Institutional Evaluation Programme:

Performance in Research, Performance in Teaching – Quality, Diversity, and Innovation in Romanian Universities Project

Guidelines for institutions

JANUARY 2012

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I. THE CONTEXT: HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM IN ROMANIA

1.   Context and Background

The evaluations to be undertaken through the EQAR-listed EUA's Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP)[1] are taking place within the context of major reforms in the Romanian higher education system, and specifically in accordance with the provisions of the 2011 Law on Education that came into force in January 2011 and the various related normative acts described below.

One area of reforms has been the ranking of the study programmes and all Romanian universities (public and private) having been classified into three major categories described as:

a) Advanced research and teaching universities
b) Teaching and scientific research universities (including the sub-category of teaching and artistic/creative universities)
c) Teaching and learning universities.

This process was undertaken using data on outputs provided by the universities in relation to:
- teaching and learning
- research
- artistic creativity* (only in the case of artistic/creative universities)
- institutional relationship with the external environment and
- institutional capacity.

The law requires that the university classification exercise is followed by the **institutional evaluation** of all universities, to be carried out by an international agency. The European University Association (EUA), through its Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP), which is on the European Register of Quality Agencies (EQAR), has been selected by the Romanian authorities to carry out this task.

The institutional evaluations are thus taking place in the context of the overall reform and its objectives and will take into account the quantitative data collected and submitted by each university and its specific positioning in the recent classification exercise. During the evaluations, each university is assessed by IEP teams which will use the IEP Guidelines to identify good practice and formulate recommendations for further improving the quality provision of each and every university.

Thus, in this overall context of the reform of higher education in Romania and specifically of the recent classification of universities in the three distinct categories, the institutional evaluations of Romanian universities aim primarily at:

a) evaluating the extent to which each university fulfils its stated institutional mission

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[1] EUA's Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) is an independent EUA service managed by its own Steering Committee to assure the independence of the evaluations (more information available at: http://www.eua.be/iep/). The management of its daily activities is the responsibility of the IEP secretariat, which is an integral part of EUA's secretariat (see the organisation chart: http://www.eua.be/about/who-we-are/secretariat.aspx). In the context of this project the IEP secretariat will be responsible for most of the activities carried out by EUA as project partner.

b) assessing the extent to which each university's stated institutional mission corresponds to the results of the classification exercise and to current institutional reality

c) supporting universities in further improving quality provision and strategic management capacity through targeted recommendations

d) supporting universities in enhancing their institutional quality assurance mechanisms

e) providing policy inputs through cluster reports and a final system review report that will support the Romanian authorities in further developing higher education policies, specifically the methodology used for the classification of universities.

2. The project outline

Main objective:

The project *Performance in Research, Performance in Teaching – Quality, Diversity, and Innovation in Romanian Universities* aims at strengthening core elements of Romanian universities, such as their autonomy and administrative competences, by improving their quality assurance and management proficiency.

Main activities:

This project sets the premises for an external evaluation exercise of the Romanian universities within the framework of the university classification according to the National Education Law.

In the framework of this project 42 Romanian universities will benefit from an IEP evaluation during two rounds of evaluation[2], as follows:

- First round (2011 – 2012): 12 advanced research and teaching universities

- Second round (2012 – 2013): 30 teaching and scientific research universities (including the teaching and artistic/creative universities)

The results of the evaluation exercise (i.e. the evaluation reports, the cluster reports prepared after each evaluation round and the final report comprising the cluster reports and the final conclusions and recommendations) will be disseminated in public events (workshops and conferences) as well as published on the project's website both in Romanian and English.

The project consortium

*Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI) (www.uefiscdi.gov.ro)

*European University Association (EUA) (www.eua.be)

The project website

www.forhe.ro

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[2] For a more efficient project management, the universities in the first two classes during the classification exercise (**a total of 42 institutions**) will be evaluated in two rounds in the framework of this project - *Performance in Research, Performance in Teaching – Quality, Diversity, and Innovation in Romanian Universities.* However, two additional rounds of evaluations are foreseen for the universities belonging to the third class – *teaching and learning institutions*, as defined during the classification exercise. These institutions (**48 in total**) will be evaluated in the framework of the project *Ready for innovating, ready for better serving the local needs - Quality and Diversity of the Romanian Universities*, a project with similar aims and using the same IEP methodology but targeting a different category of universities with distinct features and additional challenges to be addressed in the evaluation process.

II. INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION PROGRAMME: GUIDELINES FOR INSTITUTIONS

1.1 IEP: The methodology and evaluation cycle

The Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) stresses the institutional responsibility in defining quality and the means to achieve it. IEP has carried out close to 300 evaluations worldwide since 1994, and has become a distinct European approach to quality enhancement and a versatile tool for strategic development. The idea of the IEP is to provide a flexible tool for assessing institutional goals and sharpening institutional missions. The evaluation report highlights the good practices identified by the team, but it also provides the university with recommendations for further improvement in order to achieve its mission and goals. The recommendations are specifically tailored to the context of each university.

The distinctive features of the Institutional Evaluation Programme are:

- A strong emphasis on the self-evaluation phase
- A European and international perspective
- A peer-review approach
- An improvement orientation

The focus of the IEP method is the institution as a whole rather than individual study programmes or units. It focuses upon:

- Decision-making processes and institutional structures and effectiveness of strategic management
- Relevance of internal quality processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision making and strategic management as well as perceived gaps in these internal mechanisms. As part of this larger framework the evaluations address the issues of internal quality assurance as identified in the first part of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG – see annex 6).

The IEP evaluation team consists of rectors or vice-rectors (active or former), a student and a senior higher education professional acting as team coordinator. Team members provide an international and European perspective; they all come from different countries, and none of them comes from the country of the institution being evaluated. Team members (other than the team coordinator) are not paid for their IEP work; they are motivated to serve by a commitment to the Programme's nature and purposes and by a desire to contribute to the development of the institution being evaluated.

It should be emphasised that the main preoccupation of the team is to be helpful and constructive. Team members will come prepared to lead discussions with carefully prepared questions. Sessions are intended to be interactive. No formal presentations should be made.

The evaluation team's conclusions and recommendations are collected in a report that will be presented to the institution and subsequently published on the project website.

The steps of the evaluation process in each round are presented in **Annex 1**.

1.2 Evaluation teams

IEP evaluation teams consist of highly experienced and knowledgeable higher education leaders, academics and a student. Team members are selected by the Steering Committee of the Institutional Evaluation Programme with a view to providing each participating institution with an appropriate mix of knowledge, skills, objectivity and international perspective. A team consists of five members: rectors or vice rectors (current or former), one student and a senior higher education professional acting as the team coordinator. Each team member comes from a different country and none from Romania.

