REPORT ON THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF CURRENT QA SYSTEM IN BAKU BUSINESS UNIVERSITY
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25 May 2021

1. Introduction

Issue as identified by ESG	Conformity	Non Conformity	Areas for improvement
1. Policy for quality assurance	QA policy is in place and in line with institutional strategic planning.	None	While QA policy is available it lacks a coherent and systematic structure. A concrete policy QA institutional statement is currently being developed. The evaluator advices to better operationalize the concrete priorities on QA policy for the institution.
2. Design and approval of programmes	A clear and systematized process for programme design is provided in compliance with national regulations	None	Room for maneuver in programme design is limited due to tight national regulations. However, the institution should ensure that Faculty Programme Commissions for programme design and syllabus formulation channel participation from students and potential employers.
3.Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment	Institution has adapted measures to promote student-centred learning delivery by providing training, salary incentives and award recognition. Streamlining assessment methodologies is an important action already undertaken by Quality Assurance Center that also contributes to this area.	None	The evaluator recommends progressing on the promotion and adaptation of innovative student-centred teaching methodologies by working closely with academic staff and student representatives in domains such as assessment and teaching methodologies.

4. Teaching staff	In line with the previous section, the institution watches carefully recruitment and accreditation processes of academic staff and promotes professional development via trainings.	None	Institution would benefit for a scaling-up of the training actions, providing tools and pathways to its internal staff to advance on the adoption of QA practices.
5. Information management	An all-encompassing information management system has been designed to collect and analyse QA data. The activity is led by QAC and embedded in the day-to-day practices of the institution.	None	The information management system seems to be very well designed but it will find beneficial to ensure that information is also retrieved from other stakeholders such as the students and labour market.
6. Public information	The institution publicizes QA related information, guaranteeing transparency and accountability to its main stakeholders.	None	QAC should become more involved in the selection process of the information that is shared in the website and what remains in the Scientific Council.
7. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes	The institution has mechanisms in place to review academic programming and QA policy.	None	Systematization of the review mechanism, specially SERs should be undertaken in order to ensure a comprehensive and informed process of QA review.

2. General recommendation

BBU created its Quality Assurance Center (QAC) within the framework of the EQAC project. The new service has a defined set of competences and responsibilities, reporting directly to Scientific Council, placed under direct control from the Rector and oversees the activities of the different faculties of the institution. QAC is integrated by 3 staff and 1 Director with key attributions in a supportive role in core tasks such as accreditation, evaluation, monitoring, supporting e-learning, career development and internationalisation.

1. Policy for quality assurance

The institution has developed its own quality policy reflecting the Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023, which will be further operationalized in the policy statement to be provided soon. This policy acknowledges QA as top of the agenda priority for the institution to progress on these issues. It also commits efforts and resources to engage with key international players in the field of QA. The institution also proved a strong commitment from higher management and an institutional willingness to gradually advance on the inception of real Quality Culture. Nevertheless, the institutional QA policy lacks a coherent approach which fails to systematize strategic priorities for the institution, capturing the contextual specificities of their private nature and applied scientific field and providing a concrete strategic pathway to advance on these issues in the context of its stakeholders.

Therefore, evaluator encourages the institution to review QA policy during the annual review and approximate the QA policy to the reality of BBU. In this endeavor, the brand-new QAC should provide key insights to define urgent needs and priorities for action in the field of QA for the institution

2. Design and approval of programmes

The institution has devised a comprehensive and strong procedure, articulated through the Faculties Programme Commission and the Scientific Council, which work within the boundaries set by the Ministry of Education in Azerbaijan in order to define learning outcomes and syllabuses for each programme. The procedure is clearly described and the competences attributed across different bodies.

However, the procedure does not provide details on how students and employers can be further involved in the process. Given the scientific field of BBU, connection with the labour market should be enhanced in order to ensure quality and relevance of the academic programmes, eve in the capacity to modify the proposals from the Ministry are restricted.

3. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Appropriate assessment criteria, methods, and tasks are foreseen in the syllabuses overseen by the QAC. The institution also collects periodical feedback from the students to evaluate teaching performance. Additionally, the institution foster engagement with innovative teaching and assessment methodologies with transparent and well—defined frameworks.

The evaluator congratulates the efforts of homogenizing and providing clear guidance to assessment methodologies directing them towards a student-centred approach but also notices that the institution through the QAC should increase their efforts to capacitate its teaching staff with the necessary tools to deliver teaching and learning centred in the students. Intensifying awareness-raising campaigns between the different stakeholders (students, Academic staff, management, etc.) will also help in this domain.

4. **Teaching staff**

The institution identifies deans and faculties chairs as key actors in the process of fostering training actions among teaching staff. The institution, through the QAC, ensures that recruitment and accreditation of teaching staff follows pre-defined standards. The institution has also worked in the organization of capacity building actions, specifically to adapt to the virtual teaching modalities during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also promotes engagement with new learning methodologies and teaching delivery via awarding prizes to recognize outstanding work from the teaching staff.

The evaluator recognizes the effort of the institution but recommends to keep expanding capacity building actions in order to enlarge knowledge and familiarity with new teaching practices and assessment methods.

5. **Information management**

The institution collects on periodical basis data from different stakeholders in a comprehensive manner and following a predefined procedure according to targeted Key Performance Indicators and concrete metrics. It also ensures analysis and dissemination of the results to guarantee accountability with main stakeholders. In the process led by the QAC, the institution coordinates inputs from different bodies and according to the Action Plan is aiming at expanding penetration and the magnitude of the process.

This being said, the evaluator advises to advance further the solid information management system in the institution by enlarging contact points with the students and labour market representatives in terms of data collection, analysis and dissemination. This action will round-up an already well-stablished system at BBU and generate a groundbreaking intervention for an information management system at the institution and in Azerbaijan.

6. Public information

The institution shares all QA related information with the Scientific Council and publishes selected information in the institutional website. By following this course of action ensures transparency and accountability in its decision-making related to QA.

However, it is not evident how the QAC is involved in the process and if the institution can provide more autonomy to the Center in order to engage with specific stakeholders (students & labour market) and disclose information on the evaluation and other analytical results. This will contribute to open-up even more the institution to external scrutiny, building-up ownership and appropriation of QA practices from the different stakeholders.

7. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

The institution has coherent mechanisms in place to review their academic programming and QA policy, mainly through the work of the Programme Monitoring Commission. However, the institution also recognizes the importance of updating the Self Evaluation Report (SER) procedures and its periodicity, ensuring better communication at faculty level with all involved staff (students & teaching staff mainly).

As such, the evaluator recommends that QAC advances on systematizing procedures for SER, so they become an instrumental tool for monitoring and periodic review of compliance with QA standards within the institution.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The institution during the interview and monitoring process provided evidences of the implementation of EQAC project actions and its direct impact on the development of full-fledged QA system at institutional level. Whereas this system still is incipient and with much room for improvement, it proves the commitment of the institution to continuously advance on the generation of QA at institutional level, specifically engaging with international players in the field of QA under the umbrella of the European Union.

Existence of the documents

QA policy	**Verified**
QA strategy	**In development with the forthcoming QA statement**
Statue of QA Centre	**Verified**
QA staff job description	**Verified**
Stakeholder mapping	**Verified**
QA action plan	**Verified**
QA reports	**Verified**

Monitoring questions:

The evaluator appreciates the high level of cooperation and collaboration provided by BBU through the whole monitoring process but particularly during the interview. The facilitation of the participation of the rector proves the strong institutional commitment to spearhead policy change on the adaption of international QA standards at Higher Education level in Azerbaijan.