelines known to all stakeholders by publishing them on the AVAP website.

AVAP has established procedural guidelines, which are published on the agency's website, for all its committees and commissions. All protocols have been revised and updated since the panel's visit in2022 and validated by the Protocols and Appeals Commission, ensuring that the reports issued by the panel of experts are public and independent. AVAP has developed rubrics and supporting materials to assist evaluators involved in the various activities carried out by the agency.

As indicated in the previous criterion (ESG 2.4 Peer review experts), AVAP provides the information, resources and training necessary to carry out the assessment activity. In this case, within AVAP's IT platform, SIAVAL – on which evaluators must carry out their work – evaluators have access to four training documents setting out the guidelines to be followed and a series of guidelines to ensure the consistency of their evaluations. This information is particularly relevant for new evaluators. The documents are as follows:

a) The guide to the relevant assessment procedure.

b) The protocol relating to that guide.

c) The applicable basic regulations.

d) A document to ensure consistency in assessments.

A member of the agency's technical staff participates in all committees and commissions; they are responsible for organising them, resolving any queries that evaluators may have, and ensuring compliance with the established guidelines. AVAP staff do not influence the formation of the opinions of the groups in which they participate. These staff members are also available to universities to answer any queries they may have regarding the process.

The Regulations governing the organisation and operation of the Branch Verification Committees and the Programmes Verification Commission, as well as those of the External Evaluation Committee and the Certification and Institutional Accreditation Commission, set out their structure, composition and functions. One of the most important aspects of these documents is the description of how these bodies operate, in particular the frequency of their meetings, the process for convening them, and the selection, appointment and term of office of their members.

The decision-making process is set out in the operating procedures. Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority, and, in the event of a tie, the chair shall have the casting vote. Minutes shall be drawn up for all meetings held, reflecting, amongst other matters, any incidents, conclusions and decisions adopted. The minutes shall be signed by the secretary and authorised with the chair's approval. Members are guaranteed access to the minutes in electronic format so that they may consult the content of the resolutions adopted.

Finally, the regulations specify that decisions of the Council of Universities based on reports issued by the Programmes Verification Commission may be subject to appeals, which will be considered by the AVAP's Protocols and Appeals Commission.

The following is a table presenting the number of decisions (including negative ones) for each of the agency's external quality assurance activities over the past five years.

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 (*)
Verification (Unfavourable)	- 	- 	25 3	38 3	21 0
Substantial Modification (Unfavourable)	- 	- 	34 1	109 2	116 0
Non-Substantial Modification (Unfavourable)	- 	- 	108 17	222 37	23 5
Monitoring (Unfavourable)	22 0	16 0	0	63 0	
Renewal Accreditation (Unfavourable)	152 0	70 0	44 0	246 1	46 0
IQAS Certification (Unfavourable)	- 	- 	-	5 1	5 2
Institutional Accreditation (Unfavourable)	- 	- 	-	2 0	3 0

* Provisional figures

EVIDENCE

Support guide for the preparation of the report on the verification/modification of official undergraduate and master's degree programmes:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Guia-de-Apoyo-Verificacion-Grado-y-Master-REVISION-MARZO-26.pdf ↗

EVIDENCE

Assessment protocol for the verification/modification of official undergraduate and master's degree programmes and higher arts education programmes:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Protocolo-para-verificacion-y-modificacion-de-titulos-oficiales-de-grado-y-master_REVISION-V4-con-ISEACV.pdf ↗

Regulations governing the organisation and operation of the Discipline-Specific Verification Committees and the Programmes Verification Commission:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ROF-COMITES-DE-VERIFICACION-DE-RAMA-Y-COMISION-DE-VERIFICACION-DE-TITULOS.pdf ↗

Guidance on IQAS certification
https://avap.es/es/educacion-superior/acreditacion-institucional/certificacion-del-saic/ ↗

Assessment protocol for the renewal of accreditation for bachelor's and master's programmes
https://avap.es/es/educacion-superior/titulos-universitarios-oficiales/renovacion-de-la-acreditacion/grados-y-masteres/ ↗

Assessment Protocol for the Renewal of Accreditation for Doctorates
https://avap.es/es/educacion-superior/titulos-universitarios-oficiales/renovacion-de-la-acreditacion/doctorados/ ↗

ESG 2.6 Reporting

STANDARD:

Full reports by the experts should be published, clear and accessible to the academic community, external partners and other interested parties. If the agency takes any formal decision based on the reports, the decision should be published alongside the report.

AVAP reports follow the guidelines and protocols published on the agency's website and adhere to a structure previously agreed upon by all quality assurance agencies through the Spanish Network of University Quality Assurance Agencies (REACU), taking into account the 2015 ESG and current legislation.