1.3 Timeframe for the evaluations

The IEP secretariat is prepared to work with each university to adapt this timeframe to its specific circumstances and requirements. However, it should be noted that the evaluations must follow the project timeline and delays that might break the project cycle should be avoided. The dates proposed below are also, within certain limits, subject to discussion with the representatives of universities in the workshops.

Round 1: 12 advanced research and teaching based universities[3]Stage 1: January – April 2012

- ✓ The Rector signs the <u>Memorandum of Understanding</u> and the Registration Form, and appoints a contact person to liaise with the IEP secretariat and the team coordinator.

- ✓ Two university representatives attend the <u>workshop for universities</u> organised in Bucharest on 10 January 2012.

- ✓ All experts will attend a training workshop aiming to familiarise themselves with the methodology and the specific features of the Romanian higher education system.

- ✓ <u>Self-evaluation phase</u>: the institutions undergo a self-evaluation process and provide the team and the IEP secretariat with a self-evaluation report on the basis of the Guidelines – see point 2, below. Please note that the self-evaluation report **must be received 4 weeks** prior to the first site visit.

- ✓ The team coordinator corresponds with the university contact person to agree on a draft programme for the first visit.

Stage 2: May – November 2012

- ✓ The evaluation team conducts <u>a first site visit</u> to the institution (May – June 2012) and requests any additional information as appropriate.

- ✓ The institution submits any additional information as requested by the evaluation team (within a maximum of **4 weeks** after the first site visit is completed).

- ✓ The evaluation team makes <u>a second site visit</u> to the institution (October 2012).

Stage 3: December 2012 - January 2013

- ✓ The IEP secretariat sends the draft written report to the institution for comments on factual errors.

- ✓ The IEP secretariat sends <u>the finalised report</u> to the institution. All reports will be published on the project website

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[3]The list of advanced research and teaching based universities can be found at:
http://chestionar.uefiscdi.ro/docs/MonitorulOficial6septembrie%202011.pdf

✓ Representatives of the institutions will be invited to attend the post-evaluation workshop (January – February 2013)

Round 2: 30 teaching and scientific research based universities and teaching and artistic/creative universities

Stage 1:[4]May- October 2012

✓ The Rector signs the Memorandum of Understanding and the Registration Form, and appoints a contact person to liaise with the IEP secretariat and the team coordinator.

✓ Two university representatives attend the workshop for universities.

✓ All experts will attend a training workshop aiming to familiarise themselves with the methodology and the specific features of the Romanian higher education system. Self-evaluation phase: the institutions undergo a self-evaluation process and provide the team and the IEP secretariat with a self-evaluation report on the basis of the Guidelines – see point 2, below. Please note that the self-evaluation report **must be received 4 weeks** prior to the first site visit.

✓ The team coordinator corresponds with the university contact person to agree on a draft programme for the first visit.

Stage 2: November-2012-March 2013

✓ The evaluation team conducts a first site visit to the institution and requests any additional information as appropriate.

✓ The institution submits any additional information as requested by the evaluation team (within a maximum of **4 weeks** after the first site visit is completed).

✓ The evaluation team makes a second site visit to the institution (October 2012).

Stage 3 April –June 2013:

✓ The IEP secretariat sends the draft written report to the institution for comments on factual errors.

✓ The IEP secretariat sends the finalised report to the institution. All reports will be published on the project website

✓ Representatives of the institutions will be invited to attend the post-evaluation workshop.

The list of teaching and scientific research based universities and teaching and artistic/creative universitiescan be found at:
http://chestionar.uefiscdi.ro/docs/MonitorulOficial6septembrie%202011.pdf

2 Self-Evaluation: Process and Report

The IEP emphasises self-evaluation as a crucial phase in the evaluation process. The self-evaluation phase has two aspects that are equally important: the self-evaluation *process* and the self-evaluation *report*:

- The self-evaluation *process* is a collective institutional reflection and an opportunity for quality improvement of any aspect of the institution. Institutions are urged to take this opportunity to involve all members of the institution in this process.

- The self-evaluation *report* is one outcome of the self-evaluation process; it provides information to the evaluation team, with emphasis on the institution's strategic and quality management activities while also including the data provided by the university as input to the classification exercise.

The goal of both the *process* and the *report* is to enhance the institutional capacity for improvement and change through self-reflection. This is a crucial phase in which careful consideration should be given to maximise the engagement of the whole institution. If an institution wants the evaluation process to address a particular strategic priority of the institution in-depth, it should pay particular attention to the chosen priority in its self-evaluation process and report.

As soon as the institution has received these guidelines it should begin the self-evaluation process by setting up the self-evaluation group (Section 2.1). The self-evaluation group will base its work on the checklist (Section 2.3) and will write the self-evaluation report (Section 2.4).

2.1 The self-evaluation group

To ensure the success of the self-evaluation, the institution will set up a self-evaluation group that represents a broad view of the institution. The self-evaluation group should have the following characteristics:

- Its members are in a good position to judge strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

- It represents the major constituencies in the institution (academic and administrative staff and students) to maximise involvement of all major stakeholders. Although it is important that the abovementioned constituencies are represented, the group ought not to be an exhaustive gathering of all units and faculties within the institution.

- The rector should *not* be part of the group.

- The group is small (max. 10 members) to ensure that it is efficient.

- It selects a chairperson and an academic secretary to write the report under the chairperson's responsibility.

- It decides on the distribution of tasks.

- It plans and coordinates the work: e.g. tailoring the checklist (cf. 2.2) to the national context and the particular institution, gathering and analysing the data, co-ordinating the work of any sub-group.

- It provides opportunities for a broad discussion of the self-evaluation within the institution to promote a broad identification with the report.

The institutional leadership will:

- clarify the responsibility of the self-evaluation group towards staff members who are not on the team, i.e., the self-evaluation group should not work in isolation but seek, through institution-wide discussions, to present as broad a view as possible of the institution

- support and encourage the process along the way by explaining its purpose across the institution.

- appoint a contact person to the IEP evaluation team and the IEP secretariat (a liaison person responsible for the arrangements of the site visits).

The self-evaluation will result in a report submitted to the external evaluation team under the responsibility of the rector. This does not mean that the rector or all actors in the institution necessarily agree with all the statements in the self-evaluation report. But the rector must accept responsibility for both the self-evaluation process as well as the report.

It is essential for the success of the self-evaluation that information is circulated widely in the institution about the procedures, goals and benefits of the institutional evaluation.

2.2 Preparing the self-evaluation: What kind of information to collect and analyse?

As an important step in the evaluation exercise, the self-evaluation report has three major purposes:

- To present a succinct but analytical and comprehensive statement of the institution's view of quality and strategic management

- To analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the institution, identify the opportunities and threats it faces and propose specific actions to address them

- To provide quantitative and qualitative data supporting the analysis

The self evaluation report should take account of the positioning of the university and thus relate to its stated mission according to the recent classification exercise.

