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Nancy

Quality Standards for institutional evaluation

Draft structure and method for adaptation to the national higher education context

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Foreword

The national framework for quality assurance draws at first from the Law XXX on Higher Education and Research in Higher Education Institutions in [*country*] and the experience of National QA Agency. The second source of inspiration is the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance in higher education (ESG), established in 2005 and revised in 2015 by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European Universities Association (EUA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Educations (EURASHE) and the European Students' Union (ESU). The standards and criteria benefited from the reflection of National QA Agency over the recent accreditation of programmes and institutions.

That national framework has been designed with a view to conducting self-evaluation and external evaluation of national higher education institutions. It could be used either for improvement or for accreditation purpose. There will be guidelines meant to operationalise that framework (the Experts handbook and the .

Quality principles in [*country*]

Shift from the "philosophical approach" of the new methodology to a more practical approach, meant to foster the ownership of the academic community, the external experts and the National QA Agency staff.

Both obejctives are intertwinded for quality assurance in [*country*] :

- quality improvement

- quality assessment.

Institutional quality assurance to be the "umbrella framework" guiding the methodology for quality assurance of programmes, doctoral schools and other issues.

Definitions

Domain	Domains are the major areas of the quality assurance system that are subject to evaluation.
Standard	Standards indicate the expected level of requirements and conditions by which quality is assessed or that must be achieved by higher education institutions and their programs for accreditation or certification. In order to correctly judge whether a particular quality standard is met or not, a standard must be formulated clearly and explicitly and linked to specific criteria, which can be divided into (more operational) indicators/guidelines.
Criteria/ guidelines (as per ESG wording)	Criteria are control/guiding points/lines that determine the realisation/fulfilment of the standards. The criteria detail the requirements and conditions to be met in order to reach the standard, and provide the quantitative and qualitative basis on which an evaluative conclusion is drawn.
Evidence	Evidence is the data used to determine the performance level of a standard, which is the acceptable level of performance. Evidence can be either qualitative or quantitative. They must be collected regularly. To do this, the HEI is encouraged to provide empirical data, for example by developing a statistical system.

The quality framework at a glance:

6 domains for quality are suggested to reflect the key missions and quality expectations of national higher education institutions, irrespective of their category:

1. Strategy and governance
2. Quality assurance system
3. The curriculum
4. Teaching, learning and assessment
5. Research support
6. Student and their support

Domain	Standards
A- Strategy and governance	1. The institution's vision and strategic plan are in alignment with its mission. The institution has adequate policies, processes, procedures and instruments to realize its mission and implement its strategic plans. 2. Personnel and students and other stakeholders are involved in the design and implementation of the institution's strategy. 3. The institution contributes to the social, economic and cultural development of the territory on which it is located and at the national level. 4. There is a clear and transparent division of responsibilities, duties and authorities among the governing/leading authorities and decision making bodies, personnel (academic and non-academic staff) and according to the expected qualifications. 5. Students are involved in the administrative and decision-making processes and are incentivized to engage in the institution's strategy and management. 6. Institution pursues an open strategy of collaboration and partnership at a regional, national and international level.
B- Quality assurance system	1. Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. 2. The quality management/assurance system is developed with clearly-defined structures, objectives, processes and procedures, 3. Internal stakeholders develop and implement the Internal QA policy, while actively involving students and external stakeholders. 4. The institution designs and implement policies with the objective of assuring, preserving and improving quality, especially for human resources, learning environment (infrastructures, equipment) and financial resources. 5. The Internal QA policy, processes and mechanisms are effective, inclusive, permanent and aim at embedding a quality culture all over the institution

	6. Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management ans quality assurance of their programmes and other activities.
C- The Curriculum	1. The institution ensures that new and existing programmes reflect the needs of society and are continually adapted to societal development and the changing needs of the national and regional, and international labour market as well as societal needs. 2. The institution ensures that programmes have an appropriate level (short cycle/Ba/M/Doctorate, vocational, Life Long Learning), an academic content and an educational quality that supports students' learning and the achievement of programme objectives. 3. The institution ensures its capacity to run the programmes efficiently regarding its human resources and learning environment. 4. Learning objectives, clear goals and information are defined for each study programme and are communicated to students and stakeholders. 5. Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme and should be communicated to all those concerned. 6. Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.
D-Teaching, Learning and Assessment	1. The curriculum design, development, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and review processes are in alignment with national requirements and the institution's vision and strategy. 2. The institution has mechanisms to maintain and update its programmes and develop methodologies to approve, control, evaluate and periodically enhance their quality, and use these mechanisms on a regular basis. 3. The institution must have mechanisms to ensure that the hiring, management and professional development of its teaching staff is carried out with the necessary guarantees to ensure they can fulfil the requirements according to their corresponding functions. 4. The institution has and uses mechanisms ensuring support for and improving the quality of the teaching delivered by any teaching staff. 5. The institution brings to the forefront and supports projects of pedagogical innovation and excellence in order to improve the integration of graduates and to strengthen the capacity for innovation by setting up innovative and employable courses. 6. The institution ensures the quality of exchange programs and international mobility (students, teachers, staff) and promotes mobility at all levels. Specific quality assurance mechanisms are in place for mobility.

	7. The institution offers opportunities for any student's educational and professional needs to pursue, stop and resume the study programmes.
	8. The institution has a clear policy regarding the assessment of student's achievements, accumulation and transfer of credits, ensuring that the assessment is consistent, fair, equitable, understood by the students and and carried out in accordance with the pedagogical approach and stated procedures.
E- Research support	1. The institution has developed and implements a research policy in close relationship with its academic provision and programmes, as integral part of HEI's strategic approach and which operates in the institutional, national and international context
	2. The institution ensures the dynamism of national and international development of its research policy as well as the valorisation and dissemination of its results.
	3. There is an institutional strategy and programming of research activities
	4. The institution ensures that the research projects guarantee a high level of scientific quality in a relevant research area.
	5. The institution promotes research and scientific activity in programmes teaching where relevant, including involvement of students in research projects and activities.
	6. The institution has set up appropriate structures and mechanisms to support, incentivise, assess,reward research engagement and foster the production and valorisation of research.
F- Students and Their Support	1. Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression and graduation,
	2. Admission, progression requirements and student evaluation methods are clear, manageable and publicly made available.
	3. Mechanisms for student support and advice are established for successful accomplishment, continuation of studies and career preparation/job placement-orientation..
	4. Institutions should ensure implementation of a student-centred learning and teaching, encouraging students to play an active role in creating the learning process, and the assessment of students reflects this approach
	5. The institution ensures inclusiveness of any kind of student admitted.
	6. The institution has a supportive policy to extra-curriculum activities and reward the engagement of students.