This structure is similar for all reports relating to degree programmes. At the beginning of the report, it is stated whether the report is provisional – and therefore open to allegations from the university – or final. It also includes all the identifying details of the specific degree programme. Next, the report's conclusion—whether favourable or unfavourable—is presented clearly and concisely. This is followed by a presentation of each of the criteria to be considered in the report, which are in turn broken down into different sub-sections. The heading of each sub-section describes the standard to be met, the specific rating obtained and the justification for it.

All reports can be consulted via the SIAVAL platform. On this platform, a series of filters can be applied to display the desired information, whether for specific degree programmes by programme name or their code in the Register of Universities, Centres and Degree Programmes (RUCT), or for groups of programmes, by year, status of the application or university, amongst others.

Universities are also required to publish the reports they receive on their websites. This publication must be open access and easily accessible to any interested party.

The structure of institutional accreditation reports and DOCENTIA reports differ and is determined by the specific nature of their content. In the former case, the procedure is initiated by the university applying to the Council of Universities for the accreditation of one of its centres, and it is the Council that requests a report from AVAP certifying that the centre has renewed the accreditation of at least half of the degree programmes it offers. Consequently, the structure of this report sets out the centre's details, the list of degree programmes offered, the members of the accreditation panel—which includes the agency's director—and the report's conclusion, whether favourable or unfavourable, which is binding. This report is submitted to the Council of Universities, which is responsible for granting the centre's accreditation and notifying the university of its decision. AVAP's reports are published on the agency's website and are available for consultation by all stakeholders.

The DOCENTIA programme reports are produced under a collaboration agreement between ANECA and AVAP. Their structure comprises several sections, notably the overall assessment of compliance with the programme's requirements, necessary improvements to be implemented, and recommendations. This report is based on the supporting documentation for the programme's implementation developed by ANECA, which can be consulted on its website. All reports issued can be consulted on the AVAP website. Furthermore, on 31 March 2026, the DOCENTIA Commission was established to enable AVAP to assume the functions relating to this programme.

We shall now briefly outline the procedure for drawing up these reports for the different activities of AVAP:

VERIFICATION OF NEW OFFICIAL PROGRAMMES AND MODIFICATION OF PROGRAMMES

In both cases, the procedure for verifying or modifying a degree programme begins with the applicant university submitting a favourable report on the academic and social necessity and feasibility of introducing the official university degree programme, issued by the regional ministry responsible for universities, together with the curriculum document in accordance with Annex II of RD 822/2021 of 28 September, which establishes the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality, to the Council of Universities, via the unit of the General Secretariat for Universities. In the case of substantial and non-substantial modifications, this report will not be required, as it was already obtained during the verification of the degree programme.

The General Secretariat for Universities notifies AVAP of the receipt of the curriculum report. In the case of institutions with institutional accreditation, the curriculum report is sent simultaneously to the relevant unit within the General Secretariat for Universities and to AVAP.

AVAP assigns the assessment to the Branch Verification Committee based on the field of knowledge in which the university has registered the official Bachelor's or Master's programme. The Branch Verification Committee draws up a draft report on the verification or substantial modification of the quality of the curriculum document. This reasoned proposal is submitted to the Verification Commission (VC) , which issues the provisional report, which may be:

- Favourable
- Favourable with conditions: in this case, the report specifies the issues that must be amended in order to achieve a final favourable report
- Unfavourable

The provisional report is sent to the university applying for the programme so that, within 15 working days of receipt, it may rectify any issues and amend those matters highlighted in the report, or submit any representations it deems relevant.

Once any allegations and corrections submitted by the university have been received, they are examined by the Branch Verification Committee , which draws up a draft final report to be submitted to the Verification Commission. The Verification Commission issues the final quality assurance report, which is either favourable or unfavourable. Should the final report be favourable, it may include any relevant points on which the authorities, universities and agencies may carry out follow-up work.

AVAP forwards the final report to the applicant university, the Council of Universities, the competent body of the Autonomous Community and the Ministry responsible for universities. Once the Council of Universities has received the final report, it proceeds as follows:

- If the final report is favourable, the Verification and Accreditation Commission of the Council of Universities certifies that the proposed programme is consistent with the curriculum and complies with the provisions of current regulations, issuing a positive verification decision for the programme.
- Should the report be unfavourable, the Verification and Accreditation Commission of the Council of Universities issues a negative verification decision.

The Council of Universities notifies the verification decision to the Ministry responsible for universities, the Autonomous Community and the proposing university or universities.

The procedure for verifying study programmes may not take longer than six months (excluding any appeal procedure). Once this period has elapsed, the application is deemed to have been approved and the study programme verified. Without prejudice to approval by administrative silence, the Programmes Verification Commission shall issue its report and submit it to the Council of Universities, as appropriate.

