



Establishing and development of Quality Assurance Centres at Azerbaijan Universities - EQAC 586351-EPP-1-2017-1-AZ-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS ANALYSIS PRESENTED BY AZERBAIJAN TOURISM AND MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

UNDERTAKEN BY DR. ALVYDAS PUNIS

EKT, LITHUANIA

SEPTEMBER 2018

This assessment provided by EKT is produced as part of the ERASMUS+ project "Establishment and Development of Quality Assurance Centres in Azerbaijani Universities" (EQAC) and has been undertaken in accordance with the guidelines for assessment provided by the Project Co-ordinator. Remarks and suggestions are presented with a view to providing a practical framework in which **Azerbaijan Tourism And Management University** (herein after ATMU) could apply to improve its Internal Quality Assurance System.

The SER of the existing internal quality assurance system of ATMU was developed using ISO 9001:2015 as a point of reference. Yet, the guidelines for assessment (as determined by the Project Co-ordinator) require that external experts focus on how well partners institutions have adapted, or could adapt to integrate the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG). Consequently, the observations presented below in the table relates to the use of ISO 9001:2015. Nevertheless, in order to integrate ISO 9001:2015 and ESG requirements, it is provided comments as to how the weaknesses highlighted in the existing internal quality assurance system of ATMU could be improved in accordance of ESG 2015 standards.

At what extend internal quality assurance system of ATMU is based on the provisions of ESG 2015, it is necessary to find out during the meeting in October with ATMU community. Actions for the improvement presented in the table below can be supplemented afterwards.

Issue as identified by ISO	Conformity	Nonconformity	Actions for the improvement
9001-2015	-	-	·
	1.	Context of the organization	
1.1 Understand the organization and its context	The determination process of external and internal issues relevant to ATMU goals done by the top management of the university and, particularly, by the orders of the rector is in place.	However, monitoring and reviewing system of the internal and external issues at ATMU is weak, there is not a system of monitoring and review of information about internal and external issues related to the quality of education and research at ATMU.	Develop a methodology to understand the key internal and external factors that influence ATMU activities and performance by exploring the documents and tools like records of meetings where context is routinely discussed and monitored; PESTLE (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental) analysis tools for external issues; SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis tools for internal issues; other documented information describing organizational context etc.





of the European Unio	Conformity	Nonconformity	Actions for the improvement
Issue as identified by ISO 9001-2015	·	-	•
1.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties	Vision of ATMU - to become an area leader in the field of tourism and management, becoming a pride of the employees and educators, becoming avanguard of change and innovation, internationally recognized and sustainable, a university band.	Lack of experience and insufficient communication among academic staff, teachers and students hamper understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties of ATMU.	Identify the requirements of the internal and external stakeholders of ATMU and capture their relevant expectations and needs relevant to the QAS. Monitor and review information about stakeholders and their relevant requirements by permanent review of all relevant legal requirements; by establishing feedback system; by recording surveys, networking, meeting face-to-face, attending conferences, workshops, other public events; by participating in benchmarking etc.
1.3 Determining the scope of the quality management system	No information provided about the scope of the QAS of ATMU	No information provided about the scope of the QAS of ATMU	To verify that the scope of QAS of ATMU exists as documented information (which may be contained in the quality manual). Consider context (internal and external issues and the requirements of stakeholders) an its links to ESG 2015. State the types of products (e.g. research outputs) and services (e.g. education, training) covered by the QAS of ATMU.
1.4 Quality management systems and its processes	Quality assurance and accreditation department was first established on January of 2018. The department has own rules of the regulation defining department's responsibilities and duties based on Ministry of Tourism and culture and university's regulations. Quality Assurance Department — regulates teaching loads, divides among departments, arranges guiding and production internship. It prepares educational standards and curricula in accordance with the direction of ATMU's activities. It monitors implementation of the Academic calendar of ATMU. It carries out students' enrollment at ATMU and statistical analyses related to them, prepares reports on academic year and references on bases of dean's office reports. It determines annual teaching load and submits to the dean's offices. It coordinates students' all documentation, carries out current control on teaching, analyses result of examination sessions, submits reports to the Ministry of Education and arranges to hand out diplomas to alumni	However according to the international experience, the responsibilities of Quality assurance department is not well defined and its duties are not fulfilling the requirements of the standards and guidelines of EQA.	Develop the internal QAS based on ESG 2015 by identification of the key and supporting processes; determinate the sequence and interaction of processes; controlling of outsourced processes. Ensure that the documentation is created and maintained by ATMU to support the operation of QAS processes, such documentation might be in the form of quality assurance handbook, teaching staff handbook, student handbook, templates and forms for curriculum description of the courses, examination, other guidance material in physical samples (if relevant) as well as in IT systems (including intranet and internet). Ensure that the information identification and retain comply with ESG standard 1.7 Information management and shows that the processes of QAS is carried as it is planned.





