

EQAC “Establishment and Development of Quality Assurance Centers in Azerbaijan Universities”

586351-EPP-1-2017-1-AZ-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

Final Report of Baku Business University on preparation of Pilot Program

1. About Pilot programs:

2 pilot programs were determined by the University management:

- “Accounting and audit”
- “Marketing”

In Accounting and audit program, totally there are **150** bachelor students from all courses. According to the plan, 5 teachers and subjects were defined as pilot and approved by the rector by considering their competencies and capacity to carry out all the tasks within the project.

The subjects are followings:

1. Managerial accounting
2. Analyses of Financial Statement
3. Financial accounting
4. Audit
5. Cost accounting

In “Marketing” program, totally there are **180** bachelor students from all courses. According to the plan, 6 teachers and subjects were defined as pilot and approved by the rector by considering their competencies and capacity to carry out all the tasks within the project.

The subjects are followings:

1. Marketing
2. Marketing Communication System

3. Marketing management
4. Strategic Marketing
5. Marketing of manufacturing industries

2. Program commission

One of the main parts of pilot project is to establish of Program commission to accomplish all the tasks properly according to action plan. For this purpose 2 program commissions were established on “Marketing” and “Accounting and audit” specialties and approved by the rector on 30 September 2019.

Program commission on “Accounting and audit” specialty consists of 7 members:

1. Prof.Ibad Abbasov- Rector of Baku Business University
2. Prof. Suleyman Qasimov- Vice-president for economic issues of State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic
3. Ayatulla Jabbarov- Head of Accounting and audit” department
4. Khatira Azizova- Vice-rector for educational affairs at BBU
5. Elchin Babayev- Chief accountant of BBU
6. Alim Majlumov- Bachelor student
7. Aytaj Eynullayeva- Master student

Program commission on “Marketing” specialty consists of 9 members:

1. Rahim Sadigov- Head of “Marketing and management” department
2. Pusta Farhadi- teacher in “Marketing and management” department
3. Gulshan Bayramova- Head of “Project management” department
4. Zamig Ahmadov- Head of “International relation” department
5. Natavan Mammadova- teacher in “Marketing and management” department

6. Rekam Baghirov- Director of “Business Insight” Company
7. Anar Valiyev- Director of “Business Insight” Company
8. Elmir Mustafayev- Bachelor student
9. Ahadzade Seljan- Master student

The responsibilities and tasks of program commissions were determined as followings:

1. To participate actively in trainings
2. To determine the gaps, drawbacks in general objectives, outcomes
3. To identify the correlation between subjects in the specialty
4. To do research and identify the requirements of labor market
5. To identify new learning objectives, outcomes for the specialty and subjects
6. To achieve changing of syllabuses by taking into account new requirements
7. To raise awareness about National Qualification Framework, ESG and other legislative acts among staff members
8. To identify the needs of students as a stakeholder
9. To monitor study process regularly and give feedback
10. To develop teaching methods and learning resources
11. To increase student support
12. To conduct survey among staff members and students
13. To provide all findings from monitoring and surveys to Quality Assurance Center

3. Monitoring of Pilot teachers' teaching method

According to Pilot project plan, Pilot teachers' teaching methods must have been monitored. In this regard, they were observed in 2 times, the first monitoring carried out before starting trainings, and second one was accomplished after training sessions. The main objective of the monitoring was to define progress in our teachers' methodology by comparing the findings of the observation' outcomes. During monitoring process, 10 lessons were observed and monitoring observations were executed by the Quality Assurance Center, Project coordinator, Vice-rector for educational affairs and Program commissions' members. In accordance with the results of monitoring, teachers' methodology has been improved noticeably.

