



# **WP1. Scoping and Analysis of Quality Assurance in Azerbaijan Universities**

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT** **Sumgayit State University**



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## **1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

This study is produced as part of the Establishment and Development of Quality Assurance Centers in Azerbaijani Universities ERASMUS+EQAC project . This project is an ERASMUS + Action 2 Capacity Building Project financed by the European Commission. This publication reflects the views of authors only, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

The report was made possible through the collaboration with the administration, faculty and students of Sumgayit State University.

Sumgayit State University (SSU) was established on the base of Azerbaijan Industrial Institute on June 13, 2000 due to the decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic. Rector of Sumgayit State University is Professor Elkhan Bahadur Huseynov.

Sumgayit State University has 7 faculties:

- 1.Economy and Management
- 2.Engineering
- 3.Mathematics
- 4.Physics and Electro-energy
- 5.Chemistry and Biology
- 6.History and Geography
- 7.Philology

SSU has 27 chairs, 5 research laboratories, about 15 departments, 2 libraries and 5 Centres. 6000 bachelors, 256 masters, 36 PhD students and 57 researchers study in our university. 6 members of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, 40 doctors of science and professors; 92 PhD, associated professors, 200 senior lecturers, teachers and 402 assistants work in SSU. Journal of “Scientific News” are published in 2 directions: natural and technical sciences and humanities. The articles are published in 3 languages: Azerbaijani, Russian and English. web page

of Sumgayit State University is in 3 languages: Azerbaijan, English, Russian. [www.sdu.az](http://www.sdu.az) One of the main departments of SSU is International Cooperation Department. This department was established in 2001. SSU cooperates with Turkey, Russia, Iran, Georgia, Poland, UK, The USA, Italy, Spain, Ukraine, Tajikistan, Holland, Germany, Greece, Finland, Austria, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Korea, Israel and other world country universities.

### ***Bilateral Agreements***

***Figure 1.***

Country	Universities	Logo
Russia	Ufa State Oil University	
	Samara State University	
	Daghistan State University	
	Kursk State University	
	Russia State Humanitarian University	
Belarusia	Belarusian State University	
Gazakhstan	Atırau State University	
Germany	Kölen University	
Austria	Gratz Technical University	
Poland	Warsaw Technical University	

## 2. METHODS

### Data Collection

This survey had been conducted to identify the professional development needs of teachers at Sumgayit State University. This study is completed by retrieving information through a mixture of quantitative (survey questionnaires, focus group) and qualitative (literature review) methods to provide considerable evidence of the needs of Teaching and Learning at our university.

This survey was conducted online and it was completed by 90 respondents from SSU according to ISO 9001:2015. The link to the survey was sent us by the coordinator university Baku Business University by email and shared through social media.

The questionnaire contains 6 items that provide measurement of aspects of Teaching and Learning, management, university strategy and evaluation methods or system at the university.

The survey also learned some general information about the participants like the gender, age and profession.

Focus group was created at SSU, it consists of 7 members. We selected them from each faculty.

Survey conducted among 30 students, 30 administrative and 30 teaching staff members. Respondents were represented each faculties of SSU. Men are representing 68%, while women are 32 % of all respondents. Majority of the teachers of the age group of 25-44, the other part is distributed as 38.6% are 45-64 age group, 10.1% are more than 65 years old. The large majority (70 %) of

teachers have over 10 years of experience in teaching, 12% have 6 to 9 years of experience, whereas 10 % have up to 3 years of experience.

### Context of the organization

University determined the external and internal issues that are relevant to organization purpose and its strategic direction and those that affect it's ability to achieve the intended results of the quality management system. In University, from the results of surveys we can say that there is going monitoring and reviewing of information about these external and internal issues. Organization tried to determine the needs and expectations of interested parties that are relevant to the quality management system. But as the result, there is a big difference between quality management system and what university did. We can say organization didn't determine the boundaries and applicability of the quality management system to establish its scope. As well the scope of the organization's quality management system is not available and can't be maintained as documented information. The scope state the types of products and services covered, and provide justification for any requirement of this International Standard that you determines is not applicable to the scope of its quality management system. The organization quality management system hasn't been established including the processes needed and their sequence and interaction. The organization hasn't determined the inputs required and the outputs expected from these processes and hasn't determined the sequence and interaction of these processes. Also hasn't determined and applied the criteria and methods (including monitoring, measurements and related performance indicators) needed to ensure the effective operation and control of these processes. Actually if to look the organization hasn't done anything that determines the quality management system and its processes.

