

***Draft template for guidelines for self assessment  
at programme level in Georgian universities (to be  
adapted and further developed by NCEA working  
group)***

***1.1 Standards and criteria to be applied***

In the self-assessment, the important question is against what standards we will assess the quality? A university has to formulate its own standards and criteria, but it is essential to take into account the criteria formulated by the respective national QA agency. Also standards formulated by a professional body must be taken into account. Furthermore, one should use internationally accepted standards. The aspects for the assessment of the quality of our programs are the following:

- Goals and objectives; expected learning outcomes
- Program content
- Program specification or description
- Program organisation
- Didactic concept/teaching/learning strategy
- Student assessment
- Staff quality
- Quality of the support staff
- Student profile
- Student advice/support
- Facilities & infrastructure
- Student evaluation
- Curriculum design & evaluation
- Staff development activities
- Benchmarking
- Achievements /graduates
- Satisfaction stakeholders

In section 2, criteria are formulated for each quality aspect.

## 1.2 *An analysis model for teaching and learning*

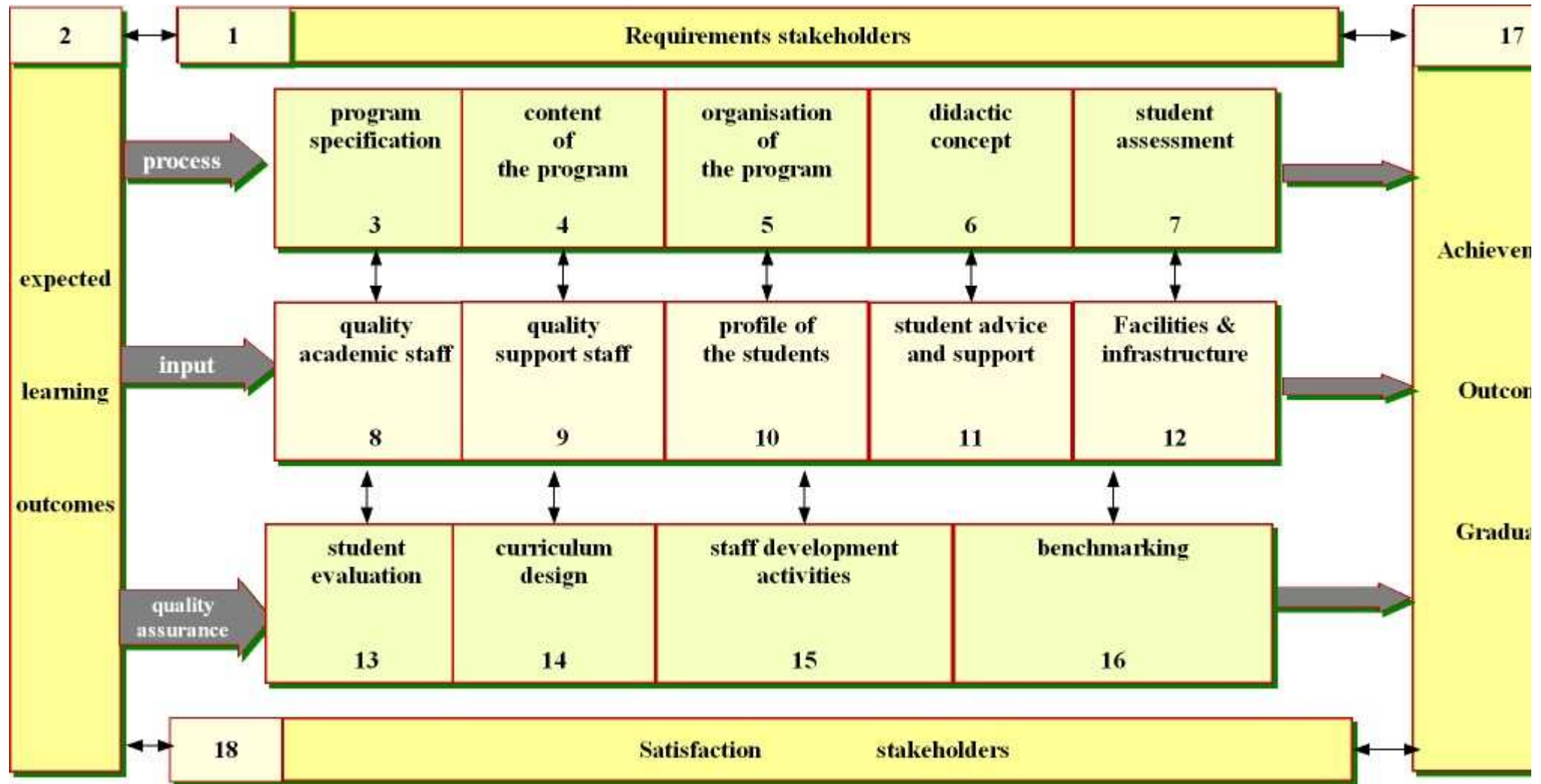
An institution for Higher Education generally has three core activities: teaching/learning, research and community outreach. Of course, the last two activities are important too. However in the guidelines the emphasis is on the quality of the educational task. To find out the quality of education, the instrument of self assessment at program level is used. ***The object of the self assessment is the program.***

*A program is defined as a coherent set of courses leading to a certain degree (bachelor or master). We may call the program also a curriculum. Of course, it will be sometimes more practical to combine the self assessment of coherent programs, e.g. private law, public law and international law)*

As mentioned in chapter 1, quality is a concept with many aspects. There are many factors influencing quality. With regard to Teaching and Learning the following dimensions can be distinguished:

- Quality of the input
- Quality of the process
- Quality of the output

In order to map the quality in a self-assessment we need a clear model to guard against looking at some aspects and ignoring others. Figure 2 (next page) shows a model for the analysis of the educational activities. For the self-assessment, this analysis model will be used. The model is elaborated in section 2.