As the main vehicle for the institution to present itself, the self-evaluation report is also an opportunity for the institution to reflect critically upon the way it is managed and handles quality as a central process in its strategic decision making.

Therefore, the self-evaluation report should not be simply descriptive, but *analytical, evaluative and synthetic*. It is based on a SWOT analysis (assess strengths and weaknesses, identify threats and opportunities) and show how the various elements of strategic thinking and quality management are interconnected.

Four central questions structure this SWOT analysis:

- **What is the institution trying to do?** What are its norms and values, the mission and goals?

- **How is the institution trying to do it?** What are the organisational characteristics of the institution, i.e. governance structures, and its key activities and to what extent are these in line with the norms and values?

- **How does the institution know it works?** To what extent does the institution know whether its activities and organisational structures meet the institution's objectives?

▪ **How does the institution change in order to improve?**

2.3 The Checklist

See annex 3

Annex 3 presents a checklist that will guide the data collection and analysis in the preparation of the self-evaluation report. It is important that all the points on the list are addressed by the self-evaluation group but, since each institution operates within its own specific context, the self-evaluation group may want to tailor the checklist before starting its work. If some questions are not relevant or if specific pieces of information are impossible to provide, this should be noted in relation to the questions.

The checklist is structured into four major sections that reflect the four central questions mentioned above.

It should be noted that in the context of this project and in accordance with the current provisions of the law, the following areas of interest will be considered, *inter-alia,* as particularly relevant during the external institutional evaluation:
a) The extent to which the university fulfils its institutional mission and its organisational objectives
b) The institutional development strategy
c) The existing institutional infrastructure enabling data collection and processing, as well as its structuring around the core criteria and indicators for the classification exercise
d) The institutional teaching and/or research infrastructure; quality of existing teaching and/or research outputs and the institutional strategy for quality enhancement in teaching and/or research
e) Quality of the existing human resources and institutional policies of staff recruitment and professional development
f) Institutional systems and mechanisms designed for the approval of study programmes, for monitoring and evaluation, including programme learning outcomes, and/or for research project development
g) Student assessment practices
h) Institutional structures for quality management (e.g. administrative and decision-making processes, resource allocation, internal structuring).

2.4 The structure of the self-evaluation report

See annex 4

After the self-evaluation group has collected and analysed the data as outlined above, it will summarise all the information gathered and present its findings in the self-evaluation report. A proposed structure for this report is presented in annex 4. The report should be fairly short, analytical, reflective and critical.

Practical aspects

▪ The maximum length of the self-evaluation report is 20 - 25 pages, excluding the appendices. The reason for this relatively short report is to maintain a focus on institutional management without probing too deeply into the specifics of all faculties and activities. Institutions are

encouraged to make use of any existing data and documents. Unless there has been a previous agreement on the language of the evaluation, the self-evaluation report and its appendices should be written in English.

- The self-evaluation report is written partly for an internal audience (the institution's staff members and students) and partly for the evaluation team. The evaluation team is knowledgeable about higher education in general but, as internationals, they may lack in-depth knowledge of specific national situations. The self-evaluation group should keep this in mind when writing its report.

- IEP and the evaluation team will consider the self-evaluation report as confidential and will not provide any information regarding this report to third parties.

- The self-evaluation report should be read and signed by the rector before being sent to IEP and the evaluation team. This ensures that the institutional leadership is informed appropriately.

- **The self-evaluation report should be made available to all institutional members.**

- The report should be sent to the IEP Secretariat which will further distribute it to each individual team member at least **four weeks** prior to the first site visit.

It is of the utmost importance for the running of the project and especially the site visits that deadlines are respected. To ensure this, the self-evaluation group is advised to plan to **meet weekly for a couple of hours** to ensure progress. Conducting the self-evaluation process and writing the report is an ambitious task that requires a substantial time investment of approximately three months.

3 Site Visits

3.1 Preparing for the site visits

We have stressed that the IEP process is intended to act as a support to develop further the universities' capacity to change. Therefore, the guidelines and sample programmes for the visits should be adapted to the institution's specific needs and circumstances. Each institution will be visited twice, as detailed below.

In order to ensure fruitful discussion during the site visits:

- The number of participants in each meeting **must not exceed eight (8)**, except for students who seem to prefer larger groups of up to ten persons.

- The team should meet **privately** with individual groups, e.g., only students should be present at the students' meeting, with no members of the staff present. These meetings will be treated confidentially by the evaluation team: it will not report on an individual person's statements.

- Equality among the **persons o**n the panel should be respected to allow everyone to participate fully in the interviews.

- All meetings are interactive: the evaluation team will come prepared with questions in order to start a dialogue. **Participants should not prepare formal presentations**.

Practical considerations:

- Sample schedules for the visits are presented in annex 5, but institutions and evaluation teams should bear in mind that they are only suggestions and can be modified if appropriate, taking into consideration the size, structure etc. of the institution in question. The schedule of the second visit particularly is subject to changes depending on the themes that the evaluation team wishes to concentrate on.

- Enough time should be left for the team's debriefing sessions.

- A ten-minute leeway should be left between each meeting to allow groups to go in and out, to give the evaluation team a few minutes to reflect together on previous meetings or to make changes to plans for the next meeting. Such brief breaks, in addition to coffee breaks, can also be useful to catch up on time if some meetings take longer than expected.

- If the evaluation team needs to move from one location to another (e.g., to another faculty), please take account of the time to do so.

- If the institution has several campus sites, careful consideration should be given as to whether visits to several sites are necessary. Unnecessary visits should be avoided in order to keep travelling time to a minimum.

- The liaison person will make the necessary arrangements for the visits, including transportation for the evaluation team to and from the airport, hotel reservations and scheduling meetings.

- The liaison person provides nameplates for the meetings, distributes the evaluation team's short biographies in advance of the site visit and informs participants about the general objectives of the first visit and of the particular meeting in which they are involved. If possible, it would be helpful for the team to receive the names and positions of the people to be interviewed in each meeting beforehand (for ex. the day before).

3.2 First visit

For the participating institution, the first visit serves the following purposes:

- To contribute to greater awareness in the institution at large of the evaluation process and its main purpose which is to enhance the institution's strategic development and change management through an examination of its internal quality arrangements

- To identify the topics for the second site visit and to set the appropriate tone. An open and self-critical approach on the part of the institution is much more beneficial than a "public-relations" approach.

For the evaluation team, the first visit will contribute to develop their understanding of:

- the national higher education context

- institutional operations in terms of students, staff, finance, facilities and location

- the structures and processes of strategic decision making (planning, teaching and research, financial flows and personnel policy)

- the important local issues with respect to strategic management

- the existing institutional procedures for quality assurance.