With regard to the resolution of any appeals, as set out in Article 26.10 of RD 822/2021, the applicant university, upon receiving notification from the Council of Universities, may request a review of the verification decision from the Presidency of the Council of Universities, for which a specific time limit applies.

If the appeal is accepted for consideration, it is assessed by a Commission for Appeals on the Verification and Accreditation of Study Programmes of the Council of Universities, comprising academic and professional experts who have not previously participated in the evaluation process.

This commission assesses the verification report, taking into account solely the curriculum report submitted by the university. Where there are grounds for doing so, the commission draws up a draft resolution for the Standing Commission of the Council of Universities.

If it deems it necessary, the commission may refer the case file to AVAP for review in light of any issues identified that warrant further assessment. The collegiate body responsible for examining the appeal is AVAP's Protocols and Appeals Commission, which draws up a report analysing the issues highlighted by the Council of Universities.

Once the report from AVAP has been received, the Council of Universities' Commission for Complaints Regarding the Verification and Accreditation of Study Programmes draws up a draft resolution, which it sends to the Standing Commission of the Council of Universities for a final decision.

In any event, the decision brings the administrative procedure to a close. If the prescribed time limit expires without a decision having been issued on the appeal, it may be deemed to have been dismissed. The Council of Universities notifies the applicant university of the final decision, whilst also informing the Autonomous Community, AVAP and the Ministry responsible for universities.

As regards the procedure for non-substantial modifications to degree programmes, RD 822/2021 of 28 September, which establishes the organisation of university education and the procedure for ensuring its quality, defines such modifications as those that do not entail a change in the nature, objectives and fundamental characteristics of the registered degree programme. Building on this basic legislation, the Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies (REACU) approved in 2022 the Assessment Protocol for the modification of university study programmes leading to official Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes. This protocol lays the foundations for the management and evaluation, by the agencies operating throughout the country, of substantial and non-substantial modifications to official degree programmes.

The classification of modifications as substantial or non-substantial shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions set out in Annex I of the Assessment Protocol: verification/modification of official bachelor's and master's degree programmes in the Valencian Community. Prior to processing the application, the University may consult AVAP regarding any queries that arise concerning the nature of the modifications it intends to implement.

The body responsible for assessing and issuing a report on the requested non-substantial modifications is the Verification Commission. A committee for the assessment of non-substantial modifications may be established to verify that the application submitted by the university complies with all the requirements set out in RD 822/2021 and RD 1614/2009, and to submit its report to the Commission.

With regard to the procedure, universities wishing to make non-substantial modifications to their accredited degree programmes must submit a request to AVAP using the form provided for this purpose in the protocol. The university uploads all the required documentation to the online platform (SIAVAL) designated for non-substantial modifications.

Once the application has been examined, and within a maximum period of 2 months, AVAP issues an individual decision for each modified degree programme, which is set out as follows:

- Modification Accepted: the modification is accepted on the grounds that it does not entail a change in the nature, objectives and fundamental characteristics of the verified degree programme. It may contain recommendations to be followed when implementing the modification.
- Modification Not Accepted: the modification is rejected, with reasons given, as it is considered to entail a change to the nature, objectives and fundamental characteristics of the accredited degree programme.

In the absence of a decision within the stipulated timeframe, the university may consider its application to have been accepted. The university may lodge an optional appeal for reconsideration against the decision – which brings the administrative procedure to a close – with the same body. The Protocols and Appeals Commission is responsible for ruling on this appeal.

MONITORING ON STUDY PROGRAMMES

With regard to monitoring reports, it is the universities that initiate the procedure by applying for their relevant degree programmes to be included in each of the annual calls for applications. The university draws up an annual self-assessment report on each of its established degree programmes, which it submits to the AVAP together with other supporting evidence. The self-assessment report on the degree programme drawn up by the university must provide justification that the results achieved meet the objectives for which the programme was designed.

Upon receipt of the documentation, the Monitoring Commission analyses both the publicly available information and that provided by the university in its report and supporting evidence. This commission comprises a group of experts, including one student and an AVAP official who acts as secretary, with a voice but no vote.

The commission drafts a provisional report which may be favourable, favourable with conditions, or unfavourable. This provisional report is sent to the university so that, if it deems it appropriate, it may submit allegations . Once any allegations have been assessed, AVAP proposes a final report, which may be favourable or unfavourable to the monitoring process, and sends it to the applicant university. The university may lodge an appeal against this final report.

Should the monitoring report reveal serious breaches of the commitments set out in the curriculum document, AVAP notifies the governing bodies of the institution and the university and brings the matter to the attention of the regional ministry responsible for universities, so that the measures deemed appropriate may be taken.

