UiA University of Agder Norway

Quality Assurance System

for Education at the University of Agder

Adopted by the University Board 27 January 2021.

Contents

1. Introduction 4

2.Quality work objectives 6

Course quality 6

Study programme quality 6

Study programme portfolio quality 6

3.Roles, responsibilities and tasks 8

Boards and committees 8

Other arenas 9

Personal roles 10

Instructions, mandates and role descriptions 14

Templates/Check lists/procedure descriptions 14

Administrative services 14

Students, the student organisation and student representatives 15

External participants 15

4. Processes and reports 16

4.1 Quality work at the course level 16

Student evaluation of courses 16

Student evaluation of practical training 18

Evaluation of doctoral supervision 20

4.2 Quality work at the study programme level 20

Student evaluation of exchange 20

Quality assurance of places of practical training and UiA's facilitation of practical training 21

Evaluation of courses and study programme in the lecturers' meeting 22

Evaluation in the Study Programme Committee/PhD programme-Committee 23

Annual study programme report 24

Periodic programme evaluation and ensuing reaccreditation 24

Establishing and accrediting new study programmes 27

4.3 Quality work at study programme portfolio level 28

Discussion in the faculty's/unit's manager meeting 28

Quality report from the faculties/unit 29

Dialogue meeting between the university management and faculty/unit 30

Dialogue meeting between the university management and the joint faculties/unit 30

The Education and Research report 32

University Board decision concerning the study programme portfolio and planned admission of students 32

Periodic study programme portfolio-review 32

Analyses and surveys 32

4.4 Quality work related to administrative services 33

5. Training and follow-up of employees and student representatives 34

5.1 Training and follow-up of employees 34

5.2 Training of student representatives 34

1. Introduction

The University of Agder is an open and inclusive university with clear and future-oriented education management at all levels. Quality work is an essential part of the management of education, anchored in the university's strategy and in the academic fields that constitute the basis of the university's study programme portfolio. Quality work should be characterised by a culture of cooperation in the meeting between employees, students, working life and society.

Quality work is a continuous process that will contribute to developing the study programmes. The quality assurance system describes the quality work in courses, study programmes and the study portfolio as well as quality work linked to administrative services and follow-up of employees.

The quality assurance system is to contribute to the realisation of the overall aims of the quality work in that it facilitates for systematic efforts regarding further development of courses, study programmes and programme portfolio. The quality assurance system comprises all education that is offered at UiA, from the bachelor's to the PhD level, and includes continuing and further education.

The quality assurance system is to stimulate and ensure regular assessment of the quality of the existing course – and study programme portfolio, as well as facilitate the development of new courses and study programmes. The system will promote sharing of experience and dissemination of successful practices. Procedures for follow-up of evaluations, revealing quality failures and implementation of quality raising measures are also included in the system.

The Act relating to Universities and University Colleges directs the institutions to have a system of quality assurance that secures and further develops the quality of their educations. The act also requires that student evaluations are a part of the system. Also, there are a number of constraints on quality work and requirements to the quality assurance system incorporated in national and local regulations, primarily in

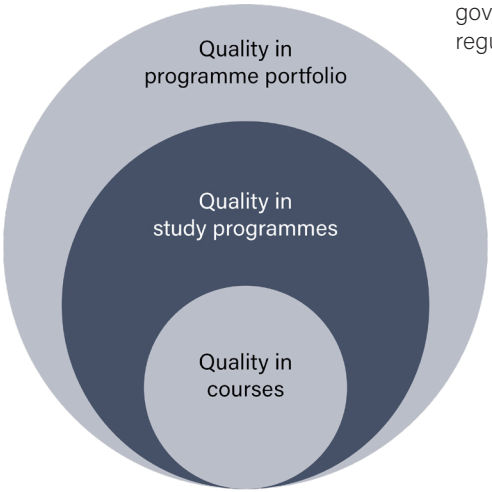
- Regulations relating to quality assurance and quality development in higher education (KD)
- Regulations relating to supervision of education quality in higher education (NOKUT)
- Examination Regulations at the University of Agder
- PhD regulations at the University of Agder

The quality assurance system at the University of Agder is organised in the following manner:

- Chapter One: Introduction
- Chapter two: Quality work objectives
- Chapter three: Roles, responsibilities and tasks
- Chapter four: Processes and reports
- Chapter five: Training and follow-up of employees

Materials also include mandates, guidelines, report templates, checklists, forms etc.

The quality assurance system will be reexamined and, if necessary, revised at least every fourth year. The university's Academic Affairs Committee will be consulted in the process. The University Director may stipulate editorial changes.



Definitions

Study programme: a unit of study consisting of a collection of courses with a common set of learning outcomes which is offered for application and admission to students. Programme categories: bachelor's, master's and PhD programmes as well as one-year and half-year programmes.
Education offered: generic term for study programmes and courses
Free-standing courses: courses that are not part of a study programme
Practical training: systematic instruction at a place of practical training where the student acquires practical competence under supervision by a person with relevant education and work experience.

The term 'practical training' in the quality assurance system includes both practice governed by National Curriculum regulations and practice which is not governed by National Curriculum regulations.

2. Quality work objectives

The overall objective of the quality work is that the students should achieve the best possible learning outcomes and personal development in relevant educations that prepare them for working life and a society in change. The governing bodies and management at all levels of the university are responsible for quality work and will support the development of a quality culture among employees and students.

