AVEPRO

B. Guidelines
for
SELF-EVALUATION
2019

(Self-Evaluation Report/SER)

AVEPRO

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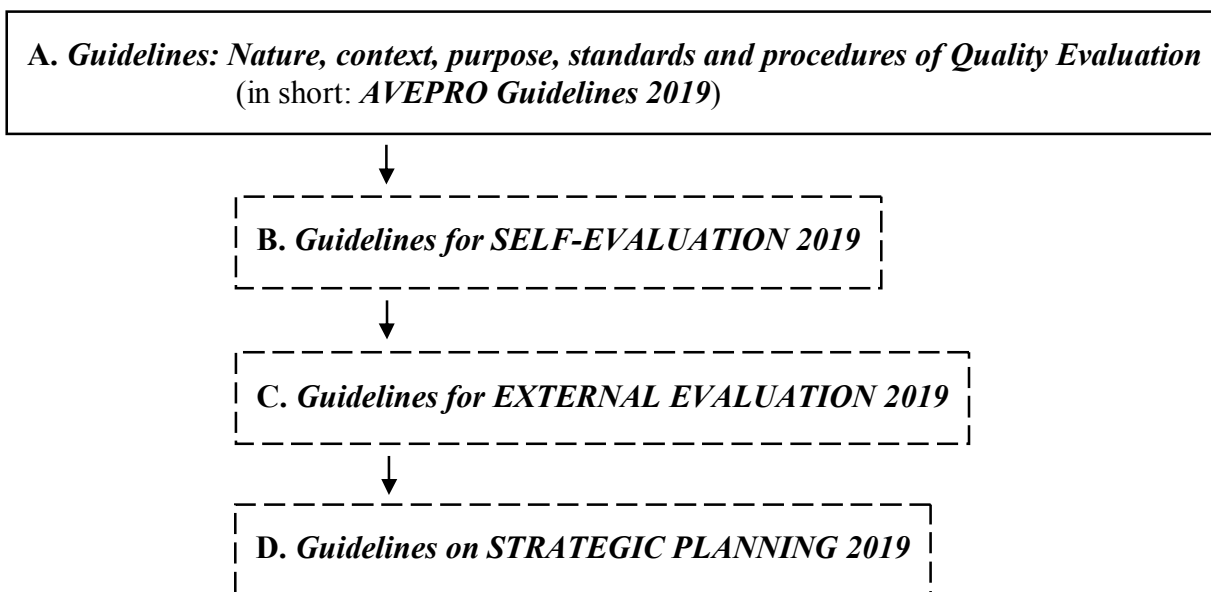
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➤ **Introduction**

These **guidelines for the SELF-EVALUATION** are part of a **set of guidelines proposed by the Agency** and should be considered as **integrating and providing more detail to complement the** *AVEPRO Guidelines*[1]:

> **A.** *Guidelines: Nature, context, purpose, standards and procedures of Quality Evaluation* (in short: *AVEPRO Guidelines 2019*)

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> **B.** *Guidelines for SELF-EVALUATION 2019*

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> **C.** *Guidelines for EXTERNAL EVALUATION 2019*

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> **D.** *Guidelines on STRATEGIC PLANNING 2019*

Reference should therefore be made to the latter regarding the context of internal evaluation, resulting in the production of a Self-Evaluation Report / SER.

➡ It is important to underline that the SER is of **fundamental importance for the entire process of Quality Assurance**, and consequently great care and attention should be dedicated to all phases of its preparation.

It should also be noted that the SER **is a confidential document and therefore <u>not destined for publication nor dissemination.</u>**
This confidentiality is essential in order to ensure the greatest possible freedom of critical analysis regarding every aspect of the Institution.
The SER is therefore only available to:

> → the Institution itself, being essential in the follow-up and strategic planning phases
> → AVEPRO
> → for the members of the External Evaluation Team (appointed by AVEPRO), who have the task of verifying the correctness of its contents, analysing the data and interacting with people in order to understand in greater detail whether the Institution's vision and mission can be translated into a concrete strategy aimed at the continuous improvement of quality.

The **role of quality-related coordination** is attributed to a **Quality Committee** (within each Institution), which supervises all quality processes, organizes their monitoring and refers to the Senate/Academic Council (where present[2]).

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[1] *AVEPRO, Guidelines: Nature, context, purpose, standards and procedures of Quality evaluation and promotion*, 2019.

The Committee has a variable number of members according to the size of the Institution, and regarding **SELF-EVALUATION** needs to be organized **in relation to the effective situation of the Institution.**

