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National Accreditation Council
Republic of Colombia

Guidelines and aspects to be assessed for the high quality accreditation of higher education institutions.

Approved by the CESU at its meeting held on March 23, 2021.

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PRESENTATION

In the second half of 2018, the Ministry of National Education initiated a reflection exercise in relation to quality assurance in higher education through a series of workshops called "Calidad ES de Todos" [Quality IS for Everyone], in order to collectively develop a new public policy on the Higher Education Quality Assurance System whose premises include building on what is already in place. These workshops highlighted the need to strengthen the Higher Education Quality Assurance System and to achieve greater standardization with the National Accreditation System, both of which aim to improve the quality of education in the local, regional and global contexts.

In July 2019, Decree 1330 was issued, which updates the regulations for qualification certification, establishes the modalities of academic offerings (classroom, distance, virtual, dual or other developments that combine and integrate these modalities) and recognizes the diversity of levels of education, professional technical, technological, university, specialization, master's and doctorate programs. It also adopts a concept of quality as a basis for the recognition of quality conditions for both institutions and programs.

At the same time, the National Accreditation Council carried out a reflection exercise on the updating of the high quality accreditation model, considering contributions derived from international assessments, national and international trends, advances in the national reflection exercises on quality assurance and the reflection exercise that has characterized the Council since its inception in 1995.

As a result of this effort, in the second half of 2019 a proposal for updating the high quality accreditation model was submitted to the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) from which, and based on the provisions of Decree 1075/2015 as amended by Decree 843/2020, after several revisions and dissemination throughout the country, Agreement 02 was issued by the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) on July 1, 2020, containing components that update the model and adhere to the tradition of the Council, university autonomy, including the recognition of the diversity of institutions and academic programs and the assessment of achievements and results as core components, particularly those of learning, in addition to recognizing the capacities and processes that had traditionally been considered to be part of the comprehensive assessment.

This document contains the guidelines (factors, characteristics and aspects to be assessed) for the high quality accreditation of higher education institutions in accordance with their character and nature and aims to make contributions to raise the quality levels of institutions, with the high quality assessment system as a benchmark in accordance with their realities, challenges and possibilities; and ultimately, to plan the strengthening of the capacities to have a transformation and impact on society.

1. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines correspond to the model for assessing the high quality of higher education institutions at the professional technical, technological and university levels or technological schools and universities that make up the Colombian higher education system. This model aims to be holistic in the sense of including inputs, processes, capacities, activities and results of an institution; function as a management tool that supports continuous improvement with forecasts for the future, and to serve as an assessment instrument.

The updating of the high quality accreditation model established in Agreement 02/2020 of the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) defines a dynamic model which establishes the factors and characteristics, while the aspects to be assessed are specific and also dynamic, insofar as they respond to changes in the social, cultural and environmental context, and have been developed in consultation with the academic community and will be periodically updated.

Based on a working document of its own authorship and in keeping with the Council's tradition of developing guidelines with the participation and input of the academic community, the National Accreditation Council consulted the associations of institutions which, as they have done on other occasions, received the document, analyzed it and made their contributions, observations and recommendations. The academic organizations consulted were the Association of Colombian Universities (ASCUN); the Colombian Association of Higher Education Institutions with Technological Education (ACIET); the Colombian Association of Institutions with Distance and Virtual Programs (Acesad); the Association of Higher Education Institutions of the Colombian Caribbean (Asiesca) and the Colombian Postgraduate Network (RCP).

The contributions received were analyzed by the General Accreditation Board of the National Accreditation Council and are considered in this document for the implementation of the high quality accreditation process defined in Agreement 02/2020 of the National Council of Higher Education (CESU). However, it is important to note that the aspects to be assessed are expected to be updated and, consequently, the National Accreditation Council leaves them open to discussion and reaffirms the invitation to the academic community to help contribute to their enrichment and updating and highlight the achievements attained in higher education institutions.

Additionally, and to contribute to the work of the institutions, the Ministry of National Education has developed a Glossary of terms included by Decree 1330/2019 and Agreement 02/2020 in the regulations developed for the qualification certification and high quality accreditation. It is clear that the terms can have many definitions from different epistemological standpoints; therefore, the glossary serves a guideline in the framework of the National Accreditation System and the Higher Education Quality Assurance System.

These guidelines also include a reflection on higher education institutions in the 21st century; the regulatory framework of the high quality accreditation model; national policies in higher education; recognition of the diversity of institutions; high quality in higher education; high quality of institutions; assessment of the high quality of institutions; and finally, the factors, characteristics and aspects to be assessed for the accreditation of higher education institutions.

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

2. HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS[1] IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Since their medieval origins, higher education institutions have been centers for reflection, artistic production and generation of knowledge about the broadest spectrum of human experiences. Their development has concurred with the maturity with which societies face the most pressing problems of their times, from the standpoint of reflection, artistic creation and research. It is for good reason that it is one of the longest running institutions in contemporary societies, as well as one of the most widespread human experiences in the world in recent centuries, regardless of cultural traditions. Of course, one of the characteristics that has ensured the success of higher education institutions lies in their ability to adapt.[2]

Since the 19th century, in particular and without losing their original meaning, higher education institutions have been characterized by the production of knowledge in the various fields of science, as the main stakeholder of the scientific and technological revolution over the last hundred years. In addition to promoting science, higher education institutions also produce knowledge relevant to their environment, which is fundamental in the rapid technological progress that is transforming the global context in which we live. Especially in recent years, an economy is emerging based on the capacity to generate and use knowledge, on the quality of its human resources and on the demanding requirements of entrepreneurial capacity, which requires an agile and flexible institutional framework to respond to the profound changes taking place in the environment. In this context, the capacity for innovation has become an essential link in ensuring that advances in science and technology give rise to effective socioeconomic development and wellbeing for the population.[3]

It was previously thought that the world of science, and therefore higher education institutions, were only concerned with the process of generating knowledge using the scientific method, restricting the topic of its use and application to other areas and other social stakeholders. In the Knowledge Society, this dichotomy is no longer valid. In fact, higher education institutions have been recovering the plural meaning of their practices. The generation of knowledge, even in the so-called hard sciences, is increasingly based on specific contexts and the requirements or needs of specific groups, organizations or communities, which require this knowledge to improve their wellbeing, increase their competitiveness or ensure their sustainability and therefore, their future.

In this context, there has been a significant change in the role of higher education institutions in the Knowledge Society. Indeed, higher education institutions have undergone a remarkable evolution from their establishment in the Middle Ages to the present day. We are not referring to the advances in knowledge and the scientific and technological revolution that has dominated the last hundred years, but to changes in the roles that higher education institutions play in their society and, therefore, in the way they relate to their environment. Higher education institutions have evolved from the initial conception of a "community of professors and students dedicated to knowledge", to the model of a higher education institution that, while playing the previous role, must relate closely with various social stakeholders in their environment (e.g. businesses, government, communities), aiming to advance the process of social appropriation of knowledge, as well as its application in the revitalization of the productive sectors and to increase community wellbeing.

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[1] In the broad sense, a university is understood to be an institution of higher education and in the Colombian context, it refers to higher education institutions that include professional technical, technological and university institutions or technological schools and universities.
[2] Max Weber: The Politician and the Scientist; Madrid, Alianza, 1998.
[3] Orlando Fals Borda (ed.): Participación Popular: Retos del Futuro [Participation of the People: Challenges for the Future]; Bogotá, COLCIENCIAS/IEPRI/ ICFES, 1998. These reports on the Second World Meeting on Participatory Action Research (PAR), held in Cartagena in 1997, analyze the performance history of this school since the First Meeting on this topic, also held in Cartagena in 1977. See also Orlando Fals Borda and Mahammad Anisar Rahman: Acción y Conocimiento: Cómo Romper el Monopolio con Investigación-Acción Participativa [Action and Knowledge: Breaking the Monopoly with Research]; Bogotá, CINEP, 1991.

Historically, this projection of higher education institutions in their environment arises first in the social and human sciences, due to the role played in this field of knowledge by scientists or intellectuals in their society, brilliantly analyzed by Max Weber at the end of the 21st century [2]. From this perspective arises the so-called "action-research", through which the researcher aims to insert themselves in a community or social space, not only to understand it better but also to improve it [3]. Knowledge is placed at the service of the community, which is aimed at generating value.

The projection of higher education institutions in their environment has accelerated in the last four to five decades as a result of three complementary and mutually reinforcing factors. Firstly, the spectacular progress that has been made in some fields of knowledge (e.g. molecular biology, new materials, informatics, etc.) has dramatically shortened the distance between laboratory and production line. There used to be a "knowledge application gestation cycle" of 15 to 50 years that separated basic research conducted in laboratories from its possible applications in the productive sector or in the community, either as a new (final or intermediate) product, production process or service. Now, these cycles have been shortened to two or three years in some cases, due to the fact that the results and products of research in scientific laboratories very quickly find applications of various kinds in the productive sector, or in solving social or environmental problems in their environment. The classic distinction between basic research, applied research and technological development is blurring and evolving towards interactive processes or virtuous spirals of generation and use of knowledge that enrich the latter.

Secondly, the impact of scientific progress has been enhanced by another important feature of the Knowledge Society or Knowledge Economy. We are moving from the era of production systems based eminently on physical and energy resources, to production systems based on knowledge, or whose efficiency and productivity depend on their capacity to generate and use knowledge. The latter has become a production factor that plays a fundamental role in solving social and environmental problems.

Thirdly, the problems of social development and sustainability of our society and its environment have increased, despite the remarkable progress of science and technology and the growing capacity to solve the problems generated thereby. The challenges faced today in terms of economic sustainability (creating jobs), social sustainability (ensuring development with social inclusion) and environmental sustainability (sustainable management of biodiversity and the environment) entail the unavoidable need to produce knowledge that is relevant to solving such problems, aiming to apply it to solve them in an innovative manner. In the context of these challenges, in 2015 UNESCO defined the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which serve as an important guide for the definition of the major goals of higher education in the world. The 2019 International Mission of the Wise identified three major challenges for the country's development: Biodiverse Colombia, productive and sustainable Colombia, and equitable Colombia. Hence, higher education institutions, as places of confluence of different ways of getting to know and reflecting on society, preserve a close relationship with the productive systems, in addition to their place as centers of critical, open and essentially democratic thought, regardless of the processes of change in contemporary society, in which they themselves participate as direct stakeholders. Moreover, they preserve their character as a place where production and creativity are generated in the broadest of senses: that of sociological criticism, historical and philosophical research, artistic and cultural creativity and many others in which the relationship with the factors of production is not immediate.

This highlights the strategic role that knowledge plays in the contemporary world, and therefore the social responsibility of scientists and higher education institutions as institutions that play a leading role in the construction of a Knowledge Society with the capacity to address these challenges. But knowledge alone does not generate economic and social development if it does not give rise to innovation. Hence the importance of the latter. Innovation is understood as the application of knowledge to improve the living conditions or wellbeing of a community, to strengthen the productivity and competitiveness of a company or production chain, or to increase the effectiveness of public policies and the consolidation of civil society. In this perspective, innovation can be seen as the process by which society generates value from knowledge, by extracting economic and social benefits therefrom.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The 1991 Political Constitution of Colombia establishes that education is a personal right and a public service with a social role, and includes the freedoms of teaching, learning, research and the academia. It also ensures university autonomy, orders the State to strengthen scientific research in public and private higher education institutions, and to offer special conditions for their development; and, likewise, it assigns it with the obligation to provide financial mechanisms that enable the access of all eligible individuals to higher education.

Law 30/1992, in developing the duties and rights contained in the Constitution, defines the interest in promoting the quality of educational service as a guiding principle of the State's action; it defines the autonomy of the institutions according to their academic nature and the fields of action in which they are engaged; it reaffirms the nature of the public service of education and, therefore, the need for the State to promote, inspect and oversee it, in order to ensure society that such service is provided in the necessary quantity and quality. It also places state or public higher education institutions in a special regime, defines their modes of organization and the election of their directors and establishes the teaching, administrative, financial, contracting and fiscal control regimes.

This law orders the organization of official institutions as a system; defines the regulations applicable to private higher education institutions; creates the National Accreditation System to ensure that the institutions that voluntarily become part of it meet the highest quality requirements and achieve its purposes and objectives; establishes the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) as the higher education planning and coordination body responsible for, among other roles, the implementation of the National Accreditation System and the definition of the functions and form of integration of the National Accreditation Council, a body also provided for in this law.