	Conformity	Nonconformity	Actions for the improvement
Issue as identified by ISO 9001-2015	•	•	·





2. Leadership



*	* *
*	*
*	*
*	**

or the European Onio	No information	No information provided	Top management of ATMU must ensure that the human and
2.1 Leadership and Commitment	provided about the leadership and commitment of the top management of ATMU with respect to QAS	about the leadership and commitment of the top management of ATMU with respect to QAS	financial resources needed for implementing the QAS are available. The actions required of top management of ATMU must include: 1. Developing and supporting the QAS by defining and communicating policies; 2. Establishing organizational objectives related to QAS; 3. Ensuring appropriate resources for QAS are available. 4. Implementing and improving the QAS by encouraging employees to achieve requirements; 5. Reviewing QAS performance and ensuring resources are available to improve the QAS.
	The need to be customer (stakeholder) focused and maintain satisfaction of customer (stakeholder) is perceived	However, there are no tools and procedures in place to determine and address the needs of customers (stakeholders) and enhance their satisfaction.	Top management of ATMU must ensure that a process exists to achieve the following: 1. Identifying customer (stakeholder) requirements (See 1.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties); 2. Meeting customer (stakeholder) requirements; 3. Enhancing customer (stakeholder) satisfaction.
2.2 Policy	Mission of ATMU- to grow staff with creative and diverse thinking skills, promoting their own profession, knowledge and skills all over the world, promoting their creative and diverse thinking skills, to expand the horizons of education, science and culture in the country, and to contribute to their wellbeing in society and to the continuous development of the creative young generation.	Although the Quality Management System of ATMU is in place, there is no information about the Quality Policy and it's availability in ATMU.	Top management of ATMU should establish the Quality Policy of ATMU in compliance with ESG 2015 standard 1.1. Policy for Quality Assurance and demonstrate that the quality policy is compatible with the strategic direction and context of ATMU, with stakeholders and their requirements. Quality Policy of ATMU should ascertain that processes of continual improvement are implied and known throughout the ATMU and it should be signed by the Rector of ATMU. Quality Policy of ATMU must be publicly available to any relevant stakeholder on the website of ATMU, for instance.
2.3 Roles, Responsibility & 1. Authority	ATMU's decision-making process is independent and under the control of the rector. Along with Rectorate other supreme decision-making body is Academic board and mainly concerns with academic activities. In accordance with the regulations dealing with the board of Rector (Rectorate) of ATMU approved by the Rector, the Board holds its meetings once a week in order to conduct the work of board management. The top management of ATMU assigned responsibilities and authorities	However, there is no evidence that the top management of ATMU assigned the responsibility and authority for the management conformation with international standards (ISO 9001:2015 or / and ESG)	Ensure that ATMU personnel have not only been advised of their responsibilities and authorities, but also that they understand these in the context of the overall purpose of the QAS.





for relevant roles of	
heads of faculties and other	
departments. Each unit (faculty,	
department, Central Administration) of	
ATMU has duty to perform	
management and support ATMU	
leadership in management issues.	
ATMU's Educational-Methodical Board	
is the driving-advisory body which	
serves to raise the quality of	
educational-teaching process and its	
scientific and methodological provision.	
Educational-Methodical Board is	
established by ATMU rector's order. It	
includes the vice rectors, deans,	
department heads, heads of scientific	
and methodological structures, highly	
qualified teachers and professionals	
possessing definite pedagogical and	
scientific-methodical work experience.	
Educational-Methodical Board is	
headed by the pro-rector for academic	
affairs, as a rule.	