The following provides a **general summary of the cycle of Quality Assurance**, which is more fully explained in the AVEPRO Guidelines 2019.
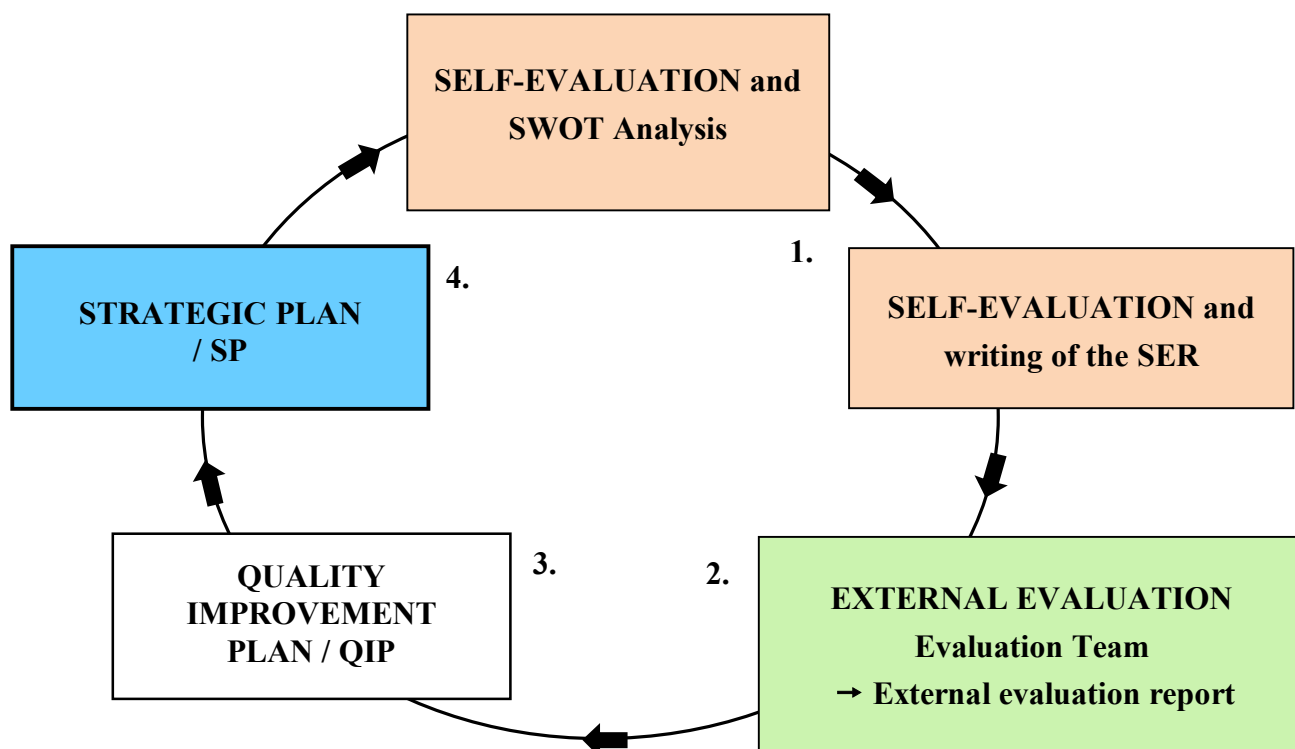

Figure 1 - General summary of the cycle of Quality Assurance

It is helpful to bear in mind that the cycle of Quality Assurance is composed of several phases:

1. **INTERNAL evaluation** or **SELF-EVALUATION** (1.)
2. **EXTERNAL evaluation** (2.)
3. **Quality Improvement Plan / QIP** (3.)
4. **Strategic planning** (4.)

For further details reference should be made to the ***AVEPRO Guidelines for External Evaluation 2019***[3].

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[2] In the case of very small Faculties and/or particular circumstances, the Committee can even comprise a single person and report to a different Institutional subject, which would correspond to the Senate or Academic Council in a larger Institution.

[3] AVEPRO, *Guidelines for Self-Evaluation*, 2019.

➤ **Preparation of the Self-Evaluation Report / SER**

For an introduction to what the SER is and the utility of the whole process of self-evaluation, reference should be made to **paragraphs 3 and 4** of the *AVEPRO Guidelines 2019[4]*.

Preparation of the SER begins a few months prior to the start of self-evaluation, with a meeting of the **Quality Committee** to **organize the self-evaluation process**, at which the following are established:

- a **schedule of meetings**
- **specification of the timescale and the actors involved**
- **preparation of the instruments** or the **mode of collection of the various contributions required**: QUESTIONNAIRES (what kind / for which stakeholders / mode of distribution / printed or digital / via the website or an online platform /mode of collection of the results), **FOCUS GROUPS** (what kind / for which stakeholders / when / mode of collection of the results)
- **attribution of tasks** (within the institutional context) regarding the gathering of the various contributions required.

• **Consultation within the Institution**

Paragraph 3.2 of the AVEPRO Guidelines 2019 underlines that "It is important for the success of the internal evaluation process that all members of the Institution be kept fully informed about the details of the self-evaluation as it progresses, especially at the initial planning stage."

Therefore particular importance is placed on the involvement of students and all staff (teaching and non-teaching), as, especially in the first cycle of evaluation, it is necessary to create a "virtuous circle of quality" at all levels of the Institution. Indeed, it has been "amply confirmed that the involvement of students and staff (teaching and non-teaching) is fundamental for the realization of the SWOT analysis in particular."

The Institution can choose (in accordance with its own structure and resources) the modes it deems most appropriate to inform staff – both teaching and non-teaching – and students and raise awareness about quality. For example, it may:

- organize specific informative meetings (presentation of the process and instruments of self-evaluation) for teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and students
- raise awareness about the collection of data within the Institution with posters or notices on the website and/or social media
- send individual communications (printed or electronic/using email or other media) providing specific information regarding the quality process
- contact student representatives and encourage the organization of meetings and the dissemination of information regarding quality.

• **Specification of timescale and the actors involved**

When specifying the timescale for the process of self-evaluation, the Quality Committee must bear in mind the needs of the various stakeholders and place the key points in the process on a precise timeline. This will facilitate the work of all actors involved and make it possible to intervene in the event of problems or the need to adapt the original plans.

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[4] *AVEPRO, Guidelines: Nature, context, purpose, standards and procedures of Quality evaluation and promotion*, §3 e §4, 2019.

Certain **specific points** can be identified in the self-evaluation process, **independently of the size, structures and resources of the various Institutions**:

- preparation of the instruments
- informing the academic community
- collection of data
- processing of data
- preparation of the SER
- approval of the SER
- sending the SER to AVEPRO.

The specification of the timescale and the actors involved is important in order to establish WHO DOES WHAT and WHEN.

➤ **Preparation of the instruments (meetings, questionnaires, focus groups...)**

Bearing in mind the effective situation of the Institution (in terms of size, structure and resources available), the Quality Committee collects data for self-evaluation. These can be subdivided into three distinct types:

- ➡ **SWOT analysis** (reflection upon strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats)
- ➡ **information provided by stakeholders** via the compilation of **questionnaires**
- ➡ statistical and numerical **information provided by the Institution** (Annexes to the SER).

The presence of these types of information within the SER is of fundamental importance, as first the Institution and then the External Evaluation Team need to check the congruence and coherence between the **"perceptive" aspect of evaluation**, which will mainly emerge from the SWOT analysis, and the **"objective" aspect of analysis and evaluation,** deriving from careful observation of what the data reports.

