



STATUTES

OF THE HOLY SEE'S AGENCY
FOR THE EVALUATION AND PROMOTION
OF QUALITY IN ECCLESIASTICAL
UNIVERSITIES AND FACULTIES



**Statutes of the Holy See's Agency
for the Evaluation and Promotion of Quality
in Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties (AVEPRO)**

Article 1

Constitution, aim and location of the Agency

§ 1. The Holy See's Agency for the Evaluation and Promotion of Quality in Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties (AVEPRO), erected by the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI through official document signed by him dated 19 September 2007, is an Institution linked to the Holy See, according to the rules defined in art. 186 and 190-191 of the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus*¹.

§ 2. The Agency aims at promoting the quality of research and teaching and evaluates the attainment of adequate international standards on the part of the academic institutions of the Catholic Church, as already desired by the Second Vatican Council.²

§ 3. It performs its service towards Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties that, erected or approved by the Congregation for Catholic Education, have power to confer academic degrees under the authority of the Holy See³.

§ 4. The Agency is endowed with public canonical juridical personality and Vatican civil juridical personality.

§ 5. The Agency has its legal head office in the Vatican City State.

Article 2

Autonomy of the Agency

§ 1. While complying with current canonical norms and international agreements in matters of higher education which the Holy See is part of, the Agency is fully autonomous in the development of the activities planned in the present Statute. To such aim, it develops, updates and puts into effect adequate measures and courses of action for the attainment of institutional goals.

§ 2. In respect of its autonomy, the Agency conducts its own activities in collaboration with all parties related to it, as specified in the Rules, referred to in art.14.

¹ Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus*, art. 186 and 190 in AAS 80 (1988), 910-911.

² Cf. *Declaratio de Educatione Christiana*, 10 in AAS 58 (1966), 737.

³ Cf. CIC, Can. 815-817 in AAS 75 II (1983), 148.



Article 3

Quality of ecclesiastical academic institutions

§ 1. The quality of ecclesiastical academic institutions in the field of higher education and research is understood as the effective capacity of these institutions to meet their aims, which are:

- 1° through scientific research and didactic activity to cultivate and promote the disciplines they study and teach, and to deepen knowledge of Christian revelation and of matters connected with it⁴;
- 2° to offer appropriate training for the teaching of the sacred sciences and sciences connected with them, and for the duties and activities of the Church⁵;
- 3° to give active help, in accordance with their own nature and in close communion with the Hierarchy, to the local and universal Church, in the work of evangelization⁶.

§ 2. Quality is promoted and assessed through the evaluation of the results achieved in the various fields: scientific, educational and formative, and in relation with the resources and structures available.

Article 4

Range of activity of the Agency

§ 1. In accordance with the universal vocation of the Church, the Agency is structured to operate worldwide. In case of specific requirements, it can be articulated into more regional subcomponents in order to meet particular necessities or requests from various countries or geographical areas.

§ 2. The establishment or approval of the regional subcomponents mentioned in the previous paragraph lies with the Secretariat of State.

§ 3. The Agency conducts its activities in compliance with the international conventions, agreements and initiatives which the Holy See adheres to.

Article 5

Activities of the Agency

Within the limits of its competency and capacity, the Agency carries out more particularly the following activities according to the requirements of time and place:

⁴ Cf. Apostolic Constitution *Sapientia Christiana*, art. 3 § 1 in AAS 71 (1979), 478.

⁵ Cf. ib. Foreword III in AAS 71 (1979), 472.

⁶ Cf. ib. Art. 3 § 3 in AAS 71 (1979), 478.



- 1° it supports ecclesiastical academic institutions in developing the quality of research and teaching;
- 2° in common with the academic institutions involved, it defines, develops and updates procedures for the internal and external evaluation and assessment of quality, in compliance with ecclesiastical and civil, judicial and practical requirements at regional, national and international levels;
- 3°
 - a) it plans the external assessment of quality in single academic institutions;
 - b) it carries out such assessment through the visits of experts;
 - c) it drafts the final reports;
- 4° it elaborates and suggests improvements after external assessment;
- 5° it favours the circulation of information in the academic field;
- 6° it chooses and prepares experts for site visits;
- 7° it promotes the use of adequate means for the promotion of quality, among which a data base of the academic institutions involved in the field of activities of the Agency.

Article 6

Structure and staff of the Agency

§ 1. The Agency is composed of:

- a) the President;
- b) the Board of Directors;
- c) the Scientific Committee.

§ 2. It also comprises the Director and other staff members.

§ 3. The Agency uses the services of experts.

Article 7

President

§ 1. The President is appointed by the Supreme Pontiff for a five-year term. The appointment is renewable only once.

§ 2. The President runs and represents the Agency.



Article 8

Board of Directors

§ 1. The members of the Board of Directors are appointed for a five-year term, renewable only once, by the Holy Father, to whom they are proposed by the President of the Agency. They are distinguished by wealth of knowledge and prudence and have qualifications and experience both academic and in the specific field of quality promotion. They should also reflect, as far as possible, the various competences as well as the diversity and geographical extension of the Church.

§ 2. The Board of Directors is composed of a minimum of five and a maximum of ten members.