			3.Planning
3.1 Actions to Address Risks and Opportunities	No information provided about the actions to address risks and opportunities at ATMU in respect of QAS.	No information provided about the actions to address risks and opportunities at ATMU in respect of QAS.	Quality Assurance Centre should seek and record evidence that ATMU has taken a planned approach to addressing risks and accomplishing opportunities to the benefit of the QAS, education, and research. Objective evidence could be in the following various forms: 1. Meeting minutes; 2. SWOT analysis; 3. Reports on stakeholders' feedback; 4. Competitor analysis; 5. Planning, analysis and evaluation activities; 6. Strategic planning documents; 7. Design and development reviews of curricula of courses; 8. Management review minutes; 9. Risk determination or evaluation records.
3.2 Quality objectives and plans to achieve them	Mission of ATMU- to grow staff with creative and diverse thinking skills, promoting their own profession, knowledge and skills all over the world, promoting their creative and diverse thinking skills, to expand the horizons of education, science and culture in the country, and to contribute to their well-being in society and to the creative young generation.	However, there is no evidence on how quality objectives and targets are documented at each relevant function and level within the ATMU. Does the scope and number of the objectives and targets are realistic and achievable? What kind of indicators will be used to track the progress?	The quality objectives as the overall goals shall be reflected in the principles established in the Quality Policy. The appropriate level(s) of management personnel at ATMU should define the targets. Targets must be quantified where practicable and comply with ESG standard 1.7 Information management. The action plan must: 1. Address each objective and target; 2. Designate the personnel responsible for achieving targets at each relevant function / level of ATMU; 3. Establish a time-frame or a schedule for achieving each target. To ensure the progress of the action plan and a coordinated effort, a target leader should be selected for each target. Communicate the expectations and responsibilities laid out in the action plans to those who need to know. QAC should seek and record evidence that effective planning was undertaken in support of ATMU quality objectives and their achievement.
3.3 Planning for change	Changes are intended to be beneficial but they need to be carried out when determined by ATMU as relevant and achievable.	There is not expressed perception of understanding that changes shall be carried out in a planned manner. There is lack of mechanism in order to inform the staff of ATMU about changes in education and research quality.	ATMU should identify the risks and opportunities associated with changes. In order to realize the benefits associated with the identified risks and opportunities, subsequent changes to the management system may be needed. These changes could relate to any aspect of any process, such as inputs, resources, personnel, activities, measurements, and outputs. Top management of ATMU should ensure that all personnel are made aware of any changes which affect their process, and that subsequent monitoring is undertaken to ensure that QAS and education as well as research changes are effectively implemented.





4.Support





4.1 Resources

development, and improvement of the professor-teacher staff are one of the main priorities of ATMU. Selection of teachers is carried out by the relevant chairs. Bachelor's degree, Master's Degree, Experience, and Language Skills are taken into account when they are employed. IELTS certification is required from teachers who teach English.

Formation.

The functions of academic staff are detailed in the job descriptions of academic staff and the requirements applicable to the qualification and experience of academic staff are governed by the requirements for teaching and research staff.

However, based on survey results university has not succeeded to implement successful remuneration program of staff. To promote self-improvement, it is planned to adopt techniques that support the development of managerial staff along with research staff and it is also planned to implement further

projects for the mentioned issue.

ATMU should ensure that it has determined and provided the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the QAS. It is necessary to check that ATMU has identified which resources (infrastructure, finance, personnel and IT etc) it needs to make available in order to ensure the effective operation of the QAS and higher education and research processes.