The first visit should result in a validation of the self-evaluation report, and the evaluation team should get a broad impression of how the institution operates (decentralisation, co-ordination, etc.).

Therefore, the choice of persons the evaluation team meets is highly important. For the benefit of both the institution and the team, a representative and diversified sample of the community should take part in the first visit. This includes academic and non-academic staff, as well as different types of students and representatives of external "stakeholders". It is important that the evaluation team also meets "average" students and "average" academic staff, i.e., not all should be members of official bodies (senates or council) or unions.

An indicative list of persons and bodies that the evaluation team should meet includes:

- The rector as well as other members of the rector's team

- The self-evaluation group

- Representatives of the central staff: mainly from the quality office, international relations office, financial services, student services, personnel office, planning unit, coordinating unit of research activities, public relations office, etc.

- Representatives of external stakeholders and partners (public authorities, private industry, other actors from society, etc.)

- Delegation of senate / council

- Deans / dean council

- Students (bachelor, master and doctoral level)

- One or two faculties, one or two special centres (if any)

The first visit lasts **2 days**. The institution is responsible for proposing the schedule for the first visit, which will need to be validated by the evaluation team. A sample schedule for the first visit

is presented in annex 5, but other options are also possible in consultation with the evaluation team coordinator.

The sample schedule includes visits to faculties or other units, which may (but need not) be organised as parallel sessions. Please note that:

- Faculty is used here in a generic sense to mean a "structural unit", i.e., some institutions have only faculties while others have different types of faculties, research institutes and other structures. The evaluation team (split in pairs if necessary) may be interested in visiting a mixture of these units.

- The number and types of units to be visited should be adjusted based on the institutional structure and size: some institutions have small numbers of large units; others have large numbers of small units.

The schedule should be adapted to the characteristics of the institution and it should be kept in mind that the team will have the opportunity to visit other units during the second visit.

At the end of the first visit, the team will:

- Ask for additional written information if necessary. These additional documents, as well as any other information that has been requested, should be sent to all members of the team and to the IEP secretariat at least four weeks before the date of the second site visit.

- Decide the dates of the second visit (in co-operation with the institution)

- Identify the persons, bodies or units to meet during the second visit.

The first visit contributes to the team's understanding of the specific characteristics of the institution. As such, it is not intended to lead to any conclusions. The evaluation team will not produce an evaluation report at this point.

3.3 Second site visit

The focus during the second visit is no longer to gain an understanding of what is specific about the institution but to find out whether, how, and with what results, the institutional strategy and internal quality policies and procedures are implemented coherently in the institution with particular reference to the positioning of the university in the recent classification exercise.

The practical aspects for organising the first visit apply to the second visit as well, with one important difference. The evaluation team will be responsible for establishing the programme of the second visit. An example of a schedule for the second visit is given in annex 5, but the institutions and teams should keep in mind that it is always possible to tailor the schedule to suit the priorities of the institution and the needs of the evaluation process. The schedule of the visit must be discussed between the liaison person and the team coordinator in advance. As shown below, the schedule of the visit may include parallel sessions in order to cover more ground and collect more evidence. The team will advise the institution in good time of its plans in this respect.

The **usual length** of the second site visit **is 3 days** (see the sample schedule in annex 5). Any extension of the second visit beyond the usual length must be decided by the evaluation team and discussed with the institution during the first site visit at the latest. Given the operational and financial constraints of the project, such decisions must be approved the IEP secretariat and UEFISCDI.

Videotaping or recording the oral report session or including members of the media during this session is not recommended. If this does happen, it must be agreed to in advance of this session with the team chair.

4   Evaluation Report

The evaluation team will draft a written report based on the oral report presented at the end of the second visit. The draft report will then be communicated to the rector by the IEP secretariat. The rector will ensure that any factual errors are corrected and, most importantly, comment on the usefulness of the report for the institution's follow-up process.

The institution's reaction must be sent to the IEP secretariat, which will forward it to the team coordinator. The report will then be finalised and sent officially to the rector, again via the IEP secretariat, thus formally concluding the main evaluation process.

Please note that the final evaluation reports will be published on the project website (www.forhe.ro).

The table below summarises the key milestones and division of tasks during the report-writing stage.

Time frame and division of labour		
Task	**Main responsibility**	**Time Frame**
Write draft report	Team coordinator	Within 4 weeks after the second visit
Comment on draft	Evaluation team	Within 2 weeks
Send draft report approved by the team chair to IEP secretariat	Team coordinator	Within 2 weeks
Edit	EUA editor	Within 1 week
Comment on new draft	Team coordinator (if necessary, in consultation with the team chair)	Within 2 weeks
Send report to institution	IEP secretariat	ASAP
Institution corrects factual errors	Rector	Within 2 weeks
Any change + sending final report to institution + publishing it on the project website (www.forhe.ro)	IEP staff (if necessary, in consultation with the team chair and team coordinator)	Within 2 weeks

Annex 1

The steps of the evaluation cycle

- The Rector of each university is asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding and a Registration Form, outlining the responsibilities of the institution in undergoing the evaluation. This includes nominating 1-2 liaison persons who will assist in coordinating the visits.
- Two representatives of all universities participating in a specific evaluation round will attend a training workshop for universities. This workshop aims to prepare the participating universities for the evaluation process, and more specifically provide information on the self-evaluation phase. The IEP secretariat, acting as the contact point for experts and universities to be evaluated, will confirm the dates of the first site visit to the university and inform them about the expert team that will be coming. The UEFISCDI project team, will make all local arrangements for accommodation, meals and transport, and communicate the practical information to the IEP secretariat, which will maintain permanent contact with the experts. Universities will be asked for support with the local arrangements.
- A **self-evaluation process** is conducted by the university, with a self-evaluation **report** sent to the evaluation team at least 4 weeks before the first visit.
- The **first site visit** takes place over 2 days. During the site visits, if the university in question deems this to be necessary, professional interpretation will be provided for the team by the project consortium in order to facilitate communication and avoid possible misunderstandings.
- At the end of this first visit, the team requests any additional information that may be useful.
- The university provides additional information as agreed with the team, at least 4 weeks before the second visit.
- The **second site visit** takes place over 3 days, with an oral report issued to the Rector and any other invited parties on the last day.
- After the evaluation team has agreed upon the final report, IEP secretariat sends the final report to the university for a factual check. The IEP secretariat wraps up the process by officially sending the report to the university. All final reports will be published on the project website.
- After each round of evaluations a post-evaluation workshop is organised. Universities are asked to participate in the post-evaluation workshop, where the exercise will be discussed and debated amongst peers from different universities. The conclusions drawn during the post-evaluation workshop will be included in the cluster-report of each evaluation round.
- After the evaluations of all universities in one class have been finalised, a cluster report will be produced, merging the findings, conclusions and recommendations of all the evaluation reports of universities concerned.
- After the last evaluation round a system report will be elaborated, integrating the three cluster-reports and final conclusions and recommendations.
- Universities are invited to participate in the final dissemination conference of the project.