Alternative scope of quality framework

Extended domains

The 6 domains encompass all missions of higher education. However, National QA Agency might want to pay more emphasis on some domain and disaggregate the 6 domains into others, e.g:

1. Strategy and vision
2. Governance and management
3. Human resources
4. Financial resources
5. Infrstructures and facilities
6. Student recruitment, admission, certification
7. Programme monitoring
8. Teaching, learning and assessment
9. Research, innovation, and 3rd mission
10. Community engagement
11. Partnerships and mobility
12. Communication

Dynamic domains

Another option might be to break down the quality domains into logical groups, according to the specificities of higher education:

1. **Conditions to operate**
   a. Strategy and governance
   b. Human resources and logistics
   c. Communication
   d. Quality assurance
2. **Core process for training**
   a. Programme design
   b. Programme monitoring (from implementation to updating)
   c. Student assessment
3. **Core process for research**
   a. Strategy and policy
   b. Organisation and support
   c. Evaluation of research
   d. Interplay research-training
4. **Core process for students**
   a. Support to success and improvement
   b. Student life and engagement
   c. Equality
   d. Socioeconomic insertion
5. **Quality levers, e.g:**
   a. Internationalisation
   b. Entrepreneurship
   c. Citizenship
   d. Pedagogic innovation

Domains, standards and criteria

A. Strategy and governance

The institution's vision and strategic plan are in alignment with its mission. The institution has adequate policies, processes, procedures and instruments to realize its mission and implement its strategic plans.

Criteria:

1. The institution has set and published a mission statement.
2. The institution's strategies and policies comply with the mission statement.
3. The strategy of the Institution is implementable and in consistency with the national development priorities.
4. The institution is committed into the evaluation of quality, integrity, and effectiveness of its academic programs.
5. The institution ensures the consistency of institutional and faculty/department strategies with a view to preventing conflicts.
6. The institution assures equal opportunities for development and improvement between different units (faculty, departements, programmes).
7. The institution has and ensures the establishment of mechanisms that ensure the implementation of the charter of values and its proper functioning.
8. The institution has an action plan, based on priorities and broken down into monitoring indicators.
   This may imply that: Institution's strategy is drafted in accordance with its mission and purpose. Institution's development strategy sets appropriate objectives and means to achieve expected outcomes. The institution developed a corresponding strategic plan and formulated short, medium, and long-term development plans. It sets future-oriented goals and develop feasible strategies for implementing these. The objectives formulated by the institution can be traced back to its overall strategy and development plans, which are internally and externally oriented.
9. Planning and evaluation are systematic, comprehensible, integrated and appropriate to the institution.
   This may imply that: The institution allocates sufficient resources for its planning and evaluation efforts.
10. The institution has installed structures of supervision and internal evaluation.
    This may imply that: Planning and evaluation involves the participation of individuals and groups responsible for achieving institutional goals. The institution has engaged external consultants to assist its proper functioning.
11. The institution periodically monitors and evaluates its missions, objectives and achievements by assessing their relevance to the evolution of the institution and its external environment.
    This may imply that: Its evaluation system is based on qualitative and quantitative indicators. Evaluation enables the institution to demonstrate by verifiable means the achievement of objectives. The institution has documents that confirm its performance in implementing the results of its planning.

12. The institution has a system of periodic review of its action plan, taking into account the results of the evaluations.
This may imply that: Institutional performance is enhanced by applying the findings of periodic evaluations of policies and conditions that support the achievement of its objectives.

13. Academic freedom, diversity, research and teaching, as well as corporate responsibility, are encouraged and help to accomplish the institution's mission and purpose.
This may imply that: Academic freedom at the institution is expressed in freedom of teaching, freedom of scientific research, freedom of creation.

Personnel and students and other stakeholders are involved in the design and implementation of the institution's strategy.

Criteria:

1. Academic staff are involved in internal debate under institutional procedures prescribed by statute.

2. The governance system takes into consideration the views and comments of students, as stakeholders, in the areas in which students have a direct and reasonable interest (training, student affairs).

3. The institution incentives students's particpation and provides training so they actively engage in institutional and faculty and department-level governance structures and decision-making, as well as consultative bodies.

4. The institution takes corrective actions or adapt strategy to address the results of the National Student Survey.

5. All personnel – teaching and non-teaching – are actively involved in the institution's long- and mid-strategy. They are aware and work towards achieving the goals established by the institution.

6. External stakeholders (employers, experts, authorities…) are consulted and engaged in the design of the long- and mid-strategy or part thereof (e.g. internationalization strategy).

7. The institution has cooperation agreements with stakeholders for conducting the teaching and professional practice for students.

The institution contributes to the social, economic and cultural development of the territory on which it is located[1] and at the national level.

Criteria:

1. The institution is well represented or actively involved in professional associations and associations or platforms for teaching and research.

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[1] Names « regional » in that evaluation framework. Regional might therefore be local (like municipalities).

2. The institution is actively and regularly involved in local or regional socio-cultural initiatives.
3. Staff participate in collaborative initiatives developed with external partners.
4. The institution develops, participates in and manages service projects for the development or social assistance community.
5. Service, development or social service projects are actively used in teaching, and provide impulses and ideas for research.
6. Students engage in projects with societal or regional impact.

There is a clear and transparent division of responsibilities, duties and authorities among the personal (academic and non-academic staff), according to the expected qualifications.

Criteria:

1. The institution has the decision-making structures and bodies at all levels, which have their specific organisation and their powers and competencies.
2. Academic staff, administrative staff, students, etc have opportunities to participate in management and decision making processes, related to planning, resource allocation, program and curricular development.
3. There is coordination among faculties and departments within the institition.
4. The institutional management system intends to realise the mission, vision and strategy. The management deals with the mechanisms of planning, development and continuous improvement, risk assessment, activity assessment of units and their interaction.
5. The institution has a clear allocation of staff duties, delimitation of responsibilities of collegial bodies. Inst has established a transparent system of information and communication (internet, portals, emails etc) with students, staff and stakeholders.

Students are involved in the administrative and decision-making processes and are incentivized to engage in the institution's strategy and management.

Criteria:

1. Students are represented in governing bodies of the institution, structures of teaching-research and services.
2. Student Councils express opinions and proposals for all problems of general interest of the institution as educational plans and research programmes, study regulations, etc.
3. The institution supports student councils and finances their activities.

Institution pursues an open strategy of collaboration and partnership at a regional, national and international level.

> **Criteria:**

1. The Institution has defined objectives in teaching, learning, research, internationalisation, governance and relationship to the society that fit into the national and regional context.
2. The institution has a strategy with regard to the development of society that fits into the institutional profile.
3. The institution has set objectives meant to to develop its relationship with the society.
4. The institution's profile in teaching, learning, research, services fit into the regional, national and international context.