Quality work takes place in close cooperation between students and staff, and in cooperation with working life and society. Knowledge gathered from quality work is used to develop the quality of the education offered and to reveal possible quality failures. Quality failures should be corrected within a reasonable time. The results of the quality work are part of the platform of knowledge regarding assessment and strategic development of the total programme portfolio of the institution.

Study- and research administrative support functions should be organised in a manner so that they become efficient support systems for the primary tasks.

Quality work is organised around courses, study programmes and programme portfolio and has the following objectives:

Course quality

UiA will offer courses with updated and relevant learning outcomes, with learning activities that contribute to students achieving the defined learning outcomes, and with satisfactory cohesion between learning outcomes, learning activities and assessment methods.

Study programme quality

UiA will offer study programmes with updated and relevant learning outcomes, and with courses that contribute to students achieving the defined learning outcomes of the programme. Study programmes must be based on research- and development work, relevant experience from working life and social life, and should also attend to national and international perspectives. Study programmes should have satisfactory framework conditions and a well-developed infrastructure. Students must encounter a high-quality and consistent learning environment that takes care of both physical, psychosocial, organisational, digital and pedagogical aspects. The learning environment should enhance learning and student involvement and stimulate students to complete their studies within the nominal length of study.

Study programme portfolio quality

UiA will offer a study programme portfolio with high quality in all academic fields. The connection between education and research and between teaching and research is to be emphasised. UiA will take care of its social responsibility by contributing to fulfilling regional and national needs for labour, contribute to competence development and life-long learning as well as by being an active disseminator of knowledge both regionally and nationally.

THE KIDNEY

3. Roles, responsibilities and tasks

Boards and committees

The University Board

The University Board has overall responsibility for quality work at the university and for developing the study programme portfolio as a whole. The board establishes and terminates study programmes of 30 credits or more. The board discusses the annual education – and research report and stipulates focus areas for next year's report and the reports on quality from the Faculties and the Teacher Education Unit. Moreover, the Board decides on changes to the quality assurance system and local regulations, as well as instructions and mandates for boards, committees and staff roles with responsibilities and tasks related to quality work.

The University Academic Affairs Committee

The committee supervises the quality of the study programmes on behalf of the University Board. The academic affairs committee accredits new study programmes and reaccredits study programmes on the basis of periodic evaluations. The academic affairs committee may also implement periodic evaluation based on risk assessment. Moreover, the academic affairs committee stipulates templates, checklists etc. for different parts of the quality assurance system.

The University Research Committee

The research committee comments on issues relating to accreditation and reaccreditation of study programmes at the PhD level.

The University Learning Environment Committee

The Learning Environment Committee addresses and discusses issues that concern the students' physical, psychosocial, organisational, digital and pedagogical learning environment.

The Faculty Board

The Faculty Board has overall responsibility for quality work at the faculty and development of the study programme portfolio. The Faculty Board establishes and terminates courses and externally financed study programmes of 30 credits and less. Also, the Faculty Board accredits and reaccredits free-standing courses and externally financed offers of study of 30 credits and less. Concerning the remaining study programmes, the Faculty Board is obliged to make a statement in connection with establishing and terminating programmes and adopts changes to programme descriptions. The Faculty Board stipulates the cycle of periodic programme evaluations and may also implement such evaluations based on risk assessments. The Faculty Board adopts the Faculty's annual quality report and may also delegate tasks to a study programme committee at the Faculty.

Teacher Education Board
The teacher education board has overall responsibility for quality work relating to the teacher education programmes and for developing the university's teacher educations and is obliged to make a statement in connection with proposals for establishing or closing down teacher education programmes. The Board also adopts changes to study programmes and adopts the annual quality report. The teacher education board stipulates the cycle of periodic programme evaluations and may also implement such evaluations based on risk assessments.

Study programme committee/PhD programme committee
All study programmes which awards a degree upon completion, as well as the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education, must have a programme committee that contributes to the development of the study programme and the students' total learning environment. Study programme committees/PhD programme committees meetings should be arranged at least once per semester. The study programme committee contributes with suggestions for the annual study programme report. Also, once per year, the PhD programme committee processes reports on progress from students and supervisors and contributes with suggestions to the annual quality report on the PhD programme.

The Faculty may delegate tasks from the PhD programme committee to a specialisation committee.

Other arenas

The Faculties and the Teacher Education Unit will themselves organise additional arenas for quality work.

A lecturers' meeting should be held for all study programmes at least once per semester. The meeting will discuss the results of the students' evaluation of courses, practice and exchange in the study programme. The lecturers' meeting will also give recommendations concerning possible changes to courses and study programmes. Lecturers' meetings in the teacher education programmes are conducted both at the programme level and the course level. For PhD programmes, the lecturers´ meeting may be conducted on the spesialisation level. The composition of the lecturers' meeting for each study programme of is stipulated by the Faculty/Teacher Education Unit. The university's Academic Affairs Committee appoints the supervisor for the lecturers' meeting.

The managers' meetings at the Faculties/Teacher Education Unit discuss the status of the study programme portfolio and measures like follow-up of programme reports/PhD programme quality report, and reports in the wake of periodic programme evaluations.