➡ **SWOT analysis**

The data provided by the SWOT analysis is particularly important for the whole **quality process (for both self-evaluation and external evaluation)**.
This task of analysis, normally very in-depth and precise, favours overall understanding of what effectively characterizes the Institution at the time of evaluation, from both positive and negative viewpoints.

➡ **Information provided by the stakeholders**

This data is collected via questionnaires filled in directly by the stakeholders – teaching staff, student, graduates, non-academic staff and other users.

➡ **Statistical and numerical information provided by the Institution**

This data, contained in the **Annexes to the SER** (see the relevant section of this document), concerns the various dimensions of Institutional life: numbers of students, teaching staff, publications, average teaching hours, average time to graduation, budget and resources available, and funds for research. They represent the state of the Institution (what it is at the time of self-evaluation) and should be **considered as supporting information for that contained in the SWOT analysis and the rest of the SER**.

• **Collection of data**

Concerning the information provided by the Institution (Annexes to the SER), each Quality Committee adapts to the effective situation it operates in and interacts with the academic and service units (generally academic offices).

Concerning the information provided by the stakeholders, certain general remarks can be made regarding the **questionnaires**, which must be **absolutely anonymous** and should be distributed to teaching staff, students and other staff (administrative and non). They should deal with the following subjects at least:

- teaching
- research
- satisfaction with services

For further details regarding the questionnaires, **reference should be made to the AVEPRO website**, which contains a section devoted entirely to this subject from which various documents can be downloaded, including **model questionnaires** (produced following a study analysing different types of model gathered by various Institutions). This collection of models is neither definitive nor exhaustive and is intended as a guide.

➤ **Preparation of the SER**

As indicated in the AVEPRO Guidelines 2019 at paragraph 3.4, "When writing the SER the Quality Committee should bear in mind the importance of **providing a critical analysis of all aspects of the Institution's work**, as opposed to a mere listing of factual information and of opinions obtained from questionnaires".

This type of analysis can be conducted following the suggestions provided in the following paragraphs, which contain thirteen key points in the light of the provisions contained in the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* and the ESG[5].

Each point will be presented with reference to the aspect to be examined (WHAT IS TO BE EVALUATED) and the questions that the Institution should ask itself during the evaluation of data regarding the point in question (HOW IT IS TO BE EVALUATED). **The answers to the questions asked (and all those that may arise, also considering the particular characteristics of the individual Institutions) should provide a detailed picture of the Institution's position** in relation to the point in question.

It is important to reiterate that the **SER is a document of fundamental importance for the Institution itself** and that the critical analysis of the various aspects of the Institution's work should be carried out with particular care, openness and a spirit of constructive criticism.

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[5] ENQA/ESU/EUA-EURASHE, *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area/ESG*, 2015

➤ **Contents of the SER**

Introduction

The Institution should provide certain information to facilitate understanding of the document:

- Existence and composition of a Quality Committee
- Methods used to collect the data needed for compilation of the SER, including which instruments employed (questionnaires, focus groups)
- The effective involvement of students and all staff - teaching and non-teaching (cf. paragraph 3.2 of the AVEPRO Guidelines 2019).

1. The Institution's vision, mission and objectives

> When presenting its history and describing itself, the Institution should also describe its own vision and mission, from both academic and ecclesiastical viewpoints. The vision should express what the Institution hopes to achieve. The mission should describe the founding purposes (why the Institution exists) and the major organization commitments of the Institution (what it does and how it does it). In other words, what the Institution wants to be in terms of size, position in relation to its context (e.g. other Institutions), the role of students, relationships between the three cycles of education, strategic sectors of teaching and research, national and/or international position, and methods of governance. Please keep in mind that the Quality Promotion Process is strictly connected to the clear definition of the mission statement.

To evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be useful** to ask certain questions:

- What are the specific characteristics of the Institution?
- What goals does the Institution propose to set and achieve?
- What is the Institution's philosophical and theological basis?
- Does the Institution think it has the necessary means and resources to effectively achieve the goals it has set itself?
- Have its goals changed over time? If so, how and in which aspects?
- Is the Institution connected to a specific charisma? If so, which and in what way is this related to the Institution's goals?
- Which cultural and social context does the Institution operate within?
- What are the greatest difficulties the Institution encounters while seeking to achieve its goals? How is it attempting to overcome them?

2. SWOT analysis and updating of the Strategic Plan

> The Institution should draw up its own SWOT analysis, i.e. a reflection seeking to highlight the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats regarding both the whole academic unit and individual areas of reference (e.g. teaching, research, teaching staff, students, services, etc.).

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- What are the Institution's main strengths? How does it intend to maintain and develop them?

- What are the Institution's main weaknesses? How does it intend to overcome them?

- What are the Institution's main opportunities? How does it intend to take advantage of them?

- What are the main challenges and obstacles that the Institution is called upon to deal with? How does it intend to overcome them? On what timescale?

- How does the Institution intend to achieve its short and long-term goals?

- Which strategic priorities are highlighted in the SWOT analysis, in line with the Institution's vision and mission?

- Has the Institution already managed to deal with the main difficulties and problems that have emerged over time? If so, how, and which aspects has it intervened on most? If not, which obstacles has it had problems with?

- Does the Institution have a strategic plan formulated in accordance with its SWOT analysis? If so, describe it.

3. Quality Assurance / QA policies

> The Institution should have a public QA policy that constitutes an integral part of its management.
> Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy via appropriate structures and processes, also involving external stakeholders.
> The Institution should undergo regular external evaluation of its QA.

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- Has a permanent Quality Committee been set up? Who are its members and how does it work?

- Are all interested parties involved (e.g. teaching staff, students, other staff, stakeholders)? If so, in what way?

- Are questionnaires available to obtain information of use for self-evaluation? If so, have they been used? If so, with what level of participation?

- Are the materials that have already been produced in terms of self-evaluation and strategic planning constantly reviewed and revised?

- Does the Institution have a quality policy? How was it formulated? Who is in charge of its implementation, and with what means?