Annex 2

Terms, conditions and financial guidelines

Timing of the site visits

The timeline for the evaluation process, and more specifically the dates of the first site visit, will be agreed upon at the beginning of the process through a dialogue between the institution, the IEP secretariat and the members of the evaluation team. After the dates have been set and communicated to all parties, the flights for the evaluation team members will be booked by the project team and no further changes to the agreed calendar can be made. If, for any reason the dates have to be changed after this, the party who initiates the change is responsible for covering the additional costs caused by the change.

There should be as short a time as possible between the first and the second site visits as it is important that the impressions collected by the team members during the first visit are still fresh in their minds by the time they undertake the second visit

The whole evaluation process, including the final report, should be finalised by December 2012 (for the 1st Round) and by November 2013 for the 2nd Round.

Logistics during the site visits and financial guidelines

The UEFISCDI project team will be in charge of the logistics (local transportation, accommodation, catering) related to the organisation of the two site visits according to the draft programme of the visits agreed between the university and the evaluation team.

The IEP Secretariat will be responsible at all times for the communication between the university and the evaluation team with support from UEFISCDI.

Use of the project logo:

According to the project communication guidelines.

Annex 3

Checklist for self-evaluation process

I. Norms and values, mission and goals: *What is the institution trying to do?*

This section discusses institutional norms and values. It analyses the mission and goals of the institution. The IEP evaluation team will be particularly interested in the strategic choices the institution has made with regard to its scope and specific mission as identified in the recent classification exercise.

- ✓ Governance and management

    - ✓ What is the degree of centralisation and decentralisation that the institution aims for?

    - ✓ Does the institution have human resources policies in place?

    - ✓ Does the institution have an institutional quality assurance policy in place?

- ✓ Academic profile

    - ✓ What balance is the institution aiming to achieve with its teaching, research and service to society?

    - ✓ What are the institution's academic priorities, i.e. which teaching programmes and areas of research are emphasised?

    - ✓ To what extent is a student-centred approach, as promoted by the Bologna Process, implemented in the teaching of the institution?

- ▪ Academically-related activities: what are the institution's goals for its relationship to society (external partners, local and regional government) and its involvement in public debate?

- ▪ Funding: how does the institution see its relationship with its funding agencies (public and others, such as research contractors)?

- ▪ What balance is the institution aiming to achieve in terms of its local, regional, national, and international positioning?

- ▪ What is the vision of the institution with respect to its present and future positioning, in particular in the context of the recent classification of Romanian universities but also in the broader international HE landscape?

- ▪ What is the rationale of the strategic choices made by the institution?

II. Governance and activities: *How is the institution trying to do it?*

In practice, the institution manages its activities (teaching, research, and service to society) in order to realise its mission and goals, while taking account of the specific opportunities and constraints it faces. The inevitable discrepancy between what ought to be (norms and values) and what actually exists (organisation and activities) is an indicator of the institution's strengths and weaknesses. It is the analysis of strengths and weaknesses that constitutes the next phase of the self-evaluation.

The issues addressed in Section I should be re-visited but, rather than stating objectives, Section II will reflect upon the institution's strategy in terms of each of these issues and how they are achieved, and will analyse the extent to which the institution takes full advantage of its autonomy. Moreover, each subheading in this section should also contain concrete proposals on how identified weaknesses could be remedied and strengths could be further enhanced.

- Governance and management: Re-visit questions in Section I by taking the following issues into account:

  ✓ Analysis of management practice: what are the respective roles of central-level administrators, offices and faculties/institutes? Does co-ordination among faculties/institutes take place, and if so how? What does the institutional leadership control and decide? Who decides the following:

    ➢ Academic activities and policies (teaching and learning, research)

    ➢ Funding issues

    ➢ The selection and promotion of academic and administrative staff

    ➢ The selection of students

    ➢ Development of service to society?

  ✓ How does the institution involve students and external stakeholders in institutional governance?

  ✓ How adequate are the institution's human resources, human resource policy and practice for current and future needs (e.g., gender policy, age profile, recruitment, promotion, redeployment and staff development)?

  ✓ How does the institution's involvement in inter-institutional cooperation (at regional, national or international level) reflect its positioning as identified in Section I?

  ✓ How do the actual management policies reflect the institution's mission and goals, and how could discrepancies between the goals and reality be amended and strengths be reinforced?

- Academic profile : Re-visit questions in Section I by taking the following issues into account:

  ✓ Analysis of research and educational approaches. This can be brief unless some programmes or approaches, teaching or research units deserve specific mention because they reflect the institution's academic profile (e.g., special didactic approaches, a unique and/or very large research institute, e-learning etc.)

  ✓ Analysis of educational programme design and organisation of research activities

  ✓ How do the study programmes and research activities reflect the mission and goals, and how could discrepancies between the goals and reality be amended and identified strengths be reinforced?

- Academically-related activities: Re-visit questions in Section I by taking the following issues into account:

  ✓ Analysis of research and technology transfer, continuing education, regional and service to community, etc. This can be brief, unless some activities deserve specific mention.

  ✓ How do the various academically-related activities reflect the institution's mission and goals, and how could discrepancies between the goals and reality addressed and strengths be reinforced?

- ✓ Student support services:
    - ✓ Is the organisation and content of student support services suitable to meet the goals set?
    - ✓ How effective are student support services in enhancing the achievement of students?
- ✓ Funding: Revisit questions in Section I by taking the following issues into account:
    - ✓ What is the total budget of the institution, including salaries, contracts, etc.?
    - ✓ What percentage is allotted by the state or other public authorities, formed by student fees, by private sources (research contracts, foundations, etc.)?
    - ✓ Is the state allocation a lump sum, or, if not, what percentage of this allocation is ear-marked?
    - ✓ What are the amounts allotted to faculties and departments, and according to which criteria are they distributed? Are these amounts decided by the institution?
    - ✓ What are the allocation procedures within the institution? Who decides what and how?
    - ✓ What percentage of the budget can be used by the institutional leadership to implement new initiatives?
    - ✓ Is the institution able to calculate the full costs of research and teaching activities?
    - ✓ What does the institution perceive as strengths and weaknesses in terms of its funding, and how could weaknesses be remedied and strengths be further enhanced?

III. Quality assessment practices: *How does the institution know it works?*

The question "How does the institution know it works?" refers to the internal quality assessment processes and practices available and operative in the institution.

