



Criterion 1: The institution/entity has defined, implements and keeps up-to-date a policy for supporting the quality of its study programmes.

The Belgian French-speaking Community's legislation clearly refers to this criterion. As stipulated by the Article 9 in the Decree of 7 November 2013: «The higher education institutions [HEIs] are bound to follow up and assure the quality of all their activities, and to take all measures needed for carrying out and ensuring the follow-up of an effective internal evaluation.»

This criterion aims to analyse the existence and effectiveness of a quality management policy and associated processes, which need to include an active role for students and other stakeholders.

Dimension 1.1: The HEI's governance policy

The HEI has defined a governance policy in line with its missions and values. In this context, it develops and implements an organisation and processes designed to ensure that its governance is efficient. The institutional governance facilitates the articulation between quality management at institutional level and at programme level, thereby contributing to the quality of the assessed programme.

Dimension 1.2: Quality management at HEI, entity and programme levels

The HEI/entity develops and implements a quality management policy and associated processes at HEI, entity and programme levels. These foresee an active role for students and other stakeholders. In doing so, the HEI explicitly commits to establish a culture recognising the importance of quality and its management through appropriate processes.

Dimension 1.3: Programme development, strategic planning and periodical review

The HEI/entity develops and implements processes and mechanisms for designing, monitoring and periodically reviewing its study programme. These processes and mechanisms are effective, participatory, and contribute to improving the quality of the programme. The strategic planning takes into account the results of all the quality assessments of the programme.

In the case of a joint programme, the HEIs/entities develop and implement processes and mechanisms for designing, monitoring and periodically reviewing the joint study programme(s), in collaboration with their partner(s).

Dimension 1.4: Internal information and communication

The HEI/entity has defined and implements a communication policy as well as effective procedures for disseminating information on the assessed programme to internal stakeholders.

Criterion 2: The HEI/entity has developed and implements a policy for ensuring the relevance of its study programme.

This criterion aims to examine to what extent the programme's intended learning outcomes meet current or foreseeable societal needs in terms of training and personal development. It also aims to explore how the objectives and content of the programme support the social and professional integration of graduates and/or their integration into a flexible learning path.

Dimension 2.1: Assessment of the study programme's relevance

The HEI/entity develops and implements processes and mechanisms to ensure that the study programme complies with legal requirements and takes into account the stakeholders' needs and expectations. The study programme is regularly updated (with inputs from business practices, research results, link with research, link with professional contexts, scientific and technological knowledge, etc.). It contributes to the social and professional integration of graduates and/or their integration into a flexible learning path.

Dimension 2.2: External information and communication

The HEI/entity regularly publishes up-to-date, impartial, objective, quantitative and qualitative information on the study programmes and diplomas offered.

Criterion 3: The HEI/entity has developed and implements a policy for ensuring the internal coherence of its study programme

This criterion aims to assess the coherence between the following aspects: the intended learning outcomes as stated by the study programme, the programme contents that are actually carried out, the learning provisions and activities, the overall design of the programme, the sequencing of learning activities or provisions, the time foreseen for achieving the intended learning outcomes, the assessed learning outcomes, and the criteria and modalities for assessing them.

Dimension 3.1: Learning outcomes of the study programme

The HEI/entity selects, formulates and publishes the programme's intended learning outcomes. These are realistic, fit for purpose and communicated in an appropriate way.

Dimension 3.2: Study programme content, learning activities and provision (including internships, projects, and final dissertations)

The HEI/entity develops and implements learning provisions and activities designed so that the intended learning outcomes can be achieved.

Dimension 3.3: Study programme's overall design and time foreseen for achieving the intended learning outcomes

The study programme is designed and implemented in a way that is appropriate for achieving the intended learning outcomes, within a reasonable period of time.

Dimension 3.4: Assessment of the achievement level for the intended learning outcomes

The assessment criteria and modalities are designed in accordance with the intended learning outcomes and are applied in a systematic and consistent way. Moreover, the requirements are clearly formulated and communicated to students in due time.