4. General overview regarding programmes: education, multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approaches

> The Institution should provide clear information regarding the programmes and courses available. In particular, the study plans should be coherent with the learning outcomes to be achieved, the central role of students, and the employment opportunities foreseen.
> A multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approach should be followed, in accordance with the unity of knowledge that characterises the Institutions' Christian context.

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- Which study programmes are available?
- Has the Institution conformed to the Bologna Process?
- How are courses selected?
- How is the number of credits established?
- Is there a method for acquiring student feedback? If so, of what kind? Has it been used? If so, what was the outcome?
- How is dialogue fostered between the various subjects within the Institution?
- How are cooperation and encounters between different disciplinary areas encouraged?
- Do any programmes work in association with others?

5. Strategies and modes of learning and the centrality of students

> The Institution should guarantee that courses are run in a way that encourages students to take an active role in the development of the learning process.

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- Are there clear and uniform rules on admissions, recognition and the completion of studies?
- Are the criteria and methods of examination, as well as those of evaluation, clearly communicated to students?
- Does the Institution's approach to learning take into account students' diversity and their needs? If so, does this approach allow for flexible learning?
- Does the Institution provide for different modes of teaching, which can facilitate learning by students with particular needs?
- Are conditions and support in place to help students progress in their academic careers and become independent learners? If so, of what type?
- Are modes of regular evaluation of the courses by students provided for? If so, of what kind? Have they been used? Have the results obtained generated concrete changes?
- Are teaching staff/student relations based on mutual respect and reciprocal understanding encouraged?
- Are instruments to monitor students' academic progression provided for? If so, of what type?

6. Support and services for students

> The Institution should make adequate resources and services available to students (e.g. didactic resources, support structures, advising in civil questions, recognition rights, housing etc.).

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- Does the Institution offer a range of resources to support learning? If so, of what type? (e.g. access to libraries, didactic aids, IT services, tutors, etc.)
- Are the resources and services accessible to students and clearly publicized?
- Are there any structures to provide students with related information? If so, of what type? Do the students deem them effective and sufficient?

- Is any financial aid available to students with particular needs? If so, of what type?
- Are there any projects and/or concessions for students regarding accommodation?

7. Learning and teaching: definition of study plans, their monitoring and review, appreciation of teaching staff

> The Institution should provide for processes to plan and approve study plans, as well as to review and revise them, so that courses are designed to achieve predetermined objectives, taking into account the learning outcomes to be met, and benefit from appropriate modes of teaching.
>
> The qualification awarded at the end of the study programme and the level it corresponds to must be specified.

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- Are the courses planned with definitions of their general objectives, in accordance with the institutional strategy and explicit learning outcomes?
- When planning the study programmes, does the Institution relate them to the framework of qualifications outlined by the Holy See?
- Do the courses take into account the involvement of students and any other stakeholders?
- Is students' general progress fostered?
- Are the courses designed taking into account the different professional areas in which students will operate upon completion of the various cycles?
- Are clear modes of approval of the study plans provided for? If so, which?
- Are the study plans subject to regular monitoring and review? If so, in what way?
- Does the Institution have ways of rewarding teaching staff whose courses have been judged particularly positively? If so, of what type?
- Are there clear modes of recruitment and promotion of the teaching staff? If so, of what type?
- Does the Institution provide a diploma supplement (where it is required) to students who request one?

8. Research and scholarship, support for the creation of research centres

> The Institution should be able to equip itself with clear research strategies in order to confer value to publications, conferences (also international), the creation of specialist journals, the promotion of further studies and the production of knowledge, also via the formation of special research centres or groups.

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- How important is research within the Institution?
- Which research topics are proposed for doctorates, conferences, commissioned research, etc.?
- Are the research activities of teaching staff encouraged and promoted? If so, in what way?
- Are there opportunities for post-doctoral studies or other forms of collaboration for researchers?

- Has the Institution launched research projects with other Institutions? If so, of what type? Are they ongoing? Have they been renewed/revised once or more? If set up in the past and not renewed, for what reasons?
- Are any forms of partnership with other Institutions (also at an international level) provided for? If so, of what type? How long have they existed?
- Are there any policies to support inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary research? If so, of what type? How are they supported and realized?
- Does the Institution set aside specific funds for research? If so, of what type?
- Are any research programmes funded with resources from outside the Institution? If so, of what type? For how long?
- Are there any specific fundraising projects for research?
- How many publications were produced in the period considered, and at what level?

9. Ability to create networks

> The Institution should be mainly responsible for policies regarding teaching, research, and third mission, which should be coordinated in such a way as to create networks of centres of specialization (also in order to facilitate mobility among researchers), thus taking advantage of the positive and enrichening contribution of peripheral entities.

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- Has the Institution launched a networking policy? If so, of what type (with neighbouring/nearby or with physically distant Institutions; as a "node" or point of reference for other Institutions, etc.)? Since when? Have they given rise to any positive results in the form of events/publications/workshops?
- Does the Institution have contacts with other Universities/Faculties/Administrations? If so, of what type?
- Has the Institution entered into national/international agreements in the areas of teaching and research? If so, of what type?
- Does the Institution participate in any national/regional/local exchange projects for teaching staff/researchers? If so, of what type? Since when? Have they given rise to any positive results in the form of events/publications/workshops?
- Does the Institution host events/conferences/congresses/workshops organised by other entities operating in research contexts? If so, of what type?
- Are the publications of teaching staff/researchers at the Institution related to cooperation with other entities on broad spectrum projects? If so, of what type?

10. Contributions to the outside world/third mission activities

> The Institution should foster and promote forms of commitment and contact with external entities in order to render its own activity more fruitful and extend its impact beyond the strictly academic environment (of education and research), thus contributing to the social, cultural and economic development of the society and territory in which it is based.

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be**

helpful to ask certain questions:

- Has the Institution identified external actors with which it can enter into cooperation and/or partnership? If so, which?
- Is there a general interest in contributing to forming public opinion in civil society?
- Does the Institution take note of the main issues in public debate?
- Does the Institution have a policy to support its third mission? If so, of what type? What emerged from the questionnaires regarding teaching staff/students/researchers' impressions on this matter?
- Is the Institution open to and interested in offering new courses or innovating existing ones based on external stimuli?
- Does the Institution see itself as playing a role in regard to its local community?
- Are any forms of cooperation with the diocese and local ecclesial fabric provided for?