RENEWAL OF STUDY PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

The university submits the application for the renewal of the accreditation of its official degree programmes to the Council of Universities via the relevant application system of the Ministry responsible for universities. This application is forwarded to AVAP so that it can verify that the curriculum is being implemented in accordance with its original proposal. The assessment must include a visit to the university by external experts, which concludes with the preparation of a mandatory assessment report for the Council of Universities.

Once the admissible applications have been received, AVAP plans the entire procedure to be followed, contacting the university to request the submission of supporting documentation, including a self-assessment report prepared by the university using the template provided by AVAP, as well as the schedule for the visit by the External Evaluation Committee.

This Committee is responsible for visiting the university and reviewing one or more degree programmes, which may be grouped by subject area. AVAP selects the members of the External Evaluation Committee and publishes their names on its website, and informs the university of the committee's composition, together with a brief curriculum vitae for each member. The university is given a deadline within which to exercise, where appropriate, its right to challenge the committee members, stating the grounds for doing so.

Once the deadline for submitting the self-assessment report and all other supporting documentation has passed, AVAP provides the External Evaluation Committee with access to these documents via SIAVAL prior to the visit. The committee analyses this documentation and verifies whether it is sufficient to produce the assessment report, notifying AVAP's technical staff of any missing evidence.

At the end of the visit, the members of the External Evaluation Committee pool their preliminary conclusions in order to draw up the external evaluation report. AVAP provides the evaluators with a document setting out the aspects to be considered, which serves as a guide to help them identify which aspects must be assessed under each criterion and guideline.

Each member of the External Evaluation Committee produces an individual report. This report must contain a detailed and reasoned analysis of the degree of compliance with each and every one of the criteria and guidelines for the renewal of accreditation. For each criterion and guideline, a reasoned explanation must be provided of the aspects to be considered, the notable strengths and the areas for improvement identified.

Based on the individual reports, evidence and impressions gathered during the various interviews conducted throughout the visit, the academic member of the External Evaluation Committee for the degree programme coordinates the drafting of a report, which is then reviewed by each committee member so that they may contribute suggestions and proposals. The academic member incorporates the suggestions and proposals made by all committee members and finalises the report. The committee chair reviews the report, signs it and submits it to AVAP. Once AVAP's technical staff have verified that the report meets all requirements and includes an assessment of all criteria, it is forwarded to the Programme Assessment Commission.

Following the visit by the External Evaluation Committee and the issuance of the external evaluation report, the degree programme is assessed by the Programme Assessment Commission, which issues a decision based on the aforementioned report. Each of the seven criteria is assessed according to four levels: 'excellent'; 'met'; 'partially met'; 'not met'.

The report must also be assessed as a whole and be properly justified; it may be:

- In favour of the renewal of accreditation.

For each criterion, it may contain suggested actions that contribute to achieving a higher standard of teaching or improving the resources allocated to it; where applicable, these should be included in the box marked *'Recommendations*', which may be taken into account in future accreditation processes.

- In favour of renewing accreditation, subject to conditions.

In this case, the report contains a list of conditions. As set out in Article 28 of RD 822/2021, a follow-up assessment must be carried out three years after the effective implementation or renewal of accreditation, with particular emphasis on the degree programmes that have received this rating.

- Unfavourable to the renewal of accreditation.

Depending on the nature of the shortcomings observed, specific aspects may be identified that the university must address in order to obtain a favourable report.

The university may submit allegations within twenty days of receiving this draft report. Once the allegations , if any, have been assessed, the AVAP draws up a final report, which may be **favourable** or **unfavourable** to the renewal of accreditation, and sends it to the applicant university, the Council of Universities, the Valencian Regional Government and the Ministry responsible for universities. At the same time, the External Evaluation Committee's report will be published on the AVAP website. Once the Council of Universities has received the AVAP report, it will issue the final decision. If the report is favourable (or

favourable subject to conditions), a decision granting the renewal will be issued. Should the report be unfavourable, a decision rejecting the renewal of accreditation will be issued, in which case the degree programme will be discontinued.

Finally, as described above, the university may express its disagreement with the conduct of the procedure or challenge the final decision through the complaints and appeals procedure, which will be resolved by AVAP's General-Directorate or by its Protocols and Appeals Commission, respectively.

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

Institutional Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions is a procedure through which institutions can achieve the renewal of accreditation for the degree programmes they offer, by certifying the implementation of their Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). Therefore, the first step for institutions wishing to have the implementation of their IQAS certified through the AUDIT-AVAP Programme is to submit an application to take part in this programme. The institution concerned may apply for certification of one, several or all of the IQAS of the centres comprising the institution.