Institution pursues an open strategy of collaboration and partnership at a regional, national and international level.

> **Criteria:**

1. Institution determines its cooperation policy priorities with the relevant stakeholders.
2. Cooperation strategy is reflected in long-term strategy of institution development as well as the regional, national and international development strategies.
3. Institution takes into account the needs of regional economy and labour market for opening new programmes or drafting scientific research projects.
4. Institution collaborates with regional partners in the framework of cooperation strategy implementation.
5. Institution organises and formalises agreements with counterpart institutions of higher education.
6. Institution collaborates with other institutions to provide services to students that help them succeed in their studies, professionnal and personnal development.

B. Quality assurance system

A quality management system is developed with clearly defined objectives, policies and procedures in order to promote a quality assurance culture and ensuring quality of the institiution's activities (teaching, research, services to the society).

Criteria:

1. The quality assurance policy covers all elements of the institution's activities outsourced or executed by other parties.
2. A dedicated quality assurance policy is institutionalised (operationalized into structures and clearly defined into appropriate, effective and efficient mechanisms and methods).
   This may imply that: The institution has set up a quality assurance unit at institutional level, assigned quality assurance focal points in faculties and departments.
3. The internal quality assurance system is enforced at all levels across the institution.
   This may imply that: The institution has implemented self-assessment methods for the quality of teaching and learning, the quality of research activities, the appropriateness of the learning environment. Specific evaluation and monitoring process are implemented (e.g. self-evaluation, peer reviewing, student and staff opinion surveys, destination surveys).
4. The institution defines quality standards for its central processes and for the products or objectives it uses or implements, notably in teaching, research, internationalisation, cooperation and services to the society.
5. The appropriate stakeholders are involved in the design and implementation of the quality assurance policy
6. The institution evaluates the effectiveness of its planning and evaluation activities on an ongoing basis, in order to further enhance the implementation of the quality assurance policy.
7. The information gathered by or from students, alumni, employers and other stakeholders are used for quality improvement.
8. The institution puts in place clear, controlled and shared procedures for key processes.
9. Corrective actions are systematically implemented when dysfunctions or non-conformities are detected as a result of assessments or complaints.
10. The institution demonstrates effectiveness in decision-making, based on factual, balanced analysis of sufficiently accurate and reliable data.

The institution designs and implement policies with the objective of preserving and improving quality, especially for human resources, learning environment (infrastructures, equipment) and financial resources.

Criteria:

1. The institution –or part thereof (faculty, departments) conducts evaluations of governance-management, teaching, research, internationalisation, cooperation and

services to the society, among other domains, on a regular basis and takes subsequent decisions.

2. For quality management, the institution has defined, selected and made available human resources and appropriate tools.

3. The institition has a permanent structure (e. g. quality assurance policy commission.
   This may imply that: A team of quality coordinators ensures the application of procedures in the sectors. Validated tools are used to diagnose or evaluate.

4. Internal quality assurance policy involves internal and external stakeholders in quality assurance processes in a targeted and effective way.
   This may imply that: Both staff and students are involved in the definition of quality policy, diagnosis and continuous improvement. Representatives of the socio-economic and cultural sectors can give opinions on the transversal skills to be acquired or developments in the society to be examined. Experts in quality management and education can evaluate the tools used to measure quality; they can help define performance indicators. Secondary school principals can give their opinion on ways to improve the transition of students to higher education. Graduates (i.e. former students) can evaluate and give their point of view to improve the effectiveness of their study program and the process of assistance to integration into the professional world.

5. The institution provides and manages adequate premises for implementing the study programs and research activities.

6. The institution provides students and staff with all the resources required for training and research work (access to documentation, syllabi…)

7. The IT infrastructure is managed efficiently and is permanently maintained in a proper operating state.
   This may imply that: the institution regularly and systematically assesses the adequacy, use and impact of its library, information resources and services, information technology and communication. It uses evaluation findings to improve and increase the effectiveness of these services.

8. The institution ensures, through needs analysis and effective governance, the necessary financial resources in the short and long term.
   This may imply that: The institution secures sufficient revenue and its budget is clearly and transparently planned and covers all costs incurred. Distribution of financial resources and their use are in accordance with the rules and standards of budgetary programming and public financial management. The institution sets up the special structure for its financial management and financial policy implementation. The institution pursues a transparent policy for distribution of financial resources. The institution analyses indicators from monitoring of financial policy implementation.

C. The Curriculum

The institution ensures that new and existing programmes reflect the needs of society and are continually adapted to societal development and the changing needs of the national and regional, and international labour market as well as societal needs.

Criteria:

1. The institution has an overall strategy, and the study program's qualification objectives have been developed in accordance with it. The national legal requirements regarding the study program's establishment have been observed.

2. Study programmes are drafted in such a way that students have opportunities for employment, professional and personnal development, documented by a feasibility study or any means demonstrating the current and future needs of the job market and the society.

3. The learning outcomes approach is being implemented incrementaly at programme level.

4. Study programmes reflect the needs of the labour market and stipulate the competences to be acquired by students.

5. Study programmes aim to provide students with specialised and interdisciplinary knowledge, as well as professional, methodological and general competence.

   This may imply that: The study programme pursues specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and extraprofessional or interdisciplinary aspects, and refer in particular to the domain of academic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and those of personal development.

6. The institution collaborates with the socio-economic world to explore its needs and upgrades regularly the program contents.

   This may imply that: relevant external stakeholders, including potential employers and graduates, are continually and systematically included in the dialogue on programmes, including their objectives, content and results, and that the results of this are applied to the adaptation of programmes, that central external stakeholders, including potential employers and possible authorising bodies, etc., are included in the development and assessment of suggestions for new programmes.

   The institution accommodates the appropriate learning environment (physical and virtual) including premises and equipments.

   The institution has specific arrangements and process for the introduction of new programmes (design, validation, revision).

The institution assesses regularly and through specific arrangements, the objectives, content, delivery modes and student assessment of the programmes and the impacts on the students learning. The institutions assesses the changes of the market and job-training matching, provices evidence of student success and of programme effectiveness as well as staff experience.

The institution ensures that programmes have an appropriate level (short cycle/Ba/M/Doctorate, vocational, Life Long Learning), an academic content and an educational quality that supports students' learning and the achievement of programme objectives.

