



IQainAR STRATEGY AND ROADMAP

STUDENT CENTRED IQA

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

STAKEHOLDERS INPUT

IQAINAR STRATEGY AND ROADMAP

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1 Introduction

Project **IQainAR** aims to support enhancement and development of the Internal Quality Assurance of Higher Education Institutions (IQA of HEIs) of partner countries with international (EU) quality standards as benchmark as well as strengthening the HEIs towards local, regional and national policies and strategies implementation.

The IQA system has a very broad spectrum, and this project will focus on two main areas of IQA of HEI: teaching (teaching, learning and assessment) and teacher (educator, practitioner researcher), as teacher plays a key role of QA of teaching. Additionally, IQA lies within a culture of quality awareness, critical review and of continue-improvement attitude and actions within HEI's. This project is aiming at supporting the further quality culture development within HEI's of partner countries.

This is a policy document of the project strategy and roadmap to achieve the enhancement and development of the IQAs at the participating HEIs, as part of the WP1 (Work Package 1 deliverables).

The IQainAR project strategy has three main characteristics:

1. The development and enhancement of student centred IQA systems
2. The involvement of all key stakeholders in the IQA processes
3. The concept of continuous improvement and the implementation of PDCA cycles in all processes and procedures.

The purpose of the strategy is not only to enhance the IQA systems of the HEIs but also to develop and implement a system and a culture of continuous improvement at each institution.

2 Quality Assessment Standards in EU, Azerbaijan and Russia

2.1 Quality Assessment Standards in EU

The project policy, strategy and roadmap are developed in line with the ENQA criteria for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) is responsible for the dissemination of information, experience and good practice in the field of quality assurance in higher education to European quality assurance agencies, public administrations and higher education institutions. In 2005, ENQA published the technical document *Criteria and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, which laid the foundations for the structuring and implementation of Internal Quality Assurance Systems in European universities. This document was updated in 2015, being a base document for Higher Education institutions and agencies in the European Higher Education Area in the processes of quality management and evaluation developed.

The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) holds account of all quality assurance and accreditation agencies that comply with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESGs) in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

In the Netherlands, quality assurance at higher education institutions are monitored and safeguarded by the **Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO)**. A higher education institution located in the Netherlands has the responsibility to develop its Internal Quality Assurance system that will be aligned with the external quality requirements at local, regional, national and international level. The standards set forth by NVAO constitute a reflective cycle, and based on this an institution can demonstrate that the quality culture is focused on development and following up on policy results. These four standards, 1. Vision and policy; 2. Implementation; 3. Evaluation and monitoring; 4. Focus and development, are specified in the Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands (NVAO, 2018).

In Spain, the **National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA)**¹, together with **University Quality Assurance Agencies**², are responsible for the assessment of syllabuses in accordance with the verification protocols jointly agreed on. University syllabuses are verified based on submitted reports. In the accreditation phase, the university must justify the adjustment of the situation of what has been achieved with that proposed in the project presented or justify the causes of the imbalance and the actions carried out in each of the areas. The structure of the report corresponds to the ten aspects³: 1. Description of the degree; 2. Justification; 3. Competences; 4. Access and Admission; 5. Teaching Planning; 6. Academic Staff; 7. Material Resources and Services; 8. Expected Outcomes; 9. Quality Assurance System; 10. Implementation Schedule.

In Germany, the relevant Land (regional) Ministry of Science and Research conducts the supervision of higher education institutions. External evaluation is performed at regional level by evaluation agencies

¹ Based on the Royal Decree 861/2010, of 2 July, which amends Royal Decree 1393/2007, of 29 October

² Members of ENQA and registered with EQAR

³ listed in Annex II of Royal Decree 861/2010

or by associations of higher education institutions including all “Länder” or regions. Additionally, an instance called The Science Council (Wissenschaftsrat) conducts accreditation assessments for non-state universities.

An **Accreditation Council Foundation (Stiftung Akkreditierungsrat)** has been established for the accreditation of bachelor and master level programmes (in the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany. This council is a joint institution of the previously mentioned Länder for accreditation and quality assurance of teaching and learning at HEIs in Germany. The Länder jointly perform their tasks of quality assurance and development by means of the council.

