

STANDARDS FOR THE EVALUATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

EVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2022-2023
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INTRODUCTION

The Institutional Evaluation Framework defines the three core components that structure both self-evaluation and external evaluation:

- **Fields:** These define the overall scope of the evaluation. Each field is associated with at least one standard. The framework comprises three domains. The first domain covers the key dimensions involved in institutional leadership and management. Fields 2 and 3 address the core missions of higher education and research institutions.
- **Standards:** These express the expectations of the evaluation process, drawing upon the missions assigned to higher education institutions under the Education Code, as well as the major orientations and practices that characterize higher education and research. They are formulated as actions placing the institution in an active and accountable position.
- **Criteria:** A set of criteria is associated with each standard. These criteria specify how the standard may be reflected in the institution's self-evaluation report. While neither exhaustive nor exclusive, the criteria identify the issues that the expert panel will examine in order to assess the extent to which the institution meets the expectations embodied in the corresponding standard.

This evaluation framework is based on a model of institutional governance and management built around the following key dimensions:

Institutional Positioning: Institutional positioning encompasses the identification of the place occupied by the institution within its local, national, and international environment, the role it plays within that environment, and the overall ambition it seeks to achieve. Positioning is defined both at the beginning and at the end of the reference period, with changes over time reflecting the institution's trajectory. Defining institutional positioning requires a strategic analysis directed both inward (strengths and weaknesses) and outward (opportunities and threats).

Institutional Strategy: For the reference period, institutional strategy combines, on the one hand, the translation of the institution's ambitions into major operational objectives aligned with its positioning and, on the other hand, the mobilization of the resources and competencies necessary to achieve them. The strategy is deployed across all areas of activity and is informed by prospective analyses. Where appropriate, it may be formalized within the contractual agreement between the institution and its supervisory ministry.

Organization: Organization refers to the structural choices made by the institution regarding its internal arrangements in order to fulfil its missions, implement its strategy, and achieve its objectives.

Governance: Governance encompasses all bodies, mechanisms, rules, and decision-making processes that support the design and implementation of the institution's strategy. It articulates the interaction between the political and administrative spheres of the institution.

Steering and Management: Steering and management comprise all mechanisms and tools mobilized by the institution to implement its strategic orientations operationally. This includes change-management processes, activity and performance monitoring systems, information systems, and decision-support tools, such as multi-year human resources and financial planning instruments.

Activities and Outcomes: The key dimensions of institutional management constitute the core of the first domain of the evaluation framework. They also underpin the evaluation of the institution's missions (Fields 2 and 3), with the aim of examining the conditions under which institutional activities are carried out and the principal outcomes achieved. Accordingly, both self-evaluation and external evaluation are expected to assess the relationship between the institution's strategy, the results obtained, and the resources deployed to implement that strategy.

This framework establishes the context within which the institution conducts its self-evaluation, following the **strategic dialogue meetings** that enable Hcéres to prepare the evaluation process jointly with the institution. The objective of institutional evaluation is to provide an assessment that is useful and tailored to the institution being evaluated, taking into account its specific characteristics and the adaptations these may require.

Such adaptations may take three forms:

1. Certain criteria may be irrelevant to particular institutions because they do not apply universally (for example, criteria relating to the *Initiative of Excellence* programme).
2. Certain criteria—or even entire standards—may, at the institution's request and following discussion with Hcéres, become the subject of a specific focus because of their particular strategic importance.
3. Certain criteria may be adapted to reflect the specific characteristics of the institution (for example, in the case of an Experimental Public Institution or a Private Higher Education Institution of Public Interest).

These modalities for adaptation are described in the document *Guidelines for Institutional Self-Evaluation*. This document sets out the context within which Hcéres evaluations are conducted and identifies good practices and expectations regarding institutional self-evaluation. It also clarifies certain aspects of the framework, particularly the expectations associated with, and possible adaptations of, the standards and criteria discussed above. Finally, it provides definitions of the concepts used throughout the framework in order to facilitate a common understanding of its content.