Personal roles

Rector

On behalf of the University Board, the Rector has overall responsibility for quality work at the University of Agder. The Rector is also responsible for the annual governing dialogues between the university leadership and the managers at the faculties/Teacher education unit

Vice-Rector for Education

The Vice-Rector for education, programme quality and learning environment chairs the university's Academic Affairs Committee and has overall responsibility for quality work and for overseeing the quality of the study programmes.

Vice-Rector for Research and Interdisciplinary Projects

The Vice-Rector for research and interdisciplinary projects heads the university's (central) research committee and has, jointly with the Vice-Rector for education, overall responsibility for quality work in study programmes at the PhD level.

Vice-Rector for External Relations and Innovation

The Vice-Rector for external relations and innovation has overall responsibility for the university's contact with society and working life. In cooperation with the Vice-Rector for education, the Vice-Rector for external relations and innovation also has overall responsibility for quality work connected to further- and continuing education (EVU), education offered to the local communities, practical training and other work-relevant elements in the study programmes.

Faculty Dean

The Faculty Dean manages the faculty's quality work and ensures that this work is conducted in accordance with the university's quality assurance system. The Dean has overall responsibility for the link between the Faculty's study programme portfolio and research activity and cooperation on teacher education. Also, the Dean has overall responsibility for the Faculty's cooperation with external parties. In cooperation with the Faculty Director, the Dean has overall responsibility for personnel management and competence development as well as to ensure adequate study programme management for the Faculty's offers of study. Also, the Dean has overall responsibility for the Faculty's learning environment.

The Dean has overall responsibility for the development of the Faculty's PhD programme and for other study programmes where the responsibility does not lie with a specific department. In relation to PhD programmes, the Dean is responsible for preparing a reply to the report from the periodic programme evaluation.

Dean of the Teacher Education Unit

The Dean of the Teacher Education Unit manages the unit's quality work and ensures that it is carried out in accordance with the university's quality assurance system. The Dean has overall responsibility for cooperation with the faculties and external parties concerning the content and organisation of the teacher education study programmes and the development of the total portfolio of the programmes. Also, the Dean has overall responsibility for the learning environment in the teacher education

and a special responsibility for initiating research – and development work related to the teacher education study programmes.

Head of Department
The Head of Department manages the department's quality work and ensures that it is carried out in accordance with the university's quality assurance system. The Head of Department is, in cooperation with study programme managers and PhD programme managers, responsible for developing the department's courses and study programmes, and for facilitating discussions of quality work on different internal arenas. For offers of study up to, and including, the master's level, the Head of Department is responsible for preparing a reply to the report from the periodic programme evaluation and the report from the expert committee in connection with the establishment of new study programmes.

In departments which contribute with courses to the teacher education programmes, the Head of Department is responsible for cooperation with current programme managers.

In cooperation with the Dean, the Head of Department is responsible for the department's cooperation with external parties. Also, the Head of Department is responsible for the connection between the department's study programme portfolio and research activities as well as for personnel management and competence development. The Head of Department has overall responsibility for the department's learning environment.

Head of Study for the Teacher Education
Heads of Study for the teacher education are, in cooperation with Heads of Department, responsible for quality work being carried out in accordance with the university's quality assurance system. Heads of Study will also contribute to developing the learning environment and academic and pedagogical quality in the study programmes.

The Head of Study is also responsible for facilitating discussions of quality work in different arenas with current cooperation partners at the faculties and with students. In cooperation with the Dean of the Teacher Education Unit, the Head of Study is responsible for cooperation with external parties.

The Head of Study prepares the annual programme report and replies to the reports from the periodic programme evaluation and reports from the expert committee in cases where a new study programme is being established.

Study programme coordinator/PhD programme coordinator
All study programmes must have a coordinator/PhD programme coordinator who manages quality work in connection with the study programme and ensures that it is carried out in accordance with the university's quality assurance system. All programmes conferring a degree and PPU must have their own study programme coordinators. For EVU study offers that do not confer a degree, one joint study programme manager may be appointed for each faculty or department.

The study programme coordinator/ PhD programme coordinator will contribute to the development of the learning environment and the academic and pedagogical quality of the study programme.

In cooperation with the Head of Department, the study programme coordinator/PhD programme coordinator is responsible for facilitating discussions of the quality work in different arenas with lecturers, students and external cooperation partners.

The study programme coordinator/ PhD programme coordinator chairs the lecturers' meeting.

The study programme coordinator/PhD programme coordinator prepares the annual study programme report.

The Faculty Board may delegate tasks from the PhD programme coordinator to the leader of the PhD specialisation.

Coordinator
Faculties that offer courses in the teacher education programmes must have subject coordinators who, in cooperation with the study programme manager, contributes to the development of the different teacher education programmes.

If needed, the faculty may also appoint a coordinator for parts of a study programme who in cooperation with the study programme coordinator/ PhD coordinator contributes to the development of the study programme.

The person responsible for the course
The person responsible for the course is academically responsible for the course and is responsible for coordination of courses with multiple lecturers. The person responsible for the course is also responsible for conducting student evaluations and for follow-up of students and participation in lecturers' meetings. Normally, the person responsible for a course should be employed in a full-time post at the university.

Supervisor for PhD students
The principal supervisor of PhD candidates must submit a supervisor report at least once a year.