(NB: Requirements of Stakeholders/ Satisfaction of stakeholders)

Figure 1: An analysis model for the self-assessment of Teaching and Learning

### 1.3 How to use the model

1. In section 2, under the heading of the aspect (e.g 2. *Expected learning outcomes* or 12. *Facilities & infrastructure*<sup>1</sup>) the criteria to be met are given.

We have to keep in mind that there are no absolute and objective criteria and standards.

In general, one may say that the formulated criteria can be seen as the minimum requirements. If needed, an explanation and interpretation of the criteria is given.

2. The self assessment aims at finding evidence that the faculty/department is meeting the criteria. Therefore, one has to look at the criteria and try to find indications of meeting the criteria:
  - give a description of the state-of-the-art of the aspect
  - make a critical analysis of the state-of-the-art. (Is one satisfied with it or not?)
  - describe the strengths and weaknesses concerning the mentioned aspect
  - what evidence is there that you are meeting the criteria?
  - if there are problems or if you are not satisfied, what actions are planned to overcome the shortcomings?
3. To help you to find evidence, under the heading “looking for evidence” a set of questions are formulated that can be used in finding the needed indications. This is not a conclusive list. Be aware that the questions are not to be seen as a questionnaire that need to be completed. They are guides on what to look for.

*If it is the first time the faculty/department is involved in a structured self-assessment, there will be a lot of blank spots. It will not always be possible to fill all segments. So a number of aspects will be left unanswered this time, but will force the faculty to take action. Do not worry about it. This is something for the future.*

*The basic rules to apply in the self assessments are:*

- *All aspects (cells of the model) need to be discussed. It is not possible to make a selection.*
- *For each cell the following steps are to be taken:*
  - *description*
  - *analysis*
  - *formulation strengths and weaknesses*
  - *evidence for meeting the criteria*
  - *action plan for improvement*
- *When it is the first time, do not worry too much about white spots. Include them in the action plan*

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<sup>1</sup> *The numbers refer to the number of the cells in the model*

## **SECTION 2: The self assessment**

### **2.1 The quality aspects to be assessed**

#### **1. Requirements stakeholders (Numbering)**

*The faculty/department, responsible for the program has a clear idea about the relevant demands and needs of all stakeholders.*

#### **Explanation**

Higher Education has many stakeholders and all stakeholders have their own ideas about quality. These stakeholders include:

- The government or the state
- The employers
- The academic world
- The students
- The parents
- The Society at large

Each stakeholder will appreciate different aspects of quality and because all stakeholders have their own ideas and expectations, it can be said that *Quality is a matter of negotiation between the academic world and the stakeholders*. In this negotiation process, each stakeholder needs to formulate, as clearly as possible, his/her requirements. The organisation (faculty or department) as supplier of the academic training must try to reconcile all these different wishes and requirements. As far as possible, the requirements of all stakeholders should be translated into the expected learning outcomes of the program.

#### **Looking for evidence**

- *Does the organisation have a clear idea about the requirements set by the government?*
- *How does the organisation know the needs and requirements of the labour market?*
- *How does the organisation analyse the needs and requirements of the students/parents?*
- *How does the organisation analyse the needs and requirements of the society?*
- *How does the organisation balance the requirements of the different stakeholders?*

#### **2. Expected learning outcomes**

*The program/curriculum has clearly formulated learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, attitude) reflecting the relevant demands and needs of all stakeholders.*

#### **Explanation**

Before the quality can be assessed, there is a need to know clearly what students are expected to learn. Learning outcomes must therefore be clearly *formulated*. Students come to the university to learn something. Therefore, we have to formulate very clearly what we expect the student to learn and what we expect our graduates have learned in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude. The expected learning outcomes form the starting point for the self-assessment. There should be a distinction between generic academic skills and discipline specific skills.

### Looking for Evidence

- *What are the expected learning outcomes (ELO) of the program?*
- *How does the ELO fit into the mission of the institution as a whole?*
- *Does the labour market express specific requirements for graduates to meet? Is there a well-defined job profile for the graduates of this program?*
- *How do you try to tune the program to the labour market?*
- *How are the objectives made known to the staff and the students?*
- *To what extent do we think the objectives have been realised?*
- *Do we have any plans to adjust the objectives? Why?*

## THE PROCESS CELL 3 – 7 OF THE MODEL)

(To include a brief introduction/preamble) for consistency as with other cells

### 3. The Program specifications (or program description)

**Universities are recommended to publish, for each program they offer, a program specification/description which gives the intended learning outcomes of the program in terms of:**

- *knowledge and understanding that the students will have acquired upon completion of the program*
- *cognitive skills, such as an understanding of methodologies or ability in critical analysis*
- *subject specific skills, such as laboratory skills, clinical skills, etc.*

### Explanation

The formulated learning outcomes must be translated into the program. It is important that the objectives are well known to everybody. Therefore, universities are recommended to publish a program specification or description **for each program they offer**. The program specification is a source of information for:

- Students
- Employers, particularly about the skills and other transferable intellectual abilities developed by the program.  
Professional and statutory regulatory bodies that accredit higher education programs, leading into a profession or other regulated occupations.