FIELD 1: STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Eight standards (1 to 8) define the scope of this field. They are intended to assess the institution's positioning, strategy, governance, organisation and operational management. More specifically, they examine how these dimensions influence the institution's activities and outcomes, and how performance is monitored against its strategic objectives.

Standard 1. The institution defines its institutional positioning at the local, national and international levels.

C.1 The institution defines its positioning in light of its identity, values and history. It analyses its place and role within the higher education, research and innovation landscape.

C.2 The institution establishes a long-term ambition, defining the position it seeks to attain in a manner consistent with its identity, place and role.

C.3 The institution conducts analyses, including benchmarking exercises, to support its positioning. Where relevant, it identifies specific institutions or categories of institutions that serve as reference models.

Standard 2. Based on its positioning, the institution defines a strategy at the local, national and international levels, translates it into operational objectives, and monitors its implementation.

C.1 For the reference period, the institution defines a strategy aligned with its long-term ambition. This strategy takes the form of an institutional project articulated through major priorities in research, innovation, inclusion of science in society, education, student life and campus life.

C.2 The institution translates its strategy into operational objectives, which are implemented through action plans.

C.3 The institution is able to describe the trajectory followed during the reference period and to analyse its consistency with its strategic priorities and operational objectives.

C.4 The institution monitors its institutional strategy and trajectory through dashboards and performance indicators aligned with its institutional project.

Standard 3. The institution operates within its wider environment and develops a partnership policy aligned with its strategy.

Local and National Academic Partnerships

C.1 The institution maintains relationships with the higher education institutions located within its region and, where applicable, participates in territorial coordination arrangements whose activities and outcomes support its strategy.

C.2 The institution pursues an integrated strategy with its partner research organisations, reflected in shared objectives.

C.3 The university maintains a strategic partnership with the University Hospital Centre (CHU) or with other healthcare institutions in support of academic health centres dedicated to healthcare, education and research.

C.4 The institution establishes other strategic academic alliances and partnerships that are relevant to its strategy.

International Partnerships

C.5 The institution relies on strategic partnerships to define its international strategy.

C.6 Through its partnerships, the institution supports and promotes inbound and outbound staff mobility and encourages the hosting of visiting academics and researchers in order to strengthen its education and research activities.

C.7 Where relevant, the institution strengthens its international strategy by developing overseas operations in collaboration with local stakeholders.

Economic, Social and Cultural Partnerships and Regional Engagement

C.8 As part of its strategy, the institution engages with its social, economic and cultural environment and develops strategic partnerships.

C.9 The institution develops partnerships with regional and local authorities in alignment with local and regional higher education, research and innovation strategies.

Impact of the Institution on Its Environment

C.10 The institution defines strategic commitments in the field of social responsibility, particularly regarding ethics and sustainable development.

C.11 The institution assesses the socio-economic impact of its activities and, where appropriate, uses dedicated tools to measure it.

C.12 The institution evaluates and manages its environmental impact, notably through indicators, labels and certification schemes.

Standard 4. The institution's governance is supported by organisational arrangements, communication processes and information systems that are aligned with its strategy.

Governance

C.1 The procedures governing the preparation of decisions, deliberations and the implementation of resulting actions are clearly defined within the institution.

C.2 The institution's governing and advisory bodies promote internal democracy and stakeholder participation in institutional life.

C.3 Academic and administrative units contribute to the development and implementation of the institution's strategic priorities.

C.4 Responsibilities and levels of subsidiarity are clearly defined across the institution's different organisational levels.

C.5 The institution is able to assess the impact of the Excellence Initiative on its organisation, operations and performance.

Communication

C.6 External communication promotes the institution's identity and enhances its visibility.

C.7 Internal communication contributes to informing staff and students and strengthens their sense of belonging.

Information Systems

C.8 The institution has implemented an integrated information system whose organisation and resources meet its management needs and cybersecurity obligations.

Standard 5. The institution implements a comprehensive quality policy.

- C.1 A transparent and rigorous quality policy is deployed across services and organisational units, with the involvement of staff and students.
- C.2 The institution uses continuous improvement tools together with foresight activities, internal evaluation processes and external reviews.
- C.3 The institution monitors the recommendations arising from the previous evaluation and explains how these recommendations have been addressed.

