



## **Assessment of the needs analysis of Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction.**

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The Azerbaijan University of Architecture and construction is the only university in this area. The University was a part of State Oil Academy and Polytechnic university, but got status of independent university more than 40 years. The number of full time academic staff is more than 600. The number of students is almost 9 000. The percentage of foreign students is equal to 10 %.

The education is given on three levels: Bachelor, Master and PhD.

The university has seven faculties and a unit for preparing foreign languages and “qualifying or preparatory” faculty. The university gives also education at the upper secondary level (gymnasium).

The statistical unit at the university follows and reports among other about the advancement of the students.

The university has also an education and/or evaluation center that seems to have the task to follow the results of the students.

The highest deciding /governing body is the academic council. The rector and the Administration seems to have a big power to decide in all questions. The participation of the students is not so visible.

The assessment of the university needs analysis has been compared with the guidelines provided by the project-coordinator as well as with the European standards and guidelines (ESG).

### **General Comment on the needs analysis**

The needs analysis is a result of surveys from different groups, focus group discussions and interviews with staff at central positions. It is big effort behind the needs analysis. But who is responsible for the result of the needs analysis? Has the analysis been communicated with the persons involved i.e. members of the focus groups and the interviewees? The involvement of the students is not

visible? Why are the students excluded.

#### Quality assurance policy

**ESG:** Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is public and forms a part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes while involving external stakeholders.

**Project:** Does the institution have a policy for QA? How well known and accepted is the policy within the institution?

Who decides about the QA policy and the organization of the QA-work?

How is this policy executed? What actions are undertaken? Is there an annual report about QA at the institution?

**University assessment report:** The university has quite recently formulated a quality assurance policy. It seems to have been formulated by the University administration and not fully communicated to and accepted by the academic staff.

The University determined Quality Assurance group for the effective implementation of quality management system and for the operation and control of its processes.

The university administration and quality management track the current trends in education, which methods to improve the quality of education are used by the world's leading universities and update quality objectives in accordance with the existing technical and material base and academic potential of the University.

**Comment:** It is obvious that the QA work at the institution is at the primary phase. Much and ambitious work has been done already. But it seems that this work has been carried out within the university administration. It is not clear how the quality assurance policy is communicated to the main part of the academic staff and the students. The involvement of external stakeholders needs to be defined

It is not clear who decides about the quality assurance policy. Is the rector, the academic council or the academic secretary? The whole structure for the quality assurance process seems to be not so well defined.

#### Quality assurance unit

**Project:** Does the institution have a specific unit for QA? Where in the organization is this unit placed?

How many people work at the unit for QA? What are their qualifications?

**University assessment report:** The University administration determined and provided the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the quality management system.

The initiative to create a group to monitor the quality of education at the university was shown by the administration. Firstly two specialists were sent to the preparatory trainings, which were organized by the UK Quality Assurance Agency. The Administration takes a direct part in all meetings and events related to the improvement of the present situation in the sphere of quality control. The strategy of the quality control department is defined by the university rector, at the same time the administration take into account the suggestions of the staff.

**Comment:** The QA unit has been established and the need of training of the staff at the unit is recognized. The monitoring group for QA is a good idea, but the task and responsibility of the group need to be defined. What is meant with “the Administration”? Who are included and what is the responsibility of the “Administration”?

**ESG:** Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and responds to ne needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

**Project:** How often are programs and courses reviewed? How is this process organized?

Who receives the results of the QA-work? Who (person or unit) decides about changes and improvements proposed in the QA-report.

**University assessment report:** Begining from the 2018 Quality Assurance management began to review the education system in planned manner.

Top management and department heads prepare a report on the work done, submit it to the academic council, as well as to the academic secretary. But there is no standard form for writing this report.

According to the existing situation the following information on the performance and effectiveness of the quality management system can be observed

- 1) customer satisfaction and feedback from relevant interested parties. *The questionnaires for bachelors/masters, teachers and graduates were prepared to get their feedback about education.*
- 2) the extent to which quality objectives have been met. *Forms were created for heads of departments, so they could indicate which changes should be done to meet the quality objectives.*

- 4) nonconformities and corrective actions. The responsible persons need to suggest. According to the external evaluators filled forms
- 6) audit result and the performance of external providers. *All reports of external evaluators with their signs and stamps are retained in the corresponding department.*
- f) opportunities for improvement. *Indicated in external evaluators report.*

#### Summary and recommendations

The university has taken good steps into developing a QA system and process. In the concluding SWOT-analysis the university shows good insights in what is needed to be done for the future.

#### Just a few recommendations for the future

- Decide the position and responsibility of the QA unit.
- The QA policy must be communicated and accepted to all involved partners as well as the students (who are not customers).
- Who is taking care and deciding about the results of the QA work?
- What is the role of the Academic council in the QA process.
- The composition of the QA management group or perhaps advisory group for QA needs to be considered. It is necessary that this group consists of teachers, students and stakeholders outside the university. The responsibility of the group is also to be defined.