### Looking for evidence

- *Are the objectives/expected learning outcomes translated into the program and **its** courses?*
- *Does the university have a clear program/curriculum specification/description?*
- *Is the description **known** to staff and students?*

### 4. The content of the program/curriculum

- *The program shows a balance between **specialist** contents and general knowledge and skills.*
- *The program takes into account and reflects the vision, mission, aims and objectives of*

the institution.

- The objectives and expected learning outcomes of the program are explicit and are known to staff and students.
- The program shows the expected learning outcomes **of the graduate**. Each course should **clearly** be designed to show the expected learning outcomes of the course. To obtain this, a curriculum map/program map must be constructed and available.

### Explanation

The content of a program is closely linked to the translated goals and aims. The formulated learning outcomes **determine** the content of the program. Furthermore, the program must be coherent and up-to-date. For each course it should be clear how it contribute to the achievement of the overall learning outcomes.

### Looking for evidence

- Do the contents of the program reflect the expected learning outcomes?
- Can the program be considered as adequate for achieving the expected outcomes?
- Are the courses in the program clearly interrelated?
- Is the program coherent?
- Is there a balance between specific and general courses?
- Do the courses demonstrate a growing complexity over the years?
- Is the program content up-to-date?

## 5. The organisation of the program

- The program is designed in such a way that the subject matter is integrated and also **strengthens** other courses in the program
- The program **is** shows range, depth and coherence of the courses
- The program structure shows clearly the basic courses, **the intermediate courses, the specialist courses** and the final thesis or dissertation

### Looking for evidence

- **Why** is this program structure chosen?
- Has the program been changed structurally over recent years? If so, why?
- **Were** any requirements specified on the internal coherence of the courses? Who set these requirements?
- Is the first year of the program a good introduction into the **subsequent** parts of the program?
- Is the link between the basic program and phase of specialisation adequate?
- Is the organisation of the various specialisations satisfactory?
- Is the relation between basic courses, intermediate courses and specialist courses and the optional course is in the program satisfactory?
- Are bottlenecks experienced within the program?
- Is the instruction/teaching provided by other departments satisfactory?
- Is the chosen academic year structure (trimester or semester) adequate/appropriate? What is the opinion of those involved ?

## 6. Didactic concept and teaching/learning strategy

- *The didactic concept promotes action learning*
- *The didactic concept is student oriented. Hence, the conception of teaching is the facilitation of learning.*
- *Quality learning embraces the principles of adult learning*
- *In promoting responsibility in learning, teachers should:*
  - a. *create a teaching-learning environment that enables individuals to participate responsibly in the learning process*
  - b. *provide curricula that are flexible and enable learners to make meaningful choices in terms of subject content, program routes, approaches to assessment and modes and duration of study*
- *Action learning is a continuous process of learning and reflection, supported by peers, with the intention of achieving quality student learning.*

## Explanation

*Didactic concept means the strategy developed by the faculty with regard to the **didactic** and pedagogical approach in the program. What didactic and pedagogic approaches are practised.* Of course there is **not** a single didactic concept that is valid for all. However, at least one has to think about the didactic model behind the program.

## Looking for evidence

- *Is there an explicit didactic concept and teaching learning strategy shared by all staff members? Is this adequate?*
- *Are the instructional methods used (organisation of self-instruction for students, size of classes, organisation of seminars, practical courses/internships etc.) satisfactory?*
- *What is the role of the computer in the program?*
- *Is there sufficient variety in the teaching/learning methods?*
- *What circumstances prevent the use of desired instructional methods (number of students, material infrastructure, lecturer skills)?*

If research is a core activity for the university:

- *When do students come into contact with research for the first time?*
- *How is the interrelationship between education and research expressed in the program?*
- *How are the research findings included in the program?*

The practical training of students (trainees) is a specific aspect in the didactic concept. Describe the position given to practical training in the program:

- *Is practical training a compulsory part? What is size in credit points.*
- *Have any criteria been formulated for the practical training to comply with?*
- *What is the level of preparation for practical training in the program (concerning content, method and skills).*
- *Is the level of the practical training satisfactory?*
- *Are there any bottlenecks in the practical training? If so, what causes them?*
- *How are students coached?*
- *How is the assessment done?*



## 7. Student assessment

- *The system of assessment and examination provides an effective indication whether the students have reached the expected learning outcomes of the program or its components.*
- *The tests, evaluations and examinations are in line with the content and learning objectives of the various parts of the program.*
- *The program provides individual students with adequate feedback concerning the extent to which the various learning objectives have been achieved.*
- *The program ensures adequate consistency of the student assessments.*
- *The assessment is adequately organized (as regards e.g. announcement of the results, opportunities to re-sit tests or examinations, compensation arrangements etc.).*
- *The examination committee functions adequately and performs its statutory tasks*

### Explanation

Student assessment is one of the most important elements of higher education. The outcomes of such assessment have a profound effect on students' future careers. It is therefore important that assessment is carried out professionally at all times and takes into account the extensive knowledge that exists on testing and examination processes. Assessment also provides valuable information for institutions about the efficiency of teaching and learner support.

