



ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN 2021

The Plan is warmly commended to all the universities, faculties and institutes which fall into the jurisdiction of AVEPRO, together with the Congregation for Catholic Education; the various Bishops Conferences; Religious Orders who govern many of the institutions; Chancellors; collaborative QA agencies in state systems; and the other partners of AVEPRO.

I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Consistent with the principles and rationale presented in the AVEPRO Strategic Plan, this document indicates those actions which are deemed necessary to advance the evolution of AVEPRO and its service to the Church and the ecclesiastical universities, faculties and institutes in the calendar year 2021. The actions are derived from an analysis of the main Plan and its eight Strategic Priorities, selecting those which need to be activated and worked on immediately to provide a sound foundation for what follows in subsequent years.

Consideration will be given to notional targets dates for the activities within the year and the identity of individuals and / or groups charged with making the actions happen. The whole is clearly subject to the coordination of the AVEPRO Bureau.

The operating plan is designed to make things happen in fulfilment of the Agency's priorities, and will be accompanied by a continuing process of monitoring progress, which will facilitate any needed adjustments.

There is a balance to be struck between the natural and eager desire to make progress, and the realities of the Agency's capacity and the context, in which AVEPRO operates which will determine the speed which can be expected. Therefore, in some cases and for some specific activities, the processes will be started in 2021 but the activity will be fulfilled during the following years.

As suggested by Pope Francis in the Apostolic exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* of 24 November 2013, at number 223: "This principle enables us to work slowly but surely, without being obsessed with immediate results. It helps us endure difficult and adverse situations, or inevitable changes in our plans. It invites us to accept the tension between fullness and limitation [...]. What we need, then, to give priority to actions which generate new societies. Without anxiety, but with clear convictions and tenacity".

II. ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN 2021

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS IN RELATION TO PRINCIPAL HEADINGS

Strategic Plan Priority 1: AVEPRO - Organization and Governance

1.1 *Ensure the structure and organization of AVEPRO are sufficient to achieve its goals and objectives*

Action items:

- ✓ Submit the Budget by 30 September (or when indicated by the Secretariat for the Economy) each year;
- ✓ Deliver Financial reports as requested by the competent authorities.

1.2 *Ensure coherent training and learning opportunities to AVEPRO's staff*

Action items:

- ✓ No action foreseen for 2021.

1.3 *Establish a deeper utilisation of Councils members' expertise, skills and knowledge*

Action items:

- ✓ Organise a full utilisation of range of expertise on Scientific Council through the creation of work groups to develop practice in key areas of the Strategic Plan, defining responsibilities and deadlines under the coordination of the Bureau;
- ✓ Start the activity of Working Groups following a planned sequence.

1.4 *Establish appropriate organisation and capacity for AVEPRO to operate globally in given world regions*

Action items:

- ✓ No action foreseen for 2021.

1.5 *Establish the respective positioning and operative relations between AVEPRO and national QA agencies*

Action items:

- ✓ Establish the framework for relations between AVEPRO and national QA agencies
- ✓ Attend national and international meetings of the EUA, ENQA, INQAAHE etc., to establish relations with other agencies.

1.6 *Examine the possibilities of additional income to sustain planned prioritised activities*

Action items:

- ✓ Critically evaluate the possibility of adopting a fee mechanism for the evaluations
- ✓ Examine the possibilities of *pro bono* collaborations
- ✓ Define the opportunity of fund raising strategies
- ✓ Implement the Holy See policies in terms of financial

1.7 *Update/revision of the Statute and draft of terms of reference*

Action items:

- ✓ Define the Procedure to be followed with the Secretariat of State.

1.8 Preparation of a new SER for the CCE and/or for ENQA full membership purposes

Action items:

- ✓ Define a precise improvement plan for the Agency to respond to the recommendations of the second ENQA review report.

Strategic Plan Priority 2: Quality Promotion

2.1 *Symposia and briefings on Q. and strategic cultures and associated behaviours/internal organisation for QA*

Action items:

- ✓ No action foreseen for 2021.

2.2 *Facilitate networking among stakeholders*

Action items:

- ✓ Define a “map of the relevant stakeholders”.

2.3 *Refinement of strategic planning guidelines*

Action items:

- ✓ Redesign SP guidelines to be sensitive to HE Institutions in different settings with regards to factors such as “maturity” of the Institution, size, local conditions and provide different models of SP appropriate to each, including a suggested process by which SP can be formulated.

2.4 *Addition of new guidelines, papers or publications on key aspects of sustainability and QA for future scenarios and critical areas (e.g. relating to Quality internationalisation, research, PhD, HR, alliances, non-traditional learning / exams post COVID): “whole institution approach”. Follow-up and monitoring of effectiveness*

Action items:

- ✓ Define relevant topics for the guidelines to be developed by the Agency
- ✓ Identify priorities
- ✓ Produce papers on a collaborative basis with HEI (e.g. one a year) to be delivered to the Ecclesiastical Academic community.

Strategic Plan Priority 3: Quality: Self-Evaluation and Improvement

3.1 *Review, systematise and update guidelines to reflect a “whole institutional approach”*

Action items:

- ✓ Redefine the edition of QA Guidelines, updated and systematised in the light of ENQA and other recommendations to reflect a “whole institutional” approach
- ✓ Update the formats for self-evaluation reports.

3.2 Provide country / international training

Action items:

- ✓ Programme of country/regional training offer.