### Leadership

The top management of the University takes accountability for the effectiveness of the quality management system. Rector of the University ensured

that the quality policy and quality objectives are established for the quality management system and are compatible with the context and strategic direction of the organization and ensured that the integration of the quality management system requirements into the organization's business processes. But top management of the University hasn't promoted the use of the process approach and risk-based thinking and we can say they are ensured 50 to 50 that the resources needed for the quality management system are available. The top management hasn't communicated the importance of effective quality management and conforming to the quality management system requirements. As the survey results it shows that 47% of the people that participated in survey says the top management hasn't communicated anything about that. They hasn't ensured that the quality management system achieves its intended results. Selection, appointment, promotion and dismissal of academic and administrative staff are implemented by the approval of the Rector. Centre for Human Capital Management is in charge of recruitment and dismissal procedures in the university. In special cases the selection and dismissal decisions are consulted in the University Scientific Council. All the procedures are coherent with the Labor Code of Azerbaijan Republic.

Top management hasn't demonstrated leadership and commitment with respect to customer focus by ensured that:

- a) customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements are not determined, understood and consistently met.
- b) the risks and opportunities that can affect conformity of products and services and the ability to enhance customer satisfaction are not determined and addressed.
- c) the focus on enhancing customer satisfaction is maintained.

Top management has been established, implemented and maintained a quality policy but with low percentage of conformity.

The quality policy hasn't been available and been maintained as documented information and hasn't been communicated, understood and applied within the organization.

The top management hasn't assign the responsibility and authority for ensuring that the quality management system conforms to the requirements of this International Standard, ensuring that the processes are delivering their intended outputs, reporting on the performance of the quality management system and on opportunities for improvement, in particular to top management, ensuring the promotion of customer focus throughout the organization, ensuring that the integrity of the quality management system is maintained when changes to the quality management system are planned and implemented.

### Planning

The organization has established quality objectives at relevant functions, levels and processes needed for the quality management system but we cannot say that they fully established it is actually taking the same percentage from survey that they hasn't established.

The quality objectives has been and not been consistent with the quality policy. The quality objectives haven't been measurable taken into account applicable requirements, hasn't been any relevant to conformity of products and services and to enhancement of customer satisfaction, hasn't been monitored, hasn't been communicated, hasn't been updated as appropriate.

There has been quality objectives and planning to achieve them but there has been a big difference in conforming to quality management system. So we can also say there hasn't been any quality objectives and planning to achieve them. There hasn't been any planning of changes.

### Support

The organization hasn't determined and provided any resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the

quality management system. The organization hasn't considered the capabilities of, and constraints on, existing internal resources, what needs to be obtained from external providers.

The organization hasn't determined and provided any persons necessary for the effective implementation of its quality management system and for the operation and control of its processes.

The organization hasn't determined, provided and maintained any infrastructure necessary for the operation of its processes and to achieve conformity of products and services.

The organization hasn't determined, provided and maintained any environment necessary for the operation of its processes and to achieve conformity of products and services.

The organization for 100% hasn't determined and provided any resources needed to ensure valid and reliable results when monitoring or measuring is used to verify the conformity of products and services to requirements.

The organization hasn't determined the knowledge necessary for the operation of its processes and to achieve conformity of products and services. There hasn't been any competence, awareness, communication.

### Performance evaluation

The organization has determined:

- what needs to be monitored and measured? 50/50
- The organization hasn't determined: the methods for monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation needed to ensure valid results?
- when the monitoring and measuring shall be performed?
- when the results from monitoring and measurement shall be analyzed and evaluated?



In general the organization doesn't evaluate the performance and the effectiveness of the quality management system and the organization hasn't retained any appropriate documented information as evidence of the results. Also there hasn't been any analysis, internal audit and evaluation.

In management review inputs there is some matching but mostly there is more major (great) unconformities.