Criteria:

1. Study programmes are offered in line with Bologna Process in successive cycles under the system: Bachelor, Master, Doctorate and ensures the continuity of content of study programs across the different levels (bachelor's, master's, doctorate degrees, additional education), based on academic interdependence of disciplines and transversality.
2. The curriculum is organised to help seamless student progress (e.g. modularisation, RPL).
3. Study programmes are designed to facilitate students' mobility and ensure transfer and recognition of credits.
4. The institution offers specific study programmes (e.g. short-term specialisations) as a form of lifelong learning.
5. Study programmes are organised to meet the needs of different categories of students (part-time studies, etc.) as well as students with disabilities or undergoing specific challenges.
6. The institution uses a range of appropriate assessment methods to evaluate the learning experience gained by students (theoretical, practical, knowledge, skills, transversal competences, etc.), the curriculum, the teaching methodology.
7. The institution preserves and guarantees the quality of distance learning (delivery, evaluation).

The institution ensures its capacity to run the programmes efficiently regarding its human resources and learning environment.

Criteria:

1. Training is planned efficiently and clearly, with program content and activities communicated well in advance.
2. Teaching activities are carried out in an efficient manner, in a suitable context (e.g. size of groups, infrastructures with adequate learning time.
3. Qualifications of teaching personnel correspond to the level and requirements of the study programme academic qualification procedures.
4. Teaching methods are evaluated and adjusted on a regular basis. The institution has and applies internal evaluation methods. The institution analyses the resources for the

new study programs (classrooms, laboratories, computers, financial resources, learning material, staff qualitys, etc)

5. The institution has set up a teacher evaluation system that values the quality of pedagogy and promotes emulation.
6. The institution guarantees the provision of adequate and easily accessible learning resources. Adequate support from the teacher is also provided to the student.
7. The institution ensures that it provides students with systematic, substantial and sequential opportunities to acquire important skills and knowledge. It is actively engaged in improving the skills of students, based on field studies, surveys of all stakeholders.

Clear goals are defined for each study programme and are communicated to students and stakeholders.

Criteria:

1. The intended learning outcomes demonstrably describe the level of the programme (Associate Degree, Bachelor's, or Master's), as well as its orientation (professional or academic).
2. The institution ensures that the module content is congruent with study level (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral degrees) and expected learning outcomes. The institution stipulates the learning goals and requirements for each programme mand makes them available to students.
3. The intended learning outcomes have been adequately translated into educational objectives of the curriculum.
4. ECTS is used and credit points correspond to the intended learning outcomes and workload of students.
5. The intended learning outcomes tie in with the regional, national or international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme. Insofar as is applicable, the intended learning outcomes are in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations.
6. The intended learning outcomes are periodically evaluated.
7. The curriculum enables the students to master appropriate (professional or academic) research and professional skills.
8. The feasibility of the study programme is guaranteed, as is an appropriate amount of student workload.
9. The teaching-learning environment encourages students to play an active role in the design of their own learning process (student-centred approach). The design of the learning environment chimes with the educational philosophy of the institution.

D. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The curriculum design, development, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and review processes are in alignment with legislation and the institution's vision and strategy.

Criteria:

1. Professionalism and sufficient human resources are guaranteed in the study program and ensure its successful implementation.
2. Recruitment and appointment of teaching staff is appropriate. Interdisciplinary links to other study programs are taken into consideration.
3. Qualitative and quantitative sufficiency of the equipment and spaces necessary for the successful implementation the study program are guaranteed.

The institution has and uses mechanisms to ensure that outcomes (of learning, employment and the satisfaction of the different interest groups) can be measured, analysed and used for the enhancement of the quality of programmes.

Criteria:

1. The institution has a quality assurance procedure and ensures the quality of the teaching and learning process, whatever the way or the place where it is offered. Continuing education, virtual, distance learning or shift scheduling are clearly integrated and incorporated into the training policy and the institution's evaluation system.
2. The institution periodically monitors and evaluates the implementation of its study programs to ensure that they meet their assigned goals and that they meet the needs of students and society.
3. The institution has indicators to evaluate students on an ongoing basis and evaluates learning outcomes effectively. The results achieved are continuously monitored and documented.
4. The institution encourages and uses student feedback. Students are involved in evaluation of lecturers and study programme implementation. Survey mechanisms can measure quality systematically to maintain dashboards.
5. Study programmes quality is evaluated also by statistics of employment of graduates in the relevant study programme.

The institution must have mechanisms to ensure that the hiring, management and professional development of its teaching staff is carried out with the necessary guarantees to ensure they can fulfil their corresponding functions.

Criteria:

1. The institution makes its organization chart public.
2. The institution has a robuts, fair, transparent mechanism for recruiting its personnel. *This implies that: There are corresponding regulations in force for recruiting teaching and administrative personnel, which are clear and transparent and promote equality*

and recognition based on qualification and experience. This implies that: The institution provides for criteria and procedures for personnel recruitment in the internal regulations. The institution publishes employment criteria for each vacant job position. The institution recruits with priority qualified academic staff from internationally recognized universities. The institution pursues a policy of part-time employment for its needs. The institution pursues a policy of promotion of full-time, part-time, invited or contracted academic staff.

3. The duties and responsibilities of the personnel correspond to their qualifications and experience.
4. The personnel is aware of their tasks and contribute to enhancing the institution's strategy and activities.
5. The number of personnel employed is adequate for developing all the institution's current and planned activities.
6. The institution follows a training plan according to priorities defined in development project.
7. The institution organizes social activities and promotes social dialogue.
8. The institution pursues a policy of life and health insurance.
9. The institution engages in implementation of integration policies for its staff.
   This implies that: The institution engages its staff to organise an information day, by preparing informational brochures. The institution pursues a favourable policy for integration of its staff in its social life.

The institution ensures the quality of exchange programs and international mobility (students, teachers, staff) and promotes mobility at all levels. Specific quality assurance mechanisms are in place for mobility.

Criteria:

1. The study program has a modular structure linked to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), as well as a course-related examination system. Descriptions of the modules are available to students and contain all information required by the ECTS User's Guide, particularly regarding learning content and outcomes, didactic methods, workload and prerequisites for credit allocation.
2. The combination and succession of study program modules are consistent with the program's qualification objectives.
3. Mobility gaps (exchanges), if offered in the study program, are integrated into the curricula. The scope and form of program-related cooperation agreements are recorded, including those with national and international entities, higher education institutions, companies and other organizations.
4. Study programmes are designed to facilitate students' mobility.
5. Credits awarded in a foreign Higher Education Institution in the framework of a mutual agreement are transferred without review.
   This implies that: the institution provides opportunities to transfer credits awarded at home or abroad, through equivalence of parts or complete study programmes in terms

of the right to continue education in the same or similar study programme in a counterpart institution.

6. The institution promotes exchange programs and international mobility among its students and teaching personnel.

The institution offers opportunities for any student's educational and professional needs to pursue, stop and resume the study programmes.

