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QUARTZ
Empowering Education

Quality Assurance for Reform and Transformation of HEIs in Uzbekistan - QUARTZ

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Ensuring Quality in Higher Education: Programme Design, Student-Centred Learning, and Lifelong Learning Pathways

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QUARTZ Training for Trainers

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Outline

- ESG Standard 1.2: Design and approval of programmes (academic offer planning)
- ESG Standard 1.3: Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment
- ESG Standard 1.4: Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
- Lifelong Learning

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Academic Offer Planning: Supporting Long-Term University Growth

Matching academic offerings with student and market needs & gaining efficiency and responsiveness in the short term

Identifying and Committing to Research Priorities to innovation and knowledge creation

Relevance, Competitiveness, Sustainability

Strategic positioning for sustainable success: evolving educational trends and industry demands

Maintain academic excellence to ensure quality assurance and accreditation compliance

Academic Offer Planning: Supporting the Purposes of Higher Education

- **Preparation for the labour market** – *skills, competences, and adaptability*
- **Preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies** – *critical thinking, civic engagement, social responsibility, shared values*
- **Personal development** – *soft skills, creativity, ethical decision-making, resilience, leadership*
- **Development of a broad and advanced knowledge base** – *research, innovation, knowledge creation, interdisciplinary learning*

Overview of Academic Offer Planning Approaches

Academic planning can follow a **top-down, bottom-up, or hybrid approach**.

Institutions choose a model based on **governance structure, institutional priorities, and stakeholder involvement**.

Top-Down Approach

Institutional leadership (President, Provost, Board of Trustees) sets broad strategic goals.

Deans and department heads translate these priorities into specific and policies.

Academic units develop and implement programmes that align with the institution's vision.

☑ Advantages:
Strong institutional alignment and strategic focus.
Efficient resource allocation and budgeting.
Ensures compliance with accreditation and regulatory requirements.

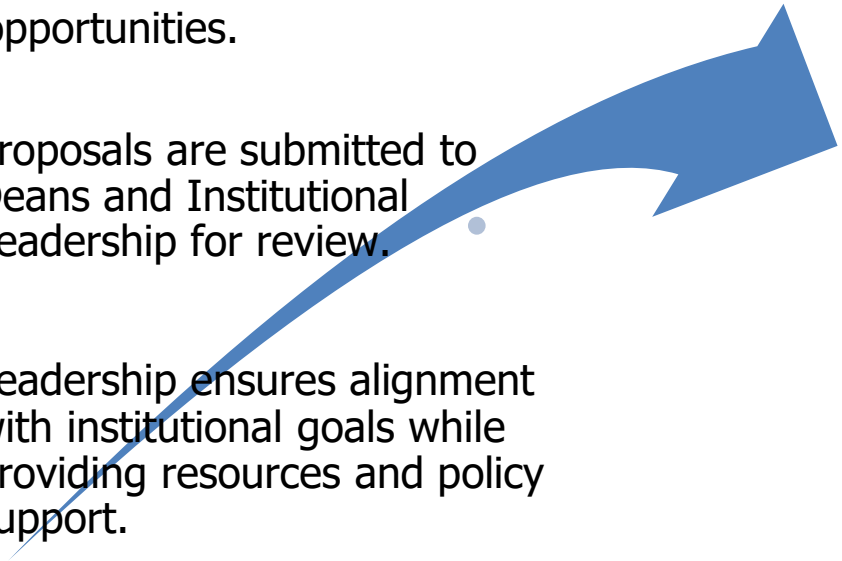
✗ Challenges:
Risk of limited faculty and student engagement.
Less flexibility to respond to emerging academic needs.

Bottom-Up Approach

Faculty and department chairs identify curriculum needs and research opportunities.

Proposals are submitted to Deans and Institutional Leadership for review.

Leadership ensures alignment with institutional goals while providing resources and policy support.



☑ **Advantages:**

Encourages faculty innovation and engagement.

More responsive to student needs and academic trends.

Enhances stakeholder participation in decision-making.

✕ **Challenges:**

Risk of fragmented programme development.

Inconsistent alignment with long-term institutional strategy.

Resource allocation challenges if departments operate independently.

Hybrid Approach (Blended Model)

☑ **Advantages:**

Balances strategic oversight with academic innovation.