Article 7 of the aforementioned law establishes that the fields of action of higher education are: technical, scientific, technological, humanities, arts and philosophy. Articles 16 to 19 define professional technical institutions, university institutions or technological schools and universities. The programs they offer and the degrees they award will be in accordance with their nature, and the university institutions and universities were authorized to offer professional technical and technological programs.

Article 213 of Law 115/1994 defined technological institutions as those authorized to offer job training programs, academic training programs in disciplines and specialization programs in their respective fields of action.

Law 749/2002 organizes public higher education service at the technical, professional and technological levels, defines technical and technological higher education institutions and authorizes them to offer and provide academic programs up to the undergraduate level through preparatory cycles. This law enables students to switch between programs and institutions and establishes the requirements or assessment criteria for technical, professional and technological institutions to redefine or change their academic nature.

The same law establishes that "Professional technical and technological institutions, by their nature, are the higher education institutions called on to lead technical professional and technological training in the country, and to respond to the demand for this type of training with quality.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the professional technical and technological institutions may offer professional programs only through preparatory cycles, when they are based on the professional technical and technological training programs. To do so, they must have the qualification certification for each of the cycles that make up the program.

The certification granted to a program structured in preparatory cycles will be considered as a unit, where it is necessary for its operation to maintain the cycles as they were registered in the National System of Higher Education Information, SNIES [4][4].

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[4] Article 11 of Law 749/2002, amended by Article 62 of Law 962/2005.

In 2008, Law 1188/April 25 was issued "By which the qualification certification of higher education programs is regulated and other provisions are issued." Among others, it establishes the quality conditions for offering academic programs and provides that "All higher education institutions may offer academic programs by preparatory cycles up to the professional level, in all fields and areas of knowledge, complying with the quality conditions set forth in this law and adjusting them to the different levels, modalities and educational methodologies [5]."[5].

Decree 843/June 14, 2020 [6] by which Chapter 7 is added to Title 3, Part 5, Book 2 of "Decree 1075/2015 - Single Regulatory Decree for the Education Sector" integrates the stakeholders of the National Accreditation System, regulates the stages of the accreditation process and reaffirms the authority of the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) to define the high quality accreditation model, upon recommendation of the National Accreditation Council.[6]

Through Agreement 04/1995, the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) issues the regulations that determine the roles and integration of the National Accreditation Council. It was subsequently replaced by Agreement 01/2000, which complemented the organization of the National Accreditation Council and, more recently, by Agreement 01/2020, which defines the regulations, roles and integration of the National Accreditation Council.

In turn, through Agreement 06/1994, the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) defined the elements and characteristics that identify high quality accreditation and explained that the accreditation process is "different from the inspection and oversight process exercised by the State, and therefore, accreditation does not replace it."

In addition, Decree 2230/2003, repealed by Decree 4675/2006, which in turn was repealed by Decrees 1306 and 5012/2009, restructured the Ministry of National Education, created the Vice-Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry undertook the roles of promotion, registration, inspection and oversight previously performed by the Colombian Institute for the Promotion of Higher Education (ICFES). The National Intersectoral Commission for Higher Education Quality Assurance (CONACES) was also created to provide better integration and rationality to public policies on quality in higher education, in order to unify criteria, concepts, standards, instruments, and methodologies, and to adopt a consistent and viable comprehensive policy on quality and quality assessment.

To support the improvement of institutions and academic programs, new instruments have been implemented to promote, assess and certify quality in higher education, such as the Saber Pro and Saber T&T tests, which assess five generic skills (written communication, citizen skills, critical reading, quantitative reasoning and English) and in some areas of knowledge, specific skills are assessed. In addition, public policies have been formulated at the local, regional and national levels to promote quality and encourage high quality accreditation.

In July 2019, Decree 1330 was issued "Which replaces Chapter 2 and eliminates Chapter 7 of Title 3, Part 5, Book 2 of Decree1075/2015 - Single Regulatory Decree of the Education Sector," which regulates the qualification certification of higher education programs and other provisions are issued. Based on this regulation, the quality conditions are developed, and the concept of quality is established, understood as: "The set of integrated, interdependent, dynamic attributes built by the academic community as benchmarks, which respond to the social, cultural and environmental demands. These attributes allow the internal and external assessment of institutions, in order to promote their transformation and the permanent development of their educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and outreach activities." In this sense, it determines that the Quality Assurance System "promotes the processes of self-assessment, self-regulation and improvement of the institutions' educational, academic, teaching, cultural and extension activities, thereby contributing to advancing and strengthening their community and academic outcomes, based on principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and sustainability."

The decree in question establishes "institutional conditions", understood as the following, for the purposes of the qualification certification and its renewal: "... the necessary characteristics at the institutional level that enable and promote the development of the educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities of the institutions consistent with their legal nature, typology, identity and institutional mission, as well as the different

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[5] Article 5 Law 1188/2008.
[6] This decree adds Chapter 7 to Title 3,of Part 5 of Book 2 of Decree 1075/2015 - Single Regulatory Decree for the Education Sector.

modalities (classroom, distance, virtual, dual or other developments that combine and integrate them), of the programs offered, in pursuit of the comprehensive strengthening of the institution and the academic community, all within the framework of transparency and governance.

In compliance with the provisions of Article 2 of Law 1188/2008, institutions must comply with the following institutional quality conditions: student and professor selection and assessment mechanisms, administrative and academic structure, self-assessment culture, alumni program, wellbeing model and sufficient resources to ensure compliance with the goals [7]. [7]"

This means that, based on the qualification certification, the institutions and academic programs must implement quality assurance processes, an important benchmark for the assurance of high quality, which is the ultimate goal of the National Accreditation System.

In relation to the academic nature of higher education institutions, according to the law, they are as follows:

a) **Professional technical institutions:** "These are higher education institutions that are characterized by their vocation and identity expressed in the fields of knowledge and work in technical activities, duly based on the nature of the knowledge, where their education must ensure interaction between intellectual, practical and operational elements and technical knowledge.

These institutions may offer and develop education programs up to the professional level only by preparatory cycles and in the areas of engineering, information technology and administration, provided that they are based on the professional technical and technological education programs that they provide [8] [8].

b) **Technological institutions:** "They are characterized by their vocation and identity expressed in their technological fields of knowledge and professions of a technological nature with a scientific or research basis.

These institutions may offer and develop education programs up to the professional level only by preparatory cycles and in the areas of engineering, information technology and administration, provided that they are based on technological education programs that they provide [9] [9].

c) **Universities or Technological Schools:** are "those authorized to carry out job training programs, academic training programs in professions or disciplines and specialization programs [10] [10]"

d) **Universities:** are "institutions that accredit their performance with universal criteria in the following activities: Scientific or technological research; academic training in professions or disciplines and the production, development and transmission of knowledge and universal and national culture.

These institutions are authorized to provide education programs in occupations, professions or disciplines, specializations, masters and doctoral programs [11] [11]."

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[7] Article 2.5.3.2.3.2.1 of Decree 1075/2015, as amended by Decree 1330/2019.
[8] Article 1 of Law 749/2002.
[9] Article 2 of Law 749/2002
[10] Article 18 of Law 30/1992
[11] Article 19 of Law 30/1992

Guidelines and aspects to be assessed for the high quality accreditation of higher education institutions

HIGH QUALITY ACCREDITATION MODEL

4. HIGH QUALITY ACCREDITATION MODEL

The National Accreditation Council, since its first Council in 1995, has conceptualized and built an accreditation model that is ultimately geared towards institutions as a whole. Accreditation in Colombia began for undergraduate academic programs, and over the past 25 years, guidelines have been developed for these academic programs, for medical-surgical specialties, for masters and doctoral programs, and for institutions. However, as one of the results of the reflection carried out by the Ministry of National Education and the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) in relation to higher education quality assurance, the National Accreditation Council considered it appropriate to reflect on the accreditation model, taking into account several situations and recommendations. This work resulted in Agreement 02 of the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) issued on July 1, 2020, which updates the high quality accreditation model.

The National Accreditation Council, as the advisory body responsible for assessing the high quality of academic programs and institutions in Colombia, interacts with and is part of international organizations such as the Ibero-American Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (RIACES); the Ibero-American System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (SIACES); the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and the Regional Accreditation System for University Degrees of the States Parties to MERCOSUR and Associated States (ARCU-SUR), through which several academic programs of Colombian institutions have obtained international accreditation and, in fact, recognition at the level of member countries.

The National Accreditation Council is the first Ibero-American accrediting body to undergo an international assessment and has been certified by the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) since 2012, initially for 5 years and then renewed until 2022. In 2019, it also underwent the validation of Best Practices by the Ibero-American Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (RIACES) and achieved the highest score. These experiences, in addition to further committing the National Accreditation Council, have familiarized it with the state of the art of high quality evaluation at the international level and to acquire elements for updating the model in the perspective of recognition, at the global level, of the quality of our academic programs and to enable the mobility of graduates to continue their studies abroad and for professional practice.

In this context, the National Accreditation Council is in the process of preparing to voluntarily submit to internationally inspection by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME), aimed at obtaining the reciprocal recognition of its accreditation system, in response to the requirement of the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) which determines that, as of the year 2024, any physicians from countries other than the United States who apply for certification by the Educational Commission must be graduates of a medical program duly accredited with globally accepted criteria, such as those established by the WFME, in order to access postgraduate studies or practice their profession in that country. Likewise, the National Accreditation Council considers it important to promote a similar process for Colombia to be included in the Washington Agreement for academic programs of engineering.

Useful recommendations have resulted from these international experiences for strengthening the National Accreditation Council and the National Accreditation System, which will undoubtedly lead to the improvement of the high quality accreditation processes in our country.

At the national level, Decree 1330/2019, which amended Decree 1075/2015, establishes the quality conditions, which are a starting point for the assessment of high quality and, consequently, the high quality accreditation model must not only be consistent with the proposals of the decree, but must also demonstrate, through factors and characteristics, high quality benchmarks that are reflected in the operation and improvement of institutions and academic programs through continuous improvement processes.

It is, therefore, relevant and urgent to promote the strengthening of internal quality assurance systems in institutions to address the processes of qualification certification and high quality accreditation. The internal quality assurance system must have integrated information systems, assessment mechanisms and promotion actions.

The high quality accreditation model was updated by Agreement 02/2020 in aspects such as:

a) Recognition of the high quality of higher education institutions, in accordance with their legal nature, identity, mission, typology and regional context.

b) Recognition of the high quality of the academic offerings, according to their level of education (professional technical, technological, university professionals, masters and doctoral programs and medical-surgical specialties) and modality (classroom, distance, virtual, dual or other developments that combine and integrate these modalities).

c) The inclusion of achievement indicators in the processes of self-assessment and external assessment of academic programs and institutions, in addition to the indicators of capabilities and processes.

d) The incorporation of learning outcomes assessment in the processes of undergraduate and postgraduate academic programs.

e) The unification of the guidelines for accreditation of academic programs, which are complemented with aspects to be assessed. These aspects to be assessed are built with the academic communities.

Practically 25 years after the first Council was formed and after having covered the regulations of academic programs and institutions, the high quality accreditation model was updated in accordance with the aforementioned proposals, among others, in order to:

a) Respond to the demands faced by graduates in a highly competitive job market, which requires that the learning outcomes obtained to be relevant, not to mention that the dynamics of knowledge require lifelong learning and that motivation should also be encouraged by the quality of the education received;

b) Be internationally comparable and contribute to the international recognition of national accreditations;

c) Contribute to consolidating a learning and student-centered training model;

d) Include achievements and impacts as key elements in self-assessment processes for accreditation purposes.