Standard 6. The institution manages the implementation of its strategy through forecasting tools, budget planning and a structured internal management dialogue.

Financial Sustainability and Cost Analysis

- C.1 The institution operates on a sustainable economic model that enables it to achieve its objectives and fulfil its missions.
- C.2 The institution closely monitors changes in its overall financial position. It has a clear understanding of the sustainability of its decisions in the short and medium term and defines the different stages of its budget process.
- C.3 Consistent with its strategy and economic model, the institution forecasts its needs and resources through appropriate strategic planning frameworks.
- C.4 The institution monitors its payroll expenditure using forecasting and decision-support tools.
- C.5 The criteria governing the allocation of funding from the Excellence Initiative and related projects under the Future Investment Programme are clear, shared and aligned with the institution's strategy.
- C.6 The institution regularly reviews the use of funding from the Excellence Initiative and related projects under the Future Investment Programme and assesses their impact on its economic model and resource allocation policy.

Management Dialogue

- C.7 The institution conducts a management dialogue with its services and organisational units, through which resource allocation arrangements are defined.

Standard 7. Human resources policy and social dialogue reflect the institution's strategy and contribute to staff well-being at work.

Human Resources Policy

- C.1 The institution implements recruitment and employment policies for academic staff, faculty members, technical staff and administrative personnel that are consistent with its positioning and strategy. These policies comply with ethical standards, enhance national and international attractiveness, and contribute to improving the quality of education and research.
- C.2 The institution's human resources policy incorporates objectives relating to gender equality, inclusion and the reduction of discrimination.

Workforce and Skills Planning

- C.3 The institution undertakes multi-year workforce, staffing and skills planning for faculty members, researchers, technical staff and administrative personnel across all employment categories and statuses.
- C.4 The institution formalises recruitment, employment and promotion procedures for faculty members, academic staff, technical staff and administrative personnel.

Career Development Support

C.5 Through its compensation framework, the institution recognises the full range of activities and responsibilities undertaken by faculty members, researchers, technical staff and administrative personnel. This recognition is reflected in its promotion policy.

C.6 The institution implements staff development and training policies that support career progression.

Social Dialogue and Quality of Working Life

C.7 The institution is able to demonstrate the quality of its social dialogue, particularly on issues that contribute to quality of working life.

C.8 The institution develops a social support policy that includes measures for individuals facing difficulties.

Standard 8. The institution incorporates an estate strategy that supports its development.

Estate Assessment and Monitoring

C.1 The institution maintains a detailed understanding of its built and non-built estate, taking into account lifecycle, safety, security and accessibility considerations.

C.2 The institution has a sound understanding of how its estate assets are used.

Estate Planning and Sustainability

C.3 The institution relies on medium- or long-term estate planning that structures its multi-year investment programme, involves its partners and may, where appropriate, lead to the transfer of ownership of estate assets.

C.4 The institution's estate strategy is reflected in major investment projects addressing its needs in education, research and campus life, for which it secures external funding.

Estate Management and Ecological, Energy and Environmental Transition

C.5 Within an appropriate subsidiarity framework, the institution implements estate and facilities management arrangements that support its missions. It develops shared services with partners, which may include initiatives aimed at enhancing the value of estate assets.

C.6 The institution's estate strategy takes ecological, energy and environmental transition into account and relies on incentive mechanisms to support these objectives.

FIELD 2: POLICY ON RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND INCLUSION OF SCIENCE INTO SOCIETY

Four standards (9 to 12) define the scope of this field. They are intended to assess the institution's policy with regard to research, innovation and inclusion of science into society. More specifically, they examine the impact of these policies on the institution's activities and outcomes, as well as the way in which they are monitored against its strategic objectives.

Standard 9. The institution's research policy defines strategic priorities.

Strategic Choices

C.1 The institution defines its research ambitions and priorities in line with its identity and organises its research activities around these choices.

C.2 In defining these ambitions and priorities, the institution assesses the quality and trajectory of its scientific output within the national and international context of each disciplinary field. It identifies the major contributions and principal achievements attained during the reference period.

C.3 The institution evaluates the successes and limitations of actions undertaken to foster the emergence of new research themes, risk-taking and interdisciplinarity.

