

Mechanisms for guaranteeing the quality of the doctoral programme

• Quality guarantee system: organization and responsibilities

The coordinator of the doctoral programme is **responsible** for the process of monitoring and ensuring the quality of the doctoral programme.

The Universitat Rovira i Virgili has a general university-wide **quality guarantee system** for its courses which is described in the [Model for Guaranteeing Teaching Quality at the URV](#).

This model was approved by the Governing Council (in 2007) and defines the general and strategic framework governing teaching quality at the URV, the staff members responsible for quality issues and the quality guarantee processes that are implemented. Although these processes are applied at university level, each one is adapted to the specific requirements of each faculty, school, department and undergraduate or postgraduate course. The Model constitutes the Internal Quality Guarantee System (IQGS) of the URV's faculties and schools and has been awarded a [quality certificate](#) by the AUDIT programme, which is managed by ANECA, AQU Catalunya and ACSUG (2009).

The quality guarantee system outlined in the model takes into account the criteria of the ANECA qualification accreditation model (pilot project), the AQU Catalunya accreditation standards, the ENQA (European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) criteria and directives for guaranteeing quality in the European Higher Education Area, the recommendations of the AQU Catalunya Model for Verifying, Monitoring, Modifying and Accrediting Official Qualifications, and the CURSA Committee's directives regarding its Official Qualification Monitoring Protocol. Thus the Model brings together the indicators and evidence necessary to adequately document compliance with the standards defined in the quality guarantee system. It also describes the nature of these indicators and defines who is responsible for maintaining them by means of a dynamic system that is continually adapted to the internal and external requirements for guaranteeing the quality of the URV's qualifications.

In June 2008 the URV's Executive Council approved a [project](#) for the 2008-2009 academic year which was aimed at fully and explicitly incorporating the URV's doctoral programmes into the IQGS. The project enabled the university to review the processes and mechanisms for guaranteeing quality and continuous improvement that were already contained in the IQGS and to incorporate the necessary modifications for fully bringing together the internal and external requirements for guaranteeing the quality of the doctoral courses.

The project also established new processes in cases where the existing processes could not be implemented or were not recommended, as was the case with the selection, admission and enrolment of students.

• Mechanisms for obtaining information about the programme

The mechanisms that allow **information to be obtained regarding the doctoral programme** are documented in the different processes of the IQGS which cover each aspect of the programme. These processes are:

- P.1.1-01 Process for guaranteeing the quality of training programmes
- P1.2-01c Selection, admission and enrolment of doctoral students
- P1.2-02b Orientation towards the postgraduate student
- P.1.2-03 Process of course implementation
- P1.2-04 Process for managing student mobility
- P1.2-05 Process for managing career guidance
- P1.2-07b. Process for managing complaints, incidents, suggestions and praise regarding the postgraduate programmes
- P.1.5-01 Process for analyzing the results and improving the training programme

In addition to this, the different processes contained in the IQGS regarding the management of staff, services, material resources, maintenance, acquisitions, etc., allow information to be obtained about these aspects. Thus, although the processes are applied at general university level, they can significantly affect the implementation and results of each programme at faculty, school or departmental level.

The mechanisms for managing **the mobility programmes** are included in the following IQGS processes:

- P1.2-04 Process for managing student mobility
- P.1.5-01 Process for analyzing the results and improving the training programme

The IQGS processes regarding each aspect of the **organization of the doctoral programme describe the mechanisms which guarantee that the information regarding the postdoctoral programme is analyzed, that decisions regarding the development and results of the programme are taken and that actions resulting from the decision making process are implemented.** Specifically, these mechanisms are defined in the following processes:

- P1.2-07b. Process for managing complaints, incidents, suggestions and praise regarding the postgraduate programmes
- P.1.5-01 Process for analyzing the results and improving the training programme

• Mechanisms for guaranteeing the quality of the publication of information regarding the programme

The following IQGS processes describe the mechanisms put in place to guarantee the correct functioning of **the process of publishing information** about the implementation and results of the doctoral programme:

- P1.6-01 Process for publishing information regarding the qualifications

• Procedures for suspending the doctoral programme

The **mechanisms for suspending a doctoral programme** are documented in the following IQGS process:

- P1.1-02 Process for suspending qualifications

The university has defined the **basic criteria** for temporarily or definitively interrupting the teaching of the course. These are:

- The economic viability of the course. The University must have sufficient economic, material and human resources to be able to offer the course at the pre-established quality levels.
- Demand for the course. A decision to impart or suspend the course may be taken depending on the number of people applying for and enrolled on the course.
- Academic performance. A decision to impart or suspend the course may be taken depending on the academic results achieved, the drop out rate, the graduation rate, the efficiency rate or other indicators that may be defined as strategic at that moment.
- Scientific and professional relevance. A decision to impart or suspend the course may be taken depending on whether there have been scientific or professional developments of such magnitude that the course is no longer up-to-date or relevant.
- Quality. The course must comply with the quality levels established by the university regarding teaching, the teaching staff, the support staff, material resources and services.

The criteria according to which the course may be suspended are periodically revised by the academic directors of the programme and the Governing Team of the university.