As a result, updating the high quality accreditation model:

- updates the concept of high quality, considering the way in which the institution provides the public service of education, the achievements attained and the impacts generated.
- advances in the search for a Quality Assurance System that recognizes and differentiates the quality promoted by Decree 1330/2019, which amended Decree 1075/2015, from the high quality recognized by accreditation.
- respects the tradition of the National Accreditation System and advance in the assessment of achievements and, therefore, assess capabilities, processes and results.
- incorporate learning outcomes as indicators of achievement, in line with the evolution of quality at the international level.
- incorporates the monitoring and assessment of the improvement plans formulated by institutions, as part of the high quality assurance.
- strengthens confidence in the Higher Education Quality Assurance System.
- promotes the consolidation of the internal quality assurance systems of institutions, in order to meet the requirements for the qualification certification and accreditation of high quality.
- respects the autonomy of institutions by guiding the assessment based on their own statements.
- is dynamic in that the aspects to be assessed are changing and specific, and their identification responds now and in the future to changes in the social, cultural, scientific, technological and innovation contexts.

Guidelines and aspects to be assessed for the high quality
accreditation of higher education institutions

The main changes introduced by Agreement 02/2020 are as follows:

- A single document that serves as a unified guide for the accreditation processes of institutions and academic programs.

- High quality accreditation is standardized with policies of the Ministry of National Education, the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, such as: the graduation and retention policy, the inclusion policy, the wellbeing policy, the good governance policy and the Science, Technology and Innovation (ST&I) policy, among others.

- It updates the principles and objectives of high quality accreditation in Colombia.

- It includes definitions of terms used in high quality accreditation processes [12][12].

- The accreditation period may be six (6), eight (8) or ten (10) years, depending on the degree of consolidation, sustainability and impact of the institution or academic program.

- For the duration of recognition of institutional high quality accreditation, the percentage of accredited academic programs over accreditable ones is considered so that continuous improvement is evident.

- It standardizes high quality accreditation processes with the qualification certification processes established in Decree 1075/2015, as amended by Decree 1330/2019.

- It defines and unifies the stages and activities of the high quality accreditation procedure of institutions and academic programs, in accordance with Decree 843/2020.

- It includes the follow-up and assessment, by the National Accreditation Council, of the improvement plans designed by the institutions following the recognition of accreditation.

- It establishes particular factors and characteristics for the high quality accreditation of academic programs and for the high quality accreditation of institutions. It recognizes diversity according to the typologies of institutions in relation to their academic character and nature, as well as the different modalities and levels of training of the academic programs.

- It defines the scope of multicampus high quality accreditation and high quality accreditation by place or places of development.

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[12] Other terms may be consulted in the Glossary of terms of the Ministry of National Education.

Guidelines and aspects to be assessed for the high quality accreditation of higher education institutions

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

5. HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

In accordance with the academic nature, as provided by Law 30/1992 and Article 213 of Law 115/1994, higher education institutions have the legal capacity to provide academic programs as follows:

Professional technical institutions:

- **At the undergraduate level:**   Professional technical programs.
- **At the postgraduate level:**   Professional technical specializations.

University institutions or technology schools

- **At the undergraduate level:** Professional technical programs, technological programs and university professional programs.
- **At the postgraduate level:**   Professional technical specializations, technology specializations and university specializations.

The university institutions or technological schools that meet the requirements mentioned in the paragraph of Article 21 of Law 30/1992 may also obtain authorization from the Ministry of National Education to offer and provide masters and doctoral programs.

Universities:

- **At the undergraduate level:** Professional technical programs, technological programs and university professional programs.
- **At the postgraduate level:** Professional technical specializations, technological specializations, university specializations and masters and doctoral programs, provided they meet the requirements set out in Articles 19 and 20 of Law 30/1992.

Based on Law 749/2002, and the provisions of Decree 2216/2003, compiled in Decree 1075/2015, professional technical institutions and technological institutions may offer and develop academic programs by preparatory cycles up to the undergraduate level, through the process of Institutional Redefinition, which is carried out through the Ministry of National Education and is carried out with the verification of conditions by academic and institutional peers and the assessment by the Assessment Chambers of the National Intersectoral Commission for Higher Education Quality Assurance (CONACES), and ends with the issuance of the respective administrative act by the Ministry of National Education. Based on Law 30/1992 and Law 749/2002 [13][13], higher education institutions provide education at the undergraduate and postgraduate academic levels.

The undergraduate level, in turn, has three levels of training:
- **Professional Technical**
- **Technological**
- **University Professional**

Postgraduate education comprises the following levels:
- **Specialization (professional technical, technological and university).**
- **Masters programs (research and emphasis).**
- **Doctoral programs**

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[13] Law 749/2002 arranges the public service of higher education into the categories of technological and professional technical education.

NATIONAL POLICIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

6. NATIONAL POLICIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Wellbeing policy

Since the issuance of Law 30/1992, the Ministry of National Education has been working on the construction of policies to support the coverage and quality of higher education. Some developments are the result of reflections within the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) in association with entities such as organizations of higher education institutions, among others.

In 1995, the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) established university wellbeing policies through Agreement 03 of the same year:

- **Article 1.** University wellbeing programs must cover the entire community that makes up the institution (students, professors-researchers and administrative staff), considering the diverse conditions of each person in particular: their role within the institution, schedule, methodology and hours, age, socioeconomic level, needs and individual aspirations, as well as their interests, hobbies and skills.

- **Article 2.** Higher Education Institutions must define strategies to encourage participation in University Wellbeing activities; the offering of these activities must be extensive, diverse and attractive to achieve the largest possible number of opportunities and alternatives."

More recently, in 2014, the National Council for Higher Education (CESU) led a national reflection with the extensive involvement of the academic community, and the results were included in the document "Agreement for Higher Education 2034", which resulted in the updating of policies and the construction of new perspectives, at that time with a 20-year projection. It demonstrated the need to update the concept of wellbeing [14][14] based on theoretical premises gathered from the concepts of human development, comprehensive education, quality of life and community building. The Ministry of National Education proposes to higher education institutions a concept of wellbeing that, within the framework of their autonomy and in response to the characteristics of their educational community, serves as a benchmark and starting point for them to take on this institutional role.

"Wellbeing in higher education institutions is a strategic and crosscutting function that includes institutional policies, processes and practices, as well as an institutional culture that promotes the co-responsibility of the stakeholders that coexist in the context of institutional life to promote comprehensive education, the full development of human capabilities and community building."

Dropout and retention

This aspect has been, and continues to be, of special interest not only to the Ministry of National Education, but also to higher education institutions in the country and at the international level. One of the base documents of this discussion is the "National Agreement to reduce higher education dropout rates. Policy and strategies to encourage retention and graduation from higher education 2013-2014" and more recently, in 2015, the Ministry of National Education published a guide [15][15] for the construction of a retention and graduation model to support the formulation and adoption of policies, plans and projects related to student retention and graduation. The Ministry of National Education presented to the educational community an instrument that provides strategies, actions and tools to guide higher education institutions in the design of the implementation of an efficient student retention and graduation management model, based on the improvement of the quality of higher education.

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[14] Wellbeing Policy Guidelines for Higher Education Institutions. MEN, 2016.
[15] Guide for the Implementation of the Student Retention and Graduation Management Model in Higher Education Institutions. MEN, 2015.

Inclusive higher education policy [16][16]

The Ministry of National Education has developed the Inclusive and Intercultural Education Policy Guidelines, which aim to encourage higher education institutions to define actions and strategies to strengthen quality conditions from a differential approach in terms of access, retention and graduation.

The Inclusive and Intercultural Higher Education Policy, as well as its complementary documents, are framed in the 1991 Constitution, which recognized the rights and ensured the special protection of the various population groups (the disabled population, ethnic groups - indigenous, black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal, Palenquero, Rom people, victims of the armed conflict, border population).

The Inclusive and Intercultural Higher Education Policy Guidelines define inclusive education as a core strategy for achieving social inclusion, which goes beyond the traditional concept associated with exclusion and allows the design of an open and generous educational model, which considers diversity as an inherent characteristic of human beings and life, in all members of the educational community.

The purpose of this policy is to make headway in closing gaps, through the full exercise of rights and access to opportunities, by means of structural public policy measures that promote the consolidation of a more equitable country for all.

Inclusive education is an ongoing process that recognizes, values and responds in a meaningful manner to the diversity of characteristics, interests, possibilities and expectations of children, adolescents, young people and adults, whose objective is to promote their development, learning and participation, with peers of the same age, in a shared learning environment, free from discrimination or exclusion, that ensures, within the framework of human rights, the support and reasonable adjustments required in their educational process, through practices, policies and cultures that eliminate any barriers in the educational environment.

Decree 1421 was issued in August 2017, amending Decree 1075/2015, which regulates the addressing of educational needs of the disabled population in the framework of inclusive education. The challenge set by this decree is to ensure a quality education for all our students, within the framework of inclusive education.

The Decree includes the challenges of each of the responsible parties: Ministry of National Education, Secretaries of Education, educational establishments, families, students, and this is why it has suggested progressive implementation.

Regarding the publications, the Ministry of National Education has: Gender Approaches and Identities, Inclusive Higher Education Policy Guidelines and the Higher Education Inclusion Index.

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[16] In September 2013, the Ministry of National Education published the document Inclusive Higher Education Policy Guidelines. See also: https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/w3-article- 374740.html?_noredirect=1.

Good governance policy

The topic of Good Governance has been consolidating throughout this century, and it is directly related to international trends in favor of transparency, not only in Higher Education Institutions but in all areas of public and private administration.

University governance as an essential topic in the organization and management of higher education institutions is relatively new in our country. By 2014 and as a result of the international Telescopi project (Colombian Observatory of Good Practices in Strategic University Management), the Ministry of National Education conducted a study that is discussed in the document "Recommendations for a Public Policy on Good University Governance in Colombia [17][17]; this document later gave rise to the public policy issued by the National Council of Higher Education (CESU) in 2017 through Agreement 02. This study considers that good governance is a fundamental component to increase the quality and relevance of higher education and also the possibilities for inter-university cooperation.

Article 1 of CESU Agreement 02/2017 states that the main objective thereof is "to define the principles of good governance, provide recommendations and identify good practices, aimed at qualifying the governance of higher education institutions and thus ensure the highest quality and relevance in the fulfillment of their mission functions."

Today it is considered necessary to develop and implement good governance policies that ensure institutional stability and the generation of transparent, effective and efficient governance systems, in compliance with the rights and duties of individuals and the responsibility to be accountable before society.

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[17] Recommendations for a Public Policy on Good University Governance in Colombia. Pontificia Universidad Javeriana - Javeriana School of Government and Public Ethics Telescopi- Colombia, 2014

RECOGNITION OF THE DIVERSITY OF INSTITUTIONS

7. RECOGNITION OF THE DIVERSITY OF INSTITUTIONS

One of the core components in updating public policy on quality assurance in our country is precisely the recognition of the diversity of institutions; academic programs and the contexts and particularities in which educational processes are provided.

The Colombian higher education system, among other particularities, is a system made up of different types of institutions, organized according to their academic nature: professional technical, technological, university institutions or technological schools and universities. Depending on their legal nature, they may be public or private, and the former in turn may be public establishments or autonomous university entities.

Decree 1330/2019, which amended Decree 1075/2015, states: The foregoing, among others, is defined in the same decree by the recognition of quality in the framework of diversity, establishing that "In turn, the Agreement by which the high quality accreditation model is updated, in the concept of high quality, and in the development of the principles and objectives, refers to diversity as an important component in assessment for accreditation purposes:

> *"In accordance with the global dynamics of higher education, regulations are required to recognize the diversity of supply and demand of programs, levels of education, modalities (face-to-face, distance, virtual, dual or other developments that combine and integrate these modalities) and methodologies. This is in order to strengthen the quality assurance system from a dynamic perspective such as higher education."*

The foregoing, among others, is discussed in the same decree with the recognition of quality as part of the framework of diversity, establishing that:

> *"Institutions wishing to offer an academic program with identical curricular content, through different modalities (face-to-face, distance, virtual, dual or other developments that combine and integrate these modalities), may apply for a single qualification certification, provided that the quality conditions are guaranteed for the modality(ies) it intends to offer, consistent with their legal nature, typology, identity and institutional mission."*

In turn, the Agreement by which the high quality accreditation model is updated, in terms of the concept of high quality and in the development of the principles and objectives, refers to diversity as an important component in assessment for accreditation purposes:

> *High Quality. This term refers to the synthesis of traits that make it possible to recognize an Academic Program or an Institution and to make a judgment, within the framework of continuous improvement and its diversity, on its capacity for transformation, given the proximity between the optimum conditions corresponding to the nature of the Academic Program or to the legal nature, identity, mission and type of Institution, and the way in which it provides the public service of education, the goals achieved and the impacts thereof [18].*

Diversity as a principle: "Diversity is the recognition of the distinguishing and unique particularities of the institution and the academic program, as opposed to its reference peers, that enrich the higher education system without affecting quality and high quality standards [19].