Student assessment procedures are expected to:

- be designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and other program objectives;
- be fit for purpose, whether diagnostic, formative or summative;
- have clear and published grading/marking criteria;
- be undertaken by people who understand the role of assessment in the students' progression towards achieving the knowledge and skills associated with their intended qualification; where possible, not relying on the verdicts of single examiners;
- take into account all the possible consequences of examination regulations;
- have clear regulations covering student absence, illness and other mitigating circumstances;
- ensure that assessments are conducted securely in accordance with the institution's stated procedures;
- be subject to administrative verification checks to ensure the accuracy of the procedures;
- inform students clearly about the assessment strategy being used for their program, what examinations or other assessment methods they will be subjected to, what will be expected of them, and the criteria that will be applied to the assessment of their performance.

### Looking for evidence

- *To what extent do the assessments and examinations cover the content of the courses and program? To what extent do the assessments and examinations cover to the objectives of the courses and of the program as a whole?*
- *Do the assessments have clear and published grading/marking criteria? Are the pass/fail criteria clear?*
- *Are a variety of assessment methods used? What are they?*
- *Are the assessment/examination regulations clear?*
- *Are the procedures clear? Are they well known? Well followed?*

- *Are any safeguards in place to ensure objectivity?*
- *Are the students satisfied with the procedures? What about complaints from students?*
- *Do clear rules exist for re-assessments and are students satisfied with these?*

A special form of student assessment is the final project (essay, thesis or assignment). This requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills and their ability to manipulate the knowledge in a new situation.

- *Do clear regulations exist for the final project/final essay?*
- *Are the criteria for the final project clear?*
- *Is the level of the final project/final essay satisfactory?*
- *Do any bottlenecks exist for producing the final project? If so, why?*
- *Describe how students are coached.*

## **INPUT VARIABLES (CELL 8-12)**

A department's quality not only depends on the program itself. We also have to look at the preconditions set for delivering the program:

- The quality of the program will be nearly impossible to achieve without qualified and competent academic and support staff
- The quality of the entering student will influence the quality of our process and the quality of the output.
- Besides human resources, financial resources are equally important for delivery of a quality program., Financial resources are important for the program's funding and financing for the facilities.

### **8. Quality of the academic staff**

- *The staff are competent and qualified*
- *The size of the teaching staff is sufficient to deliver the curriculum and suitable in terms of the mix of qualifications, experience, aptitudes, age, etc.*
- *Recruitment and promotion of academic staff are based on merit system, which includes teaching, research and services*
- *Duties allocated are appropriate to qualifications, experience, and aptitude.*
- *Time management and incentive system are directed to support quality of teaching and learning.*
- *There are provisions for review, consultation, and redeployment.*
- *Termination, retirement and social benefits are planned and well implemented.*
- *There is a well-planned staff appraisal system based on fair and objective measures in the spirit of enhancement which are carried out regularly*

### **Explanation**

The quality of a program depends on the interaction between the academic staff and the student. We expect that the academic staff are competent and qualified. Competent teaching staff are able to:

- design and deliver a coherent teaching and learning program
- apply a range of teaching and learning methods and select methods most appropriate to desired learning outcomes
- employ a range of techniques to assess students' work and match these to intended learning outcomes

- monitor and evaluate their own teaching performance and evaluate programs they deliver
- reflect upon their own teaching practices

There will be no quality without qualified and competent staff. Looking at the criteria, we have to look at:

- The size of the staff and their qualifications
- The staff/HR management

#### *Size of the staff and their qualifications*

Use Table 3 to specify the number of staff. The term *staff* covers full-time and part-time teaching staff, visiting lecturers. Mention possible vacancies separately, **and specify the reference date for the data**. Specify the staff/student ratio and the staff/graduate ratio as per table 4.

**Table 1: Number of staff (specify reference date)**

Category	M	F	Total		Percentage of PhDs
			People	FTEs *	
Professors					
Full-time teachers					
Part-time teachers					
Visiting lecturers					
Support staff					
Total					

\* FTE stands for Full Time Equivalent. This is a unit to calculate the investment of time. 1 FTE is equal to about 40 hours per week (full-time employment). A staff member with a weekly appointment of 8 hours is 0.2 FTE.

**Table 2: Staff/student ratio and staff/graduate ratio (please specify the year)**

Total FTE for the training*	Number of Students	Number of graduates Year:	Number of students per FTE-training	Number of graduates per FTE-graduates

\*Realistically estimate of the number of FTEs used for the training. The number of students enrolled in the program at the beginning of the 2005/2006 academic year. If this number is not considered to be representative, please specify what it should be made in the text.

#### **Looking for evidence**

- *Is the academic staff competent and qualified for their job? Are the competencies and expertise of the staff adequate for delivering this program?*
- *Are there any problems with the human resources? Age profile? Vacancies difficult to fill? What difficulties are there in attracting qualified staff?*
- *What policy is pursued with regard to the employment of staff, both in teaching and research?*
- *What about teaching load? The staff/student ratio? The staff/graduate ratio?*
- *How many contact hours of service-instruction are given in other programs and departments?*

#### **Staff management**

- Does the department have a clearly formulated staff management structure?
- Is staff recruitment based on experience in teaching and research?
- Is there a system of staff appraisal?
- What role do teaching qualifications and teaching activities play in the career of the staff members?
- What does the department think of its HR policy so far?
- What future developments are there?
- How are teachers prepared for the teaching task?
- Is the teaching delivered by the staff supervised and assessed?