It is necessary to describe how ATMU allocates its staff in order to achieve the required outcome. The senior management need to determine the resource needed and maintain this. It should be recorded evidence to confirm that ATMU has provided the staff necessary for the effective implementation of the QAS and higher education and research processes.

It is necessary to observe and record evidence to confirm that ATMU has provided the infrastructure and a work and study environment necessary for the achievement of effective implementation of the QAS and higher education and research processes in compliance with ESG 2015 standard 1.6 Learning resources and student support.

ATMU should verify that those monitoring and measuring resources used by ATMU are suitable and comply with ESG 2015 standard 1.7 Information management and standard 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes.

4.2 Competence

ATMU employees are actively participating in major research projects, training and education in the competition within Erasmus Mundus, Mevlana programs studying in foreign universities. Until now, more than 50 ATMU employees have taken advantage of this opportunity. Also, the ATMU staff actively participates in 3 EU projects implemented within the framework of the TEMPUS program.

Since the university was newly created, teachers were formed mainly from their graduates however according to survey results there is lack of experience among the teachers and students are complain about this issue and should be considered as an improvement area.

According to the survey results among the academic staff teachers are complain about dissemination of training activities and are not satisfied with involvement rules of staff development programs.

ATMU should establish a process of assessing and competency-based training of existing staff and students' competencies against changing education and research needs and prevailing trends. ATMU should ensure that all staff and students of ATMU are competent in accordance with ESG 2015 standard 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification and standard 1.5 Teaching staff.





4.3 Awareness	The Scientific Council of ATMU informs about the policy of the university at the extended and different kinds of meetings.	However, it is not clear how the community of ATMU is aware about quality objectives, their contribution to the effectiveness of QAS and higher education and research processes	1. The quality policy;
4.4 Communication	Communication with interested parties is organized via electronic ways and Open Days		ATMU should identify and expand the necessary internal and external communications (what, when, with whom and how) that are required for the operation of QAS and higher education and research processes. The communication should comply with ESG 2015 standard 1.7 Information management and standard 1.8 Public information. The current ways of communication could be supplemented by: 1. Newsletters; 2. Suggestion box. 3. Annual reports or newsletters of performance sent to external stakeholders; 4. Availability of results of external evaluations / accreditations; 5. Policies published in the media and press releases.
4.5 Documented Information		No information provided about the Effectiveness in documented information management	ATMU should determine the level of documented information, its creation and renewal necessary for the effective implementation of the QAS and higher education and research processes in accordance with national legislation (e.g. data protection) and ESG 2015 standard 1.7 Information management and standard 1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes.