11. Policies for internationalization

> The Institution should integrate and promote any opportunities for internationalization in relation to its specific situation (e.g. size, context, structure, resources, etc.) and those which most closely correspond to the universal nature of the Church and the context of globalization in which it operates.

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- Is internationalization seen as an important element within the Institution? If so, in what way is it implemented?
- Are forms of partnership with other Institutions promoted? Which?
- Are there any students or teaching staff at the Institution who have been sent from other Institutions? If so, based on what type of agreement? Is this part of a partnership between individual Institutions, or a local/regional/international project?
- Are any forms of student and teaching staff exchanges provided for? If so, of what type? Are they exchanges between Institutions belonging to a circuit connected to a particular order?
- Are study abroad opportunities offered? If so, of what type? Are they part of international programmes or exchanges between individual Institutions?
- Are any forms of internationalization of the curriculum provided for? If so, of what type?
- Is the transferability of credits guaranteed?
- Is the Institution interested in forms of partnership for international research? If so, which?
- Are any forms of funding for international activities provided for? If so, of what type?
- Are there any specific fundraising programmes?

12. Publicity and information management

> The Institution should publish clear, accessible, up-to-date and objective information about its activities and the education it offers in general.

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- Does the Institution use modern technologies to publish and manage information? If so, which?
- Does the Institution provide clear, complete, accessible and up-to-date information about its own activities, study programmes, admission criteria, qualifications awarded, modes of teaching, employment opportunities, etc.?

13. Policies and modes of governance, and management of resources available (structures, staff, economic and financial resources)

> The Institution should specify the ways in which decisions, policies and the resulting actions for their implementation are realized.
>
> Moreover, it should provide effective and favourable contexts for students' learning, guaranteeing adequate resources and structures for teaching.

In order to evaluate the relationship between the Institution and the point in question, **it may be helpful** to ask certain questions:

- Does the Institution have adequate learning environments and appropriate support services? If so, of what type? Are they managed in a functional manner?
- How do decision-making process take place? Describe.
- Is transparency guaranteed in any way? If so, how?
- Is collegiality encouraged, ensuring the involvement of all interested parties?
- Are the resources available sufficient in order to fulfil the Institution's vision and mission?

➤ **Drawing up the SER**

During preparation of the SER certain fundamental points need to be considered:

➡ The importance of **providing a critical analysis of all aspects of the Institution's work**.
The SER should mention the strengths, effective remedies adopted when difficulties have been encountered, and the ability to grasp opportunities in various operative contexts, in relation to both the Institution as a whole and each individual unit.

➡ The process of evaluating and improving quality responds to four fundamental questions, which also form the basis of the institutional evaluation programme of the *European University Association*/EUA (as indicated in paragraph 1, part 1 of the AVEPRO Guidelines 2019[6]). These questions should be constantly kept in mind: WHAT are we trying to do? HOW are we trying to do it? HOW do we know if it works? HOW can we change for the better?

➡ As the ultimate aim of the process is to improve quality, the **SER should highlight the formulation of strategies and recommendations for improvement,** regarding the work of both the Institution as a whole and each individual unit.

➡ The SER is intended as a "comprehensive summary" and as such **should be no longer than 25 pages (excluding annexes)**.
A **clear and concise style of writing** is advisable, avoiding the inclusion of statistical and numerical data within the main text. The **statistical and numerical data expressly required by AVEPRO are to be included in the Annexes to the SER**, which should be compiled following the instructions provided. The Institution may also provide additional data to that expressly required, if it deems this of use for specific purposes; this can be presented to the Evaluation Team during the external evaluation.
For further details regarding the annexes see the dedicated section at the end of this document.

➡ **The size of the Institution impacts the structure of the SER.**
If the Institution is composed of a single Faculty/Institute, the SER should be structured as described above.
If the **Institution is composed of two or more Faculties**, the SER should be structured in order to provide an evaluation of the Institution as a whole, followed by an evaluation of each individual Faculty or academic unit, i.e.:

- **the SER of the Institution** which, having considered the SER of the individual Faculties and units, provides a self-evaluation of the entire structure as a whole, which should be no longer than **25 pages** (plus the required annexes)

- **the SER of each individual Faculty or Unit**, which should be no longer than 15 **pages** (plus the required annexes).

Hence the final SER should be composed of several SER and include all the annexes called for. The annexes can also be condensed into a single section, as long as this includes the general facts and figures characterising the Institution as well as details for each individual Faculty.

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[6] *AVEPRO, Guidelines: Nature, context, purpose, standards and procedures of Quality evaluation and promotion,* §1 part 1, 2019.

➤ **External evaluation visit and strategic planning**

For an introduction to the external evaluation of quality, reference should be made to paragraphs 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the AVEPRO Guidelines 2019[7].

The SER is both directly and indirectly connected to the external visit, follow-up phase and strategic planning:

➡ **SER and external evaluation visit**
The external evaluation visit is carried out by an Evaluation Team appointed by AVEPRO. The connection between the SER and the external evaluation visit is direct and clearly visible. Indeed, the SER is a fundamental tool for the work of the Evaluation Team from many viewpoints, as:
  • it contains the details that the Team has to clarify and check
  • it presents the Institution's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis), which the Team needs to confirm or refute, also facilitating the identification of any points not taken into consideration during self-evaluation
  • it mentions the planned actions to improve quality, which the Team should comment upon and add to if appropriate.

The work of the Evaluation Team is summarized in an **Evaluation Report**, which, amongst other things, contains **confirmation of the data provided in the SER and a series of recommendations**, which become important elements for discussion within the Institution in the subsequent phases of strategic planning (follow-up, quality improvement plan / QIP, strategic plan / SP).