## 9. Quality of support staff

### Criterion

There is adequate support in terms of staffing at the libraries, laboratories, administration and student services.

### Explanation

Program quality depends mostly on interaction between staff and students. However, academic staff cannot perform well without the quality of the support staff. These might be staff members who support the library, laboratories, computer facilities etc.

### Looking for evidence

- Are the library support staff members competent and sufficient?
- Are the laboratories support staff members competent and sufficient?
- Are the computer facilities support staff members competent and sufficient?
- Are the administrative support staff members competent and sufficient?

## 10. The Profile of the Student

- There are clearly formulated admission criteria for undergraduate and graduate programs
- If students admission involves selection, the procedure and criteria are clear, adequate and transparent
- The planned study load is in line with the real study load

### Explanation

The quality of the output depends a lot on the quality of the input. This concerns also the students admitted for the program.

#### The intake

- Give a summary of the intake of first year students using Table 5
- Give a summary of the total number of students enrolled in the program using Table 6.

**Table 3: Intake of first-year students (last 5 academic years)**

Academic year	Full-time			Part-time		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total

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**Table 4: Total number of students (last 5 academic years)**

Academic year	Full-time			Part-time		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total

### Looking for evidence

- *How do you analyse the development of the student intake? Reasons to worry? Causes of problems? Prospects for the future?*
- *What are the admission procedures? Are students selected? If so, how are they selected? What are the requirements?*
- *What policy is pursued with regard to the intake of students? Does the department aim to increase the intake or to stabilise it? Why?*
- *What measures are taken to effect the quality and size of the intake? What effect do these measures have?*

### Study load

- *Does the department use a credit points system? How are credits calculated?*
- *Does the program's actual study load correspond with the prescribed study load?*
- *Is the study load divided equally over and within academic years?*
- *What measures are taken in the field of program development and/or student advice when parts of the program deviate from the prescribed study load (too difficult/heavy or too easy)? Are these measures effective?*
- *Can an average student complete the program in the planned time?*

## 11. Student advice and support

- *Student progress is systematically recorded and monitored, feed back to students and corrective actions are made where necessary.*
- *In establishing a learning environment to support the achievement of quality student learning, teachers do all in their power to provide not only a physical and material environment which is supportive of learning and which is appropriate for the activities involved, but also a social or psychological one.*

### Explanation

How students are monitored and supported by staff is essential to a good student career. A university must ensure that a good physical, material, social and psychological environment is in place.

### **Looking for evidence**

- *What role do staff members play in informing and coaching students?*
- *What role do they play in integrating students into the department?*
- *How is the information flow to potential students organised? Is sufficient attention paid to the requirements of their educational background?*
- *Does the future student get a good impression of the education offered? Is the information evaluated? If so, what happens with the results?*
- *How are students informed about the study program?*
- *Is attention paid to study progress? Is student progress recorded? Does the recording lead to problems being pointed out in time? When is first contact made with problem cases? Does this result in remedial and/or preventive actions being introduced for the individual student or program development?*
- *Is special attention paid to coaching first-year students? If so, how does it work?*
- *Are there specific facilities to provide study skills for students with problems? Are these available within the department, the faculty or centrally? How is information on these matters organised?*
- *Is separate attention paid to coaching advanced students?*
- *Is assistance given in completing the final project? Where can students who get stuck with their practical training or final project get help?*
- *How are students advised on problems concerning course options, change of options, interruption or termination of studies?*
- *Is information provided on career prospects? Do students have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the labour market by means of practical training, application courses and the like?*
- *If students wish to extend their course of study, are the reasons considered? If yes, what are usually the findings and what measures do they result in?*
- *To what extent do the structure and organisation of the program contribute to students taking on an active study approach?*
- *To what extent does the program challenge student to make a satisfactory investment in their studies/program?*
- *Are you satisfied with the tools available to improve study progress?*

### **12. Facilities and infrastructure**

- *The physical resources to deliver the program, including equipment, materials and information technology are sufficient*
- *Equipment is up-to-date, readily available and effectively deployed*
- *Information technology systems are set up or upgraded*
- *University computer centres continuously provide a highly accessible computer and network infrastructure that enables the campus community to fully exploit information technology for teaching, research and development, services and administration.*

### **Explanation**

Facilities and resources should be in line with the formulated goals and aims and with the designed program. Facilities are also connected to the teaching/learning strategy. For example, if the philosophy is to teach in small working groups, small rooms must be available. Computer-aided instruction can only be realised with enough computers for the students. The main learning resources consist of books, brochures, magazines, journals, posters, information sheets, internet and intranet, CD-ROMs, maps, aerial photographs, satellite imagery and others.