For example, the German partner in our project, IUBH, is a university subject to the regulations concerning higher education in Thuringia. These regulations define the tasks that a state or state-recognised university has to fulfil. In the case of a university for applied sciences such as the IUBH, these include, for example, application-oriented teaching and studying, the preparation for professional activities, research and the transfer of scientific findings. By-laws regulate specific aspects such as access to higher education for professionally qualified persons. At the request of the relevant ministry, further requirements may be added on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, private universities are required to regularly undergo an external review by the German Council of Science and Humanities (Wissenschaftsrat) based on their criteria. As a privately run and thus not state-financed university, the IUBH must also take the situation on the education market into account in its economic activities. In addition, each university has a number of interest groups (“Stakeholders”) whose expectations it must consider in the quality management.

2.2 Quality Assessment Standards in Azerbaijan

In order to build a modern accreditation system in line with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESGs) Azerbaijan connected ENQA to its QA system requirement in HEIs.

Quality assurance at the national level in Azerbaijan is regulated by a number of laws on education and additional normative documents. The Education Quality Assurance Agency adopted the Model Charter of HEI on 29.12.2019, which specifies that the institutions are accredited in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Education” (article 1.13) and the agency carries out these accreditations.

Other rules governing the IQA in HEIs in Azerbaijan adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers:

1. State Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan (2013)
2. Bachelor’s Study Content and Arrangement Rules (2010)
3. Content and Organization of the Master Degree Education (2010)

The QA regulations in Azerbaijan are centralized, thus established at a national level, therefore regional regulations do not exist.

NSU carries out its activities for its IQA based on its strategic plan and practical guidelines for implementation, monitoring, assessment and improvements on the educational activities.

At ASPU the IQA Department was established in September 2018. Its activities are carried out based on three documents:

1. Quality Assurance Department Charter

2. Interim Regulations on Rating Assessment
3. Working plan of the Quality Assurance Departments

2.3 Quality Assessment Standards in Russia

Internal education assurance in the higher education institutions in Russia is governed at three levels; National, Regional and Local.

At the national level are:

- Federal Law No. 273-FZ “On Education in the Russian Federation” of December 29, 2012 (as amended on December 30, 2020).
- Resolution of the Russian Government of December 26, 2017 No. 1642 “On approval of the State Program of the Russian Federation “Development of Education”” (as amended on December 31, 2020).
- Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation “On Approval of the Procedure for Organizing and Implementing Educational Activities for Educational Programs of Higher Education - Bachelor’s Degree Programs, Specialist Degree Programs, Master’s Degree Programs” No. 301 of April 05, 2017 (as amended on August 17, 2020).

At the Regional level *(We provide two examples below from the project partners)*

1. At BelSU (Belgoros State University)

- Law of the Belgorod Region No. 314 “On Education in the Belgorod Region” of October 31, 2014 (as amended on July 02, 2020);
- The state program “Development of education in the Belgorod region” approved by the resolution of the Government of the Belgorod region No. 528-pp of December 30, 2013 (as amended on August 31, 2020);
- The strategy of socio-economic development of the Belgorod region for the period up to 2025, approved by the resolution of the Government of the Belgorod region No. 27-pp of January 01, 2010 (as amended on July 27, 2020).

2. At TvSU (Tver State University)

- Program of strategic development of the Tver State University (TvSU) (applied by acting rector of TvSU on 26.12.2018).
- Strategy for quality assurance in TvSU (applied by the Academic Council of TvSU on 30.05.2018).
- Concept of quality assurance in TvSU (applied. by the Academic Council of TvSU on 27.06.2012).
- Policy of TSU in the field of quality (applied by acting rector of TvSU on 25.12.2020).

At the local level

- Academic programs, their mode of delivery as well as learning conditions are scrutinized based on the government stipulated quality guidelines.
- Admissions are centered on the learning outcomes achieved from the students’ former field of studies.
- There is a verification to ascertain students’ meeting with the requirements as set by the Federal State Educational Standard by writing Federal Internet Exam in the field of Professional Education.
- At the end of this process, Quality Certificates are issued to successful prospective students.
- There is a midterm verification to determine initial learning outcomes at the end of practical work, course work and graduate work.