Criteria:

1. Study programmes allow a progressive transition from the first to the second cycle.
2. Study programmes ensure successful completion of first cycle and admission to second cycle.
3. Programmes of first-cycle studies provide students with basic knowledge, general scientific methods and principles and specific moulding skills.
4. The institution guides students wishing to change study programmes and documents the process.
5. There are appropriate mechanisms to ensure pathways, recognition of prior learning.
6. Students are informed and guided about the possibility of transfer of study programmes or credits received during their studies.
7. Credits awarded in a foreign Higher Education Institution in the framework of a mutual agreement are transferred without review. HEIs provide opportunities to transfer credits awarded at home or abroad, through equivalence of parts or complete study programmes in terms of the right to continue education in the same or similar study programme in a counterpart institution.
8. Study programs with special profiles (e.g. dual, part-time, occupational, distance learning) take appropriate measures (e.g. access to an online distance learning platform) to offer their students a reasonable and proportional education.

The institution has a clear policy regarding the assessment of student's achievements (academic and work placement and other learning outcomes a gained through the study programmes) as well as the accumulation and transfer of credits, so that the assessment is fair, equitable, understood by the students and in line with the pedagogical approach of the institution.

Criteria:

1. The assessment is consistent, applied fairly to all students and carried out in accordance with established and communicated procedures.
   This implies that: The evaluation criteria and methods, and the rating criteria are regulated and published in advance. The frequency and organization of examinations are appropriate and proportionate.
2. The institution demonstrates that students who successfully complete a training program have acquired the knowledge and developed the skills that are identified

as objectives of the program. The assessment method allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.

3. Students benefit from feedback, if necessary with advice on the learning process.
   This implies that: Students have access to personal exam scores, by observing the confidentiality principle.

4. Students have the right of appeal in the event of a problem; the protest and resolution procedure is clearly explained.
   This implies that: Complaints against examinations' scores are reviewed by a committee set up in compliance with examinations' regulation.

5. Evaluation methods are evaluated regularly for adequacy and effectiveness.

6. Students receive a diploma supplement (a document which describes the knowledge and skills acquired by holders of higher education diplomas) explaining the qualification obtained, including the learning outcomes achieved as well as the context, level, the content and status of the studies successfully completed and completed.

The institution brings to the forefront and supports projects of pedagogical innovation and excellence in order to improve the integration of graduates and to strengthen the capacity for innovation by setting up innovative and employable courses.

Criteria:

1. The institution evaluates achievements of its staff. Lecturers are regularly assessed by institution structures that pursue qualitative implementation of study programmes.

2. The institution encourages training and promotion of academic staff in western universities.

3. The institution engages foreign professors in committees/panels that promote personnel to scientific degree 'Doctor' and academic titles 'Docent', 'Prof.', 'Ass. Prof.'.

4. The institution sets as a prerequisite for promotion to title 'Professor' sufficient research or academic experience of at least 1 year in a western university.

5. The institution has a support structure that promotes continuous teaching improvement. Academic staff are trained continuously to improve teaching.

6. The institution also provides additional educational programs to cover the continuous training of its personnel and the enhancement of student training.

7. The institution has supporting mechanisms for experimentation in teaching.

8. Academic staff, teaching, scientific supporting staff and administrative staff are committed to improve teaching and application of study programmes.

E. Research support

The institution ensures that the research projects contributes to, and guarantee a high level of scientific quality in a relevant research area.

Criteria:

1. The institution establishes research structures based on criteria that take into account research priorities, scientific skills, human potential and infrastructure.
2. The institution encourages the evolution of research structures through a reflection on trends in the scientific environment, and promotes the grouping, the re-composition of existing entities or the emergence of new relevant structures.
3. The scientific equipment is shared between the various research entities of the institution.
4. The institution ensures the respect of research ethics.
5. The institution ensures the development of research teams/groups, research laboratories, organisation of workshops, involvement of the students in research activities; participation of staff and students (Msc or Doctorate) in scientific conferences.
6. The institution suports the development of inter-disciplinary research within and across faculties and departments.

The institution ensures the dynamism of national and international development of its research policy as well as the valorisation and dissemination of its results.

Criteria:

1. The institution supports and rewards participation in international research and education programs of teams or individuals.
2. The institution has the ability to identify and mobilize key institutional, scientific and socio-economic interlocutors and key valuation structures
3. The institution knows its human potential, its material and financial resources as well as the opportunities offered by its regional, national and international environment for scientific research.
4. The institution has a monitoring and prospecting structure on scientific and technological developments in its regional, national and international environment.
5. The institution has a relevant, effective and comprehensive strategy for scientific cooperation.

There is an institutional strategy and programming of research activities.

Criteria:

1. Research activity is in compliance with the mission and strategy of Inst. and with the developments and important issues in the international level.
2. The vision and strategy of the research are elaborated in consultation with the actors of the institution.
3. The priorities of the research correspond to the objectives of positioning the institution.
4. The institution organizes strategic reflection workshops on its scientific research and innovation policy, using specific external expertise.

The institution promotes research and scientific activity in programmes teaching where relevant.

Criteria:

1. The institution ensures the mutual integration of science and education.

2. The institution ensures that the research work or research findings are integrated into the learning process.

3. The actors of the field of research are involved in the training (diploma editing, educational and administrative responsibilities (master, ED, training networks, etc.).

4. The training fields are backed by the research field (contents of the model, teaching interventions).

5. The institution ensures treatment of interdisciplinary in the articulation of the field of research and the field (s) of formation.

6. The institution has a policy of welcoming and supervising students and doctoral students within the research units.

7. The institution ensures the smooth running of doctoral studies and ensures favorable conditions for the development of research work.

The institution has set up appropriate structures and mechanisms to support, incentivise, assess and reward research engagement.

Criteria:

1. The institution monitors and evaluates the instutional (or faculty or departmental) research policy and strategy.

2. The institution has provisions and arrangements for steering, monitoring and regulating its research entities and research programs and initiatives supported.

3. The institution supports the use of peer self-assessment on a regular basis (e.g. before the renewal of their accreditation).

4. The institution supports and rewards research performance, productivity and values scientific impact.

The institution has set up appropriate structures and mechanisms to foster the production and valorisation of research.

Criteria:

1. The institution uses the external evaluation of its system and research entities to identify its research potential and promote excellence in this area.

2. The institution organises the evaluation of doctoral studies on a regular basis. The results of this evaluation are the basis of the improvements made.

3. The institution encourages innovation and the emergence of innovative teams and programs.

4. The institution has an internal and external communication strategy that is relevant and adapted to the different target audiences in the field of research.