### Improvement

The organization has been determined and selected opportunities for improvement and implementing any necessary actions to meet customer requirements and enhance customer satisfaction. These are included:

- a) improving performance to meet requirements as well as to address future needs and expectations
- b) correcting, preventing or reducing undesired effects
- c) improving the performance and effectiveness of the quality management system

When a nonconformity occurs, including any arising from complaints, the organization has:

- a) react to the nonconformity and, as applicable:
  - 1. take action to control and correct it
  - 2. deal to consequences
- b) evaluate the need for action to eliminate the cause(s) of the nonconformity, in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by:
  - 1. reviewing and analyzing the nonconformity
  - 2. determining the causes of the nonconformity
  - 3. determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur

- c) implement any action needed
- d) review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken
- e) update risks and opportunities determined during planning, if necessary
- f) make changes to the quality management system, if necessary

There is not any nonconformity and corrective actions.

The organization trying to consider the results of analyzes and evaluation and the outputs from management review, to determine. If there are needs or opportunities that shall be addressed as part of continual improvement.

### **3. KEY FINDINGS**

#### **3.1 Context of the organization**

Overall situate is not favorable. With strong Soviet legacy and influence of different cultures, student-teacher relationship still is not the one you can observe in the universities of developed countries. Teachers' expectations on students are more on obedience, listening and taking notes. In most of the cases critical reflections on the learned or discussed materials are not supported and welcomed.

Even though many reforms are taking place, and most of the teachers, as seen from this survey result, say that they had numerous training organized within their universities; these trainings are random/ occasional training opportunities. There is no clear vision by the university administration how the trainings are aligned with the needs and expectations of teaching body. This situation leads to the issue that there is no strategy for next 3-5 years. This issue comes and identified resources – human and financial. So, ultimately these specific need creates a necessity to work on the strategy at least for next 3-5 years.

Head of Quality Assurance Center

Teachers need to be equipped with research skills, ICT, communication, time management, interactive teaching methods, student-teacher relationships, motivation skills, self-study and etc.

Universities expressed their interest in visiting the Quality Assurance Center, Lifelong Learning Center and learning the experiences in these fields.

***Expectations:***

- building the model of excellence in learning and teaching to guide and methodologically support the education process within identified at the university which will further disseminate this idea and model to others.
- contribution of the progress of teaching and learning processes, building the capacity of university teachers and enable them to use technology and innovations in their teaching, to link their teaching with research making it evidence-based, collaborate with and learn from European Partners, improve their skills, and enable the students to benefit from these changes
- to create Quality Evaluation Centers in the frame of ERASMUS+EQAC project which will help us to evaluate teaching and learning process.
- after achievement of the result the university will have a chance to include world ranking universities list
- It is our firm belief that the establishment of Quality Assurance Center will assist the Azerbaijani universities to consolidate both its vision and mission in line with the current National Strategy for Higher Education.

**Internationalization:**

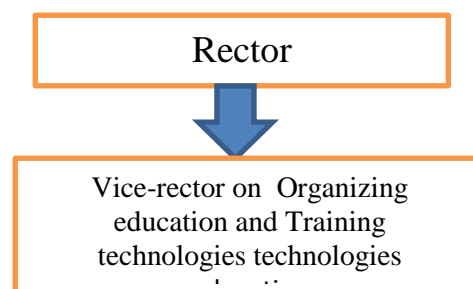
- To organize teaching and learning with new teaching technology methods
- To establish international educational environment by means of students' and teaching staff mobility

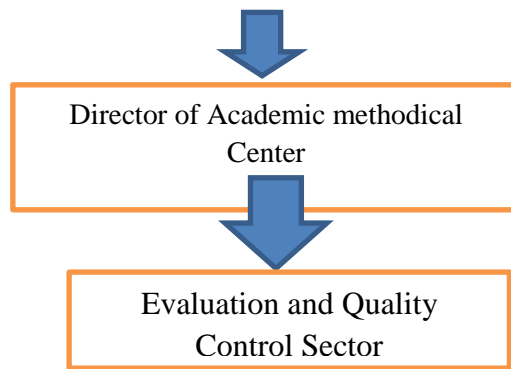
- To have joint research and academic programs with partner Universities.
- To have reliable partners from European and world universities and be included in internationally recognized ranking lists.
- To increase number of foreign students and participation in exchange programs.

Currently the university does not have Quality Assurance Center, but has sector on Evaluation and Quality Control. The university's library is not accessible electronically. Additionally, the university laboratory and infrastructure should be renovated. Student and staff satisfaction surveys should be implemented periodically. SSU is a 55 year old university in Sumgayit city and unique high education institution in the city. Quality Assurance Center may improve educational and administrative operations quality. University's infrastructure and classrooms should be repaired. Curriculum programs need to be updated.