Instructions, mandates and role descriptions

Instructions/mandates have been prepared for the Academic Affairs Committee, The Central Research Committee, the Learning Environment Committee, the Faculty Board, the Teacher Education Board, the Study Programme Committee/the PhD programme Committee, Vice-Rector for education, programme quality and learning environment, Vice-Rector for research, dissemination and innovation, Dean, Head of Department, Head of Studies, Study programme coordinator/PhD Programme coordinator and persons responsible for courses.

Templates/Check lists/procedure descriptions

The university's Academic Affairs Committee or the University Director stipulates templates, checklists, questionnaires and procedure descriptions for the different parts of the quality assurance system.

Administrative services

The University Director has overall responsibility for quality work related to the university's administrative services, and is responsible for arranging a joint annual meeting for administration leaders based on the annual reports on quality work connected to the administration's services.

The University Director is also responsible for carrying out joint training for all student representatives.

The Faculty Director/Director of the Teacher Education Unit is responsible for quality assurance and development of the faculty's study administrative services. This responsibility includes ensuring that the faculty has the necessary competence to provide support to academic managers. The Faculty Director/Director of the Teacher Education is responsible for preparing annually a report on quality work related to the unit's administrative services.

With the assistance of the Student Organisation in Agder (STA), the Faculty-/Unit Director is responsible for the election of student representatives. The Faculty Director is also responsible for the appointment of representatives of PhD programmes.

In cooperation with STA, the Faculty-/Unit Director is responsible for inviting student representatives to an information- and cooperation meeting each semester. The Faculty-/Unit Director is also responsible for appointing a contact person for the student representatives who may assist the representatives in their role within the quality assurance system.

The administrative managers of units in the university administration are responsible for development and quality assurance of study administrative services within their units. The administrative manager is also responsible for preparing the annual report on the unit's quality work.

Students, the student organisation and student representatives

Employees and students are jointly responsible for quality work. **The individual student** is expected to take an active part in evaluations of courses and programmes in which they are enrolled.. Also, students are represented in boards and committees. PhD candidates are required to submit a progress report at least once a year.

The Student Organisation in Agder (STA) assists the Faculty-/Unit Director in connection with elections of student representatives. STA is also jointly responsible for training student representatives for their role in the quality assurance system.

The student representatives have a special responsibility for student participation. At least two representatives for every level of all study programmes must be elected and at least one representative from free-standing courses. At the PhD level, one representative is elected for each PhD programme and possibly also for each specialisation.

The student representatives should function as a connecting link between their fellow students, the university and STA by obtaining the views of the students and by sharing relevant information. Also, student representatives participate in programme committees/PhD programme committees and other quality work arenas and have an important role in connection with evaluations of courses that are included in the study programme.

External participants

External participants from the Higher Education sector participate in connection with accreditation of bachelor, master and PhD programmes and in connection with periodic evaluations of the study programmes at the university.

External participants from working life and society participate in connection with periodic evaluations, in implementation and evaluation of practice and in connection with other kinds of student activities that are linked to working life.

4. Processes and reports

Quality work is organised in relation to courses, study programmes and the study programme portfolio. Information from relevant sources should systematically be collected and used as a basis for quality work. Among other factors, assessments must be based on relevant quality indicators.

Criticisable conditions and events may be reported through the university's Speak Up system.

4.1 Quality work at the course level

The purpose of quality work at the course level is to reveal aspects of courses and practice, as seen from the perspective of students and employees, that need to be improved, but also to identify qualities that should be maintained.

The following processes are included in quality work at the course level:

- Student evaluations of courses
- Student evaluations of practical training
- Evaluations of doctoral supervision

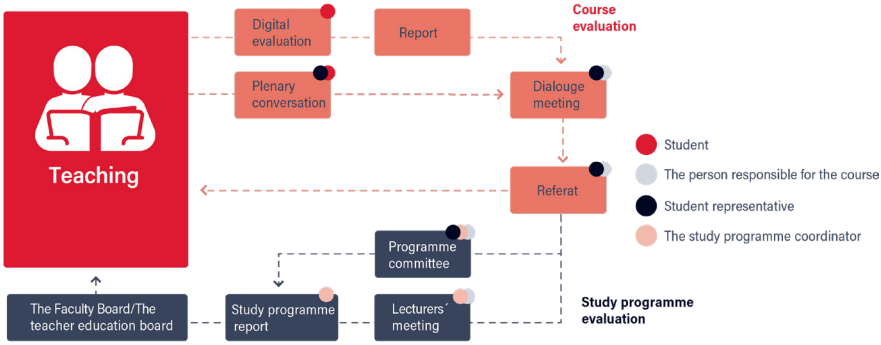
These evaluations are also part of the basis for quality work at the study programme level.

Student evaluation of courses

Student evaluations may be conducted for each course or jointly for courses in the same semester.

The method of evaluation and whether courses should have a mid-term – or an end of term evaluation is decided by the person responsible for the course in cooperation with the student representative at the beginning of the semester. Alternatively, the Faculty Board may stipulate that this matter will be decided by the programme committee/ PhD programme committee.