C.4 The institution evaluates the successes and limitations of actions undertaken to maintain and develop the diversity of its areas of expertise, particularly in scarce or vulnerable disciplines.

Institutional Partnerships and Regional Engagement

C.5 The institution analyses the successes and limitations of actions undertaken with research organisations to implement shared scientific priorities, provide research units with the necessary human and financial resources, facilitate their activities and simplify their management.

C.6 The institution analyses the successes and limitations of actions undertaken with research organisations to strengthen the links between research and education.

C.7 The institution assesses the impact of its strategic partnerships with national research organisations on its activities and outcomes.

C.8 The institution evaluates the benefits to its scientific activity arising from sustained partnerships with other higher education and research institutions.

C.9 The institution ensures optimal integration between fundamental and clinical research, in collaboration with the University Hospital Centre and national research organisations.

C.10 The institution aligns its research policy with the strategic priorities of the region and other territorial authorities and evaluates the mutual benefits generated.

C.11 The institution relies on strategic partnerships with public and private social, economic and cultural stakeholders.

Internationalisation of Research Activities

C.12 The institution relies on strategic international partnerships in implementing its research policy.

C.13 The institution contributes to the development of the European Research Area and positions itself for competitive European and international funding opportunities.

Responsible Practices

C.14 The institution implements a policy on research integrity and ethics in its research activities.

C.15 The institution implements a policy promoting open science.

C.16 The institution develops an editorial policy consistent with the principles and good practices of open science.

C.17 The institution implements a policy promoting sustainable development in its research activities.

Standard 10. The institution implements a resource and support policy for research.

Resource Policy

- C.1 The allocation of research funding, excluding earmarked resources, is analysed by the institution in terms of its effects on activities and outcomes.
- C.2 The institution analyses the successes and limitations of its recruitment and attractiveness policy, which enables it to attract nationally and internationally recognised talent.
- C.3 Regional, national, European and international funding, including support provided through the Future Investment Programme, generates demonstrable outcomes for research activities.

Support Policy

- C.4 The institution establishes monitoring, incentive and project-development support mechanisms for national, European and international research projects and provides the associated administrative management.
- C.5 The institution provides faculty members and researchers with support for the organisation of scientific events.

Standard 11. In its policy of innovation and inclusion of science into society policy, the institution defines strategic priorities.

Strategic Choices

- C.1 The institution defines its ambitions, priorities and action plan in relation to innovation and public engagement with science, and these guide the organisation of its activities.
- C.2 The institution evaluates both qualitatively and quantitatively its innovation activities and its activities relating to public engagement with science. It identifies the major contributions and principal achievements attained during the reference period.

Partnerships and Regional Engagement

- C.3 The institution participates in dedicated, shared or Future Investment Programme-supported public or private structures that support its knowledge transfer activities.
- C.4 The institution analyses the results achieved through partnership contracts in the field of innovation and assesses their socio-economic impact.

Responsible Practices

- C.5 The institution ensures that its knowledge transfer activities are conducted in accordance with sustainable development principles, research integrity and ethical standards.

Policy for the inclusion of science in society

- C.6 The institution establishes governance arrangements that ensure effective oversight of its activities to integrate science into society.
- C.7 The institution develops expertise-related activities, particularly in response to regional needs and in support of public policies, while respecting the principles of research integrity and ethics.
- C.8 The institution designs and implements participatory science projects that include knowledge-sharing components.
- C.9 The institution implements a policy for scientific and cultural outreach and knowledge dissemination targeted at specific audiences, in collaboration with regional stakeholders. This policy includes training in science communication and public engagement.
- C.10 The institution undertakes activities to preserve, enrich and promote the heritage entrusted to its care. It also contributes to the enhancement of national, regional and international heritage.
- C.11 The institution pays particular attention to issues relating to the protection of scientific and technical heritage. It deploys appropriate measures and awareness-raising initiatives for its staff.

Standard 12. The institution implements a resource and support policy that benefits its activities in terms of innovation and inclusion of science into society.

Resource Policy

C.1 The institution analyses the successes and limitations of its human resources policy in encouraging staff involvement in knowledge transfer structures.