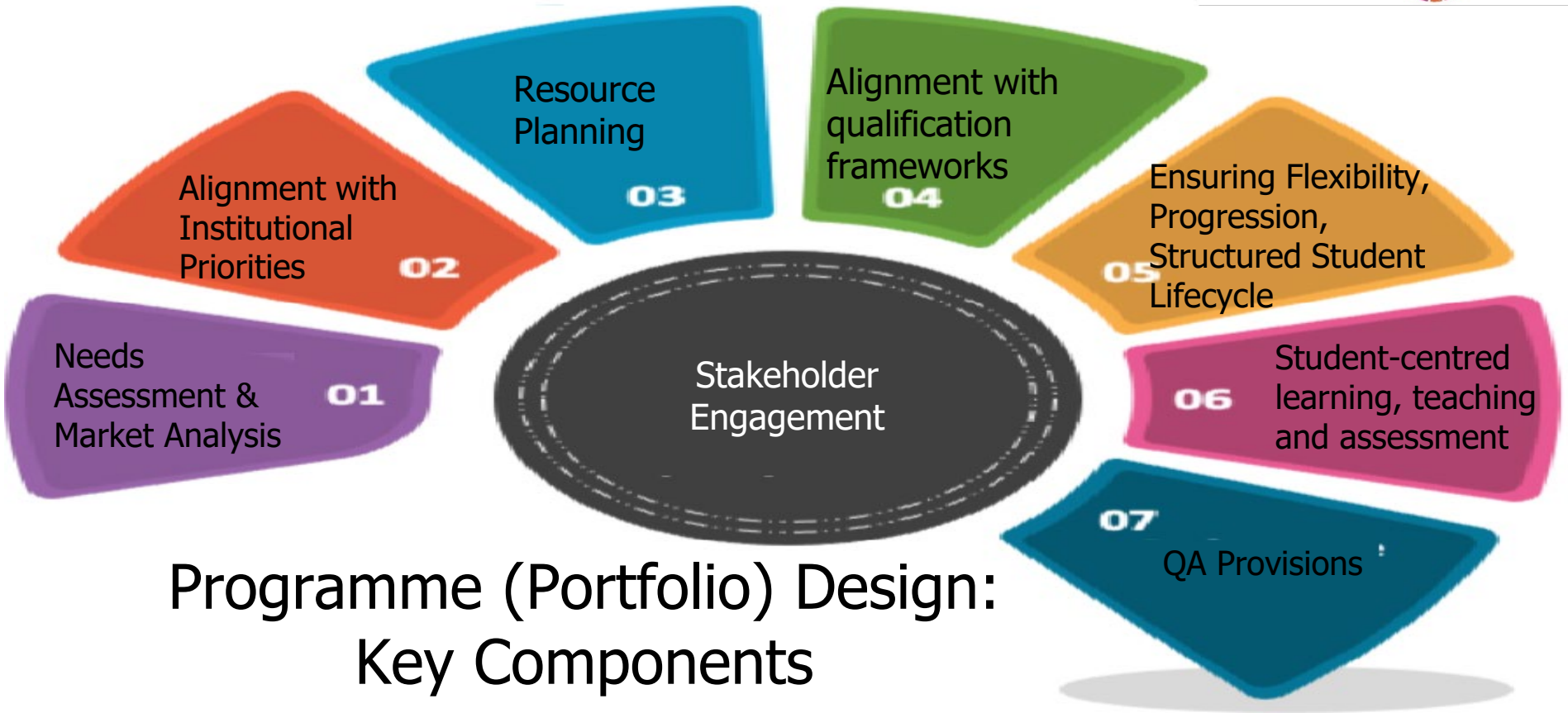
Ensures efficient resource management while maintaining academic flexibility.

Encourages collaborative decision-making and institutional coherence.

✕ **Challenges:**

Requires strong coordination and clear communication between all stakeholders.

Can be time-consuming due to the iterative feedback process.



Programme (Portfolio) Design: Key Components

Stakeholder Engagement: Incorporation and Measuring

Internal Stakeholders

- Students
- Faculty Members
- University Governance
- Non-Teaching Staff

External Stakeholders

- Government Bodies and Accrediting Agencies
- Employers and Industry Representatives
- Alumni
- Professional Bodies
- Community

Asking the Right Questions: Students and Faculty

Students

- How effectively are **we gauging student satisfaction** with our programme content, delivery and assessment methods?
- What mechanisms do we have in place to **encourage and facilitate meaningful student participation** in feedback and decision-making processes?
- How are we **monitoring and addressing factors that influence student retention** and successful programme completion?

Faculty Members

- To what extent are **our faculty members actively involved in curriculum design** and programme review?
- What **opportunities and support do we provide for faculty professional development** in areas such as curriculum design and innovative teaching methodologies?
- How do we **recognise and integrate faculty research** and publications into programme content to foster innovation?

Asking the Right Questions: Administration and Non-teaching Staff

University Administration/Governance

- How **efficiently are we allocating resources** to support robust programme development?
- What policies have we implemented to **promote and sustain collaborative programme development** among stakeholders?
- How regularly do we **convene meetings with diverse stakeholders** to discuss and advance programme initiatives?

Non-Teaching Staff

- How do we assess and **enhance the satisfaction levels of students and faculty with the support services** provided by our administrative and support staff?
- What **training and development programmes are available to non-teaching staff** to improve their contributions to programme support?
- How do we **evaluate and optimise operational processes** to ensure seamless programme delivery?

Asking the Right Questions

Employers, Industry Representatives, and Professional Bodies

- How can we integrate **industry professionals into advisory boards** to align curricula with evolving workforce demands?
  What **strategies enhance employer collaboration** in shaping graduate skills and attributes?
  How can we **expand internships, placements, and industry-driven projects** for students?
  Professional Recognition: How do we facilitate **graduate access to necessary certifications and licences**?
  How can we **strengthen engagement with external stakeholders to support knowledge transfer, applied research and innovation**?

