



## **GUIDELINES ON INFORMATION GATHERING AND DOCUMENTARY RECORDS ON ADAPTATION OF LEARNING, TEACHING AND CONTINGENCY PLANS DERIVING FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Royal Decree 463/2020, 14 March, declared state of alert and on-site university education was suspended. During this suspension period, off-site educational activities were provided, and several documents of reference have been developed:

- REACU Agreement, of 3 April, 2020, on the disruptive situation caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Considerations on general standards for adapting the University System in Spain in order to face the COVID-19 Pandemic, during the 2019-2020 academic year (document by the Ministry for Universities, 4 April, 2020).
- Agreements among the different sectoral Deans Conferences.
- Framework document on the standards for adaptation of learning-teaching and assessment at Andalusian Universities to the exceptional situation caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic for the 2019/20 academic year (11 April, 2020).

This Framework document, agreed by the Regional Ministry for Economy, Knowledge, Enterprises and University, the Directorate of Evaluation and Accreditation (DEVA-AAC) and all the Andalusian Universities, provides, among the general principles of action, that the changes introduced in programmed learning, teaching and assessment systems are adopted by the competent governing bodies and they should be documented and registered in order to facilitate the procedures for follow-up and accreditation renewal of Bachelor, Master and Doctorate degrees. Additionally, this Framework document establishes that each University should approve a document on the academic criteria valid to all degrees. The above-mentioned work document issued by the Ministry for Universities, recommends that this document on academic criteria should be developed after consulting students and teaching staff, and remitted to the competent quality assurance agency.

The Directorate of Evaluation and Accreditation of the Andalusian Agency of Knowledge-DEVA-AAC, issues these guidelines to facilitate this task to Universities, by providing guiding in order to prepare the above-mentioned document on the academic criteria adaptation, as well as by outlining the need to provide documentary evidence on the contingency plans adopted, the dissemination and communication measures adopted, in light of the student body, teaching staff and society in general.

Quality Assurance Systems (IOAS) implemented by Universities, both at Centre and degree levels, are the basis for decision making concerning assignment of responsibilities, adaptations of study plans to off-site learning and teaching modality, and organisation of available human resources (teaching staff, administration and



services staff, collaborating enterprises and institutions) and technical staff (virtual subjects, maintenance of and support to learning and teaching).

The Centres and Degrees IQAS, under the protection of the corresponding Academic or Quality Assurance Commissions, and through their defined procedures, will develop the appropriate actions to face this situation or future exceptional situations, ensuring learning and teaching quality, by taking into account rational decisions, effectiveness and efficiency in contextualising the measures adopted.

Current pandemic situation, is affecting multiple dimensions concerning degrees functioning, specially educational planning and evaluation, which might have consequences by affecting learning outcomes and learning skills acquisition. Accordingly, it is needed to maintain rigour and documentary systematisation on the decisions adopted and issuing evidence related to IQAS on these decisions. Likewise, external practices, evaluation processes, final thesis works TFG, TFM, and doctoral Thesis preparation and defence, are being affected. Evidently, several indicators should make adjustments and some correcting measures should be provided after this exceptional period.

Current IQAS have implemented defined procedures for gathering information, validated and experienced by universities, which should be used. Nevertheless, it might occur that IQAS application needed adapting some of the available tools provided for information gathering, focused on the assessment appropriateness and satisfaction with regard to flexibility measures adopted, as model practice on information use provided by these systems for real educational enhancement, beyond mere formality. In the same direction, it is convenient gathering information from the different university groups in light of this new educational scenario generated at different universities.

## **1. Objective**

Providing a procedure facilitating Andalusian universities to document, exceptionally, adaptations derived from contingency plans adopted during the state of alarm period.