- Teaching competencies and professional qualifications evaluations are done to measure outstanding teachers
- Survey questionnaires on the students to provide feedback about teachers instructional abilities and the average performance of the total students participated in the course are carried out.
- Online questionnaires are answered by the students to determine the quality of work of the teaching staff and obtain students' satisfactory levels to enable the university administration take an informed decisions geared towards providing supports and motivating outstanding teachers.
- Innovative infrastructures at both scientific and research areas of the university are assessed in terms of volume, patent as well as licensing activities
- Performance of postgraduate, doctoral and dissertation board members are assessed.
- International research collaborations, active upcoming scientific research, research grants both national and international obtained by students and faculty alike are analyzed
- Faculty members holding scientific degrees are investigated
- Research revenue impact factors are considered
- Assessment criteria are instituted based on the university's performance indicators, to measure researchers actively involved in the faculty research activities with regards to publications, organizational activities, research fund availability.

3 IQainAR Strategy

As part of the first work package we have developed the following strategic IQA domain for the development of the IQA systems:

1. Teaching & learning
2. Assessments
3. Research & researcher

The IQainAR project strategy has three main characteristics:

1. The development and enhancement of student centred IQA systems
2. The involvement of all key stakeholders in the IQA processes
3. The concept of continuous improvement and the implementation of PDCA cycles in all processes and procedures.

As answer to the question ‘What indicates quality?’, we have established two types of indicators for IQA systems: HEI performance (*Performance Indicators*) and stakeholder perception (*Perceptual Indicators*).

Performance indicators are directly measurable at each university based on what we can observe, register, and measure. E.g. no. of employed scholarly active academics, policies & procedures in place to safeguard academic integrity, etc.

Perceptual indicators are an indirect measurement of quality since these are gained through the perception (opinion) of quality of the university stakeholders. What stakeholders think about different aspects of the quality are an indication of the actual quality present at the university.

For each IQA domain we have defined performance and perceptual indicators, for the specified metrics and benchmark see section 5.

1. Teaching & learning

1.1. Performance indicators:

- 1.1.1. Qualification of academic staff
- 1.1.2. Pedagogical talent
- 1.1.3. Research based teaching
- 1.1.4. Teaching methods
- 1.1.5. Innovative teaching formats
- 1.1.6. Teaching & learning facilities (technologically advanced tools)
- 1.1.7. Level of transparency: peer-evaluations, sharing best practices among staff
- 1.1.8. Facilitation of experiential learning: work-placements
- 1.1.9. Collaboration with the industry: guest-speakers
- 1.1.10. Life-long learning: teacher trainings
- 1.1.11. Internationalisation



1.2. Perceptual indicators:

- 1.2.1. Quality of teaching
- 1.2.2. Quality of education
- 1.2.3. Quality of learning process (internships, mobility, etc.)
- 1.2.4. Quality of students
- 1.2.5. Quality of professional development

2. Assessments

2.1. Performance indicators:

- 2.1.1. Rules/guidelines
- 2.1.2. Administrative efficiency
- 2.1.3. Meeting the learning objectives
- 2.1.4. Assessment methods
- 2.1.5. Quality control mechanisms

2.2. Perceptual indicators:

- 2.2.1. Quality of assessments

3. Research & researcher

3.1. Performance indicators:

- 3.1.1. Strategic framework
- 3.1.2. Strategic research target
- 3.1.3. PhD trajectory
- 3.1.4. Research quality maintenance
- 3.1.5. Ethical decision-making
- 3.1.6. Research facilities: open science, labs, etc.
- 3.1.7. Social impact of research

3.2. Perceptual indicators:

- 3.2.1. Quality of research facilities

The Strategy of implementation (specified in the IQainAR Roadmap, see below section 4) is formulated in five (5) steps:

P- Step 1 Choose IQA indicators, metrics from table (see section 5)