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[18] Subsection a) Section 2.1 of Article 2 of CESU Agreement 02/2020.
[19] Subsection i) of Article 4 of CESU Agreement 02/2020.

Diversity of objectives:

a. To promote a culture of high quality that demonstrates the principles and comprises institutional diversity through the sustained commitment to continuous improvement, contributing to the strengthening of the social role of higher education.

b. "To serve as an instrument through which the Colombian State attests to the high quality of institutions and academic programs, in the context of the global dynamics of higher education, assumed by the diversity of Institutions as a value of the Colombian higher education system, in order to effectively promote regionalization, equality, inclusion and inter- and " multiculturalism.

Based on the foregoing, to carry out the self-assessment exercise in the institution and for the assessment in the accreditation procedure, the recognition of diversity is considered in all factors and characteristics; however, in the case of the institutions, there are factors that are impacted the most:

a.   Academic nature of the institution

- Professional technical institutions
- Technological institution
- University institution or technological school
- University

b.   Most impacted institutional accreditation factors

- Contributions of research, innovation, technological development and creation
- National and international visibility
- Community of professors (education)
- Graduate community

HIGH QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

8. HIGH QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

High quality refers to the synthesis of traits that make it possible to recognize an academic program or an institution and to make a judgment, within the framework of continuous improvement and its diversity, on its capacity for transformation, given the proximity between the optimum conditions corresponding to the level of education of the academic program or to the legal nature, identity, mission and type of institution, and the way in which it provides the public service of higher education, the goals achieved and the impacts thereof [20][20].

In order to approach this ideal, the National Accreditation Council has defined a set of general characteristics of high quality. The quality of institutions and academic programs is assessed with regard to these characteristics, but the more specific determination and relative weight of these characteristics will be conditioned by the nature of the institution and the academic program.

Although the assessment is based on universal benchmarks, it is the differentiated reading of these characteristics that enables the assessment of the high quality of higher education institutions and academic programs of the most diverse types. This differentiation will be determined by the benchmarks corresponding to what is recognized in the present historical moment and in the specific society as customary to the type of institution or academic program (the existing regulations, the basic directions of the educational sector) and by the components of what the institution specifically defines as its specificity or primary vocation (the mission of the institution) and the way in which this mission is expressed in the academic programs.

In this context, an academic program, for example, is considered to be of high quality to the extent that it makes its concept effective, and that it has proximity to its ideal, both in relation to its universal aspects as well as the kind of institution to which it belongs, and the specific project of which it is a part and which constitutes completion.

In turn, in order for the high quality to become effective, higher education institutions and academic programs must, in addition to ensuring the possibility of learning and know-how by the student corresponding to the community of which he/she will be a member thanks to the education process, assume the fundamental task of being spaces for education in the general values of the academic culture; these values are characteristic of all higher education institutions.

Naturally, in order for quality to be achieved, a favorable institutional climate and suitable organizational, administrative and governance conditions are also required.

The high quality of higher education is the raison d'être of the National Accreditation System; recognizing it, ensuring its increase and promoting its development, gives meaning to the actions of the National Accreditation Council. High quality, thus understood, implies the continuous effort of institutions to comply responsibly with the requirements of each of their educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension tasks [21][21], which receive different emphases in the various institutions, giving rise to additional specificities.

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[20] Subsection a) Section 2.1 of Article 2 of CESU Agreement 02/2020.
[21] In general, this refers to the substantive functions of teaching, research and extension or social outreach.

HIGH QUALITY
OF HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS

9. HIGH QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

"The high quality of the institutions involves [22][22]

a) Development and appropriation of a solid culture of self-assessment and self-regulation aimed at continuous improvement, supported by an internal system of quality assurance to demonstrate the achievements and ongoing development of training, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities.

b) Demonstration of the consistency between the declared objectives and the actions carried out to fulfill them, as discussed in their development plans or the programs serving as such, and in budget projection.

c) A faculty that leads the education processes and allows the consolidation of solid, recognized academic communities.

d) A faculty that enables and facilitates students' theoretical understanding for the formation of creative, innovative and reflexive thinking, in line with the levels offered and in accordance with the declared level of research. This is demonstrated:

- In the capacity to develop new products, processes and uses of existing products, by providing innovative and transforming solutions to local, regional and global problems, and at the same time, to research the social and environmental reality, among other issues and problems, through the use of knowledge as a means of development.
- If the institution declares an emphasis on research, it must give an account of the scientific research, innovation, technological development and creation carried out, in line with universal knowledge, with high national and international visibility and the guidelines established by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation.

e) Comprehensive education of individuals to address the challenges of development with ethical, social, cultural and environmental responsibility, and play a role in building a more equitable and inclusive society.

f) The social importance and relevance implied by inclusive, more diverse and flexible educational environments to adequately respond to the education and research requirements of the respective environments.

g) Graduate follow-up policies with plans for the systematization of the information obtained and mechanisms for the improvement of academic programs with the outcomes achieved.

h) Development and implementation of good governance policies that ensure institutional stability and the generation of transparent, effective and efficient governance systems that ensure fulfillment of the rights and duties of individuals and accountability before society.

i) Effective integration between administrative and academic processes, that highlights the institutional effort to ensure an efficient and effective mechanism to support the institutional mission.

j) Mechanisms for assessing and follow-up the institution's administrative performance that show continuous improvement and actions that display institutional effectiveness.

k) The capacity of insertion in a global dynamic through the understanding of the social, cultural and productive dynamics of the regions where they operate and in which they carry out research, innovation and creation processes.

l) Internationalization strategies and activities that boost the performance of students and professors in a global context, which involve strategies of multiculturalism and bilingualism, student and professor mobility, transnational academic recognition, networks and joint publications.

m) The design and implementation of flexible and interdisciplinary education processes for the development of knowledge and the achievement of the learning outcomes required in social and labor dynamics.

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[22] Article 18 of CESU Agreement 02/20202.

n) Physical and technological resources that support the development of on and off-site academic communities in learning environments that are consistent with the academic programs and modalities offered.

o) Partnerships with companies, institutions and entities that allow the development of student proactivity and the enrichment of educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities.

p) Sufficient financial resources to ensure the adequate fulfillment of mission and supporting functions, both in investment and operation in the short, medium and long term.

q) Transparency demonstrated in the promotion of the services offered by the institutions in the performance of their educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities.

Guidelines and aspects to be assessed for the high quality accreditation of higher education institutions

ASSESSING
THE HIGH QUALITY
OF INSTITUTIONS

10. ASSESSING THE HIGH QUALITY OF INSTITUTIONS

The assessment of high quality in Colombia involves a complex exercise that is interpretative by nature. The process followed by the National Accreditation Council is a comprehensive assessment that involves assessment and interpretation, as it interprets the meaning of a fact in a specific institutional and social context, framed in the legal nature, identity, mission and type of institution.

The assessment of an institution's high quality is the result of an integrated consideration of the twelve factors that comprise it. In turn, each factor is examined based on an integrated consideration of the different high quality characteristics that constitute it. The degree of compliance with each quality characteristic must be established through a comprehensive assessment of the different aspects identified by the National Accreditation Council and those identified by the institution that drive the factors and characteristics in accordance with its institutional identity and activities.

Thus, the final assessment is based on successive syntheses of assessments on sets of components of increasing complexity (characteristics and factors). Through this comprehensive approach, the group-based assessment is not the result of the sum of assessments of individual components, but rather of the integrality of the different aspects that make up the institution.

For the high quality accreditation process of institutions, the factors identified by the National Accreditation Council as pillars for the assessment are the following, which must be seen from a systemic perspective, since they are expressed in an interdependent manner.

The factors selected in the accreditation model of the National Accreditation Council support high quality and can be grouped into four dynamics:

Say what you do
- A high quality institution must have a clear foundation, consistent with its mission, vision and institutional education project. These elements must be clearly known and appropriated by the academic community. Additionally, they must provide true, ethical and verifiable information to the community, and demonstrate that it is done in this manner.

Do what you say
- A high-quality institution must show great consistency between what it says it does and what it does to achieve it, which is reflected in an adequate organization, a highly qualified faculty, quality teaching, excellent scientific research, recognized artistic creation, outstanding students, well-qualified graduates, adequate funding sources, and academic freedom.

Prove it
- A high quality institution must demonstrate the high quality of what it says and what it does through processes of self-regulation, self-assessment and external assessment, supported by reliable and comprehensive information systems.

Improve it
- A high-quality institution must demonstrate that it has a continuous improvement and innovation plan that responds to the needs shown by the self-assessment processes.

All of the above is materialized in factors that enable the appraisal of conditions for the development of the institution's educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and outreach activities. These factors are individualized as follows:

1. **Institutional identity**
2. **Institutional governance and transparency**
3. **Institutional development, governance and sustainability**
4. **Continuous improvement and self-regulation**
5. **Academic structure and processes**
6. **Contributions of research, innovation, technological development and creation**
7. **Social impact**
8. **National and international visibility**
9. **Institutional wellbeing**
10. **Community of professors**
11. **Community of students**
12. **Graduate community**

The above factors are assessed according to characteristics of universal and particular references of high quality, which are demonstrated in accordance with the aspects to be assessed."

It is important to stress that the institutions, in developing the flexibility of the accreditation model, are free to use their own instruments for gathering information and, furthermore, in response to their complexity, identity and context, may define characteristics and aspects to be assessed in addition to those established in Agreement 02/2020 and in these guidelines, which may consider the factors and characteristics of the guidelines for the high quality accreditation of institutions and in accordance with the criteria inspired by the National Accreditation System [23][23].

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[23] Article 19 of Agreement 02/2020 of the National Council of Higher Education (CESU).

FACTORS, CHARACTERISTICS AND ASPECTS TO BE ASSESSED FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONS

11. FACTORS, CHARACTERISTICS AND ASPECTS TO BE ASSESSED FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONS

"A high quality institution must demonstrate its ongoing effort to consolidate an organizational culture based on continuous improvement and academic innovation, which is demonstrated in each of the following factors":

FACTOR 1. INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY

A high quality Institution is recognized for having declared values and an institutional education project, or a program serving as such, that is communicated to and appropriated by the community. It is the fundamental reference for the performance of the educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, throughout its area of influence and in the modalities determined by the institution. At the same time, it has a participatory institutional process of systematic assessment and updating, which demonstrates the inclusion of the different levels and stakeholders involved in the development and/or governance of the Institution and/or the academic program.

CHARACTERISTIC 1. CONSISTENCY AND RELEVANCE OF THE MISSION

"A high quality institution is recognized for its mission that is consistent and relevant to the social, cultural and environmental setting, in accordance with its legal nature, identity, type and context. This mission is dynamic insofar as it involves a systematic assessment, and it is consistent and integrated with the changes in the setting; in turn, it must be established in the academic and administrative objectives and processes."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of the consistency and relevance of the mission with the legal nature, tradition, objectives and institutional achievements; the social, cultural, environmental and productive environment; the academic and administrative processes; the information it provides and the image it reflects on society.

- Demonstration of the processes of collective reflection and systematic assessment in relation to the principles and mission commitments and its relationship with the environment.

- Demonstration of the changes implemented, if any, in the institutional mission and vision as a result of the systematic and periodic assessments carried out by the institution over time, and their impact on the social, cultural and environmental settings.

CHARACTERISTIC 2. GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES OF THE INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATION PROJECT OR ITS EQUIVALENT

"A high quality institution is recognized for having an institutional education project, or a program serving as such, as the basis for institutional governance, planning; administration; assessment and self-regulation, and the performance and projection of its educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities. It is also the reference for the definition of the requirements for the development of institutional wellbeing and the demand for physical, technological and financial resources, as well as for the strengthening of national and international relations, in accordance with its legal nature, identity, mission, type and in a given context."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Existence of updating processes of the guidelines and strategies of the institutional education project or its equivalent, in a manner consistent with its legal nature, organization, administration, assessment and self-regulation of teaching, research, and extension or social outreach, as well as wellbeing, internationalization, physical, technological and financial resources, and the analysis of the impact of such updating processes on the improvement of the aforementioned substantive functions.