Criterion 4: The HEI/entity has developed and implements a policy for ensuring the efficiency and equity of its study programme

The efficiency criterion relates to the extent the objectives of the programme are achieved, when considering the resources to carry them out. The criterion intends to check whether the study programme produces the expected results, i.e. whether students indeed achieve the intended learning outcomes at the end of their studies.

With this criterion, the HEI/entity is invited to track student paths, from the moment a student registers to the programme, and with attention to the learning outcomes achievement levels and completion rates. Assessment of a programme's effectiveness not only relates to the graduates' characteristics, but also to the HEI's ability to support the students admitted to the programme in completing their studies. The criterion also involves assessing effectiveness factors, such as resource allocation, teaching practices and organisational arrangements undertaken to support the quality of the programme.

The equity criterion relates to the provisions that the programme has set up so that the students, independently of their previous academic background or their personal, social or financial situation, are able to acquire, update and develop throughout their lifetime the programme's intended learning outcomes, as well as the professional skills required for ensuring their employability, supporting their personal development, pursuing lifelong learning, and fostering active citizenship and intercultural dialogue.

Dimension 4.1: Human resources

The HEI/entity ensures that the human resources are adequate and appropriate to the programme and to the students – including to different audiences of students. The HEI/entity makes available the means needed to ensure staff quality and skills, with a particular focus on teaching staff.

Dimension 4.2: Material resources

The HEI/entity ensures that the resources allocated to teaching infrastructures and tools are adequate and appropriate for achieving the intended learning outcomes.

Dimension 4.3: Equity in terms of student welcome, progress monitoring and support

The HEI/entity ensures that the arrangements set up for providing students with guidance, orientation and support in their learning paths are fair, adequate and appropriate for achieving the study programme's objectives.

Dimension 4.4: Analysis of data required for the programme's strategic planning

The HEI/entity ensures that it gathers, analyses and makes an appropriate use of data required for the programme's strategic planning.

Criterion 5: The HEI/entity has completed the analysis of its study programme and has developed an action plan for continuous improvement.

Dimension 5.1: Self-evaluation methodology

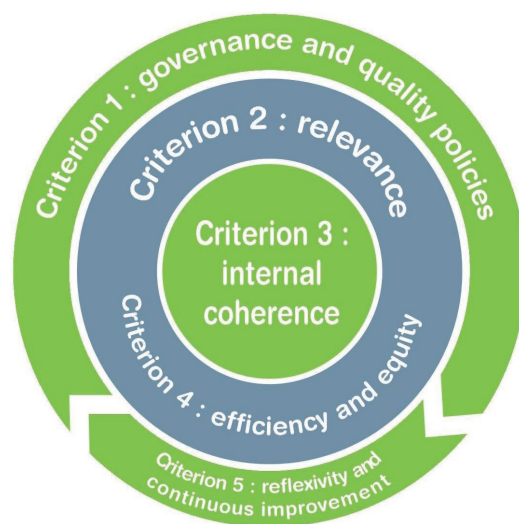
The HEI/entity has carried out a self-evaluation of the study programme, in a participatory, in-depth and validated manner.

Dimension 5.2: SWOT analysis

The self-evaluation carried out by the HEI/entity includes an analysis identifying the programme's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and threats in its environment.

Dimension 5.3: Action plan and follow-up

On the basis of the self-evaluation, the HEI/entity has taken appropriate and considered decisions. It has drawn up an action plan defining priorities and performance indicators, and aiming at continuously improving the quality of the study programme. It regularly and systematically analyses the quality of its programme.



NOTE :

Complete and detailed Accompanying guidelines (in French only) can be downloaded on the Agency's website: www.aeqes.be. These guidelines can be used by HEIs when working on their self-evaluation report as well as by experts mandated by AEQES for taking part in evaluations.

The self-assessment reports are to be compiled in accordance with the following scheme: a succinct presentation of the study programme (part 1), followed by its self-evaluation against the five criteria specified in this reference framework (part 2).