The application for certification implies the institution's commitment to provide AVAP with the IQAS documentation and records necessary to carry out the assessment procedure. Access to this information may be granted by setting up access permissions within the institution's IT system or by providing an electronic copy, by means agreed between the applicant institution and AVAP's technical staff.

Within a maximum of one month of submitting the application, the institution must make all documentation relating to the implementation of the IQAS available, preferably via the website. In addition to providing access to the documentation, the institution must supply the External Evaluation Committee with a document setting out the processes and regulations applicable to the AUDIT-AVAP model guidelines, the records and evidence generated to demonstrate compliance with each guideline, and details of where these processes and records are located within the document management system.

The AUDIT-AVAP External Evaluation Committee (CEEAA) carries out a preliminary analysis of the documentation and evidence provided, in order to assess whether the full set of information demonstrating the implementation of the IQAS is available. Should any gaps or weaknesses in the quality or integrity of the documentation and evidence be detected, these must be rectified before the external visit.

To ascertain the level of implementation of the IQAS, the CEEAA draws up a preliminary report, which may include interviews with the Centre's management team, staff responsible for the IQAS and staff from the Centre's quality unit. This report is an internal working document of the committee. Following this, an on-site visit is carried out, the main objective of which is to gain first-hand insight into the level of implementation and operation of the IQAS and the centre's capacity to guarantee the quality of the training programmes falling within its scope.

The programme for the visit must enable the CEEAA to gather the information necessary to carry out its assessment functions. The institution is responsible for organising the various interviews previously agreed with the CEEAA. Interviews are scheduled with the management team, the institution's quality assurance commission, the technical quality unit and those responsible for processes and the coordination of degree programmes. In addition, the CEEAA will meet with other stakeholders, such as teaching staff, heads of departments, students, graduates and administrative and support staff, and may also visit the institution's facilities.

During the interviews, the evidence provided is cross-checked and, where appropriate, further evidence is gathered to assess aspects not included in the documentation submitted. Other aspects may also be validated, such as best practice, opportunities, strengths, weaknesses, recommendations or requirements.

The members of the CEEAA must first reach a consensus on the content of the visit report, after which the committee chair validates it. The report must be sent to AVAP, which carries out a technical review and forwards it to the university.

AVAP's Certification and Institutional Accreditation Commission (CCAI) is responsible for issuing certification reports on the institutions' IQAS. This commission draws up the corresponding certification report, based on the external evaluation visit report prepared by the CEEAA. The CCAI's certification report will be **favourable** or **unfavourable,** and may also include aspects such as best practices or others already mentioned above.

The institution may submit allegations regarding the CCAI's provisional certification report for the commission to take into consideration. Once the allegations have been assessed, where applicable, the CCAI draws up the final certification report. If no allegations are submitted, the provisional report is deemed to be the final one.

Should the final certification report be unfavourable, the centre has six months to rectify the shortcomings identified in the certification report. If, ultimately, the centre fails to rectify these shortcomings, the institution may not reapply for the centre's IQAS certification until at least one year has elapsed since the unfavourable notification. Should the institution disagree with the final certification report, it may lodge an appeal with AVAP's Protocols and Appeals Commission, which is the body responsible for resolving such matters, thereby concluding the administrative procedure.

It should be emphasised that the IQAS implementation certificate awarded by AVAP does not in itself accredit the degree programmes offered by the institution; rather, it certifies that the institution offering them properly applies the IQAS that governs its quality assurance activities, in accordance with the ESG and the criteria developed by AVAP in its AUDIT-AVAP programme; that it complies with the protocol for the certification of internal quality assurance systems established in Spain by the General Conference on University Policy (Resolution of 3 March 2022, amended by Resolution of 8 September 2026) and, therefore, certifies fulfilment of the requirement for the institution to achieve institutional accreditation. The application for the institutional accreditation must be submitted by the university to the Council of Universities of the Ministry of Education, which, after requesting a binding report from AVAP regarding the institution's compliance with the necessary requirements, will decide on the matter.

DOCENTIA

With regard to the procedure for issuing evaluation reports on teaching activity, the university draws on the guidance document and the rest of the documentation from the DOCENTIA programme to draw up its template, which it then submits to AVAP. If the documentation provided by the university is incomplete, the agency requires the university to complete it before proceeding with its assessment.

For the certification of the DOCENTIA programme's teaching quality model, an external assessment committee is set up to visit the institution and produce a provisional qualitative report, which serves as further evidence for the final report proposed by AVAP's DOCENTIA Commission. The teaching evaluation

models designed by the universities are assessed and, where appropriate, verified by this commission. The aim of this assessment procedure is to verify that the model drawn up by the university complies with the provisions of the DOCENTIA Programme.