§ 3. The following are members by right: the Director of the Agency, with the function of secretary, a representative of the Congregation for Catholic Education and a representative of students, indicated by the President every year.

§ 4. Observers can take part in the meetings of the Board of Directors, on invitation of the President.

§ 5. The Board of Directors, chaired by the President of the Agency, approves the main orientations and supervises the activity of the Agency, of which it checks the results.

It ordinarily gathers at least once a year, summoned by the President. It can be called upon to gather on other occasions, according to necessities identified by the President, also through the various means of telecommunication.

§ 6. The deliberations of the Board of Directors are valid if a majority of members are present and if the absolute majority of the members present give approval.

Article 9

Scientific Committee

§ 1. The members of the Scientific Committee who are not members by right are appointed for a five-year term, renewable only once, by the Holy Father, to whom they are proposed by the President, after consultation with the Board of Directors. They are distinguished by wealth of knowledge and prudence, academic experience, more specifically in the field of quality promotion. They are chosen, as far as possible, to reflect the various components and the geographical extension of the Church.

§ 2. The Scientific Committee is composed of a minimum of ten and a maximum of twenty members.

§ 3. The members by right of the Scientific Committee are:

- a) the President of the Rectors' Conference of Pontifical Universities or his delegate;
- b) a delegate of the International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU);
- c) a delegate of the Federation of European Catholic Universities (FECU);



d) a representative of the students of Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties.

§ 4. The following are invited to the meetings of the Scientific Committee as observers:

- a) the Director of the Agency;
- b) a delegate of the Section for Relations with States of the Secretariat of State;
- c) a delegate of the Congregation for Catholic Education.

The President can also invite other observers.

§ 5. The Scientific Committee, chaired by the President of the Agency, helps him in the fulfilment of the activities of the Agency.

It gathers at least twice a year in plenary session, summoned by the President. The President can also summon members of the Scientific Committee when he considers it convenient.

§ 6. The Scientific Committee expresses justified advice on the modalities used for quality assessment, as well as on the choice and preparation of the experts in charge of evaluations.

§ 7. The Scientific Committee can also be asked by the President of the Agency to express their opinion and advice about single external evaluations that have been or will be carried out, or on any other question.

Article 10

The Director and staff of the Agency

§ 1. The Director is appointed by the President of the Agency with the *nihil obstat* of the Secretariat of State and of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See.

§ 2. The Director, in accordance with the indications and instructions of the President:

- 1° coordinates the activity of the office and staff for the fulfilment of the programs and tasks of the Agency;
- 2° takes care of the administration of the Agency.

§ 3. The staff of the Agency is hired by the President of the Agency, with the *nihil obstat* of the Secretariat of State and of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See, among the clerics, religious or lay persons, that are distinguished by virtue, prudence, proper experience and science, confirmed by adequate qualifications.

Article 11

Experts

§ 1. The Experts for external evaluation of ecclesiastical academic institutions are appointed for a five-year term by the President of the Agency, after consultation with the Congregation for



Catholic Education, on the strength of their scientific competence as well as academic and ecclesial experience.

§ 2. The names of Experts are entered into a list from which they are selected for single evaluations. This list must be composed of a number of persons sufficient to carry out all planned evaluations in a reasonable period of time and in the main languages.

§ 3. The Agency has the task of composing the teams of Experts for single evaluations.

Article 12

Accountancy, budget and management

§ 1. The expenditures involved in the ordinary administration of the Agency concerning staff, secretariat management, as well as expenditures for premises, are taken in charge by the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See (APSA).

§ 2. The charges incurred in external evaluation processes are as a rule assumed by the ecclesiastical academic institutions involved.

§ 3. The President, after hearing the Director, presents a budget plan to the APSA before the twentieth of September of each year. The proposed plan, accompanied by a succinct report, must also present the following enclosed documents:

- a) separate accounts concerning evaluation processes;
- b) separate accounts related to other resources that might be available to the Agency through funds coming from donations, subsidies, whatever they are called, to support its activity.

§ 4. The President of the Agency receives the balance sheet from the APSA before the twentieth of February of each year.

§ 5. The President of the Agency, after hearing the Board of Directors, and, when useful or so planned, the Scientific Committee, can adopt specific measures concerning the organisation and operation of the Agency, especially in relation with staff, administration and accountancy, office organisation, preparation of experts, as well as the charges to be assumed by the institutions involved in external evaluations.

Article 13

Reports, periodical records and diffusion of the works of the Agency

§ 1. It rests with the Agency to define the modalities for the publication of the results of evaluations.

§ 2. The Regulations, referred to in the following article, will indicate the way in which the institutions which have been evaluated can express observations on the results communicated to them after the assessment.



§ 3. By the thirty-first of March each year, the Agency presents a summary of its activities to the Secretariat of State – Section for Relations with States and the Congregation for Catholic Education.

§ 4. Every five years, as planned by Registers and International Associations which it belongs to, the Agency will carry out a self-evaluation under the supervision of the Congregation for Catholic Education as competent authority.

Article 14

Regulations

The Agency will provide for its Regulations, approved by the President with the favourable opinion of the Board of Directors, after consultation with the Congregation for Catholic Education.

Article 15

Approval and publication

The present Statute is approved *ad quinquennium* and will be published in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*.