Annual quality work for courses and programmes



Responsibility:	Person responsible for the course in cooperation with the student representative.
Time:	Is normally carried out as a mid-term evaluation
Frequency:	Each time the course is taught
Method:	Is normally carried out by using one of the following methods: ▪ Plenary conversation between the student representative and the students with an ensuing dialogue between the person responsible for the course and the student representative. ▪ Digital evaluation with an ensuing dialogue between the person responsible for the course and the student representative. ▪ Dialogue between the person responsible for the course and the student representative. ▪ Dialogue between the study programme coordinator/PhD programme coordinator and the student representative. ▪ Dialogue between the person responsible for the course and the students.
Contents:	Main focus on learning outcomes, work- and assessment methods, the students' scope of work, and the learning environment.
Documentation:	▪ The report from a possible digital evaluation. ▪ The minutes from the dialogue-based student evaluation, written up by the student representative, and with possible comments from the person responsible for the course
Follow-up:	The minutes from the dialogue and possible report from the digital evaluation are made available to the student representatives and presented in the lecturers' meeting and programme committee/PhD programme committee. Proposals for changes are discussed in the annual study programme report. Proposals for changes to the PhD programmes will be presented in the annual quality report.

Without answers to open-ended questions from digital evaluation.

Student evaluation of practical training

The method of evaluation and whether periods of practical training should have mid-term or end of term evaluation are stipulated as follows:

- For practical training governed by National Curriculum regulations: the study programme coordinator/Head of Study in consultation with the student representative.
- For practical training not governed by National Curriculum regulations: the person responsible for the course in cooperation with the student representative.

Alternatively, the Faculty Board may stipulate that the programme committee should decide the matter.

Responsibility:	Person responsible for the course/study programme coordinator/Head of Study
Frequency:	One student evaluation per period of practical training
Method:	Should normally be conducted by one of the following methods: ▪ Digital evaluation ▪ Plenary conversation between all students (or students at the same place of practical training) and the person responsible for the course or the study programme coordinator. ▪ Plenary conversation between the student representative and the students with an ensuing dialogue between the person responsible for the course and the student representative. ▪ Conversation with a selection of students and the person responsible for the course and/or the study programme coordinator.
Contents:	Main focus on learning outcomes, the professional relevance of practical tasks and activities, facilitation, follow-up and supervision from the place of practice, the student's own efforts and the scholarly facilitation and supervision of the university.
Documentation:	Report/summary of the evaluation.
Follow-up:	The report is submitted to the lecturers' meeting and the programme committee with possible comments fra the person responsible for the course/the administration. Proposals for changes are commented on in the annual study programme report. The study programme coordinator/person responsible for the course is responsible for reporting suspicions of significant quality failures at a place of practical training to the Head of Department. The Head of Studies is responsible for following up suspicions of significant quality failures at a place of practical training for teacher students

When practical training is part of a course, student evaluations of practical training may be included as part of the ordinary course evaluation where this is expedient and practically possible.

Evaluation of doctoral supervision

Evaluation of doctoral supervision is carried out through progress reports submitted at least once per year by the candidate and the supervisor. Also, circumstances surrounding the supervision are to be discussed in the appraisal interview.

Progress reports should be dispatched to the PhD programme manager and possibly also the leader of the current specialisation. The reports will then be a part of the basis for the annual evaluation of the PhD programme.

If quality failures are revealed in connection with supervision, the Head of Department and the Dean are responsible for follow-up in relation to the involved supervisor(s).

4.2 Quality work at the study programme level

The objective of quality work at the study programme level is to highlight different aspects of the programme as seen from the perspective of student, employees and external parties. The aim is to improve the programme and to ensure that existing qualities are maintained. Quality work at the programme level is also intended to ensure that the quality of the programme meets the criteria set by the Regulations as well as any additional requirements stipulated by the University of Agder.

Quality work at the study programme level is comprised of the following processes and reports:

- Student evaluation of exchange
- Quality assurance of places of practical training and UiA's facilitation of practical training
- Evaluation of courses and study programmes in the lecturers' meeting
- Evaluation by the study programme committee/PhD programme committee
- Annual study programme report
- Periodic programme evaluation and reaccreditation
- Establishing and accrediting new study programmes

Student evaluation of exchange

Responsibility:	Division of Student and Academic Affairs
Time:	After completed period of exchange
Frequency:	For each completed exchange period
Method:	Digital evaluation
Contents:	Main focus on facilitation from both UiA and the exchange institution, academic content and relevance to the study programme at UiA.
Documentation:	Report that includes all evaluations of exchange in the current study programme.
Follow-up:	The report will be submitted to and followed up by the study programme manager/Head of Study and subsequently discussed in the lecturers' meeting and the study programme committee.

Quality assurance of places of practical training and UiA's facilitation of practical training

There must be procedures available for providing information to places of practical training about issues that impact on the implementation of the subject content and the quality assurance of the practical training.

As regards places of practical training that are used regularly, written agreements between UiA and the place of practical training must be available that regulate:

- Subject-content implementation of practical training and other matters of importance to the students' learning outcomes and the quality of the practical training period.
- The distribution of roles and responsibilities
- Possible requirements for instruction at places of practical training (HES considerations or other statutory requirements)
- Implementation of supervision and possible assessment
- Number of available places of practical training
- Procedures for dialogue and information exchange between the place of practical training and the university.