The commission draws up an evaluation report setting out the assessments and proposals for improvement deemed appropriate for the university's evaluation model and, where applicable, the conditions that must be met for its approval. The assessment proposed by the commission may be:

a) Favourable: if the model meets the criteria and specifications established for the assessment of teaching activity under the DOCENTIA Programme.

b) Subject to conditions: where the model could receive a favourable evaluation report if the proposed issues are resolved in accordance with the conditions specified within the specified timeframe.

The agency notifies the university of the assessment report, which is provisional in nature, and forwards it to the university so that, where appropriate, the university may make any changes or provide any comments it deems necessary.

If the result of the provisional assessment report is 'Favourable' and the university has not submitted any changes, observations or comments, AVAP issues a final assessment report. Where the evaluation result is 'Subject to conditions', if the conditions set out in the provisional assessment report have not been resolved by the deadline, the agency issues a final assessment report with a 'Unfavourable' rating. If any of the conditions set out in the report have not been resolved during the period for submitting representations following the first follow-up, consideration may be given to issuing a 'Favourable' report with aspects requiring special monitoring, and a deadline for their resolution is specified.

Should the university have submitted comments and observations on the provisional report, the agency forwards these to the commission, which reviews the comments and any modifications the university may introduce to its evaluation model, and draws up an assessment report. The agency issues the final assessment report, which may be 'Favourable' or 'Unfavourable'.

Once the favourable certification report has been received, the university will have a period of two years to implement its model and to submit the report on the annual monitoring phase of the implementation to AVAP. Once this period has elapsed, if no follow-up report has been received, the assessment for certification shall lapse.

If the favourable certification report contains aspects requiring special monitoring, the university is obliged to inform the agency of the outcome of its improvement measures; the agency is entitled to revoke the favourable rating issued in the event of failure to comply with the agreed measures.

EVIDENCE

Regulations governing the organisation and operation of the Protocols and Appeals Commission:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ROF-Comision-de-Protocolos-y-Recursos.pdf ↗

Regulations governing the organisation and operation of the branch verification committees and the Programmes Verification Commission:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ROF-COMITES-DE-VERIFICACION-DE-RAMA-Y-COMISION-DE-VERIFICACION-DE-TITULOS.pdf ↗

EVIDENCE

Protocol for the assessment, verification and modification of university degree programmes and official higher education programmes in the arts at undergraduate and postgraduate level:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Protocolo-para-verificacion-y-modificacion-de-titulos-oficiales-de-grado-y-master_REVISION-V4-con-ISEACV.pdf ↗

Protocol for the assessment of the monitoring of official undergraduate and master's degree programmes:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/2.-Protocolo-Programa-de-Seguimiento-Grado-y-Master-version-2025-.pdf ↗

Protocol for the assessment of the renewal of accreditation for official undergraduate and master's degree programmes:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/4-Protocolo-Programa-Renovacion-Acreditacion-Grado-y-Master-2026.pdf ↗

Regulations governing the organisation and operation of the External Evaluation Committee:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ROF-Comite-de-Evaluacion-Externa.pdf ↗

AUDIT-AVAP Internal Quality Assurance System Certification Guide:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/AUDIT-AVAP-GUIA-PROTOCOLO-CERTIFICACION-SAIC_TERCERA-VERSION.pdf ↗

Regulations governing the organisation and operation of the Institutional Certification and Accreditation Commission:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/ROF-Comision-de-Certificacion-y-Acreditacion-Institucional.pdf ↗

Support programme for the quality assessment of university teaching staff's teaching activities:
https://www.aneca.es/documents/20123/265656/Programa+DOCENTIA__2025_+V2.0_registrado.pdf/a5e6aeca-b1f6-8ea5-9593-2b06bb356c31?t=1750145948849 ↗

DOCENTIA AVAP Commission:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Comision-Docentia-AVAP.pdf ↗

Report on institutional accreditation of Valencian universities:
https://avap.es/wpcontent/uploads/2025/11/INFORME_UNIVERSIDADES_VALENCIANAS_ACREDITACION_INSTITUCIONAL.pdf ↗

DOCENTIA: Support programme for the evaluation of the quality of university teaching staff's teaching activities:
https://www.aneca.es/docentia ↗

ESG 2.7 Complaints and Appeals

> **STANDARD:**
> *Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.*

The Protocols and Appeals Commission (PAC) is the body responsible for handling appeals received in the various procedures relating to AVAP's core functions. All procedures set out in the Terms of Reference provide for the possibility of lodging an appeal against their outcome with this commission. In the case of procedures relating to university degree programmes, the possibility of lodging complaints and appeals is also explicitly set out in the operating protocols published on the AVAP website.