➡ **SER and strategic planning**
The connection between the SER, follow-up and institutional and strategic planning is also very close, albeit less direct and visible (especially in the first cycle of evaluation). In reality, **this connection becomes clearer from the second cycle of evaluation**, when the Institution carries out a new SWOT analysis in preparation for the second SER (see Figure 1 – diagram showing the Quality process). The new SER must take into account the results obtained during the follow-up phase and implementation of the Strategic Plan / SP, also underlining the goals not realized, hence permitting the construction of a coherent and stable procedure for the whole Institution.
In a nutshell, **self-evaluation and strategic planning mutually complete and complement each other and the SWOT analysis constitutes the starting point for both processes**.

It is important to underline that, having completed a cycle of evaluation in compliance with the AVEPRO Guidelines 2019, the Institution already possesses practically all the elements necessary for the preparation of its Strategic Plan.

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[7] *AVEPRO, Guidelines: Nature, context, purpose, standards and procedures of Quality evaluation and promotion*, § 4, 5, 6 and 7, 2019.

➤ **SER MODEL**

As mentioned in the point regarding drawing up the SER, the **size of the Institution will affect the structure of the document.**
The model provided here **can be used both for an individual Faculty's SER and for an Institution as a whole** (in the case of Institutions comprising more than one Faculty).

The comments in brackets refer to the **approximate number of pages** that should be dedicated to each section.

It should be reiterated here that the model SER is a flexible tool, whose aim is to facilitate the task of both the Institution and the Evaluation Team, and therefore **the points listed among the details for each macro area in the text <u>are to be considered as indications and adapted to the effective situations within individual Institutions</u>**.

In contrast, **the provision of Annexes is expressly required** and they must be complete, as they are structured in order to highlight data fundamental to the quality process.
The **ANNEXES** must therefore be **<u>completed in full for each individual Faculty</u>** and, **in the case of Institutions with more than one Faculty**, must also **<u>provide data regarding the Institution as a whole, and be completed in full</u>**.

INTRODUCTION (➥ 1 page)
- State the legal status of the Institution
- List the members of the Quality Committee
- Describe the methods employed to collect the data needed for compilation of the SER (instruments used: questionnaires, focus groups)
- State how students and all staff (teaching and non-teaching) have been effectively involved (cf. paragraph 3.2 of the AVEPRO Guidelines 2019)

1. The Institution's vision, mission and objectives (➥ 2 pages)
- Describe the Institution's vision and mission
- Describe the level of correspondence between the definition of its mission and the activity of the Institution
- Describe the specific characteristics of the Institution
- State the goals that the Institution aims to achieve, also refering to how they have evolved over time
- State the goals in relation to: teaching/learning, research and local activities and engagements (third mission)
- State the Institution's philosophical and theological foundations
- Mention any connection to a specific charisma and its relationship with the Institution's goals
- Describe the cultural and social context within which the Institution operates
- Describe the main difficulties that the Institution encounters while seeking to achieve its goals and how it tries to overcome them

2. SWOT analysis and updating of the Strategic Plan (➥ 2 pages)
- Present the Institution's strengths
- Present the Institution's weaknesses

- Present the Institution's opportunities and threats
- State how the Institution intends to achieve its goals in the medium and long term
- State the strategic priorities highlighted by the SWOT analysis, in line with the Institution's vision and mission
- State how the Institution has dealt with the main difficulties and problems that have emerged in the past
- Present the updated Strategic Plan, in line with the results of the SWOT analysis

3. **Quality Assurance Policies** (→ 2 pages)
- Describe the QA system within the Institution
- State how the concept of QA is disseminated within the Institution
- Describe how the stakeholders effectively participate in the QA process
- Describe how constant dialogue with the stakeholders takes place and how situations are monitored
- State whether or not there is a system for constant review of the products of self-evaluation and strategic planning

4. **General overview regarding programmes: education, multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approaches** (→ 2 pages)
- Show how coherent study plans are with the results that the Institution wishes to achieve (learning, centrality of students, expected employment opportunities)
- Describe the courses available
- State the degree of compliance with the Bologna Process
- Describe how the number of credits is determined
- Describe how student feedback is acquired and used
- Describe the policies aimed at improving dialogue between the different disciplines within the Institution
- Describe the policies for encouraging and supporting cooperation and dialogue between the different disciplinary areas
- State which extra-curricular activities are available to students

5. **Strategies and modes of learning and the centrality of students** (→ 2 pages)
- State whether there are clear and uniform rules on admissions and the recognition and completion of studies
- Describe how examination criteria and methods are presented to students, and how evaluation criteria are applied by teaching staff
- Describe criteria for the recognition of external qualifications
- Describe criteria for the recognition of prior learning experiences and external educational credits
- Describe students' characteristics (status, geographical origin, age, academic level at entry, etc.) and how they are taken into consideration in the approach to learning
- State whether flexible learning options are available, i.e. different teaching methods capable of facilitating learning for students with particular needs (connected to their pastoral activity, type of work, etc.)
- State whether conditions and support are in place to permit students' progression through their academic careers and their acquisition of independence in learning
- State whether courses are regularly evaluated by students and how the Institution uses the data thus obtained to improve teaching

• State which instruments are used to monitor students' academic progress

6. Support and services for students (→ 1 page)

- Describe educational support services for students (library, tutors, ICT, IT services, didactic aids, etc.) and how they can be accessed
- Describe logistical support services for students (canteen, student accommodation, etc.) and how they can be accessed
- State how the Institution informs students about the availability of resources and services, as well as how to access them (online tools, manuals, guidelines, etc.)
- State whether any economic aid projects exist for students with particular needs (work, pastoral activity, etc.)
- State whether there are any projects and/or aid for students regarding accommodation

7. Learning and teaching: definition of study plans, their monitoring and review, appreciation of teaching staff (→ 3 pages)

- Describe how study plans are defined and approved
- State whether general objectives in line with the institutional strategy, and with explicit learning outcomes, are defined during the planning of courses
- State whether, when defining study plans, the Institution relates them to the framework of qualifications outlined by the Holy See
- State whether or not the courses take into account the involvement of students and any other stakeholders
- State whether the courses are designed taking into account the different professional areas in which students will operate when they have finished the various cycles of study
- Describe policies for the monitoring and review of study plans
- State the methods of implementation of policies for monitoring study plans and evaluating learning (student questionnaires, interviews, etc.)
- State whether the Institution has ways of rewarding teaching staff whose courses have been evaluated particularly positively
- Describe the modes of recruitment and promotion of the teaching staff
- Describe any policies for the ongoing education of teaching staff
- Describe how students obtain a diploma supplement from the Institution when they require one