## **2. Purpose and Scope**

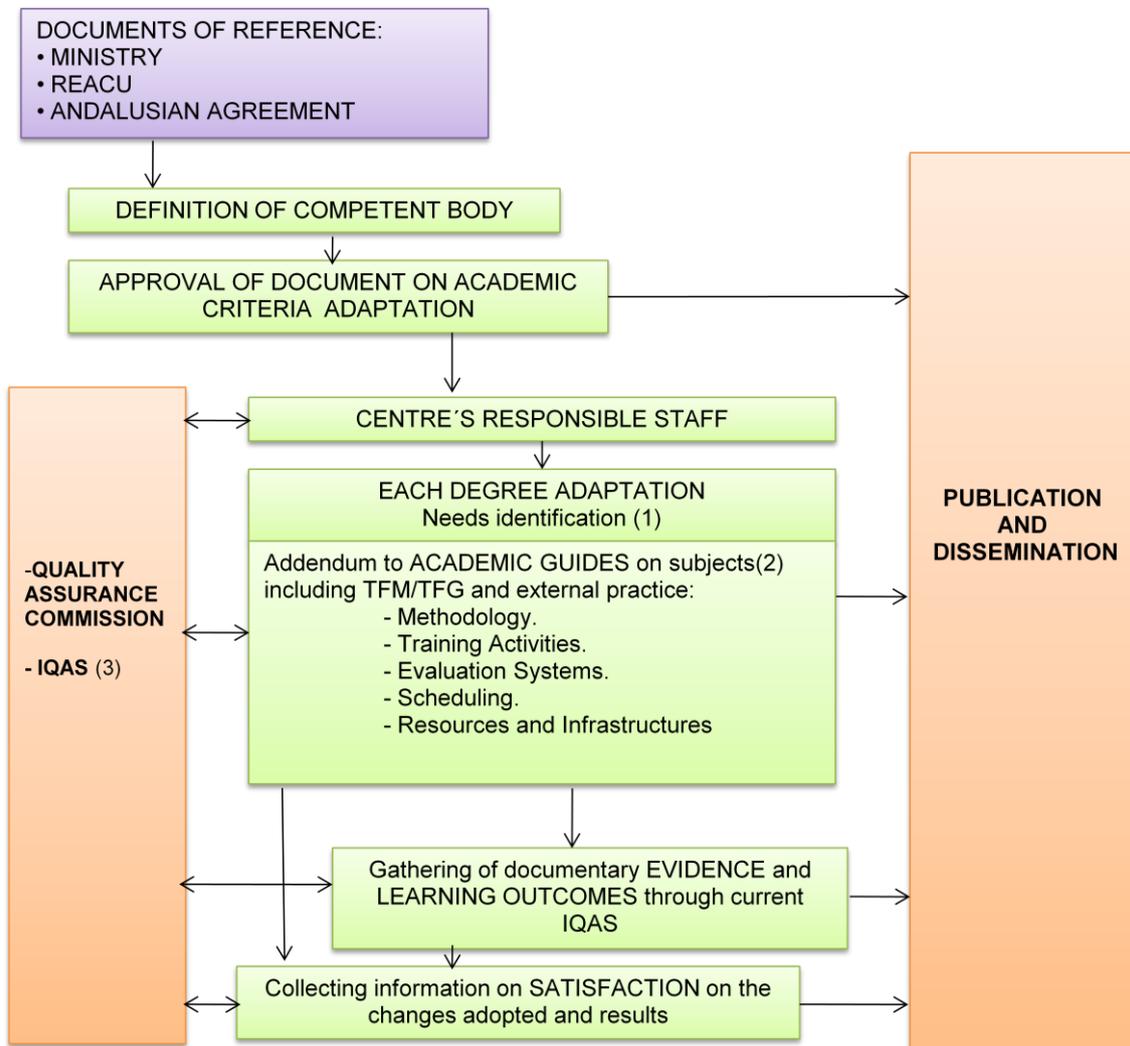
Guiding and advising universities on how to perform the record of the changes adopted and how to document the decisions made, by including them within the Centres and Degrees Quality Assurance Systems, taking into account the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG-2015).