## Looking for evidence

### Teaching rooms

- *Are there enough lecture halls, seminar rooms, laboratories, reading rooms, and computer rooms available? Do these meet the relevant requirements?*
- *Is the library sufficiently equipped for education?*
- *Is the library within easy reach (location, opening hours)?*
- *Are laboratory facilities and support staff sufficient?*
- *Do the laboratories meet the relevant requirements?*

### Didactic aids and tools

- *Are sufficient audio-visual aids available?*
- *Are there enough computers? Appropriate and enough computer programs (computer-aided education, maths programs, design programs, etc)?*
- *To what extent do the facilities/infrastructure promote or obstruct delivery of the program?*
- *Is the total budget for aids and tools sufficient?*

## QUALITY ASSURANCE ( CELL 13 – 16)

The confidence of students and other stakeholders in higher education is more likely to be established and maintained through effective and efficient quality assurance activities which ensure that programs are well-designed, regularly monitored and periodically reviewed, thereby securing their continuing relevance and currency. A well functioning quality assurance system has at least the following elements

- Student evaluation (13)
- Curriculum design (14)
- Staff development activities (15)
- Benchmarking (16)

### 13. Student evaluation

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>The department makes use of student evaluation on a regular basis</i></li><li>• <i>The outcomes of the student evaluation are used for quality improvement</i></li><li>• <i>The department provides the students with feedback on what is done with the outcomes of the evaluation.</i></li></ul> |
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### Explanation

Students are the first to judge the quality of teaching and learning. They experience the delivery method. They have an opinion about the facilities. Of course, the information given by students has to be counterbalanced by other opinions. Nevertheless, the university is expected to carry out student evaluations and to use the outcomes for improvement.

## Looking for evidence

- *Does the university use student evaluations in a structured manner?*

- *Who is responsible for the evaluations?*
- *What is done with the outcome of the evaluations? Are there any examples of this contributing to improvements?*
- *What is the input of the students who sit on the committees involved in the internal quality assurance process?*

#### **14. Curriculum design and evaluation**

- *The curriculum design (or redesign) is done in a structured way, involving all stakeholders.*
- *There is a well functioning program or curriculum committee*
- *The curriculum is regularly evaluated*
- *Revision of the curriculum takes place at reasonable time periods*
- *Quality assurance of the curriculum is adequate*

#### **Explanation**

Developing or designing a curriculum is a special activity. Too often, a curriculum is seen as a number of courses provided by the present professors. They sometimes act like small shopkeepers, selling their own product, but not knowing what others offer. Curriculum design should start with the formulation of the expected learning outcomes. The next question will be what courses are needed to achieve the objectives and finally who will teach the courses? It is important that a curriculum is seen as a joint enterprise.

#### **Looking for evidence**

- *Who is responsible for designing the curriculum?*
- *How is the labour market involved in the curriculum design?*
- *How do curriculum innovations come about? Who takes the initiative? On the basis of what signals?*
- *Who is responsible for implementation?*
- *When designing curricula, is there any benchmarking with other institutions?*
- *In which international networks does the department participate?*
- *With which institution abroad does exchange take place?*
- *Has the program been recognised abroad?*

#### **Course and curriculum evaluation**

- *How is the program (curriculum) evaluated? At course level? At curriculum level?*
- *Is the evaluation done systematically?*
- *How are the students involved in evaluating the education and training?*
- *How and to whom are the results made known?*
- *Is anything done with the results? How is this made transparent?*

#### **15. Staff development activities**

- *Staff development needs are systematically identified, in relation to individual*



*aspirations, the curriculum and institutional requirements.*

- *Academic and supporting staff undertake appropriate staff development programs related to identified needs*

### **Explanation**

It is important that the teaching staff have full knowledge and understanding of the subject they are teaching: have the necessary skills and experience to effectively communicate their knowledge and understanding to students in a range of teaching contexts; and be able to access feedback on their own performance. Institutions should ensure that their staff recruitment and appointment procedures include a means of making certain that all new staff have at least the minimum necessary level of competence. Teaching staff should be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching ability and should be encouraged to value their skills. Institutions should provide poor teachers with opportunities to improve their skills to an acceptable level and should have the means to remove them from their teaching duties if they continue to be demonstrably ineffective.

### **Looking for evidence**

- *Does the university have a training program for the academic staff about:*
  - *Curriculum design*
  - *Test development and construction*
  - *Teaching skills*
  - *Computers in the class room*
- 
- *Does the university offer the academic staff possibilities to develop and extend their teaching abilities by participation in conferences etc?*

## **16. Benchmarking**

*The faculty/department uses the instrument of benchmarking for analysing the quality of its program and its performance.*

### **Explanation**

UNESCO's definition of benchmark is: A standard, a reference point, or a criterion against which the quality of something can be measured, judged, and evaluated, and against which outcomes of a specified activity can be measured. The term, benchmark, means a measure of best practice performance. The existence of a benchmark is one necessary step in the overall process of benchmarking<sup>2</sup>.

Benchmarking is a process that enables comparison of inputs, processes or outputs between institutions (or parts of institutions) or within a single institution over time. It is important for a faculty to compare its programs with equivalent programs in the country, the region and internationally. Also the performance can be compared.

### **Looking for evidence**

<sup>2</sup> Vlăsceanu, L., Grünberg, L., and Pârlea, D., 2004, Quality Assurance and Accreditation: Glossary of Basic Terms and Definitions (Bucharest, UNESCO-CEPES) Papers on Higher Education, ISBN 92-9069-178-6.