5. Operation





.1 Operational Planning and Control	No information provided about the operational planning and control at ATMU in respect of QAS and higher education and research processes	There are also problems with implementation of the strategic plans in different structural units due to weak relationships among them and should be considered as area of improvement. Another improvement area is not existence of quality indicators and realization, monitoring of strategic plan's expectations.	ATMU should ensure that the implemented processes are controlled as planned and that there is evidence that ATMU has evaluated the effectiveness of actions taken when addressing risks and opportunities. Planning and control at ATMU should comply with ESG 2015 standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes.
5.2 Requirements for Products and Services	No information provided about the communication with stakeholders, the determination as well as review and changes of requirements for higher education and research products and services to be offered for stakeholders by ATMU	No information provided about the communication with stakeholders, the determination as well as review and changes of requirements for higher education and research products and services to be offered for stakeholders by ATMU.	ATMU should ensure that it has the ability and capacity to meet the requirements for higher education and research in accordance with national legislation and ESG 2015 standard 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification; standard 1.5 Teaching staff; and standard 1.6 Learning resources and student support.
5.3 Design and development of products and services	No information provided about established, implemented and maintained design and development process of higher education and research products and services at ATMU	No information provided about established, implemented and maintained design and development process of higher education and research products and services at ATMU.	ATMU should define its arrangements for establishing, implementing and maintaining a design and development process of higher education and research including planning, inputs, controls, outputs and changes in accordance with national legislation and ESG 2015 standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes.
5.4 Control of externally provided products and services	No information provided how ATMU ensure that externally provided processes, products and services conform to requirements	No information provided how ATMU ensure that externally provided processes, products and services conform to requirements	ATMU need to identify which materials and services it purchases affect the quality of higher education and research products and services the most. Based upon this information, establish criteria for selection and monitoring of the suppliers.
5.5 Product and Service Provision	No information provided how ATMU ensure quality of implemented higher education and research products and services.	Unfortunately lack of student- centered approach which actively engages self-directed learning and self-assessment in which allowing them to plan learning process and learning experience which framed by the standard programs approved by the Ministry of Education according to each specialization.	ATMU should ensure that the conditions by which higher education and research products and services are provided are under control and in compliance with ESG 2015 standard 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment.
5.6 Release of Products and Services	No information provided how ATMU implements planned arrangements, at appropriate stages, to verify that higher education and research products and services requirements have been met.	No information provided how ATMU implements planned arrangements, at appropriate stages, to verify that higher education and research products and services requirements have been met.	ATMU must show evidence that a process (method, techniques, formats, etc.) is in place to monitor and measure the characteristics of higher education and research products and services to verify that requirements are being met. This must be accomplished at appropriate stages of the design and development process in in accordance with national legislation and ESG 2015 standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes.





5.7 Non-conforming Outputs

No
information provided how ATMU
ensure that outputs of higher
education and research products and
services that do not conform to
their requirements are identified,
controlled and corrected.

No information provided how ATMU ensure that outputs of higher education and research products and services that do not conform to their requirements are identified, controlled and corrected.

ATMU should ensure that outputs of higher education and research products and services that do not conform to their requirements are identified, controlled and corrected in accordance with ESG 2015 standard 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes.



The second secon	6. Performance Evaluation		
6.1 Monitoring, Measurement, Analysis and Evaluation	There is no provided information how ATMU ensure the Monitoring, Measurement, Analysis and Evaluation	However, there is no information how ATMU monitor stakeholders (students, teaching staff, alumni, employers, etc.) perceptions of the degree to which their needs and expectations are fulfilled and how the data and information arisen from monitoring and measurement is analysed and evaluated.	ATMU should verify that those monitoring, measuring, analysis and evaluation procedures are suitable and comply with ESG 2015 standard 1.7 Information management, standard 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes, and standard 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance
6.2 Internal Audit	Internal audits at ATMU are planned and implemented.	However, there is no information what are the planned intervals to conduct internal audits, who will be responsible for performance of internal audits etc.	ATMU should establish an internal audit programme to cover all requirements of the standards. In addition, it should comply with ESG 2015 standard 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes.
6.3 Management Review	Management review is based on the comments, proposals or opinions of the customers. Opportunities for improvement and development of actions in certain areas (meet the needs of students, teachers, employees, etc.) are determined and implemented.	However, there is no information how frequently management review is carried out, how continuing suitability, adequacy, effectiveness and alignment with strategic direction of ATMU is ensured.	Top management of ATMU must periodically review the management system to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness. The frequency or intervals of the top management's formal review must be defined. The management review must address the possible need for changes to policy, objectives, targets, and other elements of the QAS and products and services of higher education and research. The management review process must ensure that the necessary information is collected ahead of time to allow management to effectively carry out this evaluation. Information that must be reviewed includes: 1. Minutes from previous management reviews; 2. The policies, objectives and targets; 3. Results of QAS and process audits; 4. The extent to which objectives and quantitative and qualitative targets were met.