Asking the Right Questions

Alumni

- How **engaged are alumni** in providing feedback on programme relevance and quality?
  In what ways do **alumni contribute**, such as mentoring, guest lecturing, review committees, or financial support?
  How **do we track and assess alumni career progression** as an indicator of programme effectiveness?
- What mechanisms do we have in place to foster a **continuing sense of belonging** among our alumni?

Asking the Right Questions

Community Engagement

- How can academic programmes address real-world community challenges through applied research & innovation.
- What initiatives can enhance the university's role in societal development?
- How can we integrate community-driven projects into learning experiences?
- Lifelong learning & open access education: How do we extend learning opportunities to diverse community groups?
- What mechanisms ensure continuous assessment and improvement of community engagement efforts?

Industry-Aligned Programme (Portfolio)

Labour market demand, competitor analysis, and student interest.

- Conduct **market research and stakeholder consultations** to assess industry demands and societal needs.
- Develop **interdisciplinary and flexible programme structures** that address emerging global challenges to keep pace with technological, economic, and academic advancements.
- **Balance foundational modules with specialised and applied fields** to create a diverse and adaptable portfolio, including placement opportunities.

Related Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Industry relevance of programmes (percentage of modules developed, monitored, and delivered with industry input)
Professionally accredited degrees (awards recognised by a relevant professional organisation)
Graduate employability rate (percentage of graduates employed within six months)
Number of partnerships with external stakeholders (industry, NGOs, government)
Credit-bearing placement modules, contributing to the qualification
Ratio of new programmes introduced vs. discontinued, percentage updated programmes (portfolio optimisation)
Enrolment trends per programme (growth rate and demand analysis).

Strategic Alignment and Institutional Resources

Alignment with University Strategy, Mission, and Vision	• National and regional priorities; Research, innovation, and societal impact; Inclusivity, excellence, and internationalisation.
Alignment with Institutional Resources	• Teaching, logistical, infrastructural, and research resources; Faculty expertise, laboratory facilities, and learning technologies; Sustainable resource allocation, including student services and campus infrastructure; Collaboration between academic and administrative units.

Related Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Percentage of programmes aligned with the university's strategic goals (measured via curriculum mapping);
Number of interdisciplinary and research-driven programmes introduced;
Graduate impact assessment (employment rates, contributions to research, and societal engagement);
Stakeholder satisfaction levels (feedback from faculty, students, and industry partners);
Programme-to-resource ratio (ensuring infrastructure, faculty, and logistics match student demand);
Faculty-to-student ratio in each programme;
Utilisation rate of research and laboratory facilities per programme;
Percentage of programmes delivered with blended learning and digital tools;
Sustainability of programme offerings based on financial and logistical viability.

National Qualification Framework

The comprehensive system synchronising all qualifications within the education sector at the national or sub-national level and specific to a country's structure of education and training.

Outcome-Oriented	Prioritizes the achievements of learners over the educational processes undertaken.
Learning Outcomes	Specifies the knowledge, skills, and competencies a learner should possess upon earning a qualification.
Qualification Pathways	Illustrates how different qualifications interconnect, facilitating learner progression.
Diverse Learning Routes	Accommodates multiple educational pathways, including lifelong learning, leading to recognized qualifications.
Role in Education Development	Guides the structuring of degree systems and the design of academic programmes.
Recognition Facilitation and Stakeholder Relevance	Aids in the acknowledgment and understanding of qualifications by various stakeholders, e.g., learners and employers, in evaluating the value and applicability of qualifications.

NQFs – the European Context: Transparency, Comparability, and Portability

QF-EHEA Cycle	EQF Level	Description	Typical Qualifications
Short Cycle	Level 5	Introductory higher education, bridging secondary education and bachelor's level.	Higher National Diplomas (HND), Foundation Degrees, Diplomas of Higher Education.
First Cycle	Level 6	Undergraduate level, providing a broad knowledge base and developing analytical skills.	Bachelor's Degrees (e.g., BA, BSc), Professional Bachelor's Degrees.
Second Cycle	Level 7	Postgraduate level, focusing on advanced study and original research.	Master's Degrees (e.g., MA, MSc), Integrated Master's Degrees.
Third Cycle	Level 8	Doctoral level, involving substantial original research contributing new knowledge to the field.	Doctorates (e.g., PhD, DPhil), Professional Doctorates.