Annex 3: Report on monitoring of teachers' teaching methods

The process of observation in the classes is a more effective way to gather data and provide direct inputs. Thus, directly from this monitoring, we learned many aspects which would help us to give accurate solutions. When we monitoring classes we mainly focused on following activities:

1. Teaching methodology, strategy and techniques
2. Active learning environment
3. Communication and relationship
4. Learning resources improvement
5. Assessment of students

After the first monitoring, we revealed these problems in line with above mentioned activities:

1. They didn't apply student centered system completely, some of its elements were observed
2. They used standard teaching techniques

3. They didn't provide students with learning outcomes of subjects, topics
4. Students and teacher communication level was not satisfactory
5. Students communications each other was not satisfactory
6. Students' flexibility was not sufficient during lesson
7. Learning resources, syllabus needed development and adaption with requirement of business world's representatives
8. Low level of students' involvement in discussions and debates
9. Almost, there wasn't survey and feedback neither for teachers by students nor students each other's
10. Teachers' awareness about ESG, National Qualification Framework was insufficient
11. Assessment methods were not appropriate to evaluate students' knowledge and ability effectively; also assessment was not related to learning outcomes of subjects accurately.

As a part of plan, the second monitoring was organized after completing trainings for pilot teachers.

Here are positive changes:

1. Rising of awareness about ESG, National Qualification Framework and other state legislative acts.
2. Writing of learning outcomes, objectives by taking into account labor market and stakeholders' demands
3. Applying innovative teaching methods like brainstorming, team works, role plays, feedbacks
4. Stimulating students to be more attractive, flexible and criticism
5. Trying to create active learning process by encouraging them to give feedback each other

6. Applying new assessment methods like projects, articles' analyses, team works which enable to evaluate students properly and stimulate them to be more productive
7. Conducting surveys among students to define theirs' drawbacks
8. Having better imagination on "Student centered teaching, learning and assessment" approach.

4. Trainings for teaching staff

In general, Baku Business University teaching staffs were involved 2 training sessions so far. First training session was operating along 2 weeks in November 2019 in line with different topics. In this long run training 30 teaching staffs, mainly pilot programs' teaching staffs participated in. The second training was conducted during 2 days on 6-7th of January 2020 with participation all academic staff (nearly 90) of university. At the end of final day of trainings pilot teachers were awarded with certificates for participating actively and showing progress as a result.

ANNEX 4: Approved Agenda of trainings (link to videos if possible) and report on trainings for teaching staff.

Within the framework of pilot project Baku Business University arranged large scale trainings for teaching staff. These trainings involved in various kinds of directions of quality assurance. We achieved all teaching staff participation in the training sessions, but pilot teachers from pilot programs (Marketing and Accounting) took part in each of trainings sessions regularly.

The sessions were covered following main topics and discussions:

1. National Qualification Framework, its main concepts and importance in the preparation of curriculum.
2. The context, scope, purpose and principles of “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG) and especially its “Internal Quality Assurance” part.
3. “Student centred teaching, learning and assessment” system and its comparison with teacher oriented system.

4. Defining learning objectives and learning outcomes and writing of them accurately.
5. Bloom taxonomy and its levels
6. Using innovative teaching methods, creating active learning environment
7. Necessity of involvement of stakeholders in decision making processes
8. The importance of survey and feedback system application in study process

One of the main goals of the Erasmus + project "Establishment and Development of Quality Assurance Centers in Azerbaijan universities" is to improve the quality of education and bring it in line with European standards. For this reason, the application of programs which are based on learning outcomes and new teaching methods is necessary. In accordance with the plan of the project, in which Baku Business University is the coordinator, the preparation of a pilot project covering the application of modern learning outcomes and methods has been started. Pilot project trainings encompassed explanation of "National Qualification Framework" and "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area", shifting to student centered teaching and learning from the teacher oriented system, updating the programs and syllabus for the pilot specialties and selected subjects in that specialties, the application of rules for writing objectives and learning outcomes and the compliance them with the requirements of labor markets, taking into account the interests of partners in program development, the necessity of involvement of students in designing of study programs, application of new assessment methods, presentation of course work in project form, application of regular survey and feedback system. Extensive trainings covering the above issues were successfully conducted in October, November- totally 2 weeks by Gulshan Bayramova, Project Coordinator, Head of Projects Department, and Javidan Heydarov, Director of the Quality Assurance Center.

During the training, the University administration, faculty and students of the selected pilot specialties were closely involved.

In accordance with the training plan, firstly “National Qualification Framework” and “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” were presented by the trainer and all the content of both documents, especially “Internal Quality Assurance” section of the ESG were explained in detail.