5. The institution has a policy of promoting and transferring results of research.

F. Students and their Support

Admission requirements and student evaluation methods are clear, manageable and publicly made available.
Criteria:
1. The institution informs future students for study programmes that it provides through the career counselling office.
2. The institution informs students of training programs, access conditions and evaluation methods. The institution publishes the objectives of each course and the admission procedures (diplomas required, pedagogical prerequisites, selection procedures), as well as the skills to be acquired.
3. The institution applies in a consistent and consistent manner predefined and published rules covering all phases of the study cycle, from the admission and progression of students, to the recognition and certification of their prior learning.
4. Admission requirements and student selection procedures correspond to the standards of the study program. They are realistic with a view to the intended learning outcomes, and the curriculum ties in with the qualifications of the incoming students.
5. Information specifically for students with disabilities concerning the study program, education process, admission requirements, and aforementioned compensative measures are documented and published.
6. The institution welcomes and pursues specific policies for absorption and integration of new students.
7. The institution establishes separate structures or clarifies personal's missions for reception, information and admission of new students.

Mechanisms for student support and advice are established for successful accomplishment, career preparation and continuation of studies.
Criteria:
1. The institution fosters the students' contribution to quality improvement of teaching and learning via the consultation individuals or associatiations.
2. The institution fosters communication with alumni and the creation of an alumni community.
3. The institution engages in information and orientation of students.
   This implies that: The institution has a framework for guiding and advising students. The institution makes available to students information materials or brochures.
4. The institution has established mechanisms relating to student support and advice. Structure for guiding and advising students supports them in all cycles of study the institution provides.
5. The institution has a structure of information and counselling for students.
   This implies that: The institution owns external communication means. The institution owns internal communication means. The institution staff have internal email addresses. The institution holds personal files for each student. The

institution holds the address (including email address) and phone number of each student.

6. The institution follows supporting policies for students' progress.
   This implies that: The institution provides tutorship for students. The tutoring of and provision of information to students are conducive to study progress and tie in with the needs of students.
6. The institution applies alternative teaching methods depending on its students' interests.
7. The institution assists and guides students how to find literature.
8. The institution offers courses at its premises to help students in difficulty.
9. The institution provides orientation activities.

The institution ensures inclusiveness of any kind of student admitted.
Criteria:

1. Learning and teaching take into account the diversity of students and their needs, offering flexible learning paths in an inclusive education context.
2. Inst takes care of students who are not adequately prepared for study at the level for which they have been admitted in order to support them to attain appropriate educational goals;
3. The institution supports the use of teaching methods to ensure quality training regardless of student profile.
4. The institution supports research and the implementation of new learning methods to foster interdisciplinary and flexible modes of learning for students to develop transversal skills.
5. The institution has transparently implemented provisions for the promotion of gender equality and equal opportunity for students with particular living circumstances and other vulnerable groups.
6. The institution pursues a policy of support for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses.
   This implies that: they benefit from compensative measures regarding time limits and formal requirements of the study process, as well as all performance records in the course of study. Information specifically for students with disabilities concerning the study program, education process, admission requirements, and aforementioned compensative measures are documented and published.
7. The institution pursues a policy of support for Roma students and Balkan Egyptians.
8. The institution pursues a policy of support for students engaging in sports activities at high levels.
9. The institution pursues a policy of support for students wishing to pursue part-time studies.

The institution has a supportive policy to extra-curriculum activities and rewards the engagement of students.

Criteria:

1. The institution pursues a policy to facilitate student life.

2. The institution supports students' cultural life.

3. The institution is actively and regularly involved in regional socio-cultural initiatives.

4. The institution supports students who engage in sports activities organised by its structures and other institutions.

Discussion points

1. Adapting the quality framework to **di**stinctive features

Domain	Standards	Relevance for national HE system **Compliance with the law** ⇨**Keep / Delete / Amend / Add**
A. Strategy and governance	1. The institution's vision and strategic plan are in alignment with its mission. The institution has adequate policies, processes, procedures and instruments to realize its mission and implement its strategic plans. 2. Personnel and students and other stakeholders are involved in the design and implementation of the institution's strategy. 3. The institution contributes to the social, economic and cultural development of the territory on which it is located and at the national level. 4. There is a clear and transparent division of responsibilities, duties and authorities among the governing/leading authorities and decision making bodies, personnel (academic and non-academic staff) and according to the expected qualifications. 5. Students are involved in the administrative and decision-making processes and are incentivized to engage in the institution's strategy and management. 6. Institution pursues an open strategy of collaboration and partnership at a regional, national and international level.	Collaborative work with QA experts and National QA Agency

2. Ensuring interplay between quality frameworks
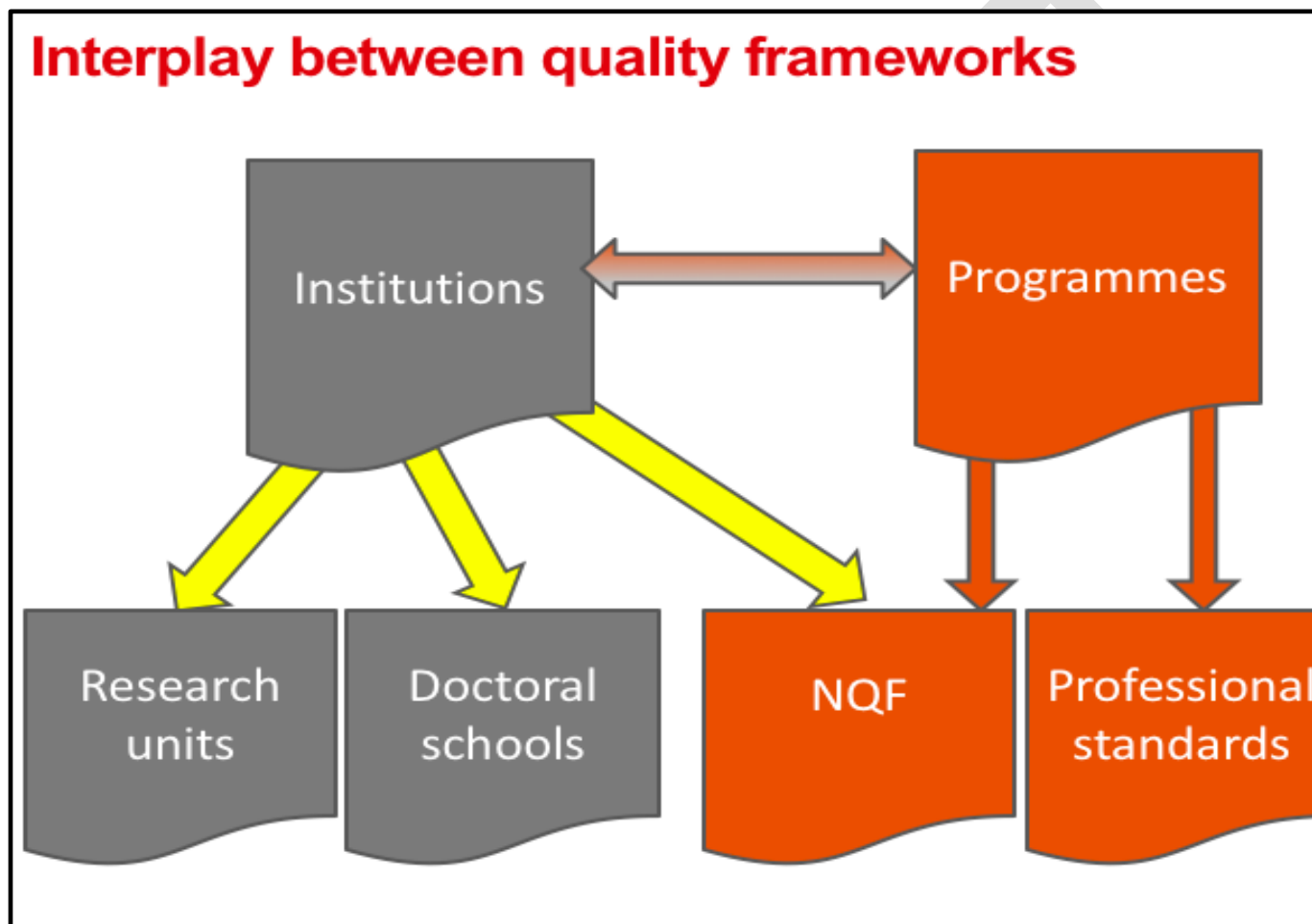
3. Ensuring consistency and alignment with programme quality framework