- *Is the university using the instrument of benchmarking? **How is it using the instrument?***
- *Does the executive management use the collected information?*
- *What is done with the benchmarking?*

### **17. The achievements: the graduates**

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. In assessing our quality we have to look not only at our quality of our process, but also have to take into account the output. First of all, we must look at our graduates. Did they achieve the expected standards? Are the achieved outcomes equal to the expected outcomes? Have the graduates acquired the expected knowledge, skills and attitudes? How far the program has achieved its expected learning outcomes can be measured against several criteria as stipulated below:

#### **a. The profile of the graduates**

- *The final qualifications achieved by the graduates are in line with the formulated expected learning outcomes of the program.*
- *The content and level of the graduation projects are in line with the degree (bachelor's or master's) awarded.*
- *Graduates are able to operate adequately in the field for which they have been trained.*

#### **Explanation**

Quality has been formulated as achieving our objectives *in an efficient and effective way, assuming that the goals and aims reflect the requirements of all our stakeholders in an adequate way.* The final test of our quality is the graduate. Did he or she really achieve the expected learning outcomes? This is not easy to measure and can only be known by means of feedback from the labour market and feedback from alumni.

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- *Is the average standard of our graduate satisfactory?*
- *Do the achieved standards match the expected standards?*
- *Do our graduates easily get jobs? Are the jobs that the graduates get in accordance with the level of graduation?*
- *Have any changes been signalled in the labour market prospects of graduates over the last few years? What are the prospects?*

#### **b. Pass rates and drop out rates**

- *The department responsible for the program has set targets for the student success rate (i.e number of graduates per year) and the duration of studies comparable with those for other relevant programs.*
- *The actual student success rate is in line with these targets.*

#### **Explanation**

Because the output quality has to be evaluated within the framework of the process, we have also to look at the efficiency of our provisions, among others we have to look at the pass rates and the dropout rate; the average time to complete a degree program (graduation time); and the employability of graduates.

*Pass rates or success rate:* number of students, successfully finishing the program

*Drop out rate:* number of students that does not finish the program. The dropout may be enrolled in an other academic program in or outside of the department, but for the program he or she left, it is counted as drop out.

Provide information on the pass rate and dropout rates of the various years (cohort) according to Table 7.

**Table 5: Student performance (last 8 to 10 cohorts)**

Academic year	Size cohort *	% first degree after			% dropout after			
		3 year	4 years	>4years	1 years	2 years	3 years	>3 years
			**			**		

\* numbers must be the same as in the intake Table 3

\*\* percentages are cumulative.

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- *What is the opinion of the department about the pass rate? If not satisfactory, what measures have been taken to improve the pass rate?*
- *Have any fluctuations in the success rate been seen over the last five years?*
- *How high is the dropout rate? Are there explanations for the dropout rate?*
- *Does the department know where the dropout students are going?*

### c. Average time to graduation

- *The average time for graduation is in line with the planned time for finishing the program.*

#### Average time to graduation

*Indicate the average number of years a student spends on a program. If necessary, categorise the students in groups.*

- *What does the department think of the average time to graduation?*
- *What measures have been taken to promote graduation and to shorten the average time to graduation?*
- *What effect have these measures had?*

### d. Employability of the graduates

- *The employment/unemployment rate of the graduate are in line with the target set by*

*the faculty.*

#### *Graduate unemployment*

- *What percentage of graduates found a job within six months of graduation over the past five years? How many within a year?*
- *What percentage of graduates are still unemployed 2 years after graduation?*

### **18. Stakeholders satisfaction**

*The faculty/department must have a structured method to obtain feedback from all stakeholders for the measurement of their satisfaction.*

#### **Explanation**

After analysing the input, the process and the output, we have to analyse the satisfaction of all stakeholders. What do they think about our performance? How do we know that? This part may cause difficulties for the department, because it may not have any tools to measure the "satisfaction rate" yet. It does not make sense to first develop tools to collect information within the framework of the ongoing analysis. It is sufficient to see that tools are missing and to describe how the problems might be solved in the near future.

#### **Looking for evidence**

##### *Opinion - Students*

- *Does the department know what students think about the courses, the program? The teaching? The examinations?*
- *Is student evaluation carried out regularly? Is it done adequately?*
- *What is done with the outcomes of student evaluations?*
- *How does the department cope with complaints by students?*

##### *Opinion - Alumni (graduates)*

- *Does the department interview graduates on a regular basis?*
- *What is the opinion and feedback of graduates when they are employed?*
- *Is the feedback of the alumni used to adjust the program?*
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##### *Opinion-Labour market*

- *Do structured contacts exist with employers and the labour market for getting feedback on graduates?*
- *How do employers appreciate the graduates? Are there any specific complaints? Do the employers appreciate specific strengths?*
- *How do we cope with complaints from the labour market?*