C.2 The institution mobilises its support services to assist expertise activities carried out for society and territorial authorities. It likewise supports scientific and cultural outreach activities.

C.3 The institution develops responses to regional, national, European and international calls for proposals, including those supported through the Future Investment Programme, and evaluates their impact on its knowledge transfer activities and outcomes.

Support Policy for Knowledge Transfer Activities

C.4 The institution implements an intellectual property management policy covering patents, software, confidential know-how, licensing and technology transfer.

C.5 The institution develops collaborative research activities through partnerships with industry, industrial chairs, joint laboratories (LabComs), start-up creation initiatives and the development of scientific platforms.

FIELD 3: EDUCATION, STUDENT LIFE AND CAMPUS LIFE POLICY

Five standards (13 to 17) define the scope of this field. They are intended to assess the institution's policies relating to education, student life and campus life. More specifically, they examine the impact of these policies on the institution's activities and outcomes, and the way in which they are monitored against the strategic objectives established by the institution.

Standard 13. The institution implements a high-quality education policy and educational provision that are consistent with its positioning and strategy.

Characterisation of the educational provision

- C.1 The institution defines its ambitions, strategic directions and thematic priorities in education, in line with its identity, and these shape its educational provision.
- C.2 The institution's educational provision is designed to ensure overall coherence, complementarity within each study cycle and effective articulation between study cycles.
- C.3 The institution's educational provision includes programmes developed through strategic and relevant local, regional and national academic partnerships.
- C.4 The institution structures its health-related programmes in accordance with reforms governing access to health studies and the academic integration of allied health professions education.
- C.5 Through its policy framework, governance arrangements and dedicated mechanisms, the institution addresses the challenges of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity.
- C.6 The institution ensures that its educational provision incorporates sustainable development considerations.
- C.7 The institution's education policy benefits from resources secured through the Excellence Initiative and related Future Investment Programme projects that contribute to the structuring of the programme portfolio.

Internationalisation of Education

- C.8 The institution develops an international programme portfolio aligned with its positioning and strategy, drawing on its international partnerships.
- C.9 The institution promotes inbound and outbound student mobility through its international partnerships and dedicated financial support mechanisms.

Research-Based Education

- C.10 The institution establishes a framework for research-oriented and research-based education within undergraduate and master's programmes.
- C.11 The institution delivers doctoral education that is fully aligned with its education and research policies.
- C.12 Through doctoral schools and, where applicable, a doctoral college, and in collaboration with research units, the institution coordinates and harmonises practices relating to doctoral training, supervision and support in order to promote doctoral success and employability.
- C.13 Where a doctoral college is jointly operated and doctoral schools are jointly accredited, the institution formalises its partnerships with other institutions and identifies their added value for doctoral education.
- C.14 The institution ensures that its programmes are research-informed through the involvement of faculty members in teaching and encourages the participation of researchers.
- C.15 The institution supports and guarantees high-quality conditions for welcoming and supporting students and doctoral candidates within research units.
- C.16 The institution provides training in research integrity and ethics, particularly for doctoral candidates.

Library and Information Resources Policy

C.17 The library and information resources policy is integrated into the institution's research-based education policy, particularly with regard to resource acquisition, access to resources and contributions to programme content by library and information professionals.

C.18 The physical and digital configuration of libraries, together with their accessibility, meets user needs and may be enhanced through partnerships where appropriate.

Employability and Professional Development

C.19 The institution takes account of regional socio-economic needs when defining its educational provision and accordingly involves socio-economic stakeholders in programme design and educational activities.

C.20 The institution defines a policy for work-integrated learning and continuing education consistent with its positioning and translates it into its educational provision.

C.21 The institution structures its policy for employability and entrepreneurship preparation throughout the student journey.

Standard 14. The institution develops a range of institutional mechanisms to support the pedagogical quality of its educational provision.

Pedagogical Organisation of Programmes

C.1 The institution establishes a framework for programme design that promotes constructive alignment. It supports this approach through programme-based and competency-based education and monitors its implementation.

C.2 The institution implements mechanisms for recognising and valuing competencies acquired both within and outside formal programmes.