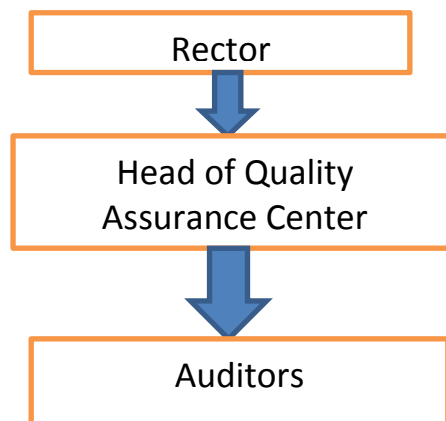
## **NEEDS**

- Improve the activity Evaluation and Quality Control sector, in order to bring up European standards to our university, educational system.
- Conducting surveys and find out outcomes for academic year is very narrow missions for us. We should change a base of management system. To avoid multi-store subordination. We need quality control system only under the management of university head (rector).
- Nowadays, our staff of this sector (Evaluation and Quality Control) consists of 4 members: a head, 1 methodist and 2 operators, as you see majority is technical staff. The structure of Evaluation and Quality Control sector at SSU: Figure 2.





**Figure 3. Evaluation and Quality Control Sector in the future (in 2020)**



#### **4. SUMMARY**

##### **a. Strengths**

SSU administration open for innovation ideas and support all staff members and creative students in any productive activities. We have access to Tomson Reuter data base. University paid 50 thousand euro for access. SSU has the council of dissertation defense given by the Ministry of Education. SSU managed to build strong cooperation with industries. This year one project titled “**Development of a conceptual model of multi-skilled specialist training**” had been selected for funding by the Foundation of Science Development (Azerbaijan).

**b. Areas of improvement**

Currently the university does not have Quality Assurance Center, but has sector on Evaluation and Quality Control. The university’s library is not accessible electronically. Additionally, the university laboratory and infrastructure should be renovated. Student and staff satisfaction surveys should be implemented periodically. SSU is a 55 year old university in Sumgayit city and unique university in the city. Quality Assurance Center may improve educational and administrative operations quality. University’s infrastructure and classrooms should be repaired. Curriculum programs need to be updated.

**c. Weaknesses and threats**

The average age of professors is high. SSU needs substantial update of course materials and lecture contents. Besides, no specialization provides degree courses in English. Students with higher admission marks chose to study in capital universities. One of the main objectives of all institutions is to contribute to the surrounding community and region. Sumgayit is not a crowded city and fewer job opportunities exist for graduates. In comparison to Baku universities, graduate employment in SSU is low.

**d. The SWOT analysis of SSU. Figure 4.**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- SSU administration open for innovation ideas and support all staff members and creative students in any productive activities.</li><li>- SSU staff have access to</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- lack of English speaking staff and students</li><li>- not having distant education</li><li>- not having e-learning</li><li>- lack of number of exchange programs</li><li>- international students</li></ul>

<p>Tomson Reuter data base. University paid 50 thousand euro for access.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SSU has the council of dissertation defense given by the Ministry of Education.</li> <li>- Not fully one profiled Being university, SSU is profiled in technical and humanitarian directions.</li> <li>- Having ASIIN certificate. It is given after accreditation process in the frame of international TEMPUS program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not having hostel and Guest House</li> <li>- not having Quality Assurance Center.</li> <li>- lack of modern technologies</li> <li>- lack of internationalization</li> <li>- not having project developers, authors</li> <li>- being of regional university</li> <li>- nominated ASIIN certificate only for 3 specialties, at the same time not using this opportunity</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- having Career Center, It Center, Department of Master and PhD, Training Center for International students, Linguistics Center and other centers</li> <li>- Being unique high education institution in Sumgayit city.</li> <li>- Participation at the international projects as a partner gives us an opportunity to cooperate with world universities.</li> <li>- Web page of SSU is in 3 languages.</li> <li>- Having partly e-library</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No specialization provides degree courses in English, which limits admission of international students.</li> <li>- Students with higher admission marks (higher IQ) chose to study in capital universities.</li> <li>- Lack of younger teaching staff in technical specializations puts.</li> <li>- Decrease number of students</li> </ul>