## Appendix1 : Checklist on the quality of a program

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>1. Requirements stakeholders. The faculty/department has a clear idea</b>							
• about the relevant needs and requirements of the government							
• about the relevant needs and requirements of the labour market							
• about the relevant needs and requirements of the students/parents							
• about the relevant needs and requirements of the academic world							
• about the relevant needs and requirements of the society							
<b>Overall opinion</b>							
<b>2. Expected learning outcomes (objectives)</b>							
• The program has clearly formulated learning outcomes							
• The program promotes learning to learn and life-long learning							
• The expected learning outcomes cover generic skills and knowledge as well as specific skills and knowledge							
• The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders							
<b>Overall opinion</b>							
<b>3. Program specification</b>							
• The university uses program specifications/program description							
• The program specification shows the expected learning outcomes							
• The program specification is informative for the stakeholders							
<b>Overall opinion</b>							
<b>4. Program content</b>							
• The program content shows a good balance between general and specific skills and knowledge							
• The program reflects the vision and mission of the university							
• The expected learning outcomes have been adequately translated into the program							
• The contribution made by each course to achieving the learning outcomes is clear							
<b>Overall opinion</b>							
<b>5. The organisation of the program</b>							
• The curriculum is coherent and all subjects and courses have been integrated							
• The curriculum shows breadth and depth							
• The curriculum clearly shows the basic courses, intermediate courses, specialist courses and the final project (thesis, etc.) activities							
• The curriculum is up-to-date							
<b>Overall opinion</b>							
<b>6. Didactic concept/teaching/learning strategy</b>							
• The staff have a clear teaching/learning strategy							
• The teaching/learning strategy enables students to acquire and manipulate knowledge academically							
• The teaching/learning strategy is student oriented and stimulates quality learning							
• The curriculum stimulates active learning and facilitates learning to learn							
<b>Overall opinion</b>							
<b>7. Student assessment</b>							
• The assessments reflect the expected learning outcomes and the content of the program							
• Student assessment uses a variety of methods							
• The criteria for assessment are explicit and well-known							
• The standards applied in the assessment are explicit and consistent							
• The assessment schemes, the assessment methods and the assessment itself are always subject to quality assurance and scrutiny							
<b>Overall opinion</b>							
<b>8. Quality of the academic staff</b>							
• The staff is qualified and competent for the task							
• The staff are sufficient to deliver the curriculum adequately							
• Recruitment and promotion are based on academic merits							
• Duties allocated are appropriate to qualifications, experience, and skills							
• Time management and incentive systems are designed to support the quality of teaching and learning							
• Accountability of the staff members is well regulated							
• There are provisions for review, consultation, and redeployment							
• Termination, retirement and social benefits are planned and well implemented.							
• There is an efficient appraisal system							
<b>Overall opinion</b>							

<b>9. Quality of the support staff</b>																				
• There are adequate support staff for the libraries																				
• There are adequate support staff for the laboratories																				
• There are adequate support staff for computer facilities																				
• There are adequate support staff for the student services																				
<b>Overall opinion</b>																				
<b>10. The student</b>																				
• The selection of entering students (if there is selection) is adequate																				
• There is an adequate intake policy																				
• There is an adequate credit points system																				
• The actual study load is in line with the calculated load																				
<b>Overall opinion</b>																				
<b>11. Student advice and support</b>																				
• There is an adequate student progress system																				
• Students get adequate feedback on their performance																				
• Coaching for first-year students is adequate																				
• The physical and material environment for the student is satisfactory																				
• The social and psychological environment for the student is satisfactory																				
<b>Overall opinion</b>																				
<b>12. Facilities and infrastructure</b>																				
• The lecture facilities (lecture halls, small course rooms) are adequate																				
• The library is adequate and up-to-date																				
• The laboratories are adequate and up-to-date																				
• The computer facilities are adequate and up-to-date																				
• Environmental Health and Safety Standards should meet the local requirements in all respects																				
<b>Overall opinion</b>																				
<b>13. Student evaluation</b>																				
• Courses and curriculum are subject to structured student evaluation																				
• Student feedback is used for improvement																				
• The department provides the students with feedback on what is done with the outcomes																				
<b>Overall opinion</b>																				
<b>14. Curriculum design &amp; evaluation</b>																				
• The curriculum was developed as a joint enterprise by all the staff members																				
• Students are involved in the curriculum design																				
• The labour market is involved in the curriculum design																				
• The curriculum is regularly evaluated																				
• Revision of the curriculum takes place at reasonable time periods																				
• Quality assurance of the curriculum is adequate																				
<b>Overall opinion</b>																				
<b>15. Staff development activities</b>																				
• There is a clear vision on the needs for staff development																				
• The staff development activities are adequate to the needs																				
<b>Overall opinion</b>																				
<b>16. Benchmarking</b>																				
• The faculty/department uses the instrument of benchmarking to get a better view on its performance																				
• The faculty/department uses the instrument of benchmarking for curriculum design																				
<b>Overall opinion</b>																				
<b>17 Achievements/the graduates</b>																				
• The level of the graduates is satisfactory																				
• The pass rate is satisfactory																				
• The drop out rate is acceptable																				
• The average time for graduation is in line with the planned time																				
• The graduates can find easily a job. The unemployment rate is at acceptable level																				
<b>Overall opinion</b>																				
<b>18 Feedback stakeholders</b>																				
• There is adequate structural feedback from the labour market (employers)																				
• There is adequate structural feedback from the alumni																				
<b>Overall opinion</b>																				
<b>Overall verdict</b>																				

- 1 = absolutely inadequate; immediate improvements must be made  
2 = inadequate, improvements necessary  
3 = inadequate, but minor improvements will make it adequate

4 = adequate as expected  
5 = better than adequate  
6 = example of good practice  
7 = excellent