NQF of Uzbekistan available at:
Government of Uzbekistan. (2025). On measures to organize the activities of the National System for the Development of Professional Qualifications, Knowledge and Skills in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Lex.uz. Retrieved from https://lex.uz/en/docs/4814154

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Comparable, still Unique

Country	Reporting year		Country	Reporting year
Bulgaria	2022	⚖	Italy	2022

Bulgaria (2022)	EQF	Italy (2022)
NQF 7 Master's degree *(Магистър)*	EQF 7	**NQF 7** Single-cycle Master Degree *(Laurea Magistrale/Specialistica a ciclo unico)* Single-cycle second level scademic diploma *(Diploma accademico di secondo livello (AFAM))* Master Degree *(Laurea Magistrale/Specialistica)* First level university master *(Master universitario di primo livello)* Second level Academic diploma *(Diploma accademico di secondo livello (AFAM)* First level academic specialisation diploma *(Diploma accademico di specializzazione di primo livello (AFAM)* Higher specialisation diploma *(Diploma di corso di perfezionamento)* Higher specialisation diploma or first level master *(Diploma di perfezionamento o Master di primo livello)*
NQF 6 Bachelor's degree *(Бакалавър)* Professional bachelor's degree *(Професионален бакалавър)*	EQF 6	**NQF 6** Bachelor degree *(Laurea)* First level academic diploma *(Diploma accademico di primo livello (AFAM))* Applied technologies higher specialisation diploma (three-year course) *(Diploma di specializzazione superiore per le tecnologie applicate di durata triennale)* Regional higher vocational training qualification *(Qualificazione di alta formazione professionale regionale)*

Source: CEDEFOP. (n.d.). National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) Comparison Tool. Retrieved from https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/nqfs-online-tool/nqf-comparison?country_1=BG&year_1=5340&country_2=IT&year_2=5340"

CORE PRINCIPLES AND ALIGNMENT MECHANISMS in HE

Learning Outcomes (LOs) are integral to the descriptors for each educational cycle (level) and define **what learners are expected to know, understand, and be able to do after completing a learning process**. The focus is on achieving specific knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Credit Accumulation and Transfer: The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a tool to express the volume of learning based on the defined learning outcomes and their associated workload.

Credit Accumulation and Transfer

Credit Accumulation and Allocation:

- Learners earn credits by completing specific modules or units within a programme.
- Each module/unit is assigned a credit value based on the estimated learning hours required for achieving the defined LOs, which encompasses all learning activities, including attending lectures, participating in seminars, independent study, and completing assignments.
- Accumulated module credits contribute toward the total required for a qualification.

Credit Transfer:

- Credits obtained from one institution or programme can be recognized and accepted by another.
- Facilitates student mobility between institutions, both domestically and internationally.
- Supports lifelong learning by acknowledging prior learning and experiences.

ECTS Allocation:

- One credit corresponds to 25 to 30 hours of the total student's workload.
- 60 credits per full-time academic year

(please refer for further details to **ECTS User's Guide** at *https://ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/ECTS_Guide/00/0/ects-users-guide-2015_614000.pdf*)

LEARNING OUTCOMES – EQF (for Life-long Learning)

In the context of the EQF, the learning outcomes are defined in terms of:

- **Knowledge:** described as theoretical and/or factual.
- **Skills:** described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).
- **Responsibility and autonomy:** described as the ability of the learner to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and with responsibility.

LEARNING OUTCOMES EQF - EXAMPLES

Level 6 - learning outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles	Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups

Level 8 - learning outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields	The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice	Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research

Source: European Union. (n.d.). Description of the eight EQF levels. Europass. Retrieved, from https://europass.europa.eu/en/description-eight-eqf-levels

LEARNING OUTCOMES – QF of EHEA

In the context of the QF - EHEA, the learning outcomes are defined in terms of:

Knowledge and Understanding: Depth and breadth of subject-specific knowledge.

Applying Knowledge and Understanding: Ability to utilize knowledge in practical contexts.

Making Judgments: Capacity for critical thinking and informed decision-making.

Communication Skills: Proficiency in conveying information effectively.

Learning Skills: Commitment to continuous learning and professional development.

Learning Outcomes of QF-EHEA - Example

Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA)		
	Learning outcomes	**ECTS credits**
First cycle qualification	Qualifications that signify completion of the first cycle are awarded to students who: • **have demonstrated knowledge and understanding** in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study; • **can apply their knowledge and understanding** in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study; • **have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgments** that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues; • can **communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions** to both specialist and non-specialist audiences; • **have developed those learning skills** that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.	Typically include 180-240 ECTS credits

Source: European Higher Education Area (EHEA). (2018). Paris Communiqué: Appendix III. Retrieved from https://ehea.info/Upload/document/ministerial_declarations/EHEAParis2018_Communique_AppendixIII_952778.pdf

Programme LOs and Module LO: Ensuring Smooth Vertical Progression

Level-Appropriate Learning Outcomes: Each module should align with the qualification level at which it is taught.

Progressive Learning Approach: Modules build on each other to develop competencies over time.

Constructive Alignment: Teaching methods and assessments must match the cognitive demand of each level to accurately measure student attainment.

Prerequisites should be logical and reasonable, avoiding unnecessary repetition or barriers.

Example of LO Progression

L4: *Describe key research methods used in business studies.* (*Understand, Apply*)
L5: *Compare and contrast qualitative and quantitative research approaches.* (*Analyse, Evaluate*)
L6: *Critically evaluate and apply research methodologies to an independent study.* (*Evaluate, Create*)

Bloom's Taxonomy & Learning Levels:
Cognitive Skills Progression: Learning outcomes move from lower-order thinking (Remember, Understand, Apply) to higher-order thinking (Analyse, Evaluate, Create).