Then, as one of the main conditions for improving the quality of teaching - correct definition of the purpose of programs, subjects and writing learning outcomes, especially the importance of using “Bloom taxonomy” in writing the learning outcomes and 6 levels of taxonomy were presented . At the end of training participant wrote subjects’ objectives and learning outcomes and the results were discussed together. At the same time, training was realized on the preparation of syllabuses with taking into consideration of ESG on the basis of real examples. After the completion of trainings syllabuses were developed by the teaching staff of the pilot specialties.

In addition to correctly identifying learning outcomes in quality assurance, it is important to evaluate them with appropriate teaching methods. In this regard, as a continuation of the trainings, a presentation was made on the use of new teaching methods and their advantages. Among the new teaching methods, the main methods such as “project writing”, “teamwork” and “article analysis” are presented in more detail. And it was emphasized that the application of both methods helps students to develop analytical thinking, critical thinking and increasing their research skills, as well as personal skills.

Another important issue in improving the quality is to involve all stakeholders in the teaching process and create conditions for their active participation in this process. For this purpose, the participants were given detailed information about internal and external stakeholders involved in the educational process, the benefits of their close participation in the activities of

the University, the benefits of various areas of cooperation with employers as one of the main stakeholders.

Finally, discussions were held on the importance of implementing a survey and feedback system, which is important for analyzing the current situation, identifying gaps and measuring stakeholder satisfaction in all areas of education. In particular, teacher and professor were encouraged to use surveys and feedback among the students to evaluate their performance.

On January 6-7th, 2020 Baku Business University conducted an extensive 2 days training with a European quality expert- Inga Juknytė-Petreikienė with the participation of all faculties' members at Baku Business University. The purpose of the training was to demonstrate in practice that the teaching process is based on a student-centred approach. Thus, during the training, the trainer made a presentation on the basis of real examples of modern teaching methods, assessment and learning outcomes and rules for their determination, which ensure more active involvement of students in the teaching process. At the same time, discussions were held on the importance of the survey and feedback system, which is one of the main features of the student-centred approach and allows to determine the effectiveness of activities. Afterwards, the teaching staff prepared and demonstrated their presentations in groups in accordance with the new teaching methods. The training was followed by a question-and-answer session and useful discussions.

<http://eqac.az/en/news-and-events/6/291>

<http://eqac.az/en/news-and-events/6/290>

<http://bbu.edu.az/az/news/23/261>

<http://bbu.edu.az/az/news/23/262>

5. Conducting survey among teaching staff

50 teachers from various departments were included survey. Before conducting survey, as a Quality Assurance Center, we arranged 8 brief round tables with teachers in departments to let them know the significance to attend and become fair and impartial when answering survey questions. The main findings of survey showed that the majority of teachers are enthusiastic to develop themselves personally and boast their career opportunities, as well as some of them are reluctant to show their weaknesses and university's problems, and generally they evaluated internal environment at university averagely 3.4 out of 5.

Annex 5 (Report on survey of teaching staff)

From the beginning of implementation of "Pilot project" at Baku Business University, totally 2 weeks trainings organized among teaching staff on various directions by the Quality Assurance Center. "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)" and its role in quality assurance, writing learning outcomes and objectives of specialties and subjects, "Bloom" taxonomy, preparation of syllabus in accordance with "ESG", new teaching methods, project writing and article analysis rules, the importance of involvement of stakeholder, the necessity of the survey and feedback system, and other important topics were in the spotlight during trainings. After completion of trainings, survey was carried on with participation of 50 teaching staff members. Survey results were analyzed by Quality Assurance Center and findings are as followings:

Survey question 1:

No	Criteria	Score
1	Compliance of study programs with the requirements of the labor market	<i>3.3 out of 5</i>
2	Teacher skills	<i>3.8 out of 5</i>
3	The use of innovation in teaching methods in the organization of the teaching process	<i>3.4 out of 5</i>
4	Compliance of material-technical base and educational building with the requirements for today and the use of them in study process	<i>3.7 out of 5</i>
5	Relationships between teachers and students	<i>3,5 out of 5</i>
6	Quality of student and teacher exchange program implementation	<i>3,5 out of 5</i>
7	Updating and improving the content of the syllabus	<i>3.8 out of 5</i>
8	Organization of professional development of teachers	<i>3,6 out of 5</i>
9	Provision of personal and professional support to students in the study process.	<i>3.4 out of 5</i>
10	Providing you with instructions in your teaching activities	<i>3,9 out of 5</i>
11	Systematic implementation of applied research and the impact level on the high quality design of study programs of it	<i>3.2 out of 5</i>
12	Level of cooperation with companies and organizations	<i>3,1 out of 5</i>
13	Participation of quality staff in the activities of University	<i>3.9 out of 5</i>

Survey question 2: “What are your strengths and weaknesses as a teacher?”