- Does the institution have an internal quality assurance policy or handbook?
- Does the institution conduct internal evaluations of programmes, departments, research etc.?

Processes related to teaching and learning are enshrined in part 1 of the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG), which were adopted by ministers in Bergen (2005)[5].

- To what extent has the institution implemented these European Guidelines?

However, the institution should not limit this section merely to teaching and learning, but examine also monitoring and enhancement processes of other activities, such as research activities, administrative processes and service to society.

These quality assessment processes include data gathering and an evaluative judgement concerning the institution's activities, but the institution should also tackle questions such as:

- How have the results of the data gathering and evaluation results impacted the activities?

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[5] Annex 7 and http://www.enqa.eu/pubs.lasso

- How is the link between these results and institutional planning and development processes ensured?

- How well do the current practices relate to the strategic choices presented in Section I?

IV. Strategic management and capacity for change: *How does the institution change in order to improve?*

Once the self-evaluation group has gone through all the above questions, it will come up with a SWOT analysis that will assess the capacity of the institution to change in order to improve:

- How responsive is the institution to the demands, threats and opportunities present in its external environment, including those related to the classification of universities?

- How are representatives from the external environment involved in the institution's strategic management?

- To what extent does the institution take full advantage of its autonomy?

- Which changes can be expected to be made towards the institution's aims?

- How can a better match be attained between the current and future mission and goals and the activities (study programmes, research, service to society)?

- What role do quality monitoring and quality management play in these developments?

Annex 4

Proposed structure and content for the self-evaluation report

<u>Introduction</u>

Brief analysis of the self-evaluation process:

- Who are the self-evaluation group members?

- With whom did they collaborate?

- To what extent was the report discussed across the institution?

- What were the positive aspects, as well as the difficulties, encountered in the self-evaluation process?

<u>Institutional context</u>

Brief presentation of the institution in its context:

- Brief historical overview; including references to the positioning of the institution in the recent classification exercise

- Legal status of the institution (public, private non-profit, private for-profit. If private who are the owners and what is the legal form)

- Geographical position of the institution (e.g., in a capital city, major regional centre, concentrated on one campus, dispersed across a city)

- A brief analysis of the current regional and national labour-market situation

- Number of faculties, research institutes/laboratories, academic and administrative staff and students

<u>Body of the report</u>

The body of the self-evaluation report strives to strike a balance between description and critical analysis (i.e., identify the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats) and should have the following sections, which follow the four sections in the checklist:

- Section I: Norms, values, mission and goals: What is the institution trying to do?

- Section II: Governance and activities: How is the institution trying to do it?

- Section III: Quality assessment practices: How does the institution know it works?

- Section IV: Strategic management and capacity for change: How does the institution change in order to improve?

As mentioned in section 2.2, the body of the self-evaluation report should not be simply descriptive, but *analytical, evaluative and synthetic* as well. It should assess strengths and weaknesses, identify threats and opportunities and show how the various elements of strategic and quality management are interconnected. In addition, the analysis should take into account changes that have taken place in the recent past as well as those that are anticipated in the future.

<u>Conclusion</u>

The conclusion summarises the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and **offers a specific action plan to remedy weaknesses and to develop strengths further.**

A useful conclusion has the following characteristics:

- Since the goal of the evaluation is to promote ongoing quality and strategic development, the report should be honest and self-reflective. Therefore, strengths and weaknesses need to be stated explicitly; specifically, it is best to avoid playing down or hiding weaknesses.

- Strengths and weaknesses that are not discussed in the body of the report should not appear in the conclusion since they would be unsubstantiated.

- Strengths and weaknesses that are discussed in the main part of the report are summarised again in the conclusion.

- Plans to remedy weaknesses are offered in the conclusion in the form of a specific action plan.

<u>Appendices</u>

Appendices will typically include the following:

- The current Institutional Strategic Plan (if one exists) or preferably, an Executive Summary (in English, if that exists)

- The data provided by the institution for the process of university classification and any further information regarding the positioning of the institution within the classification of Romanian universities

- Any available reports of evaluations during recent years (e.g. ARACIS)

- An organisational chart of the institution's faculties (or any other relevant units of teaching/research)

- An organisational chart of the central administration and support services (rector's office staff, libraries etc.)

- An organisational chart of the management structure (rector, council/senate, faculty deans and councils, major committees, etc.)

- Student numbers for the whole institution, with a breakdown by faculty, over the last three to five years; student/staff ratio (lowest, highest and mean ratios); time-to-graduation; drop-out rates; gender distribution by faculty; demographic trends in the wider target population

- Academic staff numbers (by academic rank and faculty) for the whole institution, over the last three to five years, with a breakdown by level, discipline, gender and age

- Funding: government funding (amount and percentage of total budget), other funding sources (type and percentage of total budget) and research funding (percentage within total budget); amount of institutional funding for teaching and research per faculty over the last three to five years

- Infrastructure in relation to the number of students and staff: number and size of buildings, facilities, laboratories, and libraries; their location (e.g., dispersed over a large geographical area or concentrated on a single campus); condition of the facilities

- Handbook for prospective international students (if one exists).

These data should be analysed within the national and institutional context.

Beyond these appendices, the institution is free to add other information, but the number and length of appendices should be limited to what is strictly necessary in order to understand the statements and argumentation in the self-evaluation report.

Annex 5

Sample schedules for the site visits

Sample schedule for the first visit

Time	*What & who?*	*Why?*
DAY 0		
Late afternoon	**Arrival** of evaluation team	
90 minutes	**Briefing meeting** Evaluation team alone	Division of tasks; discussion of the self-evaluation; inventory of issues for preliminary visit
Evening	**Dinner** Evaluation team, with rector and liaison person	Welcome, make acquaintance; go over preliminary programme; discuss key issues for evaluation from the institution's perspective (arising from self-evaluation and/or from rector's experience)
DAY 1		
9.00 – 10.00	**Meeting with rector** Evaluation team, rector	Discuss *privately* issues that need to be stressed in evaluation team's visit and report
10.15 – 11.30	**Introduction meeting and meeting with self-evaluation group** Self-evaluation steering group, evaluation team, liaison person	Introduction to the institution: structures, quality management and strategic management; national higher education and research policies; student issues. Understand self-evaluation process and extent of institutional involvement; how useful was self-evaluation for the institution (emerging issues, function in strategic planning processes)? Are self-evaluation data still up to date? Will they be updated for the second site visit?
11.30 – 12.30	**Tour of the campus**	To get to know the campus and paying special attention to student facilities.
12.30 – 14.00	**Lunch** Evaluation team, liaison person	Reflect upon impressions of first meetings and complete information as necessary