The scope of these actions affects official Bachelor, Master and Doctorate Degrees and, if applicable, the Centres/Degrees IQAS.



### 3. Flowchart on the procedure for IQAS documentary record and modifications adopted

The flowchart below aims at systematising the procedure for documentary record on changes and decision making through this exceptional period. Universities should evidence the decisions adopted, in accordance with the principles provided by the Andalusian Agreement of 11 April (flexibility, transparency, integration, coordination, trust and consistency). Through this guiding process, DEVA maintains a respectful position with regard to these principles within the scope of university autonomy.



(1) Identify the changes included in each degree according to learning modality.

(2) Identify the changes included in each subject according to learning modality

(3) Centre/ Degrees which currently allow information gathering, should also ensure collecting information on the changes adopted through this period, as well as collecting and analysing satisfaction on the changes adopted and results.



University degrees are managed by an IOAS which has the mission of ensuring its correct functioning, skills acquisition and learning outcomes intended in their training plans. These systems allow the provision of systematic and useful information on study plans development and learning outcomes, enabling decision making based on the analysis of information provided for preventing unbalanced educational commitments adopted.

This makes possible that, under current exceptional and unusual circumstances, a change regarding the degrees register entries is allowed, as the temporary change concerning learning-teaching modality, without the need of applying a procedure for formal modification given that IOAS information gathering and application will allow ensuring skills acquisition and achievement of learning outcomes intended. Current transient situation of emergency for adapting commitments on verification and ensuring verification reports compliance, recording and documenting these effects safeguard the centres/degrees IOAS.

#### **4. Document on academic criteria adaptation.**

For guidance only, the document on academic criteria adaptation valid for all the degrees approved by universities, will be based on the provisions included in the framework document approved on 11 April, and it will consider, at least:

- The competent body approving this contingency plan.
- If this body is not the Governing Council, the procedures for consulting students, teaching staff, administration and services staff should be considered.
- If applicable, transient necessary changes adopted by University regulations, in order to make feasible degrees academic adaptations and subsequent application by the centres.
- The criteria for content coordination and adaptation, training activities and teaching methodologies, including practice education tutorials.
- The training plan for teaching staff, as well as horizontal and vertical teaching coordination actions.
- Students support and attention measures.
- Criteria for adapting assessment systems, including the procedures for students identification.
- Criteria for adapting curricular external practice performance.
- Criteria for adaptations with regard to final thesis works TFG/TFM preparation and assessment.
- Criteria for off-site defence of doctoral thesis.
- Criteria for temporary extension of some subjects included in current academic year.
- Possible changes included in the 2020/2021 academic calendar.



- Convenient guidelines facilitating the centres and degrees IOAS including documentary evidence on decision making processes and measures adopted under this new situation, as well as gathering information on satisfaction with regard to the changes adopted and outcomes achieved.

Following the framework document approval, the centres responsible staff, if applicable, in coordination with the Quality Assurance or Academic Commissions, should adopt the appropriate measures and identify the changes included in each degree according to the corresponding teaching-learning modality.

Additionally, in accordance with the guidelines provided in the Andalusian framework document on the adaptation criteria and disseminating information on all decisions made, the adjustments or addenda should be included in academic guides on the subjects regarding final thesis works and external curricular practice.

Throughout this process, IOAS should guide and ensure information gathering and analysis, as well as documentary evidence including all the changes adopted during this transient period. Likewise, the collection and analysis of results on stakeholders satisfaction about the changes adopted, should be considered.

#### **5. Adjustment in ESG-2015 Standards and implications on evaluation programmes.**

Under Universities concurrence to the different evaluation programmes, the corresponding information on each one of these criteria should be provided, by including a description on the measures adopted, the university bodies approving them, on how these measures are made public, as well as the subsequent analysis of the changes adopted and the results achieved throughout this exceptional period. The appropriate documentation on these criteria will provide information on the corresponding programmes with regard to the actions and decisions made during this exceptional situation.

Córdoba, 14 April, 2020