8. Research and scholarship, support for the creation of research centres (→ 3 pages)

- Describe the strategies adopted regarding the research of teaching staff and doctoral students: conferences, publications in specialized journals, the promotion of in-depth research and production of knowledge, also via the creation of dedicated research groups or centres
- Describe the thematic areas of research proposed (for doctoral degrees, conferences, commissioned research, etc.)
- Describe support services for research (facilities, specialized journals, IT, etc.)
- State whether research by teaching staff is encouraged and promoted (conferences, meetings, sabbatical years, etc.) and describe any types of support provided
- State whether the Institution has specific strategies for doctoral studies
- State whether there are post-doctoral opportunities or other forms of cooperation available to researchers

- State whether the Institution has set up research projects with other Institutions, specifying the type, method and results
- State whether any forms of partnership with other Institutions is provided for (at the regional, national, international level, etc.), specifying the method, schedule and results
- State whether policies are in place to support inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary research (specifying their organizational and economic nature, etc.)
- Describe how research is financed, including the existence (or lack) of dedicated funds, and specific comments regarding the situation over the last 5 years
- State whether there are any externally funded research programmes
- State whether there are any specific fundraising policies for research projects
- Provide comments from the Institution regarding the number of publications produced in the period covered (indicated in **Annex 10**)

9. **Ability to create networks** (➜ 1 page)
    - Describe Institution's networking policy, also mentioning the nature of networks (with physically close or distant Institutions, and as the centre or a peripheral Institution, etc.), as well as when they were established and whether they have resulted in events/ publications/workshops etc.
    - State whether the Institution has contacts with other Universities/Faculties/Administrations and describe the types of relationship maintained
    - State whether the Institution has entered into national/international agreements in the fields of teaching and research, describing the types of agreement and results obtained
    - State whether the Institution is involved in national/regional/local programmes for the exchange of teaching staff/researchers, describing the types of programme and results obtained
    - State whether the Institution hosts any events/conferences/meetings/workshops organized by other entities operating in research contexts
    - State whether the publications of teaching staff/researchers at the Institution are part of cooperation on wide ranging projects

10. **Contributions to the outside world/third mission activities** (➜ 1 page)
    - Describe how the Institution encourages and promotes forms of involvement and contact with external entities, thus extending its impact beyond the strictly academic sphere (of education and research) and consequently contributing to the social, cultural and economic development of the society and territory in which it is located
    - State whether the Institution has identified external actors with whom to establish cooperation and/or partnerships (professional bodies, other bodies, etc.)
    - State whether the Institution has a policy to support the third mission, and how this is effectively implemented
    - State whether the Institution is open to and interested in offering new courses or updating those already available based on stimuli from external entities
    - State whether the Institution has a close connection with the local territory (e.g. institutional figures and civil society)
    - State whether any forms of cooperation are provided for between the Institution, the diocese and the local ecclesial fabric
    - State whether the Institution has contacts with alumni and in what form (associations, projects of a social nature, etc.)
    - State whether the Institution participates in dialogue with civil society and public debate

11. Policies for internationalization (→ 1 page)

- Describe how the Institution integrates and promotes the opportunities for internationalization possible in its specific situation (e.g. size, context, structure, resources, etc.) and which best fit the universal nature of the Church and the globalized context in which it operates
- State whether internationalization is conceived as an important aspect within the Institution and how this is implemented
- Describe the Institution's policies for the development of partnerships with other Institutions (local/regional/national/international)
- State whether the Institution hosts students or teaching staff sent from other Institutions and specify on the basis of what type of agreement (partnership between individual Institutions, local/regional/national/international projects)
- State whether there are any forms of exchange with other Institutions for students and teaching staff and specify which type (e.g. whether part of a circuit connected to the order they belong to, lay, etc.)
- State whether the Institution offers study abroad opportunities and describe them (partnerships between individual Institutions, local/regional/national/international projects)
- State whether any forms of internationalization of the curriculum are provided for
- State how the transferability of credits is guaranteed
- State whether the Institution is interested in any forms of international research partnership
- Describe the type of funding available for internationalization
- State whether there are any specific fundraising programmes for internationalization-related projects

12. Publicity and information management (→ 1 page)

- Describe the methods via which the Institution disseminates and manages information regarding its activities, study programmes, admission criteria, qualifications awarded, teaching methods, employment opportunities, etc.
- Describe which technology the Institution uses to carry out the methods indicated in the point above and the policies for their management (updating, implementation, etc.)
- State whether there are any policies for implementation and technological updating/renewal within the context of the Institution's communications, regarding both internal (students, academic and non-academic staff) and external users

13. Policies and modes of governance, and management of resources available (structures, staff, economic and financial resources) (→ 3 pages)

- Describe the Institution's status and degree of independence
- Describe the Institution's organizational structure
- List the individual and collegial authorities, specifying their functions and general competences
- Describe the processes for the appointment/election/change of the academic leadership (Rector, Dean, etc.)
- Describe how decision-making processes take place within the Institution in the field of governance and the management of resources available (structures, staff, economic and financial resources)
- Describe how the transparency of the Institution's decision-making processes is guaranteed

- Describe how collegiality and the involvement of stakeholders are ensured in relation to the Institution's decision-making processes (teaching and non-teaching staff, students, external stakeholders – e.g. religious orders, Episcopal Conferences, etc.)
- State whether data is available regarding stakeholders' effective participation in decision-making processes
- Describe the quantity and quality of resources available: teaching and non-teaching staff, economic resources, facilities
- State whether data is available regarding the numerical ratio between teaching staff and students
- Describe staff (academic and non) recruitment and career advancement policies
- Describe the learning environments and teaching equipment
- Briefly describe and comment upon the economic and financial situation (making reference to Annex 11)
- State whether there are any particular situations impacting the budget and the Institution's economic sustainability
- State whether the Institution has fundraising policies, and whether or not they are structured and focused on one or more areas/projects
- Describe the effects of the organizational structure as a whole on the Institution's capacity to fulfil its vision and mission