14.10 – 15.00 **parallel** Evaluation team may split into pairs to visit two faculties	**Visit to faculties A & B** Dean and possibly vice-dean	Introduction to the faculty: structures, quality management and strategic management; discuss relationships of faculties with the central level; input in self-evaluation; role of quality control activities in faculty
15.10 – 15.50 **parallel** Evaluation team may split into pairs to visit two faculties	**Visit to faculties A & B** Academic staff representatives	Discuss relationships of faculties with the central level; input in self-evaluation; role of quality control activities in faculty; recruitment of new staff; staff development; motivation policies. Please note that deans or vice deans should not be present at this meeting: it is reserved for "regular" academic staff only.
16.00 – 16.40 **parallel** Evaluation team may split into pairs to visit two faculties	**Visit to faculties A & B** Students	Students' views on experience (e.g., teaching and learning, student input in quality control and (strategic) decision making)
17.00 – 18.00	**Meeting with external partners** (industry, society and/or local authority)	Discuss relations of the institution with external partners of the private and public sectors
18.30 – 19.30	**Debriefing meeting** Evaluation team alone	Reflect on impressions; prepare second day of visit
Evening	**Dinner** Evaluation team alone	Reflect on impressions gained thus far

DAY 2		
9.00 – 9.50 **parallel** Evaluation team may split into pairs	**Visit to faculties C & D** Dean and possibly vice-dean	as in faculties A and B (adapt as appropriate)

10.00 – 10.40 **parallel** Evaluation team may split into pairs	**Visit to faculties C & D** Academic staff representatives	as in faculties A and B (adapt as appropriate)
10.50 – 11.30 **parallel** Evaluation team may split into pairs	**Visit to faculties C & D** Students	as in faculties A and B (adapt as appropriate)
11.40 – 12.30	**Debriefing meeting** Evaluation team alone	Reflect on impressions; list issues for additions to self-evaluation report and main visit
12.30 – 13.00	Evaluation team, liaison person	Plan the second visit schedule (select faculties or units, special or additional persons to speak with); logistical support for or during visit; visit team's meeting and working rooms (where team can work on its oral report)
13.00	**Lunch:** Evaluation team, rector and liaison person	Concluding session to agree topics of additional documentation
Afternoon	Departure of evaluation team	

Sample schedule for the second visit

Time	What & who?	Why?
DAY 0		
Late afternoon	**Arrival** of evaluation team	
60 minutes	**Briefing meeting** Evaluation team alone	Division of tasks, preliminary discussion of evaluation report structure and issues
Evening	**Dinner** Evaluation team, with rector and liaison person	Welcome, renew acquaintance; go over site visit programme

Time	What & who?	Why?
DAY 1		
9.00 – 10.00	**Meeting with rector** Evaluation team, rector	Discuss *privately* issues that need to be stressed in team's visit and report
10.10 – 11.00	**Meeting with self- evaluation steering group** Self-evaluation group, evaluation team, liaison person, task forces	Discuss any changes in context or internal situation since the first visit, analyse impact of first visit, review additional information sent to the team, clarify any open questions
11.10 – 12.30	**Meeting with the deans** Deans' Council or deans from several faculties, evaluation team	Discuss relationship of faculties with central level with respect to strategic development and quality management; input in self-evaluation; special issues arising from self-evaluation parts one and two and/or from talk with rector
12.40 – 14.00	**Lunch** Evaluation team, liaison person	Reflect upon impressions of first meetings and complete information as necessary
14.00 – 15.00	**Meeting with central office staff members**	Discuss role of institutional strategic documents (development plans, etc.) in development of institution; special issues arising from self-evaluation parts one and two and/or from talk with rector
15.10 – 16.00	**Meeting with senate** Senate representatives	Discuss relationship of senate/democratic representation body with the rectoral team regarding strategic and quality management

16.00 – 16.45	**Meeting with student delegation** Student representatives	Students' views on the institution, on relations with rector's office, on student input in quality management and in (strategic) decision making
17.00 – 18.00	**Meeting with outside partners** (Industry, society and/or local authorities)	Discuss relationships of institution with external stakeholders of private and public sector
18.00 – 19.00	**Debriefing meeting** Evaluation team alone	Exchange impressions, review the day
Evening	**Dinner** Evaluation team alone	Reflect on impressions and start preparing oral report

	DAY 2	
9.00 – 9.50 **parallel** Evaluation team may split into pairs	**Visit to faculties E and F** Dean and possibly vice-dean	Introduction to the faculty: structures, quality and strategic management; discuss relationships of faculties with the central level; input in self-evaluation; role of quality control activities in faculty
10.00 – 10.40 **parallel** Evaluation team may split into pairs	**Visit to faculties E and F** Academic staff	Discuss relationships of faculties with the central level; input in self-evaluation; role of quality control activities in faculty; recruitment of new staff; staff development; motivation policies. Please note that deans or vice deans should not be present at this meeting: it is reserved for "regular" academic staff only.
10.50 – 11.30 **parallel** Evaluation team may split into pairs	**Visit to faculties E and F** Students	Students' views on their experience (e.g., teaching and learning, student input in quality control and (strategic) decision making)
12.30 – 14.00	**Lunch** Evaluation team alone	Evaluation team, alone, to exchange impressions
14.00 – 15.00	**Meeting with international researchers and international graduate students**	To discuss their experience of the institutions
15.30 – 20.00	**Debriefing meeting** Evaluation team alone	Exchange impressions, review day and begin drafting the oral report [evaluation team needs a working

		room in the hotel for this task]
20.00	**Dinner** Evaluation team alone	Continuation of debriefing meeting
21.00 – 23.00	**Drafting oral report** Evaluation team alone	[evaluation team needs a working room in the hotel for this task]
DAY 3		
9.00 – 10.00	**Concluding meeting** Rector, evaluation team	Discuss draft oral report *with the rector alone*, to ensure it reflects the findings of the team as well as the needs of the rector for the institution's further development
10.00 – 10.30	**Adapting oral report** Evaluation team alone	Adapt oral report according to discussion with rector
10.30 – 12.00	**Presentation of oral report** Evaluation team, rector and members of the institution (invitations to be decided by the rector, e.g. rectoral team, liaison person, self-evaluation group, senate etc).	
Afternoon	Lunch and departure of evaluation team	

Annex 6

Part 1. European Standards and Guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions

ENQA (2009). *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area,* 3rd edition, pp. 16-19

1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance

STANDARD:

Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programmes and awards. They should also commit themselves explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in their work. To achieve this, institutions should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality.

The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available. They should also include a role for students and other stakeholders.