Arguments	Strengths (Number of teachers)	Weaknesses (Number of teachers)
My professional skills	28	4
Ability to apply interactive teaching and learning methods	27	3
I have the ability to apply my professional and general skills in teaching	21	1
I have the ability to collaborate with students and instill value	30	4
I have the ability to combine learning and assessment techniques with each other to achieve certain results in the curriculum and subject.	10	3
My research potential	20	1
My practical experience in teaching	20	4
Practical knowledge of the subject I teach during practice	11	2

Survey question 3: “How do you plan to develop your skills in the future?”

Criteria	Number of teachers
I will participate in seminars and trainings	29
I will apply for professional development courses	13
I will give presentations at conferences	20
I will participate in conferences as a listener	19
Despite my master degree, I intend to get Master's	-

Degree again in a different field.	
I will be enrolled in doctoral studies	3
I will share my experience which I gained at European universities with others in the trainings I organize	9
I will participate in trainings as an expert	21
I will be involved in research activities	26
I will participate in internship programs that will be organized in the country or abroad	22
I will participate in exchange programs	21
I will prepare and publish articles related to my research activities.	26

Survey question 4: Is it provided adequate environment to help providing quality of your works at the University?

Learning materials at the library	sufficient	insufficient
	33	4
Technical equipments in auditoriums for making more efficient study process	yes	no
	35	4
Suitable conditions for preparing teaching materials	yes	no
	35	5
Suitable environment for getting ready for lectures	yes	no
	32	6
Work load	optimal	non-optimal
	23	12

Survey question 5: “Do you update the content of your teaching subject in connection with the publications and teaching materials available at Baku Business University?”

Yes	31
Partially	7
No	6

Survey question 6: “Thoughts about University’s students”:

Criteria	Number of teachers
Active, struggling for their purposes	15
Entrepreneur	26
Responsible	17
Skillful	18
Unwilling to learn independently	14

Survey question 7: “In what ways can you create interest and motivation for the subject you are teaching?”

Criteria	Number of teachers
We regularly discuss the role of teaching subjects in their future professional activities	25
Practical methods	27
I give them comprehensive instructions on what to do	14
I encourage them to create relationships and practice while not spending much time on traditional lectures.	19
I give them a program with the latest admission dates and evaluation criteria they can work independently	4
I use interactive and motivating methods in the teaching process	29
Creating an environment in which I can exchange ideas in my classes	31
I try my best to make my subject interesting and understandable	26
When assigning tasks to students, I plan the timing of the	13

tasks accurately according to the set time limits.	
I think that my personal skills and qualifications have inspired my students	19

Survey question 8: “What challenges do you face in assessing student outcomes?”

Criteria	Number of teachers
Assessment methods don't allow full measure of student performance	13
Students don't pay enough attention to learning theoretical materials	22
Students don't benefit from the time allocated for counseling	16
Students are not inclined to access information on course resources	22
Students don't spend enough time to study independently	28
Assessment and giving tasks regularly in the teaching process cause in incorrect measurement of learning outcomes	5

Survey question 9: “What teaching methods do you use in your classrooms? (Choose the answers which are appropriate for you)”

Criteria	Number of teachers
Traditional lecture method	10
Demonstration of the attributes of the subject being taught	7
Practical tasks	22

Discussions (exchange of ideas / knowledge)	39
Conceptual map	1
Thematic research	4
Graphic methods	9
Group work and projects	22
Problem thinking	20
Free work using publications, articles and various sources	6
Group games	21
Write a composition	6
Portfolio methods	0
Presentation	31

Survey question 10: “What teaching materials/ equipment do you use in your classrooms?”

