

# EVALUATION STANDARDS FOR FIRST AND SECOND CYCLE PROGRAMMES

**2022–2023 EVALUATION CAMPAIGN**  
ROUND C

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## PREAMBLE

The standards for the evaluation of **first- and second-cycle study programmes** aim to assess the educational policy of the study programme and its impact on its activities and outcomes. These standards apply to first- and second-cycle study programmes evaluated by Hcéres, namely scientific and technical university diplomas (DEUST), bachelor's degrees, professional bachelor's degrees, university bachelor's degrees in technology (BUT), master's degrees and healthcare-related qualifications (including general study programme diplomas, advanced study programme diplomas, 'capacités -university capacity qualification-' and state diplomas).

The standards define the **three key categories used for self-evaluation and external evaluation**:

- **Domains:** The domains define the overall scope of the evaluation. Each domain is associated with at least one standard. The standards are organised in four domains.
- **Standards:** The standards set out the evaluation requirements by reflecting the objectives of the study programmes as defined in current regulatory texts, as well as the key guidelines and practices that characterise first- and second-cycle study programmes. They are formulated as an action that places the programme in a concrete situation.
- **Criteria:** One or more criteria are associated with each standard. The criteria specify how each standard should be reflected in the self-evaluation reports of study programmes. They set out the aspects that will be examined in order to determine the extent to which the programmes meet the expectations defined by the relevant standard.

Based on these standards, the self-evaluation report for first- and second-cycle study programmes develops critical analyses and provides evidence relating to the standards and criteria that define the content of each of the four domains for the review period.

These standards are completed by the document '**Guidelines for the self-evaluation of study programmes**'. This document sets out the context in which Hcéres conducts its evaluation. The document includes best practices and expectations regarding the self-evaluation of study programmes. It further clarifies key aspects of the standards, particularly the expectations attached to them and the criteria applied according to the type and characteristics of the study programmes and the higher education institution delivering them.

## DOMAIN 1: THE POLICY AND CHARACTERISATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Four standards (1 to 4) define the scope of this domain. The purpose of these standards is to assess the policy and characterisation of the study programme. More specifically, these standards aim to assess their impact on the study programme's activities and outcomes, as well as how the programme monitors this impact and how such monitoring relates to the programme's objectives.

### Standard 1: The study programme is in line with the higher education institution's education strategy.

- C1. The study programme is consistent with the higher education institution's ambitions, educational objectives and thematic priorities.
- C2. The study programme is structured in a way that aligns with and complements other study programmes at the same cycle, and it connects coherently with programmes at other levels to form a continuous progression.
- C3. The study programme ensures the effectiveness and added value of its local, regional and national academic partnerships.
- C4. The study programme integrates the benefits of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary education into its objectives and content.
- C5. The study programme integrates the challenges of sustainable development.
- C6. The study programme draws on the activities carried out and the resources secured under the Initiative of Excellence and related projects funded by the

Future Investment Programme to enhance its content and structures.

**Standard 2: The study programme is open to international students, in line with the higher education institution's priorities.**

- C1. The programme develops a specific international academic offering while ensuring the relevance and added value of its international partnerships.
- C2. The study programme includes incoming and outgoing student mobility and receives support, including funding, to sustain these activities.

**Standard 3: The study programme is grounded in research.**

- C1. The programme incorporates research-based teaching and learning that is adapted to its purpose.
- C2. Teaching is delivered by lecturers and researchers from the programme's disciplinary fields.
- C3. The study programme and the research units to which it is attached put in place a system for welcoming, supporting and providing research-based study programmes to students.
- C4. The study programme includes training in research integrity and professional ethics.
- C5. The study programme's research-based teaching and learning is supported by the library and documentation services of the higher education institution, particularly through resource acquisition, access provision and contribution to learning materials. The documentation staff is involved in these activities.

**Standard 4: The study programme fosters ties with the socio-economic world and incorporates elements of professional development.**

- C1. The study programme takes the region's socio-economic needs into account when defining its career prospects, objectives and content, in line with its RNCP profile, and develops relationships with socio-economic stakeholders as part of this process.
- C2. The study programme defines its policy on work-based learning and continuing professional development in a way that is consistent with the higher education institution's positioning and strategy.
- C3. The study programme prepares students for entry into the labour market and for entrepreneurship throughout the programme and, to this end, involves socio-economic stakeholders.