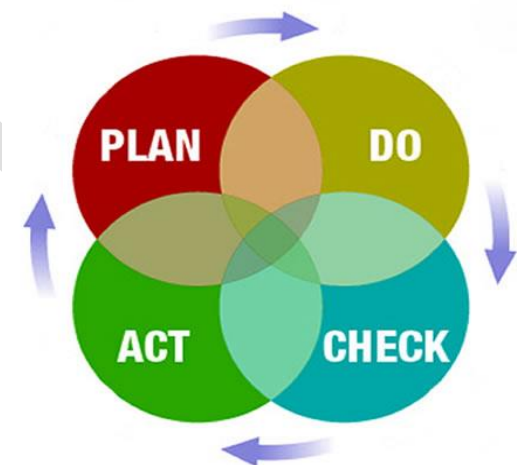| Domain	Institutional standards	Programme standards ⇨ **To be defined** ⇨ **Focsu on learning outcomes** ⇨ **Alignement with professional standards** ⇨ **Alignement with NQF**
A. Strategy and governance	1. The institution's vision and strategic plan are in alignment with its mission. The institution has adequate policies, processes, procedures and instruments to realize its mission and implement its strategic plans. 2. Personnel and students and other stakeholders are involved in the design and implementation of the institution's strategy. 3. The institution contributes to the social, economic and cultural development of the territory on which it is located and at the national level. 4. There is a clear and transparent division of responsibilities, duties and authorities among the governing/leading authorities and decision making bodies, personnel (academic and non-academic staff) and according to the expected qualifications. 5. Students are involved in the administrative and decision-making processes and are incentivized to engage in the institution's strategy and management. 6. Institution pursues an open strategy of collaboration and partnership at a regional, national and international level.	At level of Master programmes and Master domains: National QA Agency has already developed a methodology that should be included in the new methodology. To be reflected in the umbrella methodology. Collaborative work with QA experts and National QA Agency on a proposal by WB

4. Setting quality threshholds : a rating system?
2 examples with A) Strategy & governance and C) The curriculum

The objectives of QA assessment are twofold

1. Help the institutions improve their capacity;

2. Assess the attainment of the quality expectations

To pursue both objectives, the quality assurance framework will use standards and criteria, and standards for identifying rooms for improvement on quality. It will furthermore use a 7-point rating scale for QA assessment. The rating scale might be used for both objectives as it provides instituations and external evaluators an instrument for scaling their verdicts and to see how far they have progressed in their journey. The 7-point rating scale is described below.

The rating scale is based on the level of achievement of the Plan, Do, Check, Act cycle (PDCA). . This cycle is a four-step model for carrying out change. Just as a circle has no end, the PDCA cycle should be repeated again and again for continuous improvement. The Plan step consists in determining your policy. The Do step is implementing your plans. The Check step consists in measuring performance by reviewing the test, analyzing the results and identifying what you have learned. Finally, the Act step includes taking action based on what you learned in the study step: if the change did not work, go through the cycle again with a different plan.

Rating	Description
1	**The criterion is not fulfilled. There are no plans, documents, evidences or results available according to the PDCA process.** - No QA mechanisms - No plan, no documents and results available - Need to act immediately to improve the quality.
2	No plan, some evidences, not reliable and not consistent. **No PDCA but some evidences** The QA practice is at blending stage and not as requested by criteria There are few QA activities and implementation is ineffective, need some improvement to fulfil the criterion.
3	**There are plans, and some relevant evidences** There is a plan but no DCA. Do not meet the minimum request but some actions should be implemented for meeting it. There are few QA activities but they are not consistent, they need some improvement to fully fulfil the criterion. There are documents but not all evidences that show they fully fulfil the requirements. Some results are shown.
4	**There is plan and implementation as well as reliable and consistent evidences** - plan do but no check and act - implementation of QA is effective to meet the level of criteria regarding its planning and implementation. - There are evidences showing that the plan and implementation respects the necessary steps. The QA activities bring the results but it is not fully showed that the request is met.

5	PLAN Do, implementation, evidences that are consistent and reliable. There is some evaluation.
	PDC but no improvement yet.
	Explanation: The QA activities meet well the requirements of criteria with some assessment done, showing some results on planning and implementation and some preparation for improvement.
	Some evidence show that implementation is done effectively.
	The QA shows the institution can get some good results provided there is a robust plan for improvement, and positive improvement trend.
6	**PDCA, evidences are reliable and consistent. There is evaluation and improvement based on the results of that evaluation**.
	There is benchmarking to show that the trend is positive.
	The implementation of QA meets the requests of the criterion, a good practice to share at national level.
	The quality improvement is implemented based on the evaluation and the results. Many evidences show quality improvement is conducted effectively. The QA shows results met the expectations and the improvement, more than the expectation.
7	**Excellent level. PDCA, benchmark and innovation.**
	PDCA at excellent levels.
	Explanation: QA activities met the request and fulfilled the criteria. They are considered excellent, reached level of World class university as centre of excellence.
	Evidences show that improvement was achieved creatively.
	The QA activities are achieved at level of outstanding, a trend shows improvement is going up.

The scores should reflect a variety of indicators as featured in the Quality Assurance Framework. The scoring is the result of the institution's observations and judgments done for each standard. The scoring reflects the self-positioning of the institution as per the quality of its strategy, policy and initiatives.