- Evidence of actions aimed at reflecting with the academic community and society on the institutional education project, or its equivalent, adjustments thereto and the result of these assessments.

- Appraisal by the academic community regarding studies aimed at assessing the relevance of the institutional education project with the dynamics and practices for the organization, decision-making, administration, assessment and self-regulation of academic, educational, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension work, as well as wellbeing, internationalization and physical, technological and financial resources. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 3. COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION AND IDENTITY BUILDING

"In addition to its high level of academic and professional education, a high quality institution is recognized for providing opportunities for personal development in all the dimensions of the human being, while strengthening the academic community in an environment that encourages institutional wellbeing, in accordance with its identity. The foregoing is demonstrated in the recognition of the institutional identity by society in general, through the common impression that the academic community makes in its daily activities and in professional practice."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Appraisal by the academic community regarding the existence of guidelines and strategies for the promotion of the comprehensive education of students and the strengthening of the academic community in a suitable, inclusive and socially responsible institutional environment with ethical values. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the academic community and the institution's stakeholders regarding evidence to demonstrate to society that its graduates receive a comprehensive education and develop their critical thinking. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the academic community and the institution's stakeholders regarding the evidence of the strategies and programs implemented by the institution to promote the comprehensive education of students, the consolidation of their identity and social recognition. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Presentation of the results of systematic and periodic studies that assess the achievement of the comprehensive education and critical thinking of its students.

- Existence of guidelines and strategies for the promotion of the integral formation of students and the strengthening of the academic community in an institutional environment that provides the appropriate conditions to do so and is also inclusive.

FACTOR 2. INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

A high quality institution, in accordance with its legal nature, identity, mission, type, and context, is recognized for its governance that offers institutional stability, exercised through a system of rules, regulations, policies, strategies, decisions, structures, and processes, aimed at serving the general interests and the fulfillment of its institutional mission and education project, or the program serving as such, based on criteria of ethics, effectiveness, quality, integrity, transparency, inclusion, equality, and participation of the members of the academic community.

CHARACTERISTIC 4. GOOD GOVERNANCE AND HIGHEST GOVERNING BODY

"A high quality institution is recognized for its strategic guidelines and because policy and institutional development decisions are made by its highest governing body, which includes representatives of external sectors, professors and students, in accordance with its legal nature, identity, mission and type."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community of the mechanisms and forms of invitation, selection and participation in democratic representation of students, professors and alumni in the institution's highest governing body and in the sectors of society. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Systematic and periodic assessment and analysis of the impact of the application of institutional regulations, according to its legal nature, and of the code of good governance on the functioning of the highest governing body and other collegiate bodies. Inclusion of the results of such analyses in institutional improvement plans.

- Demonstration of improvement actions based on the systematic assessment of the operation and decisions made by the highest governing body and other collegiate bodies.

- Appraisal by the academic community of the efficiency, transparency and good practices of the institution's governing bodies and their members.

CHARACTERISTIC 5. STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS

"A high quality Institution is recognized because it demonstrates the existence of multiple relationships and interactions with the stakeholders of society and of the Higher Education Quality Assurance System. The foregoing in accordance with the legal nature, identity, mission and typology of the institutions, so as to integrate the education and development policies in general, by generating reflections and prospects that contribute to academic, training, teaching, scientific, cultural and outreach work.

Aspects to be assessed:

- Presentation of the results of participatory and collegial processes of stakeholders in the construction of the institutional education project or its equivalent and of the institutional planning, and the development of their respective strategic plans.

- Presentation of systematic and periodic analyses of the results derived from the existence of levels, policies, strategies and documents that guide the integration and participation of the institution with various stakeholders. Inclusion of the results of such analyses in institutional improvement plans.

- Demonstration of the number of social organizations in the region, the country and abroad with which it has established a relationship, identifying the degree and intensity of such relationship and analysis of the

contributions of these organizations in the proper fulfillment of the roles and mission commitments declared by the institution.

- Evidence of the level and efficiency of two-way communication with stakeholders.

CHARACTERISTIC 6. ACCOUNTABILITY

"A high quality institution is recognized for demonstrating that it develops mechanisms for the periodic accountability of all its stakeholders and the academic community, through reflective, structured and documented processes and mechanisms that enable the objective analysis of established commitments."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Presentation of the assessment and analysis of the accountability mechanisms at different levels that show structured and documented spaces for reflection, where the academic community and society participate, whose results are incorporated in planning, continuous improvement and decision making.

- Systematic and periodic demonstration and presentation of the opinions provided by the academic community, collected through institutional communication channels provided by the institution for accountability.

- Documentary, testimonial and statistical evidence on the existence of accountability mechanisms and their impact on institutional improvement.

FACTOR 3. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

"A high quality institution is recognized for having an integrated institutional architecture at the service of the ongoing performance of its educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, in accordance with its legal nature, identity, mission, type and regional context."

CHARACTERISTIC 7. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

"A high quality institution is recognized for demonstrating that its administration and governance are aimed at supporting and assisting in the efficient performance of its educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, defined by said institution in the framework of the constitution and the law, in accordance with its legal nature, type, identity and mission. Likewise, the institution develops policies for the encouragement, promotion and qualification of its officers, and implements an institutional architecture model that is stated in the integration of its organization, processes and positions, with periodic follow-ups that allow the detection of opportunities for improvement and implement them."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Presentation of systematic and periodic analyses of the results of the application of administrative policies aimed at the development of teaching, research and extension or social outreach. Incorporation of the recommendations of such analyses in improvement processes.

- Presentation of a systematic and periodic analysis of the application of incentive, training and promotion policies for administrative staff that contribute to the qualification of the performance of their activities and processes. Incorporation of the results of such analyses in improvement processes.

- Evidence of information and document management systems that have been incorporated in accordance with the regulations and traceability of the documentary processes of the academic history of students, academic and labor history of professors and labor history of administrative staff, as well as the administrative management report.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the efficiency of the administrative structure and role in the development of teaching, research, internationalization, extension and social outreach. Incorporation of the recommendations of the systematic and periodic analysis of such appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Presentation of systematic and periodic analyses of the results of the application of policies for incentives, training and promotion of administrative staff that contribute to the qualification of the performance of employees in the exercise of their activities and processes. Incorporation of the recommendations of such analyses in improvement processes.

CHARACTERISTIC 8. COMMUNICATION PROCESSES

"A high quality institution is recognized for demonstrating that it maintains, with responsibility and broad coverage, efficient and updated communication processes and mechanisms, which promote and ensure the right of access to information and data protection, in compliance with differential approaches, so that the information and data are appropriate for the recipients."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Presentation of systematic and periodic analyses of the effectiveness of integrated information systems and effective mechanisms for internal and external communication within the institution. Incorporation of the results of such analyses in improvement processes.

- Evidence of the institutional website, duly updated to keep the community and users informed of the educational offer, the institutional dynamics and the stakeholders that comprise it, in accordance with the regulations in force.

- Demonstration of the institution's communication channels that demonstrate the expansion of coverage, accessibility and quality, as well as their efficiency and permanent technological updating.

- Appraisal by members of the academic community of the relevance, accessibility and usability of the suitable technological platform to ensure the connectivity of all members of the academic community. Inclusion of the results of these analyses of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Existence of communication mechanisms with a differential approach that provide ease and opportunity for the institutional population to have access to information.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the existence of policies, mechanisms, platforms, means of communication and human resources for them to maintain interconnection and for external agents to access relevant , updated and truthful information on institutional policies, services, stakeholders and dynamics. Inclusion of the results of the analyses of these appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 9. GOVERNANCE CAPACITY

"A high quality institution is recognized for demonstrating that governance is exercised with leadership and that its guidelines are clearly defined, known by the different levels, and effectively contribute to the administrative stability of the institution and the continuity of its associated academic policies, curriculum, learning outcomes, credits and activities, institutional governance and wellbeing policies, and research, innovation and creation policies."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the organizational and administrative structure consistent with the institutional characteristics and the institutional education project or its equivalent. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the university community of the leadership, integrity and qualifications of those responsible for the governance of the institution and its units. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Evidence of the consistency between the actions of those responsible for the institution and its units and the commitments derived from the mission and the institutional education project or its equivalent.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the transparent mechanisms for the appointment of management positions and assignment of responsibilities, functions, roles and procedures to be followed within the institution. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 10. ACADEMIC SUPPORT RESOURCES

"A high quality institution is recognized for demonstrating that it has the equipment, furniture, technological platforms, IT systems and other networks serving as such, physical and/or digital bibliographic resources, databases, learning and information resources, that ensure the availability, access, adaptability and acceptability in its physical and virtual learning environments. It also addresses the particular requirements of the academic community, so that these resources are used appropriately, in the performance of the educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, with regard to the different levels of education and modalities of its academic programs, in line with its legal nature, identity, mission, type and regional context."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of policies, resources and budgets for investment in laboratory equipment, practice sites, libraries, teaching resources and other items to ensure the quality of the educational process, considering national guidelines for inclusion, among others.

- Appraisal by professors and students of the bibliographic, documentary and archival collections, databases and journals that are sufficient for the institution's capacity, relevant and updated to support academic, training, research, cultural and outreach activities. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community of the accessibility, availability, relevance and quality of the laboratories and practice sites for the academic work of the institution (teaching, research, extension or social outreach). Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the existence of mechanisms for the purchase, maintenance, renewal and access to equipment, furniture, technological platforms, computer systems and their equivalent, physical and/or digital bibliographic resources, databases and learning and information resources, in accordance with the different levels of education and modalities of their academic programs, in line with the legal nature, identity, mission, typology and regional context. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 11. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT.

"A high quality institution is recognized for demonstrating the effectiveness of a physical and technological infrastructure with physical and virtual spaces and facilities for the performance of educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities in environments of wellbeing.

The installed capacity must be in line with the number of academic programs, levels and modalities, in accordance with its legal nature, identity, mission, type and regional context. To this end, the planning, management and operation of the physical and technological infrastructure must be demonstrated. The Institution also implements actions that include inclusive practices and ensure sustainable development consistent with the demands of environmental protection."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of compliance with technical standards that ensure sufficiency, safety, sanitation, lighting, availability, equipment, ease of transportation and access to academic, administrative, recreational and sports areas.

- Evidence of the availability of inclusive spaces such as ramps, elevators, signage for individuals with visual or mobility disabilities, among others.

- Evidence of the availability of inclusive technological environments to support people with visual, hearing or mobility disabilities, among others.

- Evidence of measurements of installed capacity and their sustainable use over time.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community of the quality, availability and accessibility of the different learning environments of the modalities of academic offering declared by the institution, for the proper development of the different curricular and extracurricular activities, as well as those associated with the general wellbeing of its members in institutional environments. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 12. FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

"A high quality institution demonstrates that it has its own resources, financial stability and an appropriate allocation of financial resources for operation and investment, in accordance with the performance of educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, in accordance with its legal nature, type and institutional identity and the modalities in which it offers its academic programs. Consequently, the Institution plans, executes and projects budget allocations in accordance with the requirements provided for in planning and continuous improvement processes.

In turn, the Institution has mechanisms for periodic review in the management of financial resources that demonstrate its responsibility, efficiency, transparency and sustainability. It also demonstrates that it implements strategies for income diversification and expense optimization."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Presentation of information about the sources of financing, State resources, other external sources and own resources.

- Demonstration of financial stability and soundness to ensure medium-term compliance with the actions proposed in the institutional development plan, complemented by auditing and fiscal control exercises.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the policies and strategies for budget allocation, execution and evaluation, and financial administration, in order to comply with the institutional education project or its equivalent, and the achievement of the goals of the institutional development plan. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Demonstration of the reinvestment of its surpluses in its mission development and the qualification of its goods and services.

- Evidence of management for the diversification of income sources that contribute to the financial stability and development of the institution, in accordance with its development plans.

FACTOR 4. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND SELF-REGULATION

"A high quality institution is recognized for its capacity to plan its development and self-assess in a systematic and periodic manner, generating plans for continuous improvement that impact institutional decisions at all levels and areas of influence, in the development of its institutional autonomy. It also has an internal quality assurance system, which has gone through a process of maturation and improvement, to support the processes of self-assessment and self-regulation.