For practical training not governed by National Curriculum regulations, it is a requirement that the university, the place of practical training and the individual student sign a three-part agreement.

The study programme coordinator/Head of Studies will invite to a dialogue meeting with places of practical training that regularly receive students from the study programme.

Dialogue meeting

Responsibility:	Study programme coordinator/Head of Study in cooperation with the manager of the place of practical training
Frequency:	After the first completed practice at the current place of practice and after that at least every third year
Method:	Dialogue meeting
Contents:	Main focus on the university's facilitation and follow-up in the practical training period, the students' preparation and previous knowledge, the facilitation and follow-up of the place of practical training, and the feedback from the students.
Documentation:	Minutes
Follow-up:	The minutes from the dialogue meetings are submitted to the lecturers' meeting and the study programme committee.

Evaluation of courses and study programme in the lecturers' meeting

Evaluations of study programmes in lecturers' meetings will be based on a summary of existing evaluations, grade statistics for the courses that are included in the programme and other data that may be relevant.

Responsibility:	Study programme coordinator/PhD programme coordinator/ Head of Study
Frequency:	At least once each semester
Contents:	Focus on the unity and cohesion of the programme, learning outcomes, teaching- and assessment methods, the scope of work for students, relevance and learning environment.
Documentation:	Minutes from the Lecturers' meetings
Follow-up:	Minutes from the Lecturers' meeting with proposals for changes to the programme description, plus course descriptions and other possible measures, are part of the basis of the annual study programme report or quality report (PhD). Minutes from the lecturers' meetings in study programmes where there is no programme committee will be submitted to and followed up by, the Head of Department.

Evaluation in the Study Programme Committee/PhD programme Committee

Evaluation in Study Programme Committee/PhD programme Committee is carried out for all degree programmes as well as for the Postgraduate Certificate in Education. The evaluation is based on relevant data concerning the study programmes and other relevant documentation.

For the PhD Programme Committee, relevant information from the progress reports of the PhD candidates and supervisors (anonymous), will constitute parts of the basis of the evaluation. Student representatives may bring input from fellow students to the meeting in the study programme committee/PhD programme committee.

Responsibility:	Study programme manager/PhD programme manager/Head of Study
Time:	Normally in the autumn semester.
Frequency:	Annual evaluation per academic year.
Contents:	Focus on unity and cohesion, learning outcomes, teaching- and assessment methods, the scope of work for students, relevance and learning environment.
Documentation:	Minutes from the study programme committee.
Follow-up:	Minutes from the meeting in the study programme committee with proposals for changes and other possible measures is part of the basis for the annual study programme report or quality report (PhD)

Annual study programme report

The annual study programme report is submitted for all degree programmes and the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education. The report is submitted annually on the basis of evaluations in the lecturers' meetings, the study programme committee and relevant study data. The report after the periodic programme evaluation replaces the study programme report in years when the periodic programme evaluation is carried out.

Responsibility:	Study programme coordinator/Head of Study
Time:	Autumn semester
Frequency:	Annual
Contents:	Assessment of the quality of the programme, possible proposals for changes to the programme description and possible proposals for measures. If changes have taken place that may impact whether accreditation criteria are being met, these changes must be included in the study programme report. The report should also account for the follow-up of proposals in the previous study programme report.
Documentation:	Report.
Follow-up:	The study programme report will be followed up by the Head of Department. Programme reports in the teacher education will be followed up by the Dean.

Periodic programme evaluation and ensuing reaccreditation

Periodic programme evaluation is to be carried out for all study programmes and free-standing courses that are offered on a regular basis. For disciplines at the bachelor's level, the evaluation is carried out with emphasis on the major subject. Periodic programme evaluation of bachelor's programmes also includes periodic programme evaluation of the current one-year programme. For PhD programmes, periodic programme evaluation is carried out at the programme level.

The evaluation is based on an overview of the academic environments which are linked to the programme, relevant study data, study programme reports and quality reports (PhD) from previous years and the programme description.

The faculty Board/Teacher Education Board stipulates the plan for periodic evaluations in the quality report.

Responsibility:	Study programme manager/PhD programme manager/Head of Study
Frequency:	At least every sixth year for all study programmes. For new degree programmes at the bachelor's and master's level, a periodic programme evaluation will be carried out after the programme has been offered twice. The Academic Affairs Committee or the Faculty Board/Teacher Education Board may implement additional periodic programme evaluations
Method:	Periodic programme evaluation is carried out by a panel comprised of students and internal as well as external participants.
Contents:	Assessment of whether the criteria of the Regulations relating to quality assurance and the Regulations relating to supervision of education policy, as well any additional requirements stipulated by UiA, are met.
Documentation:	Report from the evaluation panel with a consideration of whether the criteria have been met and recommendations for further development of the study programme.
Follow-up:	The Head of Department/Head of Study is responsible for preparing a reply to the report and proposals for a revised study programme. For PhD programmes, the Dean is responsible for preparing a reply. The university's Academic Affairs Committee reaccredits study programmes of 30 ECTS credits or more. The university's Research Committee prepares statements on reaccreditation PhD programmes before discussions in the Academic Affairs Committee. The Faculty Board reaccredits free-standing courses and externally funded offers of study up to and including 30 ECTS credits.