ANNEXES
Annex 1 - Faculty organigram
Annex 2 - Numbers of teaching staff
Annex 3 - Mean age of teaching staff
Annex 4 - Mean hours of teaching per week
Annex 5 - Numbers of students
Annex 6 - Number of newly enrolled students
Annex 7 - Number of graduate students
Annex 8 - Mean number of years to graduation
Annex 9 - Percentage of student withdrawal
Annex 10 - Scientific production - Number of publications/contributions to conferences by teaching staff
Annex 11 - Economic/financial sources

➤ **Annexes to the SER**

Regarding **Annex 1 - Faculty Organigram**, note that a blank space has been left, so that the Institution can choose the most appropriate form to provide the data required (table, graph, description…).

Annex 1
Faculty organigram

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Annex 2
Numbers of teaching staff

► **Numbers of teaching staff - Table 1**

NUMBERS OF TEACHING STAFF (1)					
year	A	B	**TOTAL**	Total PERMANENT	Total NON-PERMANENT
20xx					
20x -1					
20x -2					
20x -3					
20x -4					

A = National
B = International

► **Numbers of teaching staff - Table 2**

Table 2 can be adapted to each Institution in accordance with its individual organization and statute. However, Institutions are requested to:

- maintain the distinction terminology between "Ordinary, Extraordinary, Invited and Assistant Professors" (identified in the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium*, norms of application, art. 18)
- specify in a brief note any additional terminology used

NUMBERS OF TEACHING STAFF (2)								
year	Ordinary	Extraordinary	Adjunct / Aggregate	Contract	Invited	Assistant	Emeritus	Other
20xx								
20x -1								
20x -2								
20x -3								
20x -4								

Annex 3

Mean age of teaching staff

► **Mean age of teaching staff - Table 3**

MEAN AGE OF TEACHING STAFF (1)		
year	Total PERMANENT	Total NON-PERMANENT
20xx		
20x -1		
20x -2		
20x -3		
20x -4		

Annex 4

Mean hours of teaching per week

► **Mean hours of teaching per week - Table 4**

MEAN HOURS OF TEACHING (1)		
year	Total PERMANENT	Total NON PERMANENT
20xx		
20x -1		
20x -2		
20x -3		
20x -4		

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Annex 5

Numbers of students

► **Numbers of students - Table 5**

	TOTAL		I cycle		II cycle		III cycle		"Uditori"		Others*	
year	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
20xx												
20x -1												
20x -2												
20x -3												
20x -4												

Others* = e.g. "Master's" students or those taking specialization courses or in any case those not normally enrolled in one of the three cycles.
A = National
B = International

Annex 6

Number of newly enrolled students

► **Number of newly enrolled students - Table 6**

	TOTAL		I cycle		II cycle		III cycle		"Uditori"		Others**	
year	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
20xx												
20x -1												
20x -2												
20x -3												
20x -4												

Others** = e.g. "Master's" students or those taking specialization courses
A = National
B = International

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Annex 7

Number of graduate students

► **Number of graduate students - Table 7**

NUMBER OF GRADUATE STUDENTS								
year	I cycle		II cycle		III cycle		Others**	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
20xx								
20x -1								
20x -2								
20x -3								
20x -4								

Others** = e.g. "Master's" students or those taking specialization courses
A = National
B = International

Annex 8

Mean number of years to graduation

► **Mean number of years to graduation - Table 8**

MEAN NUMBER OF YEARS TO GRADUATION						
year	I cycle		II cycle		III cycle	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
20xx						
20x -1						
20x -2						
20x -3						
20x -4						

A = National
B = International

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Annex 9

Percentage of student withdrawal

► **Percentage of student withdrawal - Table 9**

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT WITHDRAWAL								
year	I cycle		II cycle		III cycle		Others**	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
20xx								
20x -1								
20x -2								
20x -3								
20x -4								

Others** = e.g. "Master's" students or those taking specialization courses
A = National
B = International

Annex 10

Scientific production - Number of publications/contributions to conferences by teaching staff

► **Scientific production - Table 10**

SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION (1)		
year	Type A	Type B
20xx		
20x -1		
20x -2		
20x -3		
20x -4		

Type A = books, articles, chapters in books (traditional scientific production)
Type B = other

► **Scientific production - Table 11**

SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION (2)										
year	Teaching staff*			Books written	Books edited	Articles A	Articles B	Book chapters	Reviews	Conference presentations
	1	2	3							
20xx										
20x -1										
20x -2										
20x -3										
20x -4										

Teaching staff* = List the number of teaching staff of the 1st/2nd/3rd cycle who are members of editorial boards for journals and publishing companies
Articles A = articles published in peer-reviewed journals IN the country of origin
Articles B = articles published in peer-reviewed journals OUTSIDE the country of origin

If deemed appropriate, list the publishing companies and journals with which the teaching staff collaborate as editors, reviewers, etc.

Annex 11

Economic/financial sources

► **Economic sources - Table 12**

ECONOMIC SOURCES (1)			
year	Income	Expenses	difference
20xx			
20x -1			
20x -2			
20x -3			
20x -4			

► **Economic sources, detail - Table 13**

ECONOMIC SOURCES ➜ DETAIL (2)					
year	20x	20x -1	20x -2	20x -3	20x -4
INCOME					
Enrolment fees					
Institutional funds					
Episcopal Conference					
Diocese of reference					
Religious Orders					
Private funds (donations) or from fundraising					
Other					
total income					
EXPENSES					
Teaching staff costs					
Non-teaching staff costs					
Structural costs (rent, ordinary expenses)					
Expenses for ICT					

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Expenses for publications (library, journals...)					
Investments to create networks and activate inter- and multi-disciplinary courses					
Other					
Total expenses					