CHARACTERISTIC 13. SELF-ASSESSMENT CULTURE

"It is the set of guidelines, practices and mechanisms that institutions have in place for the systematic follow-up of the fulfillment of their mission objectives, the analysis of conditions that affect their development and the implementation of measures for continuous improvement.

A high quality institution is recognized for having implemented the culture of self-assessment and self-regulation, therefore, showing results of improvement in its academic, educational, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities and in all the operations required to sustain them. To this end, it reports on the participation of the institutional community, with the support of the information systems involved, which are demonstrated in the decision-making and execution thereof."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the definition, construction and follow-up of governance indicators consistent with the institutional projections, expressed in their development and improvement plans. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in the institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the integration of improvement programs with the planning and general budget of the institution. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in the institutional improvement plans.

- Evidence of compliance with the requirements of national information systems and their use in institutional decisions.

- Evidence of the systematization, management and use of the necessary information to be able to propose and implement improvement actions, taking into account the information recorded in the higher education information systems.

CHARACTERISTIC 14. SELF-REGULATION PROCESSES

"The institution ensures that the projection of its academic plans and policies associated with the curriculum, learning outcomes, credits and activities; its institutional governance and wellbeing policies; and its research, innovation and creation policies, as well as the execution thereof, are within the limits set by its identity, mission and type, along with the Colombian regulatory framework."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of the impact of follow-up, assessment and adjustment mechanisms, by the institution's management bodies, on the quality of its processes and services.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the efficiency of follow-up, assessment and adjustment mechanisms by the institution's management bodies, through a participatory effort involving the various institutional levels, enabling dialog, the permanent reconfiguration of the various institutional processes and the achievement of consensual goals and purposes of common interest, as part of a framework of essential values such as self-criticism and transparency. Inclusion of the analyses of these appraisals in the institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the mechanisms of invitation to and participation in the different institutional management bodies, the permanent reconfiguration of the different institutional processes and the achievement of consensual goals and purposes of common interest. Inclusion of these analyses in the institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 15. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

"In accordance with the provisions of Article 2.5.3.2.3.1.4 of Decree 1075/2015 on the culture of self-assessment and its implementation by institutions, they shall demonstrate that their internal quality assurance system has integrated mechanisms for self-assessment and planning, that they are used effectively for decision making and include the management of various types of indicators that enable a comprehensive follow-up of the institution and are aimed at promoting the continuous improvement of high quality, In line with the different educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, and with the different levels of education and modalities of their academic programs."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Presentation of systematic and periodic analyses by the academic community of the improvement plans and activities, based on the achievement indicators generated by the institution itself (such as academic value added and learning outcomes, among others), as well as those provided by the higher education information systems and the students' results on the State tests (Saber Pro and Saber T&T). Inclusion of the results of these analyses in the institutional improvement plans.

- Demonstration of the systematization, management and use of the necessary information for the implementation of improvement measures, taking into account the information recorded in the higher education information systems.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the policies and strategies implemented by the institution for quality management, self-assessment and planning in the different areas of development and academic and administrative units of the institution, as well as their evolution and improvement. Inclusion of the results of these appraisals in the institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 16. ASSESSMENT OF DIRECTORS, PROFESSORS AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

"A high quality institution demonstrates that it has and applies institutional assessment systems, which include but are not limited to the assessment of professors, administrative staff and directors to promote their improvement. This assessment covers the different educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, as well as the different levels of education and modalities of its academic programs. Based thereon, the institution implements professionalization and qualification plans for directors, professors and administrative staff."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of transparency and equity in the application of criteria for the assessment of professors and administrative and management staff, which have an effect on improving the quality of their work.

- Existence and application of clear and recognized criteria for the academic assessment of the production of professors and researchers, and of the management and performance of administrative and supporting staff.

- Appraisal by members of the academic community regarding the implementation and efficiency of institutional policies, mechanisms and strategies that ensure transparency in the appointment of academic, administrative and supporting staff, in the assignment of roles and responsibilities, and in the procedures to be followed within the institution. Inclusion of the results of these analyses in the institutional improvement plans.

FACTOR 5. ACADEMIC STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

"The institutions shall ensure the effectiveness and integrity of the integration between institutional policies, processes and procedures aimed at the management of the educational, pedagogic, evaluation, interaction and social relation components, as well as of the academic activities and the educational processes that are incorporated in the offer of relevant academic programs and framed in the universality of knowledge."

CHARACTERISTIC 17. EDUCATIONAL COMPONENTS

"The institution shall be committed, in accordance with its mission and its institutional education project or the program serving as such, to the development of study plans that support the proposed learning outcomes, as set out in the established admission and graduation profiles, which shall be monitored and assessed on an ongoing basis, so that the institution uses the outcomes to develop the strategies required for continuous improvement, according to its internal quality improvement system.

The institution will report on an academic credit policy that enables the identification of criteria for the assignment of hours for independent work and interaction with the professor, within the framework of its type, identity and institutional mission."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Measurement and assessment of the impact of policies, strategies, resources, environments and capacities aimed at the management of curricular and extracurricular processes of the academic programs of its institutional offerings in all places of development, in relation to achievement indicators focused on student learning (academic value added, learning outcomes, results on the Saber T&T and Saber Pro tests). Analysis of the results and inclusion of the recommendations in the institutional improvement plans.

- Evidence of academic and curricular planning that supports the development of educational processes with strategic actions regarding the design, implementation, development, follow-up and assessment of the educational offerings, standardizing the purposes, methodologies and pedagogical, didactic and assessment strategies of learning and the curriculum.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the creation and use of environments for critical discussion on science, technology, innovation, art, culture, values, society and the State. Systematization and inclusion of these assessments in the institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the efficiency of institutional policies and strategies for comprehensive education, curricular flexibility, internationalization and interdisciplinarity. Systematization and inclusion of these assessments in the institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 18. PEDAGOGICAL AND ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

"The institution shall report on the mechanisms and strategies effectively implemented to achieve the integration between teaching, learning and assessment processes, with a view to achieving the proposed learning outcomes, continuous improvement and pedagogical and academic innovation."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Existence of spaces for discussion and pedagogical training of professors, aimed at achieving the proposed learning outcomes, continuous improvement and pedagogical and academic innovation.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the efficiency of the institution's student assessment system with a view to achieving the graduate profiles defined in the programs. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the academic community regarding the follow-up, assessment and adherence to the policies, criteria and mechanisms of student assessment by the institution, in the interest of the learning outcomes of its students. Systematization and inclusion of these assessments in the institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 19. SOCIAL INTERACTION AND RELEVANCE COMPONENT

"The institution shall demonstrate that, in accordance with its legal nature, identity, mission, type, and context, it has incorporated mechanisms of integration that respond effectively to changes in the context and to the needs for lifelong learning, as well as to the demands of social, cultural, environmental, and technological changes at the local, regional, national and global levels. These mechanisms will also be used to implement the proposals for the integration of academic programs at different levels and in different modalities and to strengthen inter- and multidisciplinarity."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of the consistency between the educational profiles and objectives of the academic programs with the needs and expectations of education and professional, academic, scientific, technological, ethical, cultural and socially responsible performance of students in the regional, national and international context.

- Evidence of the link between the academic programs and their students with the institution's research and social outreach activities, considering the nature of the programs and their educational purposes.

- Demonstration of the impact of structured, systematic assessment of contextual needs on the current and lifelong learning of students and graduates.

- Evidence of the institutional mechanisms integrating effectively with changes in the context and the needs for lifelong learning, as well as to the demands of social, cultural, environmental, and technological changes at the local, regional, national and global levels.

CHARACTERISTIC 20. PROCESSES OF CREATION, MODIFICATION AND EXPANSION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

"In the creation, modification and expansion of the offer of undergraduate and graduate academic programs, in different modalities, the institution must consistently apply efficient policies and procedures, ensuring the high academic quality of the offer in all the places of development of its academic programs."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Demonstration of the creation of new academic programs or their modification, accompanied by the expansion of existing capacities at the institutional level to efficiently and contextually meet the commitments and responsibilities with high quality.

- Commitment of the institution to the creation, modification and expansion of places for the development of academic programs and their modalities with quality and relevance.

- Appraisal by members of the academic community regarding the efficiency of institutional policies, strategies and support for the creation, modification, extension and closure of academic programs and their modalities. Systematization and inclusion of these assessments in the institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by members of the academic community of the efficiency of the policies, mechanisms and participation of collegiate bodies in the assessment of procedures aimed at the creation, modification and extension of programs, as well as closing them. Systematization and inclusion of these assessments in the institutional improvement plans.

- Demonstration that the capabilities and processes necessary for the extension of an academic program to another place of development or another modality is not inferior to that established for the source program.

FACTOR 6. CONTRIBUTIONS OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATION TO ITS SETTING

"A high quality institution, in accordance with its identity, mission and type, is recognized for the effectiveness of its educational processes for research, critical spirit and creation, and for its contributions to scientific knowledge, technological development, innovation, transfer and cultural development, throughout its area of influence."

CHARACTERISTIC 21. EDUCATION FOR RESEARCH, CREATION AND INNOVATION

"The institution shall demonstrate that it develops policies and strategies related to the insertion of students in the dynamics of generation, appropriation, systematization and transfer of knowledge, applicable in a distinctive manner at the various levels of education. Therefore, it has effective mechanisms in place to develop students' creative and critical thinking, depending on their level of education, as well as the ability to understand the processes of research, innovation, artistic and cultural creation and technological development in various contexts." In the case of academic programs in the area of health, through teaching-service agreements, teaching and learning strategies shall be demonstrated in suitable and sufficient training scenarios to support this education."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the efficiency of institutional policies and strategies to promote students' education in research, in accordance with the different levels of undergraduate and postgraduate training and the type of institution. Systematization and inclusion of these assessments in the institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the efficiency of policies, strategies and resources made available by the institution to professors to carry out research, technological development, innovation or artistic creation projects, and the dissemination and publication of their results.

- Evidence of student participation in curricular activities and strategies specific to the different levels of education and the different modalities of academic offerings, which guide education in the development and execution of research and/or creation projects included in the institution's official registration system, as well as in the products derived therefrom.

- Evidence of a curricular roadmap that promotes the development of scientific competencies and skills, as well as of regular assessment processes to verify the fulfillment of such competencies and skills. Inclusion of the analysis of these measurements in institutional improvement processes.

- Documentary and statistical evidence that describes the systematization of learning by students and professors.

- Evidence of means for students to participate in academic activities related to scientific research, technological development, innovation and/or artistic and cultural creation.

- Existence of assessments and improvement actions related to teaching and learning policies and strategies as part of the framework of education for research. Inclusion of the analysis of these assessments in improvement processes.

CHARACTERISTIC 22. RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT, INNOVATION AND CREATION

"In accordance with its identity, mission, and type, the high quality institution must demonstrate the results of its academic, research, technological development, innovation, and creative production, and demonstrate the application of clear policies and an explicit commitment to these dimensions of academic activity. These policies shall be transformed into actions that include the promotion and assessment of professors' research, innovation and creation activities, the dissemination of their products, support for projects and the definition of an organizational structure for the performance of these activities."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Measurement and assessment of the impact of research, technological development, innovation and/or artistic creation, as an institutional commitment to generating new knowledge, to solving society's problems, to transforming products or processes to improve the quality of life of communities, to increasing business competitiveness, and to the conservation, recovery and development of the regions, among others. Analysis of the results of this impact and their inclusion in institutional improvement plans.

- Measurement and assessment of the impact of research conducted by groups endorsed by the institution on economic, productive, scientific and technological development in the regional contexts in which the institution is present and in which it interacts with its stakeholders. Analysis of the results of this impact and their inclusion in institutional improvement plans.

- Existence of the infrastructure necessary for research and/or technological development and innovation: laboratories, equipment, bibliographic resources and computer resources, among others.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community regarding the efficiency of the policies and strategies for the allocation of time to professors to carry out research, innovation and creation projects, and the dissemination of their results. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in the institutional improvement plans.

- Evidence of recognition of artistic and cultural creation in its various forms, when appropriate, considering the type of product, its relevance and impact on the communities in which it participates.