More on the revised Bloom's Taxonomy:
Anderson, L. W., Krathwohl, D. R., Airasian, P. W., Cruikshank, K. A., Mayer, R. E., Pintrich, P. R., Raths, J., & Wittrock, M. C. (2001). A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives. Longman. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235465787_A_Taxonomy_for_Learning_Teaching_and_Assessing_A_Revision_of_Bloom's_Taxonomy_of_Educational_Objectives.
https://www.apu.edu/live_data/files/333/blooms_taxonomy_action_verbs.pdf

DEFINING LOs - Examples

Programme LOs – BSc Information Systems and Technologies at VUM

Module LOs – Computational Intelligence L6	Module LOs – Principles of Programming L4
On successful completion of the module, students should be able to: ▪ Critically appraise a comprehensive/detailed understanding of the computational intelligence domain. ▪ Design and develop computational intelligence software artefacts. ▪ Critique and contextualise emerging research in the area of computational intelligence.	▪ On successful completion of this module, students should be able to: ▪ Interpret software requirements from given scenario. ▪ Structure programs using key programming constructs. ▪ Identify and implement modular elements of programs. ▪ Demonstrate understanding of the key principles of user-centric design to design and develop appropriate user interfaces.

Ensuring LOs Alignment: Module LOs and Level LOs

Intended Programme Learning Outcomes to Core Level 4 Modules	Module A	Module B	Module C	Module D	Module E	Module F
LO 1	Y		Y			Y
LO 2	Y		Y	Y		Y
LO 3	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
LO 4	Y	Y		Y	Y	
LO 5		Y	Y	Y		
LO 6	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y
LO 7	Y	Y		Y		
LO 8		Y	Y	Y		Y
LO 9		Y	Y			Y
LO 10		Y	Y		Y	

Strengthening Programme Flexibility & Student Progression

Structuring a Balanced Curriculum

- Core, elective (optional), and facultative modules, as well as programme specialisations for structured yet flexible learning

Diversifying Learning Modes

- Full-time, part-time, blended, and to enhance accessibility
- Work-based learning to integrate professional experience into academic qualifications

Ensuring Seamless Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer

- Formal Leaning
- Non-formal Learning
- Informal Learning

Core, Elective, and Optional Components. Programme Pathways

Core Modules	• Essential for foundational and discipline-specific learning.
Electives (Optional Modules)	• Allow students to specialise in areas of interest.
Facultative Modules	• Support interdisciplinary learning and skill diversification (non-compulsory, supplementary learning, no direct impact on degree completion).
Programme Specialisations (Pathways)	• Allow students to choose a specialisation that aligns with career goals, e.g., MBA (Finance) or MBA (Sport Management), can be organised by pairing elective modules to lead to specialisation.

Multiple Study Modes for Accessibility and Inclusion

Full-time & Part-time	• Offers flexibility based on student needs and availability.
Blended & Online Learning	• Incorporates digital tools for hybrid education.
Work-Based Learning	• Internships, apprenticeships, that are incorporated as credit-bearing modules.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Definition & Purpose

- **Evidence-based** integration of previously acquired **knowledge, skills, and experience** into formal education.
- "A formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of the value of a foreign educational qualification with a view to access to educational and/or employment activities." (Lisbon Recognition Convention retrieved from *https://ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/Lisbon_Recognition_Convention/04/5/Lisbon_Recognition_Convention_579045.pdf*)

Impact

- Enhances **Lifelong learning** and career mobility.
- Supports **flexible educational pathways**.
- Promotes **diversity and inclusivity** in higher education.

Types

- **Formal** – accredited education and qualifications.
- **Non-Formal** – workplace training, professional certifications.
- **Informal** – Self-directed learning, work/life experience.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer cont.

Recognition of Formal Learning

- Qualifications or periods of study for student transfer (advanced entry, credit exemption)
- Student mobility – Erasmus+ outgoing student mobility for studies or placement (including micro credentials), bilateral agreements between HEIs for Double or Joint Degree Programmes, University Alliances.

Recognition of Experiential Learning (RPEL)

- Prior learning gained through
  - work, voluntary activities or other life experiences acquired outside of formal higher education or training systems.
  - non-accredited training courses.
- Could be evidenced through work products (reports, minutes, emails etc.), testimonies, projects, professional publications, learning logs/reflective accounts, videos, audio.
- Involves an assessment process on the part of academic staff.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer: APPLICATION

- **Define Clear Parameters** – Establish **acceptable types, limits, and staff/faculty responsibilities** for RPL credit transfer.
- **Integrate into Quality Assurance Systems (QA)** – Embed RPL **criteria and assessment methods** within institutional QA frameworks, e.g., ECTS Guide, programme specifications, internal regulations and documentation for recognition.
- **Ensure Transparency** – Make RPL policies **publicly accessible** for current and prospective students, including transfer and mobility students.

Programme Specification and Formal Approval

The approval and updating of the Programme specification should be integrated into the internal QA provisions.

