

Approval of the Application by Agency for the Quality of the University in the Balearic Islands (AQUIB) for Inclusion on the Register

Register Committee
26-27 November

Ref. RC45/A157
Ver. 1.0
Date 2024-12-13
Page 1 / 5

Application of:	2023-10-13		
Agency registered since:	n/a		
Type of review:	Full	Site visit:	2024-05-29
External review report of:	2024-09-26	Submitted:	2024-10-18
Review coordinated by:	European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (ENQA)		
Review panel members:	Hilal Karaoglan, Laura Beccari, Maria Del Mar Campins Eritja, Ronny Heintze		
Decision of:	2024-11-27		
Registration until:	2029-09-30		
Absented themselves from decision-making:	n/a		
Attachments:	1. External Review Report, 2024-09-26		

1. The application of 2023-10-13 adhered to the requirements of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.
2. The Register Committee confirmed eligibility of the application on 2023-11-14.
3. The Register Committee considered the external review report of 2024-09-26 on the compliance of AQUIB with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015 version).

Analysis:

4. In considering AQUIB's compliance with the ESG, the Register Committee took into account the following activities:
 - Ex-Post accreditation of study programmes
 - Follow-up of study programmes
5. The external review process was also expected to evaluate the following activities:
 - Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions' teaching quality assessment systems (DOCENTIA)

- Ex ante accreditation (verification) of art study programmes
- Ex post accreditation of art study programmes
- Follow-up of art study programmes

Register Committee

26-27 November

Ref. RC45/A157
Ver. 1.0
Date 2024-12-13
Page 2 / 5

6. The Register Committee found that the report provides sufficient evidence and analysis on AQUIB's level of compliance with the ESG, as it regards *Ex-Post accreditation of study programmes* and *Follow-up of study programmes*. However, the Register Committee learned from the review panel report that the review panel did not fully evaluate four activities included in the Terms of Reference (*Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions' teaching quality assessment systems (DOCENTIA)*, *Ex ante accreditation (verification) of art study programmes*, *Ex post accreditation of art study programmes*, and *Follow-up of art study programmes*) nor did it take them into account when making judgements on ESG compliance. As a result, the Register Committee only considered two activities fully evaluated by the review panel, as outlined above. The Register Committee also underlined that the agency and the coordinator were expected to inform EQAR and request a change of the Terms of Reference at their earliest convenience.

7. In order to include *Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions' teaching quality assessment systems (DOCENTIA)*, *Ex ante accreditation (verification) of art study programmes*, *Ex post accreditation of art study programmes* and *Follow-up of art study programmes* in the list of ESG-aligned activities, the agency is expected to submit a substantive change report.

8. With regard to the specific European Standards, the Register Committee considered the following:

ESG 2.3 – Implementing processes

9. The Register Committee understood from the panel's analysis, that while external quality assurance processes are in line with the standard, there are discrepancies in understanding the processes of drafting and finalising review reports, as well as the role of the QA expert in the Commission of Study Programmes Evaluation (CET).

10. **The Register Committee could follow the panel's view that the agency is compliant with standard, but emphasized the panel's recommendation that the agency should ensure that all stakeholders are effectively informed about the entire external evaluation process.**

ESG 2.4 – Peer-review experts

11. The Register Committee learned from the panel's analysis that, in the ex-post accreditation reviews are collaborative effort between the panel and the Commission of Study Programmes Evaluation (CET). In particular, the Criterion 3 of the methodology is pre-evaluated by a member of the CET. Even though it is not currently the practice, these members can also participate in the external site visit.

Register Committee

26-27 November

Ref. RC45/A157

Ver. 1.0

Date 2024-12-13

Page 3 / 5

12. The Register Committee shared the panel's concerns that the current set up in which the CET members are participating both in the external evaluation and the decision making on the final outcomes of the review may lead to a potential conflict of interest. Further, the Register Committee noted that this arrangement is contrary to the requirement that external quality assurance is conducted by a group of external experts.