Finally, the complaints and appeals procedure allows an institution that has undergone a review process by AVAP to express its dissatisfaction with the conduct of the process or with those carrying it out (complaints procedure) or to challenge the formal outcome, that is, the renewal decision (appeals procedure). In the first case, the person responsible for resolving the matter is the Head of AVAP's Directorate-General. In the second case, responsibility lies with the Protocols and Appeals Commission, which is made up of experts from outside the agency and an AVAP staff member who acts as secretary, with a voice but no vote.

Furthermore, in the assessment procedures for the certification of institutions' Internal Quality Assurance Systems, in the event of disagreement with the final certification report issued by the Certification and Institutional Accreditation Commission, the institution may lodge an appeal with the Protocols and Appeals Commission (PAC), which will be the body responsible for resolving the matter, thereby concluding the administrative procedure.

The PAC is a collegiate body whose members are experts with extensive academic and professional experience in the field of quality assurance in higher education. Its composition and functions can be found in its Regulations on Organisation and Functions, which are attached as evidence.

For the PAC to be validly constituted for the purposes of holding meetings, deliberating and adopting resolutions, the presence of the chair and the secretary – or, where applicable, their deputies – and at least half of its members is required at the first call. The Commission acts autonomously and independently in the performance of its functions. Its resolutions are adopted by a simple majority of votes. In the event of a tie, the Chair has the casting vote.

With regard to the management of resources in quality assurance procedures, prior to the meeting, each member of the PAC reviews the material provided by the university and, collectively, a reasoned report must be issued, as set out in the regulations governing the various activities carried out by AVAP.

In the case of complaints received by the agency, a reasoned report must be issued based on all the documentation submitted and gathered by AVAP's quality service, in accordance with the resolution of 2 December 2020 issued by the Chair of AVAP, which approves the procedure for the submission and processing of complaints, suggestions and expressions of gratitude in relation to the services provided by the agency.

Complaints are written submissions and communications in which citizens or institutions express their dissatisfaction with the provision of services, particularly regarding delays, a lack of attention, or any other similar form of substandard conduct they observe in the running of AVAP's administrative departments.

Complaints, suggestions and/or expressions of gratitude relating to quality assurance activities in higher education will be handled by the head of the Higher Education Quality Service. Responsibility for responding to complaints, suggestions and/or expressions of gratitude shall lie with AVAP's Directorate-General, as the body responsible. The complaints-handling process is set out in full in the aforementioned resolution of 2 December 2020, which is available on the AVAP website (see evidence below).

From 2022 up to the time of writing this document, 14 complaints have been received. Their distribution over the period is shown in the table below. Analysis of these figures suggests that the vast majority are not related to AVAP's remit. In all cases, the parties concerned have received a reply informing them of the reasons why the agency does not have jurisdiction or, where this is not the case, providing a reasoned response to their requests.

To date, no appeals have been received.

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 (PROVISIONAL)
Complaints recorded	1	3	1	6	3

Decisions made by the PAC exhaust the administrative remedies and may be appealed in court.

EVIDENCE

Regulations on the organisation and functioning of the Protocols and Appeals Commission:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ROF-Comision-de-Protocolos-y-Recursos.pdf ↗

Procedure for the submission and processing of complaints, suggestions and expressions of gratitude in relation to the services provided by the AVAP:
https://avap.es/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/RESOLUCION-procedimiento-presentacion-y-tramitacion-quejas-sugerencias-y-agradecimientos_DOGV.pdf ↗

E.
SWOT ANALYSIS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

9. Swot analysis

10. Key challenges and areas for future development

— Glossary of acronyms

9. SWOT ANALYSIS

INTERNAL FACTORS	
WEAKNESSES	**STRENGTHS**
◆ High turnover of technical and administrative staff, resulting in time being spent on initial training. ◆ Need to expand and update the panel of evaluators (particularly for research assessment) to ensure there are sufficient numbers during periods of high demand for reports. ◆ Need to document the staff training process. ◆ Need for more specific training for staff. ◆ Limited involvement of international evaluators.	◆ Inclusion in the EQAR register of European agencies. ◆ Significant growth in AVAP's technical staff. ◆ High regard amongst stakeholders in the Valencian university and R&D&I system. ◆ Agreed protocols and procedures, updated in line with regulatory changes. ◆ Public and transparent information. ◆ Flexible working arrangements. ◆ Documentation updated in accordance with the requirements of the UNE-EN ISO 9001:2015 quality management system. ◆ Independence from political influence. ◆ Ongoing contact with other Spanish quality agencies.
EXTERNAL FACTORS	
THREATS	**OPPORTUNITIES**
◆ Changing national higher education legislation. ◆ Competition with other Spanish agencies to recruit evaluators. ◆ Shortage of experts with sufficient experience in university quality assurance. ◆ Climate change and its impact on people's ability to travel to their place of work, in accordance with the joint IAF/ISO statement on incorporating climate change considerations into management systems.	◆ Securing new sources of funding. ◆ Increased relations and exchanges with agencies within REACU. ◆ Regional political consensus on the need for an efficient, dedicated University Quality Agency. ◆ Improving the agency's internationalisation by participating in working groups with other agencies and international networks. ◆ A teleworking scheme that enables staff to avoid travelling from home to the workplace in adverse weather conditions resulting from climate change or other phenomena. ◆ Promoting AVAP as a sustainable agency by driving the implementation of the SDGs in Valencian higher education.