P- Step 2 Choose methods of implementation for IQA indicators

D - Step 3 Implement IQA methods

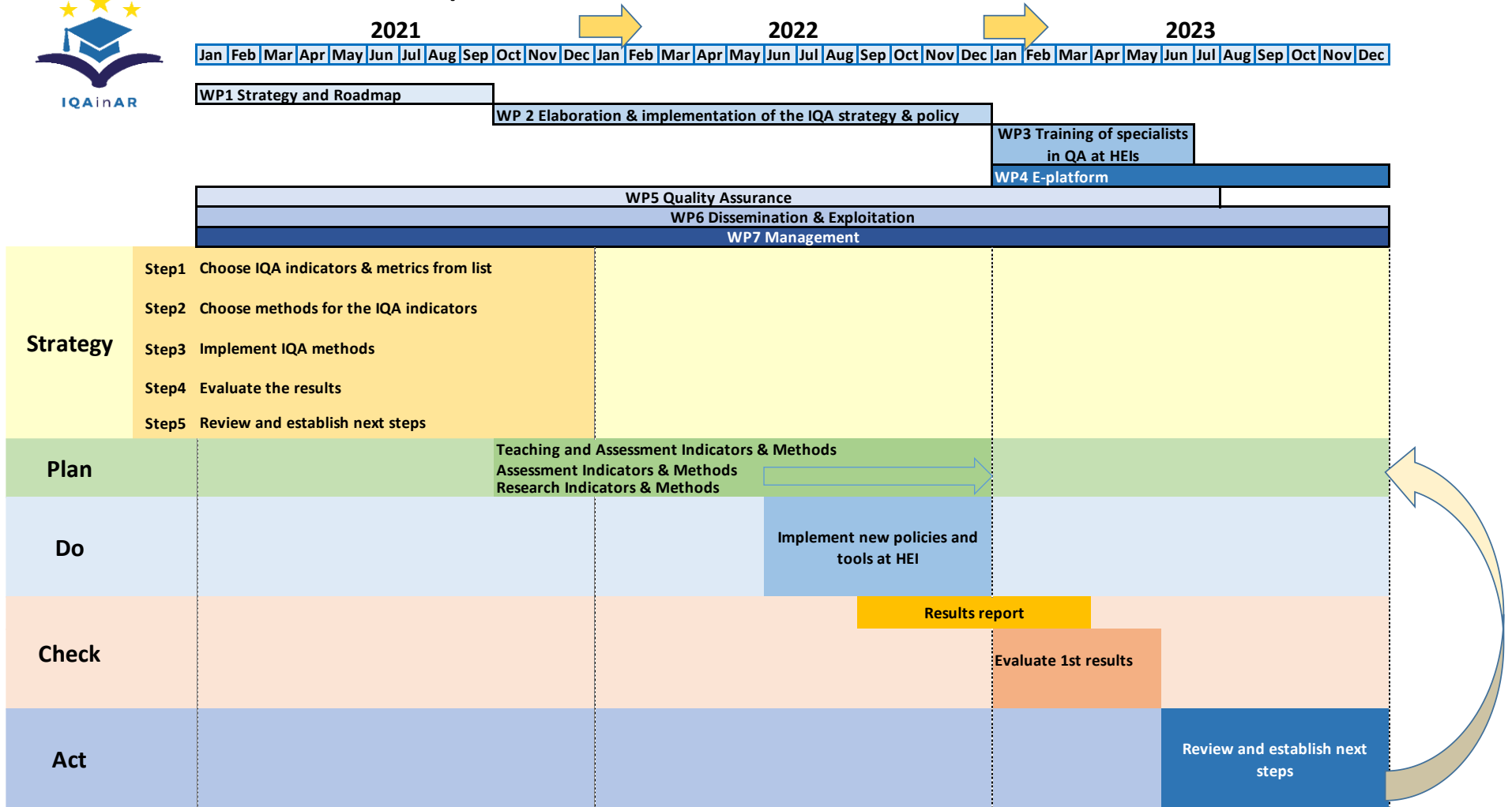
C - Step 4 Evaluate the Results

A - Step 5 Review and establish next steps

4 The Roadmap



IQainAR Roadmap



5 IQA Indicators and Implementation methods

IQA Domain 1	No.	IQA Indicator	Indicator Metric	Benchmark	Implementation Method
Teaching & Learning	Performance Indicators				
	1.	Qualification of academic staff	Level at hiring	<p>Only Master qualified or above faculty. At least 30% or more PhD qualified with both research and teaching competencies in hiring. A good mix of academic (+/-70) and professional (+/-30) qualification and experience. Must meet at least the national and any preferred international accreditation requirements.</p>	Policy & procedures
	2.	Pedagogical talent	Pedagogical diplomas at hiring Student Evaluations score Peer Evaluation score	<p>Majority of the faculty ($\geq 70\%$) members should have a certification in HE teaching & learning or willing to do it within two years. A minimum of 2 (two) in house faculty development programme activities and at least 70% faculty should attend them.</p>	
	3.	Research based teaching	No./quality of research in required/recommended literature	<p>2 to 5 (two to five) recent (i.e. from last 5 years) scientific research publications must be used in each course/module (70% of each programme curriculum).</p>	
4.	Teaching methods (innovative teaching formats)	No./quality of methods in use	<p>All faculty members should bring at least one new/innovative pedagogies and dialectical methods</p>		