13. The Register Committee also learned that follow-up activities are not conducted by panels, but directly by CET sub-commissions. CET sub-commission includes a chairperson, two academic members, one student member and one quality spokesperson.

14. Given the above mentioned issues, the Register Committee was unable to concur with the panel's conclusion of compliance and found that AQUIB only partially complies with the standard.

ESG 3.1 – Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

15. The Register Committee learned that the governing body of AQUIB (i.e., the Board of Directors), is composed exclusively of representatives of the University of the Balearic Islands (UIB) and the regional government. The Board does not include student members nor other stakeholders.

16. The Register Committee learned that AQUIB has prepared a draft of the new Statutes which, in the review panel's view, would ensure a more representative composition of the Board of Directors. However, these Statutes are not yet in force at the time of the review.

17. Considering lack of stakeholder involvement in AQUIB's governance, the Register Committee was unable to concur with the panel's conclusion of compliance and found that AQUIB only partially complies with the standard.

ESG 3.3 – Independence

18. The Register Committee understood from the analysis by the panel that the composition of the Board of Directors has dominant representation of the government and the UIB, and these two stakeholders appoint all six board members.

19. The Register Committee further learned that according to statutes, the Director of the agency is appointed by the Balearic minister responsible for university affairs. Since 2009, however, this position is vacant and the Technical Director, chosen with a public competition, manages the agency.

20. The Register Committee understood that to resolve the above mentioned issues new statutes of the Consortium of the Balearic Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education has been drafted. The statutes, however, are not yet in effect. **Following this, the Committee concurred with the panel that AQUIB only partially complies with ESG 3.3.**

ESG 3.4 – Thematic analysis

21. The Register Committee learned from the report that AQUIB has a Thematic Analysis Protocol for a systematic approach to conducting thematic analyses, which was adopted in 2023 and is being implemented for the first time. However, the topic of the only thematic analysis conducted so far does not incorporate the results of its external quality assurance procedures.

22. **Considering that the only thematic analysis conducted by AQUIB so far is outside the scope of ESG, the Register Committee was unable to concur with the panel’s conclusion of compliance and found that AQUIB only partially complies with the standard.**

23. For the remaining standards, the Register Committee was able to concur with the review panel's analysis and conclusion without further comments.

Conclusion:

24. Based on the external review report and the considerations above, the Register Committee concluded that AQUIB demonstrated compliance with the ESG (Parts 2 and 3) as follows:

Standard	Review panel conclusion	Register Committee conclusion
2.1	Compliance	Compliance
2.2	Compliance	Compliance
2.3	Compliance	Compliance
2.4	Compliance	Partial compliance
2.5	Compliance	Compliance
2.6	Compliance	Compliance
2.7	Compliance	Compliance
3.1	Compliance	Partial compliance
3.2	Compliance	Compliance
3.3	Partial compliance	Partial compliance
3.4	Compliance	Partial compliance
3.5	Compliance	Compliance
3.6	Compliance	Compliance
3.7	(not expected)	Compliance (by virtue of applying)

25. The Register Committee considered that AQUIB only achieved partial compliance with some standards. In its holistic judgement, the Register Committee concluded that these are specific and limited issues, but that AQUIB complies substantially with the ESG as a whole.

Register Committee

26-27 November

Ref. RC45/A157

Ver. 1.0

Date 2024-12-13

Page 4 / 5

26. As elaborated in points 4-7, the registration only covers two activities fully evaluated by the review panel and consequently considered by the Register Committee. Four activities included in the Terms of Reference but not fully evaluated by the review panel are considered outside the scope of registration. To include these activities in the list of activities within the scope of ESG, the agency is expected to submit a substantive change report.

27. **The Register Committee therefore approved the application for inclusion on the Register. AQUIB's inclusion shall be valid until 2029-09-30¹.**

28. The Register Committee further underlined that AQUIB is expected to address the issues mentioned appropriately and to resolve them at the earliest opportunity.

Register Committee

26-27 November

Ref. RC45/A157

Ver. 1.0

Date 2024-12-13

Page 5 / 5

¹ Inclusion is valid for five years from the date of the external review report, see §3.25 of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.