GUIDELINES:

Formal policies and procedures provide a framework within which higher education institutions can develop and monitor the effectiveness of their quality assurance systems. They also help to provide public confidence in institutional autonomy. Policies contain the statements of intentions and the principal means by which these will be achieved. Procedural guidance can give more detailed information about the ways in which the policy is implemented and provides a useful reference point for those who need to know about the practical aspects of carrying out the procedures.

The policy statement is expected to include:

• the relationship between teaching and research in the institution;
• the institution's strategy for quality and standards;
• the organisation of the quality assurance system;
• the responsibilities of departments, schools, faculties and other organizational units and individuals for the assurance of quality;
• the involvement of students in quality assurance;
• the ways in which the policy is implemented, monitored and revised.

The realisation of the EHEA depends crucially on a commitment at all levels of an institution to ensuring that its programmes have clear and explicit intended outcomes; that its staff are ready, willing and able to provide teaching and learner support that will help its students achieve those outcomes; and that there is full, timely and tangible recognition of the contribution to its work by those of its staff who demonstrate particular excellence, expertise and dedication. All higher education institutions should aspire to improve and enhance the education they offer their students.

1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards

STANDARD:

Institutions should have formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes and awards.

GUIDELINES:

The confidence of students and other stakeholders in higher education is more likely to be established and maintained through effective quality assurance activities which ensure that programmes are well-designed, regularly monitored and periodically reviewed, thereby securing their continuing relevance and currency.

The quality assurance of programmes and awards are expected to include:

• development and publication of explicit intended learning outcomes;

• careful attention to curriculum and programme design and content;

• specific needs of different modes of delivery (e.g. full time, part-time, distance learning, e-learning) and types of higher education (e.g. academic, vocational, professional);

• availability of appropriate learning resources;

• formal programme approval procedures by a body other than that teaching the programme;

• monitoring of the progress and achievements of students;

• regular periodic reviews of programmes (including external panel members);

• regular feedback from employers, labour market representatives and other relevant organisations;

• participation of students in quality assurance activities.

1.3 Assessment of students

STANDARD:

Students should be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently.

GUIDELINES:

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

Student assessment procedures are expected to:

• be designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and other programme objectives;

• be appropriate for their purpose, whether diagnostic, formative or summative;

• have clear and published criteria for marking;

• be undertaken by people who understand the role of assessment in the progression of students towards the achievement of the knowledge and skills associated with their intended qualification;

• where possible, not rely on the judgements of single examiners;

• take account of 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.

In addition, students should be clearly informed about the assessment strategy being used for their programme, what examinations or other assessment methods they will be subject to, what will be expected of them, and the criteria that will be applied to the assessment of their performance.

1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff

STANDARD:

Institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students is qualified and competent to do so. They should be available to those undertaking external reviews, and commented upon in reports.

GUIDELINES:

Teachers are the single most important learning resource available to most students. It is important that those who teach have a full knowledge and understanding of the subject they are teaching, have the necessary skills and experience to transmit their knowledge and understanding effectively to students in a range of teaching contexts, and can 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 capacity 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.

1.5 Learning resources and student support

STANDARD:

Institutions should ensure that the resources available for the support of student learning are adequate and appropriate for each programme offered.

GUIDELINES:

In addition to their teachers, students rely on a range of resources to assist their learning. These vary from physical resources such as libraries or computing facilities to human support in the form of tutors, counsellors, and other advisers. Learning resources and other support mechanisms should be readily accessible to students, designed with their needs in mind and responsive to feedback from those who use the services provided. Institutions should routinely monitor, review and improve the effectiveness of the support services available to their students.

1.6 Information systems

STANDARD:

Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes of study and other activities.

GUIDELINES:

Institutional self-knowledge is the starting point for effective quality assurance. It is important that institutions have the means of collecting and analysing information about their own activities. Without this they will not know what is working well and what needs attention, or the results of innovatory practices. The quality-related information systems required by individual institutions will depend to some extent on local circumstances, but it is at least expected to cover:

• student progression and success rates;

• employability of graduates;

• students' satisfaction with their programmes;

• effectiveness of teachers;

• profile of the student population;

• learning resources available and their costs;

• the institution's own key performance indicators.

There is also value in institutions comparing themselves with other similar organisations within the EHEA and beyond. This allows them to extend the range of their self-knowledge and to access possible ways of improving their own performance.

1.7 Public information

STANDARD:

Institutions should regularly publish up to date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programmes and awards they are offering.

GUIDELINES:

In fulfillment of their public role, higher education institutions have a responsibility to provide information about the programmes they are offering, the intended learning outcomes of these, the qualifications they award, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Published information might also include the views and employment destinations of past students and the profile of the current student population. This information should be accurate, impartial, objective and readily accessible and should not be used simply as a marketing opportunity. The institution should verify that it meets its own expectations in respect of impartiality and objectivity.

Selected further reading

ENQA (2009). *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area,* 3rd edition, http://www.enqa.eu/files/ESG_3edition%20(2).pdf

EUA publications

Please note that all EUA publications may be downloaded from the EUA website at http://www.eua.be/publications.

Conraths, B. and Trusso, A. (2007). *Managing the University Community: Exploring Good Practice.*

EUA (2006). *Guidelines or Quality Enhancement in European Joint Master Programmes. EMNEM - European Masters New Evaluation Methodology*.

EUA (2006). *Quality Culture in European Universities: A Bottom-Up Approach. Report on the Three Rounds of the Quality Culture Project 2002-2006*.

EUA (2007). *Creativity in Higher Education - Report on the EUA Creativity Project 2006-2007*

EUA (2008). *Financially Sustainable Universities: Towards Full Costing in European Universities*

EUA (2009). *Improving Quality, Enhancing Creativity: Change processes in European higher education institutions. Final report of the Quality Assurance for the Higher Education Change Agenda (QAHECA) project.*

Estermann, T. and Bennetot Pruvot, E. (2011) *Financially Sustainable Universities II: European Universities Diversifying Income Streams.*

Estermann, T. and Nokkala, T. (2009). University autonomy in Europe I. Exploratory Study.

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Hofmann, S. (2005). *10 Years On: Lessons Learned from the Institutional Evaluation Programme*.

Loukkola, T. and Zhang, T. (2010). *Examining Quality Culture Part I: Quality Assurance Processes in Higher Education Institutions.*

Sursock A. (2011*) Examining Quality Culture Part II Processes and Tools - Participation, Ownership and Bureaucracy*Reichert, S. (2006). *The Rise of Knowledge Regions: Emerging Opportunities and Challenges for Universities.*

Reichert, S. (2006). *Research Strategy Development and Management at European Universities.*

Reichert, S. (2009). *Insitutional Diversity in European Higher Education: Tensions and challenges for policy makers and institutional leaders*

Sursock, A. and Smidt, H. (2010). *Trends 2010: A decade of change in European Higher Education.*