The scoring focus on the capacity of the institution to design, implement, evaluate and remediate, i.e. the key elements that are within the institution's control, rather than on actual outcomes that are influenced by elements outside the institution's control. Good policies and institutions are expected to lead, over time, to quality teaching and learning, notwithstanding possible fluctuations due to external factors.

The institution should be rated on their current status in relation to the standards. The ratings should depend on the ongoing strategy, policy, imitative, not on promises or intentions.

In assigning rating to each quality indicator, only whole number should be used based on the above scale.

The institution scores are based on the 6 standards. 2 examples are featured below.

Rating	A. Strategy and governance
1	• The institution has not designed or issued a mission statement and has not envisaged any strategic plan. The vision is not explicit • The management system is unclear. • There is no QA mechanism.
2	• There is a sketch of a strategic plan, some faculties and departments have started a reflection on strategic orientations at their level, but there is no overarching, university-wide strategy. The mission statement is vaguely expressed. The vision is vaguely formulated by the senior management but misinterpreted or unknown by many within the institution. • There are limited instruments to ensure the institution is properly and effectively managed. Few staff feel concerned about managerial skills. • There is no QA mechanism.
3	• There is a institution-wide strategic vision. There are strategic orientations, that are stipulated in a strategic plan. These orientations are not shared with the whole the institution. • The senior and middle managers have some capacities to manage the institution properly and effectively. • Some QA mechanisms exist but with no consistency across departments and faculties.
4	• The institution has a mission statement and a vision, which are materialized in a strategic plan. The strategic plan is being implemented, but it is not fully monitored. • The management is effective and efficient for all staff, with limited possibilities to identify areas of improvement. • There are some QA mechanisms but not all are activated.

5	• The institution has a clear-cut mission statement and a strategic plan that is being enforced and monitored. Both are aligned with the strategic vision that is shared with the whole institution community. • There are evidences on the implementation and follow-up of the strategic plan and on the efficiency of the management. The institution is a reference at national level for its strategic vision, plan and managerial capability. • The QA mechanisms are activated but do not necessarily trigger quality improvement actions.
6	• The institution monitors its strategic plan and takes remedial actions where needed (e.g. updates the mission statement). • All the institution's activities are aligned with a clear-cut mission statement and a strategic vision and properly steering thanks to an efficient management system. The institution becomes a reference at regional level in terms of strategic planning and consistency of activities, which all embed the strategic vision and mission statement. • The QA mechanisms are activated and enable the monitoring and corrective actions.
7	• There is state-of-the art design, implementation and follow-up of the mission statement, strategic vision, strategic plan and university management that make the institution a unique reference point at international level, forming a skilled workforce to meet the challenges of the 21st century. • Excellence in management is known widely. The institution has spearheaded a robust quality assurance policy that permeates all levels of interventions. The mission and strategic vision and plan are easily understandable for any interested, and are widely disseminated by multiple communication channels.

Rating	C- The curriculum
1	• The institution is unable to show how the curriculum is aligned with its mission and vision. There is no QA mechanism allowing the matching with national regulations and checking the needs of the institution's environment. • The curriculum is not based on the research results or there is no evidence that research has guided the design of the curriculum content. There is no QA mechanism allowing the institution to keep track of the consistent implementation of the curriculum by faculties and departments. There is no evidence that the professional standards are fully met.
2	• Some faculties and departments have started a reflection on the design of the curriculum in order to adapt it to their specificities. They however work in silos with no institutional guidance. There is no university-wide orientation regarding the specificity of the curriculum. Stakeholders are not consulted. There is no QA mechanism. • Some faculties and departments have started a reflection or taken action to improve the relevance of the curriculum content and have thought about a more efficient implementation. They however work in silos with no institutional framework. There is no QA mechanism. The transfer and accumulation of credits is unknown or inconsistent.
3	• The institution has a plan to design a consistent and inclusive curriculum (i.e. appropriate for any kind of learner). Some Stakeholders are being consulted, but the results of the consultations are unevenly taken into account. QA mechanisms allow implementing the curriculum, with no possibility to identify problems and sort them out. • The institution has set a plan meant to ensure the content comply with the professional standards and at the same time meet the stakeholders' needs. The plan specifies the credits allocation system and refers to national or regional practice. There is no evidence on the *implementability* of the plan.
4	• The institution has enacted a university-wide policy on the curriculum design and content, that is being enforced. Research and external consultations inform the content and guide the revision of the curriculum. All faculties and departments follow the institutional guidance and the curriculum content is consistent within the institution. The content and implementation of the curriculum are not fully monitored. • The faculties and departments enforce the curriculum according to the institution's plan and guidance. The learners are informed on the content and the foreseen implementation of the curriculum, as well as when and how the curriculum will be revised. Research regularly informs the revision of the curriculum. The institution can demonstrate that the curriculum balances theory and practice. The content and implementation of the curriculum are not fully monitored.

5	• The institution monitors the curriculum to ensure consistency of implementation and revision across faculties and departments. Stakeholders fully participate in the design and the implementation and the revision. QA mechanisms provide evidences on the implementation and follow-up of the curriculum. The way the curriculum is designed and enforced is a reference at national level. Teachers benefit from institutional support to implement the curriculum. • The institution monitors the revision of the curriculum to ensure its relevance according to stakeholders' needs and the national regulations. The curriculum is flexible enough to adapt to the unexpected changes coming from the stakeholders or from national authorities. The institution joins national events e.g. reflection and working groups with national authorities and other stakeholders to present its achievements in content design and revision. The institution fosters research with a view to enriching the content and updating the curriculum on scientific evidence and paying attention to the international trends.
6	• The institution revises the curriculum at a regular pace and when needed (unexpected conditions, needs from stakeholders, national orientations) and has adopted a range of QA mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation (e.g. QA on recruitment of teachers, students supervision) valid for any learner and learning environment. Feedback mechanisms from learners and stakeholders as well as other QA mechanisms like tracer surveys allow a close alignment between the education offered and the needs of the country. • The institution is expert in curriculum development and is solicited nationally and regionally for the practices in content and revision. The institution is able to manage the trade-off between compliance with national regulations and quality expectation and the necessary flexibility to implement, revise and check the curriculum development. Top-down and bottom-up approaches are combined within the institution with contributions from faculties, departments managers, the institution leaders, teachers, learners in and out of the institution, as well as experts in the field of the curriculum.
7	• The curriculum is recognized internationally for the relevance and innovation of its design, implementation and revision. The institution is a center for excellence in Higher Education and can inform any institution on the conditions for success, modus operandi and monitoring and evaluation in that field. Authoritative publications are conducted and events are organized.