				for covering all learning styles especially for the new student generations.	
5.	Teaching & learning facilities (technologically advanced tools)	Level (quality) of facilities		A virtual learning environment (VLE) Softwares available for students e.g. SPSS, STATA, Atlas.ti. Online Library access to books, journals, publications e.g EBSCO, Pearson, Perlego, etc.	
6.	Level of transparency: peer-evaluations, sharing best practices among staff	No./type of peer evaluation activities		1 (one) voluntary peer evaluation 1 (one) or multiple sharing of best practices event organised	
7.	Facilitation of experiential learning: work-placements	No. of work-placement opportunities (though curriculum) & their management		Each programme having a work-placement embedded in the curriculum	
8.	Collaboration with the industry: guest-speakers	No. of guest speakers per course		in. 1 (one) guest speaker/course	
9.	Life-long learning: teacher trainings	No. of teachers in trainings organised		1-2 (one or two) teacher trainings available at the school 20% of teachers to participate in mobility project	
10.	Internationalisation	Projects (mobility) No. of teaching staff or students in mobility Size of the international department		1-2 projects enhancing internationalisation and teaching staff and student mobility	
Perceptual Indicators					
11.	Quality of teaching	Student feedback on teaching, teaching methods, facilities, etc.		Each course to have a evaluation moment	Course Evaluations National Surveys Education Fair (other events with similar scope)

					Teacher Awards
	12.	Quality of education	Student feedback on education in general provided at the HEI, programme evaluations	1 (one) yearly conducted general survey with the students (this can be a National Survey as well)	Course Evaluation Programme Evaluations National Surveys
	13.	Quality of learning process (internships, mobility, etc.	Satisfaction with cooperating business partners, satisfaction with work-placements, satisfaction with study mobility	Semi-annually or annually conducted surveys	Student Evaluations National Surveys
	14.	Quality of students	Teacher feedback on student performance and quality Employer feedback on interns, alumni performance and quality	Semi-annually or annually conducted surveys	Teacher/Staff Survey Employer Survey Education Fair (other events with similar scope)
	15.	Quality of professional development	Staff/teacher feedback	Annually conducted surveys	Teacher/Staff Survey Teacher Peer Reviews

IQA Domain 2	No.	IQA Indicator	Indicator Metric	Benchmark	Implementation Method
Assess-ments	Performance Indicators				
	2.	Rules/guidelines	Presence of clear instructions for assessment development	An Educational Guide	Policy & procedures
	2.	Admin efficiency	Presence of clear procedures around assessments & feedback for students and staff	An Administrative Guide	
	3.	Meeting the learning objectives	Alignment of learning goals and objectives with the assessed learning goals and objectives	An Assurance of learning process	
	4.	Assessment methods	Appropriate and effective methods of assessment	An Examination Handbook	

	5.	Quality control mechanisms	Presence of quality control of assessments in the form of a committee, answer key reviews, etc.	A Quality System Handbook	
<i>Perceptual Indicators</i>					
	6.	Quality of assessments	Student Feedback Alumni Feedback Teacher Feedback	At the end of each course or Semi-annually conducted surveys	Course Evaluations Alumni Surveys Teacher Feedback

IQA Domain 3	No.	IQA Indicator	Indicator Metric	Benchmark	Implementation Method
	<i>Performance Indicators</i>				
Research & researcher	1.	Strategic framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic research target PhD trajectory 	Defined research areas/targets No., level and type of research produced by faculty (providing details how the research is relevant for society) Targeted media citations	At least 2 (two) peer-reviewed journal publications in Scopus indexed journals At least 1 (one) conference or workshop or seminar presentation in the last five years by all PhD qualified faculty. Research Awarding Event for faculty & students (at the university)	Policy & procedures
	2.	Research quality maintenance	No./type of support measures for staff Events organised for internal dissemination	The presence of research supporting mechanisms Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> balancing in teaching load for faculty for research activities financial support for active participation in conferences and research meetings 	