On the basis of periodic programme evaluation, a reaccreditation will be carried out as follows:

1. The Faculty Board/Teacher Education Board processes the report from the periodic programme evaluation as well as any replies and proposals for a revision of the programme plan and considers whether the criteria are being met and whether reaccreditation should be recommended.
2. If the Faculty Board/Teacher Education Board does not recommend reaccreditation, the case is returned for further processing/ follow-up.
3. If the Faculty Board/Teacher Education Board recommends reaccreditation, the final report with proposals for a revised programme plan is submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee for further processing.
4. The Academic Affairs Committee may make the following stipulations:

- To reaccreditate the study programme, with an approved revision of the programme description.
- Return the case to the faculty/ Teacher Education Unit for follow-up/ processing
- To recommend that the offer of study is terminated.

Evaluation panel

Periodic programme evaluation is carried out by a panel that is appointed by the Faculty Board/Teacher Education Board. The panel is composed as follows:

	Panel for degree programmes and Post-Graduate certificate
Study programme manager/Head of study/PhD programme manage[1]	1
Course lecturers from the programme[2]	2-4
Academic staff from another HE-institution (Norwegian or Foreign)	1-4
Representatives from working life and society	1-2
Students[3]	1-2

[1]These are in the panel as observers
[2]For the teacher education programmes, this may also be programme coordinators or study programme managers from the academic disciplines.
[3]Normally at least one student representative

The panel is chaired by a member of the academic staff at another HE- institution. The current faculty/Teacher Education Unit places administrative resources at the disposal of the evaluation panel.

Establishing and accrediting new study programmes

The process for establishing and accrediting new study programmes are as follows:

1. After a decision has been made in the Faculty Board/Teacher Education Board, an application for the establishment of the new study programme is submitted within the set deadline.
2. The Board decides on the establishment by assessing the strategic significance of the programme, its attractiveness, economic carrying capacity and relevance.
3. An external expert committee considers whether the criteria of the Regulations relating to quality assurance and the Regulations relating to supervision of education policy, as well as additional requirements by UiA, are met.
4. Based on the report of the expert committee, the reply of the faculty/department and the proposal for programme description, the university's Academic Affairs Committee decides accreditation. The university's Research Committee comments on accreditation of new PhD programmes before the processing in the Academic Affairs Committee.

For establishing and accrediting One-year programmes and half-year programmes, a simplified process without external expert committee is normally deployed. Externally funded study programmes of 30 ECTS credits are established and accredited by the Faculty Board.

External expert committee

The University Board, or the Rector on authorisation by the Board, appoints members to the external expert committee based on a proposal from the Faculty/Teacher Education Unit.

The committee should be comprised of two to three representatives from the HEI-sector and possibly a representative from working life/society.

Members of expert committees should not be in a function at UiA or have attachments to the institution that may lead to disqualification. The stipulations of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act with Regulations concerning the composition of committees must be adhered to.

For representatives from the HEI-sector, the following academic qualifications are required:

Bachelor's programmes:	At least professorial competence
Master's programmes:	At least Associate Professor competence
PhD programmes:	Competence as Full Professor, at least one member must be affiliated with an international institution.

Establishing and accrediting new study programmes

4.3 Quality work at study programme portfolio level

The objective of quality work at study programme portfolio level is to identify challenges to the total portfolio and single programmes and to identify possible systematic challenges that cut across the programmes. Analyses of data at the faculty – and institutional levels will be part of the basis for the work. A report on the programme portfolio is prepared once per year (calendar year).

Quality work at the study programme portfolio level includes the following activities and reports:

Annually

- Discussion in the faculty's/teacher education unit's manager meeting
- Quality report from the faculties/ teacher education unit
- Dialogue meeting between the university management and the current faculty/teacher education unit
- Dialogue meeting between the university management and the joint faculties/teacher education unit.
- The Education and Research Report
- University Board decision on the study programme portfolio and planned admission of students

Periodic

- Periodic study programme portfolio evaluation
- Analyses and surveys

Discussion in the faculty's/unit's manager meeting

The discussion in the faculty's/teacher education unit's manager meeting is based on the Dean's/Head of Department's/Head of Study's proposal for follow-up of annual study programme reports and reports from periodic programme evaluations, relevant study data and possible external contributions.

Responsibility:	The Dean
Time:	Spring semester
Contents:	Specific challenges linked to individual study programmes, systematic challenges that cut across study programmes and the need for change concerning resources or other matters based on information obtained by the quality work. Possible changes to the faculty's/department's programme portfolio for the coming academic year.
Follow – up:	The discussion functions as a part of the basis for the annual quality report

Quality report from the faculties/ unit

The study programme report and discussions of challenges to quality in the faculty managers' meeting constitute the basis of the annual quality report.

Responsibility:	The Dean
Time:	Spring semester
Contents:	The quality report should include an assessment of the faculty's/department's study programme portfolio and learning environment in relation to relevant quality indicators. The report will describe possible systematic challenges linked to one or several of the faculty's study programmes and viable solutions for changes to the programme portfolio. The quality report will also include an analysis of focus areas stipulated by the University Board. For PhD – programmes the quality report should also include an assessment of the quality of the programme as a whole and the quality of each specialization
Follow – up:	The report is adopted by the faculty board/teacher education board and submitted to the University Board as an attachment to the annual Education – and Research Report.