Criteria	Number of teachers
Graphic projector	31
Multimedia equipment	
Video materials	19
Audio materials	13
Computers	36
Internet	26
Interactive board	9

Survey question 11: “Can you teach your subject in any foreign language?”

Yes	No
30	20

As a result of 11th question, we revealed that most of our teachers could teach their subjects in foreign language especially in English, Russian.

Survey question 12: “Did you give information about distance education for students being abroad temporarily”

Yes	No	I don't have enough information about it
11	31	8

Survey question 13: “Thoughts about distance education opportunities in Azerbaijan?”

- Based on participant responses we can say that they are informed about its advantages, benefits and want implementation of distance education in Azerbaijan but we need to establish and develop an effective guidelines and system for that.

Survey question 14: “Assessment internal environment at the University with 5 scored system”

- Survey participants scored internal environment at University between 0-5 intervals. As a result of calculation, the average point is approximately 3.4

Survey question 15: “Which topics would you like to discuss in the next meeting with teaching staffs?”

- We noticed that the vast majority of our teachers would like to talk over new assessment methods, shifting to practice from theory, enhance quality assurance, scientific research issues, updating teaching materials in the next meetings.

Survey question 16: “Proposals about changings in teaching process organization for increasing quality of education?”

- Our teaching staffs’ proposals for increasing quality of education are in mainly 4 directions:
 1. To pay more attention in practice during study process than theory and making close collaboration with labor markets representatives

2. To create electronic system for effective management
3. To give flexibility to teachers and students
4. To create financial incentives for the academic staff

6. Trainings for students

2 comprehensive trainings were arranged by the Quality Assurance Center for the students in different times. The intention of organizing these training sessions was to make them well informed about quality processes and informed them the necessity of their closely involvement in decision makings. Totally approximately 200 students attended in trainings. As a result of these meetings, students have already felt free to express themselves and to approach critically to the happenings and generally study processes.

ANNEX 6: Report on students' trainings

Alongside teaching staff trainings, Quality Assurance Centre at Baku Business University organised 2 training sessions in 27th December 2019 and 18th January 2020 for students who study pilot specialities. Altogether roughly 200 students participated in those training sessions and each of trainings was fulfilled by the director of QAC, Javidan Heydarov. The first training program was dedicated to "Quality Assurance in Higher Education", explanation of "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area". As well as, director of the Center provided detailed information about Quality Assurance Center, its' staff members, work plans. The presentation covered the following key issues: ESG and its role in quality assurance, the role of students in quality assurance, application of new teaching methods, new assessment rules, and importance of participation in surveys. During the presentation, many questions were addressed by students and they were given appropriate answers.

In the 2nd training was mainly focused on raising awareness about "Student-centered approach" in higher education, students' active participation in the teaching process, the necessity of involving them to participate in surveys and feedback activities as one of the main stakeholders and raise their awareness of innovations and new requirements in the study process. During the training, students commented their views and thoughts on the topics and a number of questions addressed by students were answered by the director of the Center.

<http://eqac.az/en/news-and-events/6/293>

<http://eqac.az/en/news-and-events/6/292>

<http://bbu.edu.az/az/news/23/260>

<http://bbu.edu.az/az/news/23/265>

7. Survey among students

In the framework of EQAC project beside teaching staff, Quality Assurance Center held 2 trainings in 27th of December in 2019 and 7th of January in 2020 with students. Throughout the trainings as QAC we made presentations about quality of education, “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area”, student centered teaching, learning and assessment, the role of students participation in designing curriculum, survey and feedback systems. After training sessions to measure our students’ satisfaction level about study process, learning methods, our current problems, we conduct survey among them. 204 students participated in survey from Marketing and Accounting pilot specialties. According to results of survey, we realized that our students mostly satisfy from offered study program, learning environment, teachers’ professionalism and offered educational services.

Annex 6 (Report on survey of teaching staff)

This report contains our pilot specialties' students' feedbacks with various directions of educational affairs. 204 students were involved in survey from different courses in "Accounting and audit" and "Marketing" programs. After students' trainings we achieved active participation of students; however they were unwilling to attend in this kind of activities.