7. Impro	vement
----------	--------

7.1 Non-Conformity and Corrective Action	As it is stated in SER ATMU administration, structural units of various levels are open to make changes in their actions, if necessary, in order to meet the needs of the interested parties. Certain actions are being implemented. When a nonconformity occurs, ATMU takes several actions to control and get over it. Necessary measures are taken to prevent the growth of the scope of the problem.	sequence of implemented actions: to analyse the current situation, to	 Determine what caused the non-conformity and then to consider whether the potential for a similar problem remains; Consider whether any further action is required to prevent a similar nonconformity recurring at the same place or occurring somewhere else, at some point in the future; Determine if similar non-conformity has occurred elsewhere and consequently whether it needs to take similar corrective action. ATMU should first contain the problem and then determine its root cause in order to take appropriate corrective action to prevent the problem's recurrence in accordance with ESG 2015 standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes, standard 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes, and standard 1.10
7.2 Continual Improvement	There is no provided information how ATMU ensure the continual improvement of QAS.	There is no provided information how ATMU ensure the continual improvement of QAS.	Cyclical external quality assurance. ATMU must be able to demonstrate continual improvement. ATMU should selected the appropriate tools and techniques to investigate the causes and thereby establishing and implementing a process for continual improvement in accordance with ESG 2015 standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes, standard 1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes, and standard 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance.



During the meeting with the ATMU QAC team were agreed to use three additional instruments in order to get more information about the conforming ATMU QMS with the requirements of ESG:

- 1. ATMU self-evaluation according to requirements of ESG Standard;
- 2. ATMU self-evaluation according to requirements of ESG Guidelines;
- 3. ATMU self-evaluation according to criteria of good practice of QAC development.

The same scale for evaluation was used in all three instruments:

0 - not implemented; 1 - implemented with major(great) inconformity; 2 - implemented with minor(less) inconformity; 3 - implemented; 4 - implemented and has an opportunity to be improved; 5 - implemented with continuous improvement

Results of this additional self-evaluation will help to focus on important areas of development of QMS of ATMU and prepare more useful plans of process improvement.

Results of ATMU self-evaluation according to the implementation of requirements of ESG Standard.



Standard requirements for "Design and approval of programs", "Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment", "Cyclical external quality assurance" according to results of self-evaluation are implemented, at average level. Comparing with other Standard requirements these three areas could require more attention and detailed planned improvement. In some cases, it will be complicated because it requires "co-creation" with the Ministry of Education:



2 "Design and approval of programs" - ATMU comment: "All standard programs and objectives of subjects are approved by the Ministry of Education according to each specialization for 5-year period and institutions are not allowed to make any changes in it except selective subjects".

- 3 "Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment" ATMU comment "Unfortunately lack of student-centred approach which actively engages self-directed learning and self-assessment in which allowing them to plan learning process and learning experience which framed by the standard programs approved by the Ministry of Education according to each specialization"
- 10 "Cyclical external quality assurance" ATMU comment "Quality Assurance and Accreditation department were first established in January in 2018 and, quality assurance tools and measures are not clearly defined".

Results of ATMU self-evaluation according to the implementation of the requirements of ESG Guidelines.



Average figures in self-evaluation results shows that Guidelines requirements are IMPLEMENTED and at higher level. Also, it is important to mention some actual observations of evaluation team:

2 "Design and approval of programs". ATMU comment:

"Lack of external stakeholders and student's involvement are the main issue and sometimes intended learning outcomes are not correlated with needs of labour market."





under the control of Ministry of Education.

· Programs benefit from external expertise and reference points; Preparation for sustainable employment - Whole process are

5 "Teaching staff". ATMU comment:

According to the survey results among the academic staff teachers are complain about dissemination of training activities and are not satisfied with involvement rules of staff
development programs.

7 "Information management". ATMU comment:

- Surveys should be conducted.
- Students do not participate in Collecting and analysing of information.

QAC development

3.4

3

3.8

Average figures in self-evaluation results shows that future activity could be directed towards QMS improvement:

- Organization of professional training for internal staff in QA;
- Coordination of "quality dialog" in University, collection of all improvement ideas and their transformation into implementation decisions;
- Control of Improvement decisions implementation.