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support in the acquisition and handling of third-party funded projects • the support of hosting research workshops and conferences at the • the granting of own research funds and scholarships. • the granting of research sabbaticals <p>1-2 (one-two) events/conferences per year, where staff and students share their research activities.</p>	
3.	Ethical decision-making	<p>Presence & procedures of ethical committees</p> <p>Ethical considerations in each thesis</p> <p>Presence of documents safeguarding academic integrity</p>	<p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>Code of Ethical Behaviour</p> <p>Ethical Committee</p>		
4.	Research facilities: open science, labs, etc.	<p>No./quality of facilities</p> <p>Access to literature resources articles/publications/books</p>	<p>ICT service, laptop lending</p> <p>Online library access to books, journals, articles: Wiley, Springer, EBSCO, Perlego, Pearson etc.</p>		
5.	Social impact of research	<p>Research concerned with being involved in professional or civic organisations</p> <p>Research integrating the UN Social Development Goals</p> <p>Research aimed at supporting disadvantaged communities</p>	<p>At least 1 (one) research project together with local HEIs and industry partners every three years.</p> <p>At least 10% final year research projects by students through local/regional industry partners.</p>		



			Research in partnership with other institutions with social impact outcomes Etc.		
<i>Perceptual Indicators</i>					
	6.	Quality of research facilities	Student/teacher feedback	1-2 (one) times per year, collecting input from students, teachers and/or alumni	Service Evaluations

6 Evaluation methods and corresponding tools based on the Comparative Analysis

No.	Evaluation method	Target Group	Content of evaluation	Form of evaluation/tools – at Uni	Schedule of evaluation
1.	Course Evaluation	Students	The course, the teaching, materials, workload	Survey – All	After course completion
				Student Committees - WUAS	Annually
2.	Course Unit Evaluation (extended)	Students	A specific course unit evaluation as a result from the general course evaluation	Survey or other forms deemed practical - UG	n.i.
3.	Programme Evaluation	Students	The programme, the programme cohesion, workload, etc.	Survey – IUBH, UU, UG, TUM	Semi-annually/Annually
				Programme Committees – WUAS, UU, UvA, UG	Annually
				AoL – UvA, UG, WUAS	Annually - Rotative
4.	Assessment Evaluation	Teachers/examiners	Assessment & exams	Moderation - WUAS Periodical reviews – WUAS, UCAM, UG,	Quarterly or more frequently
5.	Service Evaluation	Students	Study support activities	Survey – IUBH, TUM	Semi-annually
6.	Satisfaction with cooperating business partner	Students	Tasks and learning process	Survey – IUBH	Semi-annually
7.	Feedback on studying abroad	Students	Preparation, impressions, courses, teaching and teaching methods used	Survey – IUBH	After completion of the study abroad
8.	Alumni Survey	Alumni	Graduate prospects, retrospective evaluation of the followed programme	Survey – IUBH, UU, TUM	1 year after graduation, subsequently every 3 years
9.	Non-graduated Survey	Student who left the university without obtaining a degree	Retrospective evaluation of the followed programme	Survey - UU	n. i.

10.	Employer Survey	Employers	Dual study system rating, room for improvements & recommendations	Survey – IUBH	Annually
11.	Staff Survey	Academic & non-academic staff	Staff satisfaction, teaching quality, professional development	Survey by external agency - UG	Biennial (every two years)
12.	Teacher Awards	Students/Teachers	Teaching & teaching methods	Event (jury) - UU	Annually
13.	Education Fair (internal)	Students/Teachers	Teaching & teaching methods, facilities, quality	Event - UU	Annually
14.	Ancillary Activities	Teachers/Staff	Professional activities outside the scope of staff's position	Survey - UU	n.i.
15.	Self-assessment	Management & staff	Organisation, programmes, courses, staff, students	All	Annually
16.	National Student Survey (NSE)⁴	Students	The quality of teaching and facilities.	Survey- WUAS, UvA, UU and UG	Annually
17.	National (Alumni) Higher Education Monitor⁵ (WO – Monitor)	Alumni	Retrospective evaluation of the quality of teaching and facilities.	Survey – UU, UG	Biennial (every two years)
18.	International Student Barometer (ISB)⁶	Students	International university experience	Survey - UG	Annually

⁴ In the Netherlands, The **National Student Survey (NSE)** is a student feedback system by means of a yearly survey on the degree programmes, conducted on a national level.

⁵ In the Netherlands, **The National (Alumni) Higher Education Monitor (WO monitor or NAE)**, conducted by VSNU is an alumni feedback system by means of a biennial survey among recently graduated master and doctorate graduated students.

⁶ **The International Student Barometer (ISB)**, is as its name suggests an international platform where students provide their experiences, which in turn can be used by the university for benchmarking purposes.

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