

# EVALUATION STANDARDS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDY PROGRAMMES

Except for doctorates/PhDs

January 2022

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## INTRODUCTION

This document presents the external evaluation standards for international study programmes. It is consistent with the general framework of principles defined at European level.

Indeed, the member countries of the European Higher Education Area participating in the Bologna Process have pledged to conform to the common principles defined in the "European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG)", which deal with the management of quality, both internally within the institutions, and externally as implemented by the evaluation agencies, and finally as applied to the agencies themselves. The principle of the independence of evaluation agencies is therefore reflected in France by Hcéres' status as an independent public authority. More generally, the recognition of Hcéres and its inclusion in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) guarantee that its practices closely conform to European principles.

With respect to external evaluation processes, the ESGs state that:

- the aims and objectives of the evaluation should be clear and widely disseminated;
- evaluation methods must meet their objectives and be based on appropriate procedures;
- the procedures used must be known to the evaluators and the evaluated entities;
- in particular, the criteria must be explicit and published.

These standards should enable these conditions to be met, but their objective is also to help institutions in their continuous improvement process, and to provide stakeholders with the best possible information.

Hcéres has developed its evaluation and accreditation process on the basis of a set of objectives that the programme must meet to ensure a certain level of quality. This set of objectives is presented in this document in the form of standards (objectives to be achieved) and evaluation criteria (actions that can be carried out). These objectives and the evaluation criteria have been divided into four fields of quality management in a study programme:

- its policy and characterisation;
- its pedagogical organisational structure;
- its attractiveness, performance and relevance;
- its management and continuous improvement.

## FIELD 1: TRAINING POLICY AND CHARACTERISATION

Four standards (1 to 4) define the scope of this field, with the purpose of assessing the policy and characterising the study programme. More specifically, the aim is to assess their impact on the study programme's activities and results, and the manner in which the institution monitors them in light of its objectives.

### Standard 1: The study programme is consistent with the institution's training strategy.

- C1. The study programme is in line with the institution's ambitions, pedagogical orientations and thematic priorities.
- C2. The programme positions itself in the local, national or international training landscape.
- C3. The programme is developed in a coherent and complementary manner with other study programmes in the same cycle, and by forging links with programmes in other higher education cycles to which it is related in terms of continuity.
- C4. The study programme's local, national and international academic partnerships are monitored to ensure that they are operational and add value.
- C5. The study programme identifies the contributions of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary to its outcomes.
- C6. The study programme incorporates sustainable-development-related issues.

### Standard 2: The study programme is open to international students in line with the priorities defined by the institution.

- C1. The study programme develops international partnerships and ensures that they add value.
- C2. The study programme includes incoming and outgoing student mobility programmes and receives support, including financial, for this purpose.

### Standard 3: The study programme benefits from research links that are coherent with its outcomes.

- C1. The positioning vis-à-vis the research community is clearly specified. The research units, doctoral programmes, other structures or higher education institutions, possibly international, supporting the programme are clearly identified.
- C2. The study programme includes research training and research-based training (projects or internships in laboratories, research centres, seminars, etc.), or simply promotes awareness of research in a manner that is adapted to its outcomes.
- C3. Professors and researchers from the disciplines involved in the study programme participate in the courses.
- C4. The study programme and the research units to which it is affiliated establish a system for hosting, supporting and training students through research.
- C5. The study programme includes training in research integrity and ethics.
- C6. Research training and research-based training in the study programme rely on library services, in terms of acquiring and accessing resources, and contributing to training content.

### Standard 4: The study programme maintains links with the socio-economic world

- C1. The study programme takes account of socio-economic needs in the definition and promotion of its job opportunities, its outcomes and its contents. It involves socio-economic actors in these processes.
- C2. The programme defines its work-linked training and continuing education policy in line with the institution's positioning and strategy.
- C3. Partnership agreements have been signed between the institution and companies, organisations representing an activity or a profession, associations or institutions engaged in an activity related to the programme.

- C4. The study programme prepares students for job-market integration and entrepreneurship. To this end, it involves socio-economic actors.

## FIELD 2: PEDAGOGICAL ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Four standards (5 to 8) define the scope of this field, with the purpose of assessing the pedagogical organisation of the study programme. More specifically, the aim is to assess its impact on the study programme's activities and results, and the manner in which the institution monitors them in light of its objectives.

### Standard 5: The structure of the study programme and the teaching methods used are adapted to the target skills.

- C1. The study programme's objectives, contents, teaching methods and learning outcomes are defined and implemented in an approach that promotes pedagogical alignment. It adopts a curriculum-based and skill-based approach.
- C2. The programme structure is adapted to different student pathways. It enables the progressive specialisation of students and flexibility in their career paths. Bridges between programmes enable students to change study programmes.
- C3. The programme's objectives in terms of the knowledge and skills to be acquired are known to the students and other stakeholders.
- C4. The study programme recognises the value of the skills acquired within or outside the programme, for example by enabling students to build a skill portfolio or a similar mechanism.

### Standard 6: The study programme develops and diversifies its teaching practices to foster student success.

- C1. The programme diversifies its teaching methods (collaborative tools, project-based teaching, inverted teaching, serious games, active lecture classes, etc.) in order to foster its students' success.
- C2. The programme proposes specific measures to promote student success: refresher courses, individual monitoring, tutoring, division into groups according to level, etc.
- C3. The programme proposes a variety of teaching methods, including total or partial distance learning, to provide flexibility in accommodating different audiences' needs.
- C4. The study programme offers students an opportunity to learn or to be coached in the use of information and communication technologies.
- C5. The programme is based on various types of teaching environments, in line with its objectives and teaching methods.