- Existence, stability and degree of development of research units, such as: institutes, centers, groups, networks and programs, among others.

- Appraisal by members of the academic community regarding administrative and financial support for the development and management of research, the creation of companies and business plans (such as business startup and financing centers, and research and technological development centers, among others) and artistic and cultural creation. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Accreditation of the scientific and technological productivity of the research groups endorsed by the institution and registered in the National Science, Technology and Innovation System (SNCT&I, for the Spanish original).

- Academic and scientific production reported and recognized by the country's National Science, Technology and Innovation System, based on the nature and level of education of the institution's academic programs, showing evidence of the scientific, technological, artistic and cultural activity of the institution's professors and the participation of students.

- In the case of professional technical and technological institutions, demonstration that the academic productivity of their professors can be related to technological development and innovation, and aimed at

solving everyday problems, streamlining a job or optimizing certain aspects of human activities. For university professional level programs, scientific production related to the creation and implementation of processes that help to improve the quality of life of communities, business processes and the development of the productive sector can be accredited.

- Evidence of the list of awards and distinctions for research work achieved by professors and granted by academically renowned institutions.

- Existence and application of a regime of intellectual property and commercial exploitation of research results and innovations.

- Existence and application of mechanisms for assessing the results of research and creation, as part of professors' academic production.

- Demonstration of the impact and transcendence at national and international level of the equipment, software and other items that have been patented or registered.

FACTOR 7. SOCIAL IMPACT

"A high quality institution shall have the clear capacity to be prospective in what it does, promote and support economic, environmental, technological, social and cultural development, and address the problems of the places where it leads the creation of new knowledge, in accordance with its identity, mission and type. Similarly, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the environments of all its places of development or where it operates through academic programs and the performance of its educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, through policies, specific outreach programs and interaction with the external sector."

CHARACTERISTIC 23. INSTITUTION AND SETTING

"The institution shall demonstrate that it defines, maintains, and assesses its interaction with society, the public and private production sectors, and organizations that aim to impact economic, environmental, technological, social, and cultural development, so that it can positively influence the design of policies, projects and initiatives in accordance with its identity, mission, type and regional context. The relevance of contributions made by the institution is systematized and they are integrated in the processes of self-assessment of its achievements and help generate learning processes."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Measurement, assessment and scope of the institutional commitment to the development of programs, strategies and activities aimed at meeting the needs of the setting, in the regional contexts in which the institution is present and in which it interacts with its stakeholders. Analysis of the results of this impact and their inclusion in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the academic community of the institution's contributions to the study and solution of regional, national and international problems, in line with the nature, typology, identity and mission of the institution. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by members of the academic community and stakeholders of the relevance and scope of the programs and activities of research, technological development and extension or social outreach related to the institution's contexts or areas of action that are the object of recognition for the service it provides in the communities. Inclusion of the results of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Presentation of the systematic and periodic analysis of the impact of the implementation of scientific and technological knowledge transfer initiatives for effective integration into specific local and social contexts, contributing to their social development. Analysis of the results of this impact and their inclusion in institutional improvement plans.

- Presentation of a systematic and periodic analysis of the impact of social outreach activities and its inclusion in institutional improvement plans.

- Demonstration of the results and analysis of the impact of the programs and activities of continuing education, consulting, entrepreneurship, social innovation, spin-off creation, patents, extension or social outreach and technology transfer, and of policies for the development and improvement of these services.

- Evidence of the impact of self-assessment processes on institutional improvement plans, as a result of its interaction with the setting, shown in the adjustment of policies and formulation of new programs and strategies, among others.

- Demonstration of external recognition of the importance of the institution's teaching, research and social outreach activities.

- Evidence of the social contributions of graduates in the business, scientific, artistic, cultural, economic and political fields.

- Evidence of the impact of actions aimed at vulnerable populations in the institution's area of influence.

- Demonstration of the consistency between the apprenticeships and internships of the academic programs and the needs of the institution and the external sector.

- Demonstration of the existence of global interaction schemes that promote the generation of local solutions based on global perspectives.

- Evidence of recognition of the relevance and impact of graduates on the setting, their institutional participation and the support and assistance provided for them to start out in the job market.

CHARACTERISTIC 24. CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC IMPACT

"The institution demonstrates its commitment to the management, protection and safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural and artistic heritage, and complies with current regulations. It therefore respects the dimensions and implications of the management, protection and safeguarding of what is inherited, considering it a legacy that must be preserved for future generations. At the same time, it develops strategies to study and protect tangible, intangible and natural heritage, involving, in the performance of its educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, actions to promote and raise awareness in society regarding its existence and the care required."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of institutional commitment to the protection, safeguarding and strengthening of tangible and intangible cultural and artistic heritage at the local, regional and national levels.

- Presentation of studies on tangible and intangible cultural heritage and the application of the results in strengthening the institutional identity and educational and research activities.

- Evidence of institutional contributions to the management, protection and safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural and artistic heritage, consistent with current regulations.

- Evidence of results of implementing educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension strategies that promote the study and protection of tangible, intangible and natural heritage.

- Presentation of systematic and periodic analyses by members of the academic community regarding policies that protect the cultural heritage represented, for example, in archives, museums and art galleries. Analysis of the results of this impact and their inclusion in institutional improvement plans.

FACTOR 8. NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL VISIBILITY

A high quality institution demonstrates that it has established an institutional framework to integrate its work, in addition to the national setting, in international contexts in a way that enable students, professors, administrative staff and graduates to recognize and learn from diverse cultures. A high quality institution is recognized nationally and internationally and demonstrates capacities to access resources and knowledge at the international level, for intercultural communication and for the comparative analysis of its academic processes and context.

CHARACTERISTIC 25. INSERTION OF THE INSTITUTION IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXTS

"A high quality institution demonstrates that, in its academic processes, it takes the trends, the state of the art of the disciplines or professions and the high quality criteria accepted by the national and international academic communities as a reference, encourages the interaction between the members of its community and recognized members of those communities and promotes cooperation with academic programs and institutions in the country and abroad."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of the measurement and assessment of the institutional response to its commitments to the internationalization of the curriculum and research, in the national and international contexts of its own interest and in accordance with its legal nature and typology. Analysis of the results of this impact and their inclusion in institutional improvement plans.

- Systematic and periodic analysis by the members of the academic community of the existence and application of institutional policies regarding external, national and international academic benchmarks of recognized quality for the revision and updating of the study plans. Integration of the results of the analyses in the institutional improvement plans.

- Evidence of research, innovation, artistic and cultural creation and/or extension or social outreach activities, in line with the nature and typology of the institution, developed as a result of academic and professional cooperation, carried out by the institution's directors, professors, students, graduates and administrative staff, with renowned leading members of national and international communities.

- Evidence of the effective use by the community of professors and students of the incentives established by the institution for interaction and cooperation with academic programs and national and foreign institutions, as well as proficiency in a second language.

- Presentation of systematic and periodic analysis by the members of the academic community, in relation to the effectiveness and results of active agreements and activities such as faculty and student interaction and academic cooperation, carried out with nationally and internationally renowned institutions. Inclusion of the results of such analysis in institutional improvement plans.

- Presentation of systematic and periodic analysis by the members of the academic community in relation to the institution's plans and projects for the internationalization of the curriculum and research, and the possibility of

dual degrees with foreign institutions. Integrate the results of the analyses in the institutional improvement plans.

- Evidence of a verifiable impact on the improvement of the institution's quality, as a result of interaction with national and foreign academic communities, and in the latter case, including those that require proficiency in a second language.

- Presentation of the systematic and periodic analysis by members of the academic community, in relation to inter-institutional partnerships to share resources, and promote mission processes and good practices. Inclusion of the results of such analyses in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 26. EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF PROFESSORS AND STUDENTS

"A high quality institution demonstrates that it promotes interaction with other institutions at the national and international level, and promotes, supports and coordinates professor and student mobility, understood as the temporary, two-way relocation for academic purposes. Therefore, its academic community achieves multicultural and language competencies that enable mutually beneficial interactions with other communities in a global context.

Similarly, it understands that interaction in a global context occurs because the educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities develop distinctive factors for the global positioning of the institution, either because of its scientific, technological, social or environmental innovation processes, or because the institution deals with issues of transnational interest."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Presentation of a systematic and periodic analysis by the members of the academic community, in relation to the participation of the institution's professors, students and directors in academic, scientific, technical, technological and cultural networks, at the national and international levels, from which tangible products have been derived such as co-authored publications in indexed journals with visibility and impact, co-financing of projects, registrations and patents, among others. Inclusion of the results of such analysis in institutional improvement plans.

- Presentation of an analysis of the impact on the improvement of teaching, research and social outreach processes of the institution's professors and students, who in the last five years have participated in academic and professional cooperation activities with renowned leading national and foreign institutions. Inclusion of the results of such analysis in institutional improvement plans.

- Presentation of an analysis of the impact on the quality of the teaching, research and social outreach processes, as well as the quality of the students' education, based on the interactions of national and foreign professors or experts received by the institution in the last five years. Inclusion of the results of such analysis in institutional improvement plans.

- Presentation of an analysis of the impact of validation or recognition of courses taken in other national or foreign institutions on the quality of student education. Analysis of the results of this impact and their inclusion in institutional improvement plans.

FACTOR 9. WELLBEING OF THE PROGRAM'S ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

The institution shall have mechanisms and instruments in place for human development, the improvement of the quality of life of individuals and the institutional group (students, professors and administrative staff) and cohesion as an academic community. These actions must take into account the conditions and needs of each individual, in each of the places where it operates, promoting curricular flexibility to benefit from their resources. Institutional wellbeing involves the existence of different programs for internal and environmental intervention, that reduce all types of situations of risk, for which the institution must demonstrate that it has the suitable structure and infrastructure, in accordance with its legal nature, identity, mission and type.

CHARACTERISTIC 27. STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING OF INSTITUTIONAL WELLBEING

"The institution shall demonstrate that it has defined and applies institutional well-being policies aimed at pursuing human development and the improvement of the quality of life of the individual and the institutional group (students, professors and administrative staff) as a whole. These actions must be in line with the conditions and needs of each individual, in each of the places where it operates. Likewise, well-being conditions must promote the comprehensive development of individuals and their responsibilities as part of a community that promotes participation and institutional commitment."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence and application of institutional wellbeing policies for the benefit of the entire institutional community. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the fields of action, their use and coverage of the institutional wellbeing programs, their users and the impact thereof. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of human resources dedicated to wellbeing, and the allocations and execution of economic, technical, technological and infrastructure resources by the institution to ensure the optimal development of the institutional wellbeing programs. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of strategies for the dissemination of institutional wellbeing services. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Evidence of the existence, application and periodic assessment of strategies for the support and/or follow-up of students in order to prevent dropout.

- Evidence of the existence, application and periodic assessment of a protocol for preventing, detecting and dealing with violence and any type of gender-based discrimination.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community of the application of the protocol for preventing, detecting and dealing with violence and any type of gender-based discrimination.

- Evidence of the results of the periodic assessment of services offered and their relationship with the qualification of these services.

- Evidence of the results of actions aimed at the diagnosis and prevention of psychosocial, medical and environmental risks of the institutional community.

- Evidence of strategies aimed at the inclusion of vulnerable populations with disabilities and racial, gender and sexual identity minorities.

- Evidence of programs and activities aimed at preventing disasters and responding to emergencies.

- Demonstration of the impact of mechanisms for the harmonious conflict-resolution on the institutional community and the procedures for their use.

- Evidence of participation of the institutional community in the different cultural, physical and mental health programs, and sports activities promoted by the institutional wellbeing.

FACTOR 10. COMMUNITY OF PROFESSORS

The institution shall demonstrate the level, profile and commitment of its professors and have established the necessary conditions to enable them to carry out their educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities in accordance with its declared mission. It will also show how it promotes the consolidation of a community of professors characterized for their diversity, commitment to and participation in the achievement of the institutional mission.