Core elements of Programme Specification:

- General Information
  - Teaching/Awarding Institution
  - Final Award and Programme Title
  - Programme Director (Head of Department)
  - Mode of Study, Normal Duration, and Period of Candidature, Language of study
  - Subject Benchmark Statements, Professional Bodies Accreditations
  - Date of Production

Programme Specification cont.

- Admission criteria
- Aims of the programme – broad and general, defining overall purpose
- Qualification description – aligned with HEI strategic goals and NQF
- Learning outcomes
- Credits and award requirements
- Programme structure and features, curriculum units (modules)
- Teaching, learning and assessment methods
- Module delivery and assessment timetable (generic)
- Student commitments
- Ethics and guidance on unfair practices in student work
- Progression, employment and transfer opportunities
- Academic support

Ensuring a Structured Student Lifecycle (SSL)

Institutions must apply consistent, transparent, and published regulations across all stages of the student journey, including cover **admission, recognition of prior learning, academic progression, and final certification.**

Why It Matters?

- Supports student success and institutional integrity.
- Ensures fair access, mobility, and qualification recognition across institutions and countries.
- Aligns with international agreements (e.g., Lisbon Recognition Convention) for coherent recognition policies.

SSL: Admission - Fair & Transparent Access

Transparent Admission & Entry Policies

- Admission criteria should be clear, publicly available, and consistently applied.
- Equal access for all applicants to maintain fairness and institutional credibility.
- Accommodation to diverse application needs, including support for international applicants, applicants with disabilities, transfer students, students applying with RPL.
- Propper communication channels with applicants and prospective students

SSL: Student Induction & Orientation

Pre-Arrival Support *(Before the Start of the Semester)*	**Welcome Week Activities** *(First Week of Semester)*	**Academic Orientation** *(First Week of Semester)*	**Student Wellbeing & Support** *(First Week of Semester)*	**Ongoing Induction Support** *(Throughout the First Semester)*
•Access to online orientation materials (videos, handbooks, FAQs). •Virtual Q&A sessions with faculty and student mentors. •Completion of introductory academic skills modules.	•University Introduction: Overview of mission, values, and academic culture. •Campus & Facilities Tour: Library, IT services, student support centres, career offices. •Meet Your Faculty: Introduction to department heads, tutors, and key academic staff. •Social Integration: Ice-breaking activities, student clubs, networking events.	•Understanding Programme Structure: Modules, credits, assessments, and progression pathways. •Academic Integrity & Expectations: Plagiarism policies, research ethics, referencing guidelines. •Learning Support Services: Study skills workshops, tutoring, language support.	•Overview of counselling services. •Guidance on financial aid, housing, and student welfare programmes. •Safety briefing and emergency contact procedures. •Student Career Services for internship and placements. •Erasmus+ mobility opportunities.	•Regular check-ins with academic advisors or personal tutors. •Peer mentoring programmes for continued support. •Mid-semester review session to address challenges and feedback.

SSL: Monitoring Student Progression

Institutions should implement robust mechanisms to monitor and support student progress.

Regular Monitoring and Reporting

- Early Risk Identification: Weekly or monthly attendance tracking to detect at-risk students.
  Performance Reviews: Continuous academic evaluations (e.g., mid-term progress reports, formative assessments).
  Engagement Analytics: Tracking student participation in online platforms, discussion forums, and coursework.

Proactive Support Mechanisms

- Advisory meetings: One-on-one or group mentoring sessions every month with academic advisors.
  Data-driven alerts: Systems that flag at-risk students (declining grades, low attendance, disengagement).
  Student feedback surveys: Regular check-ins on learning experience, workload, and support needs.

Institutional Interventions

- Flexible learning pathways: Alternative routes for students requiring extra academic support.
  Faculty collaboration: Coordinated efforts between academic staff, student affairs, and career services to enhance support systems.

SSL: Facilitating Mobility & Recognition

- Recognition of qualifications and learning periods is key to student mobility.
- Ensures a coherent recognition in cooperation with national and international QA agencies (EU context ENIC/NARIC centres), and international partners.

ENIC-NARIC NETWORKS

ENIC (European Network of Information Centres)

NARIC (National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the EU)

What they do: **https://www.enic-naric.net**	**Key Functions**	**Who can use ENIC/NARIC Services**
Oversee and facilitate fair, consistent and transparent recognition of academic qualifications across countries	Recognition of Foreign Qualifications operating under the principles of the *Lisbon Recognition Convention*	Students seeking degree recognition abroad.
	Support for Academic Mobility & Student Transfers	Universities evaluating international student applications.
	Cooperation with Governments & Universities	Government agencies ensuring compliance with education agreements.
		Employers verifying foreign academic credentials.