3.3 Provide internal training at HEI level

Action items:

- ✓ Define a “grid of training needs” relevant for the Self-evaluation process.

3.4 Monitoring of follow up implementation

Action items:

- ✓ No action foreseen for 2021.

3.5 Mentoring of Vice Rectors and Directors for QA through dissemination of good practices

Action items:

- ✓ No action foreseen for 2021.

Strategic Plan Priority 4: Quality: Strengthening External Evaluation Processes

4.1 Selection, training and evaluation of external panellists

Action items:

- ✓ Update and broaden the database of potential external evaluation experts
- ✓ Carry out the project founded by Porticus Foundation.

4.2 Templates and guidance for SER analysis and panel report writing

Action items:

- ✓ Update the documentation created to explain the external review process following the contribution of the Scientific Council WG
- ✓ Design of templates for external panels on the analysis of SER reports and the writing of panel reports
- ✓ Redefine a model and a format for external review reports.

4.3 Consideration for the establishment of trained pools of panel administrators and chairs

Action items:

- ✓ No action foreseen for 2021.

4.4 Technical committee of the Scientific council to assess quality of the reports

Action items:

- ✓ Setting up of Technical Committee of the Scientific Council to assess the quality of SER reports, pre visit, and the quality of panel reports.

4.5 New mechanism for monitoring, action loop follow-up and implementation

Action items:

- ✓ Redefinition of a model and a format for Quality Improvement Plans (QIP).

4.6 Complaints and appeal processes

Action items:

- ✓ Identify and select practices among QA Agencies related to complaints and appeal procedures.

Strategic Plan Priority 5: Establishing of Evaluation Cycles over the 2021-2025 period, in specific regional settings

5.1 Define, in agreement with the CCE, in which countries it may be of interest to carry out evaluations in the coming years (see also SPP 6.1)

Action items:

- ✓ Identify specific needs or areas in which an evaluation process could support the Academic Institutions and the CCE in delivering their respective services;
- ✓ Define a “map” of needs;
- ✓ Define an appropriate mechanism of evaluation and promotion of Quality sensitive to local needs and specificity involving relevant stakeholders.

5.2 Plans for evaluation in the European area

Action items:

- ✓ Development of a detailed activity plan;
- ✓ Communication of the plan to local stakeholders (Episcopal Conferences, Institutions, National QA Agencies);
- ✓ Define a specific plan of action for informative seminars (when necessary) in specific countries;
- ✓ Set up the evaluation cycle in a specific country to be determined.

5.3 Plans for starting the process of evaluation in non-European areas of the world (see also Strategic Plan Priority 6)

Action items:

- ✓ No action foreseen in 2021.

Strategic Plan Priority 6: Establishing a Five-Year Strategy to enhance the given global role of AVEPRO

6.1 Define the world regions in which AVEPRO will develop a Quality Assurance presence (see also SPP 5.1)

Action items:

- ✓ Agree a classification of world regions with CCE consistent with activities of the Holy See;
- ✓ Assemble data and a profile of the number of relevant HEI per country in regions to understand the scale and complexity of the challenge;
- ✓ Attempt a prioritising of regions / countries per region to be progressed over the period of the SP.

6.2. *Determine a prospectus of the partner organisations in each region/country whose support and commitment needs to be enlisted to progress the global agenda*

Action items:

- ✓ Produce a prospectus of partner organisation as above and in selected areas...

6.3 *Determine appropriate local strategic alliances to provide a robust and sustainable organisational base through which AVEPRO's Quality Assurance purposes and activities may be achieved in specific local settings.*

Action items:

- ✓ No action foreseen for 2021.

6.4. *Adapt Guidelines to be flexible and sensitive to local conditions and settings*

Action items:

- ✓ as in SPP 3.1. above.

6.5. *Conduct of systematic events to sensitise colleagues in selected regions and countries as to what is involved.*

Action items:

- ✓ No action foreseen for 2021.

6.6. *Conduct of pilot projects in selected regions / countries*

Action items:

- ✓ No action foreseen for 2021.

Strategic Plan Priority 7: *Teaching of The Church, Global Compact on Education, Academic Life and Quality*

7.1 *Identify specific encyclicals, apostolic exhortations, documents of the Magisterium which should form the basis of the framework*

Action items:

- ✓ Discussion between CCE and AVEPRO Board and Scientific Council to establish the terrain to be covered.

7.2. *Formulate what the QA implications of these teachings are, and in particular what they mean for the operations of AVEPRO itself, HEI and the review panels*

Action items:

- ✓ Seminars with CCE and guest contributors.

7.3. *Dissemination of findings*

Action items:

- ✓ Setting up of AVEPRO work group to produce the desired documentation, with external advice as appropriate.

Strategic Plan Priority 8: *Communications and Networking Strategy differentiated for various Stakeholders and Interest Groups***8.1 *Refine and implement communication strategies with respect to specific target groups****Action items:*

- ✓ Define priorities related to stakeholders.

8.2 *Redefine the website of the Agency**Action items:*

- ✓ Reconsider the Agency needs in terms of communication strategy;
- ✓ Define the useful characteristics of the website (e.g. repository, interaction).

8.3 *Deliver papers oriented to specific target groups**Action items:*

- ✓ No action foreseen for 2021.

8.4 *Participate in international events, training and conferences**Action items:*

- ✓ Attend national and international meetings of the EUA, ENQA, INQAAHE and other national / international bodies.