Development and Diversification of Teaching Practices

C.3 The institution develops mechanisms to support pedagogical innovation and the diversification of teaching methods in order to enhance student success, including, where relevant, resources provided through the Excellence Initiative and related Future Investment Programme projects.

C.4 The institution diversifies its teaching delivery methods. It defines a policy for partially or fully online education and provides the digital infrastructure and tools required to support it.

C.5 The institution develops a variety of learning spaces aligned with programme objectives and pedagogical approaches.

Internationalisation of Educational Provision

C.6 The institution establishes a framework governing foreign-language teaching, teaching delivered in foreign languages, foreign-language certification and the integration of such certification within programmes.

C.7 The institution develops educational mechanisms that prepare students for both inbound and outbound mobility.

Adaptation of Educational Provision to Continuing Education and Work-Integrated Learning Audiences

C.8 The institution facilitates access to accredited programmes for continuing education and work-integrated learning participants through adapted arrangements for admission, supervision and instructional design.

C.9 The institution develops instructional design expertise tailored to continuing education provision.

Standard 15. The institution analyses the attractiveness, performance and relevance of its study programmes and promotes student success from guidance through to graduate employment.

Programme Attractiveness

C.1 Information, guidance and communication mechanisms relating to the educational offerings contribute to enhancing programme visibility and attractiveness, as well as the quality of guidance provided to different categories of learners.

C.2 The institution measures the attractiveness of its programme portfolio by monitoring and analysing trends in applications and enrolments across different learner groups.

Programme Performance

C.3 The institution monitors success rates and analyses the impact of support measures, student success initiatives and flexible programme pathways on these outcomes.

Programme Relevance

C.4 The institution analyses graduate employment outcomes and, where relevant, further study pathways in relation to programme objectives and labour market realities.

Standard 16. The institution monitors the development of its educational provision and ensures its sustainability through a human resources policy aligned with its education policy and through a continuous improvement approach.

Resource, Support and Incentive Policies

C.1 The human resources policy takes account of programme needs, including those in shortage areas and scarce disciplines. Through recruitment, promotion and recognition criteria relating to teaching activities, it contributes to enhancing and improving the quality of educational provision.

C.2 The institution's policy for supporting and training faculty members includes provisions relating to the teaching profession and support for pedagogical projects.

Governance and Continuous Improvement of the Educational Provision

C.3 The institution defines an internal evaluation framework and process and establishes management tools that support the continuous improvement of its educational provision.

C.4 In collaboration with academic units and teaching teams, the institution organises student evaluation of programmes and teaching and ensures that the results are taken into account in programme development.

C.5 The institution coordinates the implementation and monitoring of programme advisory boards.

Monitoring Programme Costs in Relation to Objectives and Outcomes

C.6 The institution implements indicators and tools for measuring programme costs and for monitoring and ensuring the sustainability of the educational provision.

C.7 The allocation of responsibilities and levels of subsidiarity applied to educational management contribute to the coherent, efficient and sustainable operation of programmes.

Standard 17. The institution supports the development of student life and campus life, promotes student engagement in governance and fosters student well-being.

Student Life and Campus Life Policy

- C.1 The policy for developing student life and campus life is embedded in appropriate partnerships and structured through a strategic master plan.
- C.2 Policies relating to living and learning conditions, student support services and campus activities contribute to improving student success.
- C.3 The development of student life is supported by the effective participation of student associations, which receive institutional support.
- C.4 The institution develops a high-quality welcome and support policy for international audiences in particular, thereby enhancing its attractiveness.
- C.5 The institution promotes student participation in governance and democratic life, particularly through student elections to institutional bodies.
- C.6 The institution recognises, encourages and values student engagement across a wide range of activities and responsibilities.
- C.7 The institution's student life and campus life policy incorporates issues relating to gender equality, inclusion, the reduction of discrimination, and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence.

Resource Policy

- C.8 The institution structures and manages its service provision for students and staff, both internally and through partnerships.
- C.9 The processes governing the allocation of financial, material and human resources to student and staff services reflect the institution's commitment to enhancing the quality of student life and campus life.