### Standard 7: The programme's content and mechanisms are adapted to make it internationally accessible.

- C1. The programme enables students to acquire language skills that will be beneficial for their job-market integration or further studies – especially abroad – through the teaching of foreign languages and teaching in foreign languages, and via qualifications.
- C2. In addition to foreign languages, the programme prepares its students for incoming and outgoing mobility programmes.
- C3. In the European Higher Education Area, the degree is accompanied by a descriptive annex or supplement which specifies the knowledge and skills acquired by the student.
- C4. In the European Higher Education Area, the acquisition of credits (ECTS) is subject to a formalised process known to students, in order to facilitate international exchanges.

### Standard 8: The study programme content is consistent with the needs of the socio-economic sector and lifelong learning

- C1. The programme includes opportunities to study and learn about entrepreneurship during the

studies, and involves socio-economic actors for this purpose.

- C2. The programme comprises periods of experience for students in a professional environment, including internships and projects. A dedicated scheme helps students to find internships and develop their career plans.
- C3. Courses enabling students to acquire additional skills relevant to their job-market integration are offered, and the means of monitoring and validation or certification are made known to students.
- C4. The programme facilitates access to the audience for continuing education or work-linked training by implementing appropriate hosting, supervision and study programme design methods.
- C5. Within its scope, the study programme develops a programme design that is adapted to the specific offering proposed to lifelong learning audiences.

### FIELD 3: ATTRACTIVENESS, PERFORMANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Three standards (9 to 11) define the scope of this field and are used to assess the programme's results in terms of its attractiveness, performance and relevance. The aim is also to evaluate how it monitors and proposes changes, in light of its objectives.

#### Standard 9: The programme develops and monitors its attractiveness to its different audiences.

- C1. The information systems put in place by the institution or the study programme help to improve awareness and the attractiveness of the programme, as well as the quality of the guidance provided to its different types of audience.
- C2. The programme measures its attractiveness by monitoring and analysing application and enrolment trends of the different types of audience.

#### Standard 10: Student success is monitored on the study programme.

- C1. The study programme monitors the trends in students' success rates and analyses the impact of its support measures, schemes to promote student success, and curriculum development measures. These success rates are made public.

#### Standard 11: The study programme analyses its graduates' job-market integration and further studies in relation to its objectives and the job market.

- C1. The programme analyses the quality of job-market integration and the nature of further studies on the basis of job-market-integration and cohort surveys. This data is made public.

### FIELD 4: ACADEMIC PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Four standards (12 to 15) define the scope of this field, and are used to assess the management and continuous improvement of the programme. More specifically, the aim is to assess their impact on the activities and results of the study programme and the manner in which they are monitored in light of the programme's objectives.

#### Standard 12: The programme is managed and implemented by a formally identified teaching team.

- C1. The allocation of skills and the degree of subsidiarity implemented in the field of programme management contribute to the coherent and efficient functioning of the programme.
- C2. The teaching team's roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.
- C3. The list of contributors to the programme and their status are known to the students and more generally to the audiences concerned. The proportion of courses taught by external contributors is in

line with the outcome of the study programme. Their level of expertise and responsibility is maintained at a level that is consistent with the programme.

### **Standard 13: The study programme has the resources required to achieve its objectives.**

- C1. The institution's human resources policy takes account of the programme's management needs.
- C2. The programme has sufficient administrative and pedagogical resources (secretarial offices, rooms, libraries, computer rooms, etc.) to enable it to fulfil its mission.
- C3. Members of the teaching staff are supported, assisted and/or trained as teaching staff and professors where appropriate. They ensure that their teaching practices are disseminated within the team.
- C4. Members of the programme's teaching staff participate in outgoing mobility schemes and create favourable conditions for hosting visiting teaching staff.
- C5. The study programme relies on tools and indicators to measure the study programmes' cost in order to monitor and manage its sustainability.

### **Standard 14: The study programme defines an evaluation process that facilitates its development in a process of continuous improvement.**

- C1. The programme organises the evaluation of the courses and training by the students and takes the results of these evaluations into account in its development.
- C2. The study programme has a consultative body, such as a development council, which includes students and people from outside the programme. It meets periodically to analyse the results of the programme and contribute to its internal evaluation.
- C3. The programme is subject to regular and periodic external evaluation.

### **Standard 15: The study programme is based on a quality- and ethics-based approach.**

- C1. Student recruitment procedures are transparent and clearly defined.
- C2. The evaluation of knowledge and the validation of skills is conducted according to precisely established procedures that are known to the students.
- C3. The procedures for the evaluation of courses by students, their analysis and the resulting actions are transparent.
- C4. The programme has defined and implemented anti-fraud and/or anti-plagiarism and/or anti-corruption measures.

## ANNEX

### Correspondence table for Hcéres standards and the ESG

ESG	DEI standards
1.1 – Policy for quality assurance	Standard 15
1.2 – Design and approval of programmes	Standard 1, Standard 5
1.3 – Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment	Standard 5, Standard 6
1.4 – Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	Standard 5 (C4), Standard 7 (C3-C4), Standard 15
1.5 – Teaching staff	Standard 12, Standard 13
1.6 – Learning resources and student support	Standard 13 (C4), Standard 3 (C6), Standard 6 (C5)
1.7 – Information management	Standard 9, Standard 10, Standard 11
1.8 – Public information	Standard 4 (C1), Standard 5 (C3), Standard 10, Standard 11, Standard 15
1.9 – Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes	Standard 4(C1), Standard 14
1.10 – Cyclical external quality assurance	Standard 14(C3)