Here are our students' feedbacks in detail:

1. Total number of participated students is 204
2. 35 of them are 1st year students, 45 are 2nd year students, 65 are 3rd year students and finally 59 are 4th year students.
3. In the first question: 78 (38.2%) students gave 4 (agree) and 55(27%) students gave 5 (totally agree). They said that "during the first lessons of a certain subject, full information is given about the curriculum, the main objectives of the subject, learning outcomes, assessment criteria". Only 15 (7.4%) students are not agree with this argument.
4. "In addition to explaining the subject, teachers create an active learning environment in the teaching process": 61(29.9%) students gave 4(agree) and 51(25%) students gave 5 (totally agree) in this argument. It was interesting that 43 (21.1%) students chose 3 (neutral).
5. The majority of students - 69(33.8%) agree with this statement "Learning methods, as well as assignments, help to understand the content of the subject, as well as to actively participate in the lessons and learn the subject independently". Totally agrees and partially agrees students are in the same level-34 (16.7%).At the same time 30(14.7%) students gave 2 points to show their disagree.
6. The majority of students are totally agree (67/32.8%) and agree (60/ 29.4%) with this argument, "Students ask questions, express their opinions, and take the initiative in discussions, because teachers are polite and professional".

7. “Teachers apply the theory in practice, explain ways to solve practical problems, provide the necessary tasks for professional development”. In this statement 53 (26%) students choose being neutral, 51 (25%) and 48(22.5%) students gave 4(agree) and 5(totally agree) points respectively.
8. The majority of students agree (58/ 28.4%) and totally agree (43/ 21.1%) with this argument “when studying a subject, most of the time is usually spent on theory, practical assignments, independent work and consultations, however, the time allocated for learning objectives of the subject is satisfactory”.
9. “The time allotted according to a particular subject is sufficient to complete all assignments, read subject literature, and prepare for an exam”. 52(25.5%) students are agree, 45(22.1%) students are neutral and 40(19.6%) students are totally agree with this argument.
- 10.“Teachers provide a variety of academic advice and use professional methods to check independent assignments”. The most of students (64/31.4%) agree, 44(21.6%) students totally agree with the above argument.
11. “Teachers start and finish classes on time according to the schedule, organize teaching time efficiently”. The vast majority of students (71/34.8%) totally agree, 63(30.9%) students agree with this statement.
- 12.“Clear assessment methods and criteria allow learning outcomes to be achieved”. The most of students (66/32.4%) agree, 52(25.5%) students totally agree.
- 13.Larger number of students (69/ 33.8%) totally agree, 59(28.9%) students agree with this statement “teachers evaluate assignments on time, and assessment results are objective and impartial.”
14. 69(34.4%) students totally agree and 69(34.4%) students agree with the statement “the results of independent assignments and colloquiums are thoroughly discussed and added to the student's final score.”

15. The main part of students (86/ 42.2%) totally agrees and 73(35.8%) students agree with the argument “the list of compulsory reading materials is available in the university database and library”. Only 8 students are not agree with this.
16. 54(26.5%) students just agree, 43(23.1%)students totally agree, 44(21.6%) students are neutral in this argument “I acquire/ acquired new knowledge and practical skills which are necessary for my future profession from the subjects.”. As well as, there is considerable number of students (28/ 13.7%) who are not agree with it.
17. “Subjects meet my expectations, encourage self-expression, creativity and critical thinking”. Most of students couldn’t make decision in this argument, so 57 (27.9%) students are neutral, 49(24%) students just agree and 43 (21.1%) students totally agree.
18. “Subjects are useful in communicating and collaborating, gaining self-confidence and experience.” The higher number of students (61/29.9%) agree, 49(24%) students totally agree above argument.

8. Updated syllabus

In Marketing program 8 syllabuses were updated by 5 pilot teachers:

1. Marketing
2. Adverstising organization
3. Marketing communication system
4. Marketing of manufacturing industries
5. Marketing managemet
6. Strategic Marketing
7. International Marketing
8. Marketing Research

In “Accounting and audit” program 5 syllabuses were updated by 5 pilot teachers:

1. Managerial accounting
2. Analyses of Financial Statement
3. Financial accounting
4. Audit
5. Cost accounting