10. KEY CHALLENGES AND AREAS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- **Strengthen AVAP's international recognition**

The main lines of action will focus on: (1) AVAP's involvement in international working groups; (2) actively participating in the evaluation of international joint degree programmes through the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes and the European label; (3) entering into agreements with agencies in other countries to carry out joint evaluations, exchange experts and develop procedures for the recognition of learning outcomes; (4) including international evaluators on committees; and (5) AVAP's participation in European projects.

- **Increase AVAP's visibility both internationally and in the local area**

The aim is to ensure that (1) Valencian universities gain a better understanding of what AVAP does and the value it brings; (2) students and society recognise AVAP as a guarantor of university quality; (3) public authorities recognise its role as a specialised technical body; (4) foreign universities and agencies are aware of its capabilities and have confidence in its evaluations; and (5) international experts recognise AVAP as an institution with its own expertise and leadership capacity.

- **Improve AVAP's internal organisation**

Improving the internal organisation should not prioritise expanding the size of the structure but rather ensure that AVAP has an organisational set-up capable of fulfilling its new remit without unnecessarily increasing bureaucracy. The combination of stable technical teams, well-defined procedures, digitalisation and management by objectives will enable progress towards a more professional, efficient agency that is prepared to take on new responsibilities.

- **Strengthen the culture of quality within higher education institutions, incorporating institutional accreditation as a strategy for quality improvement.**

This must be one of AVAP's priority strategic objectives: to ensure that institutional accreditation is no longer perceived as an administrative procedure of external evaluation but rather becomes an instrument for the transformation and continuous improvement of universities and their centres. In this way, universities must move (1) from evaluating in order to obtain accreditation to evaluating in order to improve; (2) from focusing on individual degree programmes to managing the quality of academic activity as a whole; (3) from viewing quality as the responsibility of technical units to embracing it as the responsibility of the entire institution; (4) from preparing documentation for external evaluations to systematically using information and indicators to inform decision-making; and (5) from regarding accreditation as an end result to understanding it as part of an ongoing cycle of improvement.

- **Collaborate with other national and international agencies on the development of thematic analyses**

This is a particularly interesting strategic direction for AVAP, as it will enable it to evolve from an agency that assesses the quality of universities into an institution that also generates knowledge, analyses trends and helps shape quality policies for higher education. We will develop a consistent framework for institutional cooperation to produce thematic analyses, in collaboration with quality assurance agencies, universities, public bodies and international networks. AVAP must become an active partner that proposes topics, provides data, coordinates research and participates in the dissemination of results.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ANECA	National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation
ACPUA	Aragon Agency for Quality Assurance and Strategic Foresight in Higher Education
ARC	ENQA Agency Review Committee
AVAP	Valencian Agency for Assessment and Forecasting
ACCUEE	Canary Islands Agency for University Quality and Educational Assessment
AQU-Catalunya	Agency for Quality in the University System of Catalonia
AQUA	Higher Education Quality Agency of Andorra
CCAI	Certification and Institutional Accreditation Commission
CD	DOCENTIA Commission
CE	Student Commission
CEE	External Assessment Committees
CEEAA	AUDIT-AVAP External Assessment Committee
CET	Programme Assessment Commission
CS	Monitoring Commissions
CVR	Branch Verification Committee
CREUP	National Co-ordinating Body of Students Representatives from Public Universities
ECA	European Consortium for Accreditation
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education
ERR	External Review Report
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
ESU	European Students' Union
EUA	European University Association
EURASHE	European Association for the Applied Sciences in Higher Education
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation (EU)
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IQAS	Internal Quality Assurance System
MECES	Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education
PAC	Protocols and Appeals Commission
QA	Quality Assurance
RD	Royal Decree
REACU	Spanish Network of University Quality Agencies
ROF	AVAP's Organisational and Operational Regulations
RUCT	Register of Universities, Centres and Programmes
SAR	Self-assessment Report
SIIU	Integrated University Information System
ST	Steering Committee
SUE	Spanish University System
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
ToR	Terms of Reference
VC	Verification Commission