CHARACTERISTIC 28. PROFESSORS' RIGHTS AND DUTIES

"The institution shall demonstrate that it applies and strengthens the provisions established in the faculty bylaws or the regulations serving as such, which define, among other aspects, their rights and duties, disciplinary system, ranking, participation in the Institution's governing bodies, and the academic criteria for employment, development, assessment, and permanence in the institution."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the application of faculty bylaws or their equivalent, for the selection, hiring, qualification and promotion of the institution's professors, as well as the incentives applied to performance and research production. Incorporation of the recommendations of these periodic analyses of appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding clarity and transparency in the application of mechanisms established to elect faculty representatives in the decision-making bodies. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Evidence of the impact of faculty bylaws on the teaching career expressed in the dynamics of promotion in professor ranking.

- Evidence of the contribution of the faculty bylaws in the development of the institutional mission.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the mechanisms of invitation, selection and participation of professors in the institution's governing bodies. Inclusion of the results of these analyses of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 29. FACULTY

The institution shall demonstrate that it has a faculty that is diverse in gender, as well as academic, demographic and cultural origin, and that it is appropriate in relation to the contracts of employment, number and hours worked by the professors, their levels of education and professional development, and consistent with the pedagogies implemented by the institution and the modalities and levels offered. It will also show that it has established the mechanisms for allocating the time and activities of its professors in an equitable and efficient manner for the achievement of the goals and objectives of its mission, which are achieved in the performance of their educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, and that this allocation is consistent with the types of contract of employment.

Faculty diversity must be consistent with the legal nature, identity, type, mission and modalities. Similarly, it must recognize the characteristics of the places where the academic programs are offered, for which it must have strategies to provide high quality professors in those places."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of the results of developing measurements that reflect the proportion of professors hired with tenure compared to other types of contracts.

- Evidence of measures that illustrate the ratio of the number of professors contracted to teaching and research needs, and the number of students in the different programs offered by the institution.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of a core group of professors with tenure and others with at least annual contracts, that is sufficient and suitable to carry out training, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension work, with an adequate professor/student ratio for the different academic programs offered. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence and application of mechanisms for the selection, hiring and contracting of professors that promote the consolidation of a diverse and inclusive academic community, committed to training, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and outreach activities. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of criteria to define faculty responsibilities in relation to the fulfillment of substantive functions and the performance of academic-administrative activities, in accordance with the category in which they are ranked. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of mechanisms for assessing the activities assigned to professors, with the purpose of qualifying, promoting and encouraging their work. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the criteria and distribution of the tasks assigned to professors in order to perform their functions under conditions of quality and in appropriate institutional spaces. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 30. TEACHING EXPERIENCE

"The institution shall demonstrate that, in its bylaws or regulations, or the rules serving as such, it considers contract terms and permanence with transparent mechanisms that are widely known to its professors. They shall include aspects such as the assessment, development, and permanence of professors in the different academic categories and their promotion from one category to another, without prejudice to the standards autonomously established by the institution; in any case, it shall clarify the duties and rights inherent to each category. Professor contracts and salary allocations are determined by academic criteria and are consistent with the legal nature, identity, mission and type of institutions."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Demonstration of the impact of professor assessment, including self-assessment, peer-assessment and assessment by the immediate supervisor, on faculty development. Analysis of the impact and inclusion thereof in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of professor ranking with academic categories that enable the mobility, qualification and professional promotion of professors. Inclusion of the results of the analyses of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the transparent fulfillment of criteria and mechanisms for determining the professor salary levels and incentives. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 31. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

"The institution shall demonstrate that it applies policies and carries out programs for faculty development, as well as for the recognition of the qualified performance of educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, in accordance with the objectives of higher education and the institution. These programs must include all professors employed by the institution through the different forms of contracts and in all the modalities. Faculty development must involve the development of the pedagogical skills and abilities necessary to serve the students entering the Institution, in accordance with the modalities of the academic programs in which they are enrolled."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Demonstration of results and measurements that illustrate the impact of the institutional policy on the professional and pedagogical qualification of its professors.

- Appraisal by members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence, coverage, quality and relevance of faculty development programs. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the application of criteria for recognition and encouragement of qualified exercise of educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and outreach tasks. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the institution's academic community regarding the evidence of the assessments of professor regulations, considering the institution's legal nature, its efficiency, transparency and effectiveness for the development of professors. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding evidence of the training provided to the institution's professors and the results thereof. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 32. PROFESSORS' ACADEMIC INTERACTION

"The institution shall demonstrate that it applies policies to promote the interaction of its professors with national and international academic communities in accordance with its legal nature, identity, mission, and type, as well as with the level and modalities of its academic programs. To this end, its faculty development plan includes the strengthening of the skills and abilities needed to interact and belong to global, local, and regional networks."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Presentation of a systematic and periodic analysis by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence and development of policies and strategies aimed at facilitating the constitution of academic communities in the institution and their interaction with other national and international counterparts. Inclusion of the results of the analyses in institutional improvement plans.

- Presentation of the systematic and periodic analysis by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the state of academic interaction of the faculty by areas of knowledge, with national and foreign academic communities. Inclusion of the results of the analyses in institutional improvement plans.

- Evidence of results of studies conducted on the relevance and effectiveness of faculty academic interaction with national and foreign academic communities. Inclusion of the analysis of results in institutional improvement plans.

- Evidence of the results of the interaction and participation of the institution's professors in academic agreements at the national and international levels.

FACTOR 11. COMMUNITY OF STUDENTS

The institution shall recognize the rights and duties of its students, apply the rules established for that purpose, respect and promote their participation in the governing bodies and ensure their admission and permanence within the framework of equality and inclusion policies that offer conditions for graduation in the time established in the study plan, in all the places where it carries out educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities, in accordance with the different levels of education and modalities thereof.

CHARACTERISTIC 33. STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND DUTIES

"The institution shall demonstrate that it applies the provisions established in the students' regulations or bylaws, which indicate, among other matters, their rights and duties, the disciplinary system and the academic requirements for admission, permanence, promotion, transfer and graduation, in accordance with the different levels of education and modalities of the academic programs. The institution shall demonstrate that it has an ongoing and systematic commitment to the life cycle of students at the institution, and, therefore, supports them in their educational process and promotes their interest in lifelong learning."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of the existence and application of student regulations that establish the conditions for admission, retention, assessment and graduation, and the rights and duties of the students of the institution's different programs. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the application of criteria for student admission and retention. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the application of promotion, transfer and graduation criteria. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding student participation in the Institution's decision-making bodies. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding transparency in the application of predetermined mechanisms for the election of student representatives in decision-making bodies. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of policies on gender equality and their implementation, through committees and organizations that promote equality and respect in the academic community. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Studies of the impact on the institution's academic community regarding inclusion policies, particularly on the insertion of students with special abilities or disabilities. Inclusion of the analyses of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 34. STUDENT ADMISSION AND RETENTION

The institution shall demonstrate that the students' admission, permanence and follow-up at the institution, and their integral development, are based on academic criteria expressed in equitable and inclusive policies in accordance with the different levels of education and modalities of the academic programs. Therefore, the institution displays evidence of a visible commitment to the effectiveness of the students' educational process, as a result of which the students display better performance than the national average in terms of indicators such as permanence and desertion by cohort. It shall additionally demonstrate that it actively engages in the characterization of its students upon admission, in order to develop systematic programs to assist in the educational process to ensure that students fulfill the learning outcomes proposed by the institution."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Demonstration of the impact of strategies for the integration of students in the different institutional dynamics.

- Evidence of the impact of support and/or other institutional strategies for the reduction of student dropout rates and graduation within the time established in the curriculum.

- Existence of orientation processes for students to identify educational roadmaps in accordance with their abilities and interests and to overcome their learning difficulties, in order to ensure their retention and the adequate completion of their educational process.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the application of policies and strategies for student admission and retention and regarding national policies and guidelines. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding strategies to ensure student integration in the institution, in consideration of their social and cultural diversity. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of programs aimed at reducing student desertion, cause analysis and retention strategies. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence and application of criteria and strategies for admitting students from other national and international institutions, and clear rules for student exchange. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the application of policies and strategies for student admission and retention. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 35. INCENTIVES AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

"The institution shall provide support and incentives, including economic, that promote the students' enrollment, permanence and graduation, particularly for students with academic merits and in vulnerable conditions."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Demonstration of the efficient application of incentive systems through programs such as monitoring, research assistance, honor's tuition and loan forgiveness, among others.

- Demonstration of the effectiveness and transparency of the application of institutional incentives and support in student retention and graduation.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence and transparent application of the criteria for the allocation of student support. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of active inter-institutional agreements aimed at facilitating student admission and retention. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of mechanisms for the dissemination of credit systems, scholarships, subsidies, economic support and incentives for students. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence of control procedures to ensure that students benefiting from institutional support make good use thereof in time for graduation. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

FACTOR 12. GRADUATE COMMUNITY

The institution shall demonstrate that it has support mechanisms for its graduates aimed at promoting their professional careers and their insertion in the labor market, continuous learning and inputs to the curricula of the academic programs based on their experience, with the support of adequate information systems. To this end, the institution shall have processes that enable interacting and communicating with its graduates, to know their location and the activities they carry out, in order to ensure the relevance of the educational offerings and the participation of the graduates in decision-making, in a manner consistent with its legal nature and in accordance with the institution's bylaws and other regulations. It must also demonstrate such coverage for the graduates of the academic programs' different modalities and levels of training.

CHARACTERISTIC 36. FOLLOW-UP OF GRADUATES

"Taking into consideration the different levels of training and modalities offered by its academic programs, the institution shall demonstrate that it has an institutional policy and program for its graduates supported by information systems that facilitate ongoing assessments, enable initiating improvement actions that promote engagement in the labor market, improved performance, entrepreneurship and the graduates' impact on the development of their territories.

Follow-up of the graduates' performance shall enable a systematic assessment of the proposed learning outcomes. Consequently, the institution shall implement through its internal quality assurance system the mechanisms required to periodically incorporate the assessments made."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of regular communication with its graduates, through programs, projects and actions that provide information about their location, achievements and expectations, and contribute to their professional development.

- Demonstration of the operation of a robust and complete information system, with regular updates on job location and performance.

- Evidence of systematic and structured studies that determine the impact of its graduates on regional and national development.

- Evidence of the application of permanent assessment of its graduates, enabling the implementation of improvement actions that promote job placement, performance, entrepreneurship and the impact of graduates on the development of the territories.

- Evidence of graduate participation in postgraduate programs; masters, medical-surgical specialty and doctoral program, in the case of institutions that can develop this educational offer due to their academic nature.

CHARACTERISTIC 37. GRADUATES AND ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

"The institution shall demonstrate that its interaction with its graduates and the results of their performance and development assessments contribute to the transformation and innovation of curricula in a manner that promotes the achievement of the students' learning outcomes and that strengthens the relevance of the academic programs."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Evidence of the systematic and periodic mechanisms and strategies used by graduates to make academic contributions for the benefit of updating and improving the academic program.

- Evidence of the degree of participation and impact of the graduates of each of the academic programs offered by the institution on the periodic processes of curricular updating and adjustment.

- Evidence of how the results of assessments on graduate performance and development have contributed to curricular transformations and innovations that promote the achievement of student learning outcomes and contribute to the revitalization and relevance of academic programs.

- Presentation of studies and consultations with graduates on the quality and relevance of the program completed and its impact on the qualification of the program and the institution.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the application of policies and mechanisms available for the relationship and interaction of its graduates with the respective academic programs. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

CHARACTERISTIC 38. GRADUATES' RELATIONS WITH THE INSTITUTION

"The institution shall demonstrate that through the mechanisms for interaction with its graduates, there is evidence of a growth trend in academic contributions that benefit educational, academic, teaching, scientific, cultural and extension activities."

Aspects to be assessed:

- Presentation of a systematic and periodic analysis of the academic contributions of graduates in the local, regional, national and international contexts. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the existence and application of a service portfolio provided by the institution, to enable the placement of graduates in the job market. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the community regarding the participation, support and voluntary cooperation of graduates of the different programs in teaching and research activities.

- Appraisal by the institution's graduates regarding evidence on the existence and effectiveness of information and follow-up systems for graduates. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the institution's graduates regarding the existence of active and timely channels of communication with graduates to support institutional development and foster mutual cooperation processes. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

- Appraisal by the members of the institution's academic community regarding the application of mechanisms available in the institution for relations and interaction with its graduates, their contribution to substantive functions and their appraisal regarding participation in the institutional dynamics. Inclusion of the analysis of systematized and periodic appraisals in institutional improvement plans.

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