**DOMAIN 2: THE PEDAGOGICAL ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME**

Four standards (5 to 8) specify the scope of this domain. These standards aim to evaluate the programme's teaching organisation. More specifically, they evaluate the organisation of teaching and its impact on the study programme's activities and outcomes, and how these are related to the programme's objectives.

**Standard 5: The study programme implements teaching methods suited to the competences it aims to develop.**

- C1. The study programme defines and implements its objectives, content, teaching methods and learning outcomes within an approach that ensures pedagogical alignment. It is based on both a curriculum-based and competence-based approach.

- C2. The study programme recognises the skills acquired both within and outside the study programme.

### **Standard 6: The study programme develops and diversifies its teaching practices.**

- C1. The study programme diversifies its teaching methods to promote student success, including, where relevant, participation in initiatives under the Initiative of Excellence or related projects funded by the Future Investment Programme.
- C2. The study programme offers a range of teaching methods, including full or partial online-learning options, to provide greater flexibility for its diverse student groups.
- C3. The study programme uses of a variety of teaching spaces, in line with its objectives and teaching methods.

### **Standard 7: The study programme's content and arrangements are tailored to facilitate its international outreach.**

- C1. The study programme helps students develop language skills needed for employment or further study, particularly in international contexts, through foreign-language teaching, courses delivered in a foreign language, and recognised language qualifications.
- C2. In addition to foreign languages, the study programme includes support mechanisms to prepare students for incoming and outgoing mobility.

### **Standard 8: The programme's content and support arrangements are tailored to students on continuing education and work-study programmes.**

- C1. The study programme ensures effective access for continuing-education and work-study participants by implementing appropriate arrangements for their reception, supervision, and programme design.
- C2. The study programme develops, within its scope, programme design tailored to the specific offer intended for continuing-education learners.

## **DOMAIN 3: THE APPEAL, PERFORMANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME**

Three standards (9 to 11) define the scope of this domain. Their purpose is to assess the outcomes of the study programme in terms of its appeal, performance and relevance. These standards aim to evaluate how the programme monitors these aspects and proposes improvements in line with its objectives.

### **Standard 9: The study programme develops and monitors its appeal among its target audiences.**

- C1. The information systems used by the study programme, whether provided by the higher education institution or the study programme itself, help strengthen its appeal and improve the quality of guidance and recruitment for its various target groups.
- C2. The study programme measures its appeal by tracking and analysing trends in applications and enrolments across different target groups.

### **Standard 10: The study programme monitors student success.**

- C1. The study programme monitors trends in success rates and analyses the impact of its support measures, student success initiatives and curriculum adjustments.

**Standard 11: The study programme analyses its graduates' transition into the labour market and progression to further study considering its own objectives and the wider labour market context.**

- C1. The study programme analyses the quality of graduates' transition into the labour market and the nature of their further studies, drawing on graduate-employment surveys and cohort-tracking studies.

**DOMAIN 4: MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME**

Two standards (12 and 13) define the scope of this domain. Their purpose is to assess the programme's management and its continuous improvement system. More specifically, the aim is to evaluate their impact on the programme's activities and outcomes, and the way in which the programme monitors these and proposes changes in light of its objectives.

**Standard 12: The study programme has the necessary resources to achieve its objectives.**

- C1. The higher education institution's human resources policy takes into account the staffing needs of the study programme.
- C2. Members of the study programme's teaching team undertake outbound mobility and create the conditions for hosting visiting lecturers.
- C3. Members of the teaching team receive support, guidance and/or training in teaching practice and ensure that their teaching practices are shared within the team.
- C4. The study programme uses tools and indicators to measure study programme costs in order to monitor and ensure its financial sustainability.
- C5. The allocation of responsibilities and the degree of decentralisation applied in the management of the higher education institution's study programmes contribute to their coherent and effective programme functioning.

**Standard 13: The study programme defines an internal evaluation process that enables it to evolve as part of a continuous improvement approach.**

- C1. The study programme organises student evaluations of both teaching and the programme itself, and incorporates the results of these evaluations into its development.
- C2. The study programme has an advisory board that includes students and external members. It meets periodically to analyse the programme's outcomes and contributes to its internal evaluation.