Dialogue meeting between the university management and faculty/unit

Based on the quality report, an annual dialogue meeting is to be conducted between the university management and the managers at each faculty/teacher education unit.

Responsibility:	The Rector
Time:	Spring semester
Contents:	Matters that are to be discussed at the meeting include: ▪ Status and development of the faculty's/department's study programme portfolio ▪ Systematic challenges to the faculty/department that have been revealed ▪ The faculty's/department's quality work linked to focus areas that are being discussed in the quality report.

Dialogue meeting between the university management and the joint faculties/unit

An annual dialogue meeting is to be conducted between the university management and the Deans of the joint faculties/Unit

Responsibility:	The Rector
Time:	The autumn semester
Contents:	▪ The faculties'/unit's plans for new offers of study ▪ Change to a programme that affects other faculties/unit ▪ Possible other needs for cooperation across faculty/unit lines

The Education and Research report

Each year, the University Board discusses the Education – and Research report. This report should include analyses of relevant quality indicators at the institutional level and benchmarking with other universities in relation to central parameters such as applicant and student numbers, throughput and number of candidates, as well as the university's score in national investigations. The quality reports from the faculties/Teacher education unit are submitted as attachment to the Education and Research Report.

The Education and Research report should also include an analysis of focus areas stipulated by the University Board. Challenges identified in the Education and Research report constitute the basis for decisions concerning next year's focus areas.

University Board decision concerning the study programme portfolio and planned admission of students

Based on the proposal for study programme portfolio from the faculties/ teacher education unit and discussions in the dialogue meetings, the University Board reaches a decision concerning which study programmes should be offered for the next academic year.

Based on the adopted study programme portfolio, the University Board reaches a decision concerning the planned admission of students for the coming academic year.

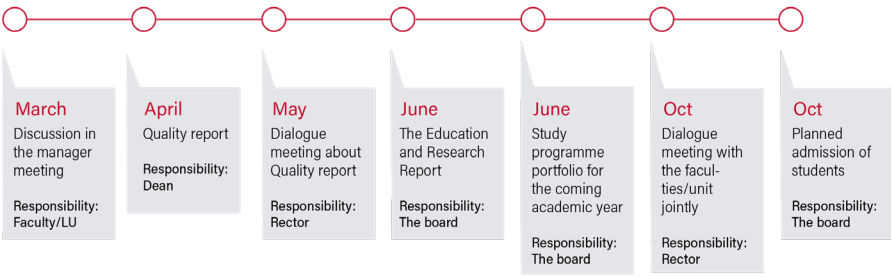
Periodic study programme portfolio review

Once in every Board period a strategic study programme portfolio review is to be carried out based on regional needs, national guidelines and international trends. The objective of this review is both to complete an overall assessment of to what extent UiA, through its study programmes, contributes to solving society's challenges, and to consider the link between the study programme portfolio and the research portfolio. The University Board adopts more detailed stipulations concerning focus areas and the process.

Analyses and surveys

Other investigations, which will be relevant to the university's quality work, will be initiated by UiA and carried out on a regular basis. Examples of such

Annual quality work at study programme portfolio level



investigations include candidate surveys, learning environment investigations and study start surveys. Other kinds of investigations may be initiated by the sector and completed on a national basis; examples include NIFU's candidate survey and the Study barometer with NOKUT's teacher and student surveys, SHOT - the students' health and satisfaction survey, et.al.

4.4 Quality work related to administrative services

Administrative managers of faculties, the teacher education unit and the various units of the central administration are responsible for preparing descriptions of procedures that have an impact on study quality and the learning environment.

Administrative managers of faculties, the teacher education unit and the units of the central administration are also responsible for preparing annual reports on quality work related to administrative services in their unit. These reports constitute the basis for discussion and follow-up in a joint administrative managers' meeting.

Measures as, for instance, follow-up in the wake of discussions in the joint administrative managers' meeting are included in the planning activities relating to the next academic year.

5. Training and follow-up of employees and student representatives

5.1 Training and follow-up of employees

The university management is responsible for offering introduction programmes and other competence raising measures to various categories of employees.

The faculty managers, the Dean of the teacher education unit and managers of the units in the central administration are responsible for ensuring that new employees complete an introduction programme and that all employees are given the opportunity to reach the necessary levels of competence.

UiA PULS – Centre for Teaching and Learning, offers a basic course in university pedagogics as well as courses and sessions for scientific employees.

The university management is responsible for training new academic leaders in education management.

If quality failures are revealed in connection with teaching and supervision, the Head of Department and Dean are responsible for necessary follow-up in relation to the persons involved.

If quality failures are revealed in connection with administrative services, the administrative manager is responsible for necessary follow-up.

The Head of Department, in cooperation with the Dean and the Faculty Director, is responsible for a satisfactory follow-up of PhD candidates who are not employed by the university.

5.2 Training of student representatives

In cooperation with STA, the University Director is responsible for conducting joint training of all student representatives.

Each semester, The Faculty Directors and the Director of the Teacher Education Unit are, in cooperation with STA, responsible for inviting student representatives to an information- and cooperation meeting with the management of the faculty/unit.

UiA University of Agder Norway

University of Agder
Gimlemoen 25, NO-4604 Kristiansand
Phone +47 38 14 10 00 post@uia.no www.uia.no