SSL: Certification & Graduation

Ensuring Qualification Transparency and Recognition Beyond Graduation

Upon graduation, students must receive clear, standardised documentation that verifies their qualifications:	The graduation documents should provide detailed information about the qualification, including:
• Degree Award (Diploma) • Certificate of Completion • Diploma Supplement (DS)*	• Learning outcomes achieved • Qualification level and academic content • Status of the awarded degree within the national and international education system (including referencing in DS to International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)**

*Detailed information and a template for a *European Diploma Supplement* can be found on the EUROPASS website:

***ISCED 2011* and *ISCED Fields of Education and Training 2013* details also available at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_(ISCED)

SSL: Transparency of Regulations

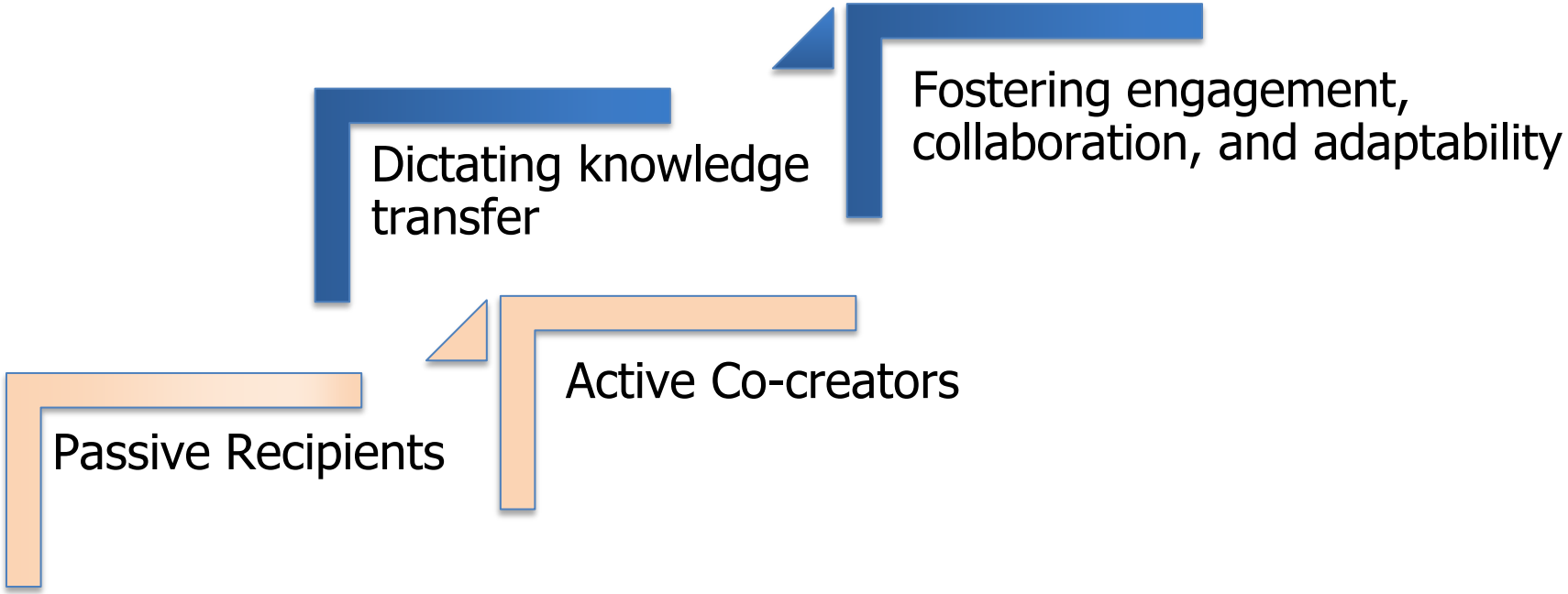
HEIs should published their regulations pertinent to all phases of the Student Lifecycle:

- on the University website
- in the Programme Handbooks

Essential Information should include:

- RPL Regulations
- Student Support Services
- Appeals, Complaints and Academic Regulations
- Induction
- Fees, scholarships, and student loans (if applicable)
- Accommodation
- Learning Centre Services
- Student Representatives, Student Union, Student Charter
- Progression and Transfer Opportunities
- Health and Safety

Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment



Student Involvement, Engagement, Partnership and Co-creation

Empowerment

Developing a certain area for collaboration

Innovation and Creativity

Taking ownership of their learning

Improving teaching by including and respecting feedback

Enhanced learning outcomes

Genuine dialogue between staff and students

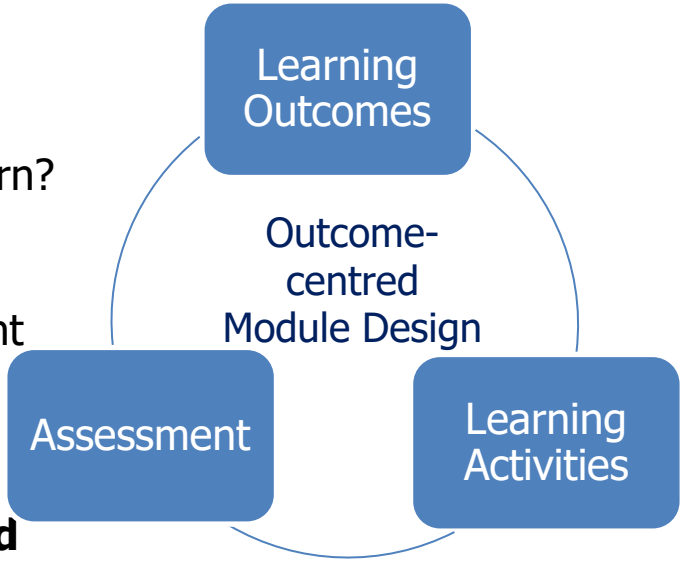
Peer assessment, gamification

Building Trust

Improving teaching by respecting and acting upon feedback

Constructive Alignment. Outcome-centred Module Design

- What are the specific **learning outcomes** students should achieve?
- How can these outcomes be clearly **communicated** to students?
- What are the **core concepts and skills** students need to learn?
- What is the **most logical sequence** for presenting this content?
- What **assessment strategies** will accurately measure student attainment of the outcomes?
- How does the module align with **accreditation and institutional requirements**?
- How can we ensure that all components work **cohesively and sustainably** to support student success?



Expanding to a Student-centred Approach

- What do students **already know**, and how does this shape their engagement?
- How **do students best learn**, considering diverse backgrounds and different styles of learning?
- What **active learning strategies** will deepen understanding?
- How can **assessments foster engagement** and critical thinking?
- How can students **take ownership of their learning**?
- What opportunities allow students to **apply knowledge in real-world contexts**?
- How can **feedback enhance** learning and reflection?

Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment (SLTA): Key Principles

Flexibility & Inclusion	• Addresses diverse student needs with adaptable learning paths.
Varied Teaching Approaches	• Uses multiple delivery strategies and , including online, blended, and experiential learning.
Autonomy & Responsibility	• Encourages students to take charge of their own learning with teacher guidance.
Respect & Support	• Fosters a strong learner-teacher relationship.
Student Feedback for Continuous Improvement	• Regular opportunities for students to provide feedback on teaching methods, assessments, and module structure.

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SLTA: Adaptable Learning Paths:
from foundational instruction to hands-on applications and self-directed learning.

Foundational Learning: Lectures & Directed Study

- **Formal Lectures:** Provide a structured overview of core subject material, establishing a **knowledge foundation**.
- **Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs):** Platforms (e.g., Moodle) **extend learning beyond the classroom** with recorded lectures, resources, and supplementary materials.
- **Directed Reading:** Reinforces subject knowledge with curated academic resources.

Interactive & Collaborative Learning

- **Tutorials:** Clarify misconceptions, reinforce lecture content, and encourage peer discussions.
- **Case Studies:** Engage students in **real-world problem-solving**, requiring critical analysis and research.
- **Problem-Based Learning (PBL):** Encourages self-directed learning, teamwork, and practical application of knowledge.
- **Seminars:** Develop students' **presentation, communication, and problem-solving** skills through discussion-based learning.

Practical & Applied Learning

- **Practical Workshops:** Offer **hands-on experience**, helping students refine their skills with structured academic support.
- **Industry Experts & Guest Lectures:** Bridge academic learning with **real-world industry practices**.
- **Simulations & Lab Work:** Provide experiential learning through **virtual or in-person lab settings**, **technical exercises**, and **scenario-based applications**.
- **Fieldwork:** Engages students in applying theoretical knowledge in **authentic real-world settings**.

Self-Paced & Digital Learning

- **Online Discussion Forums & Digital Tools:** Facilitate **collaborative learning and peer interaction** in a flexible, accessible format.
- **Self-Paced Project-Based Learning:** Encourages **independent application of skills**, allowing students to **progress at their own pace** while meeting structured milestones.

SLTA Example: Group Tasks

Purpose & Benefits	Strategies to Ensure Fair Participation
Enhances Collaboration: Encourages teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills. **Develops Critical Thinking:** Promotes peer learning and diverse perspectives. **Prepares for Real-World Challenges:** Simulates workplace dynamics and cooperative projects.	**Clear Roles & Responsibilities:** Assign defined tasks to each member to ensure accountability. **Regular Progress Check-Ins:** Schedule meetings or instructor check-ins to monitor engagement. **Weighted Contribution Grading:** Allocate grades based on individual efforts alongside group outcomes. **Use of Collaboration Tools:** Encourage shared workspaces (e.g., Google Docs) for transparency. **Peer & Self-Assessment:** Implement peer evaluations or group reflective reports to track contributions and prevent freeriding.

SLTA Example: Flipped Teaching and Student-Led Workshops

Aspect	Flipped Teaching	Student-Led Workshops
Pre-Class Preparation	Students review materials before class	Students research and prepare materials for presentation
In-Class Role	Students apply knowledge through guided activities	Students take charge of teaching and discussion
Instructor's Role	Facilitator, guiding discussions	Supportive mentor, providing feedback
Main Focus	Application and problem-solving	Leadership, facilitation, and knowledge sharing

SLTA Example: Peer-to-Peer Assessment

Peer assessment can be used as a structured evaluation method where students **review and provide feedback** on each other's work based on **predefined criteria**.

Benefits:
For Students: Enhances **critical thinking, self-reflection, and evaluative skills** while promoting **active engagement** in learning.
For the Institution: Encourages **student autonomy, collaborative learning, and accountability** in coursework.
For Academic Development: Reinforces **constructive feedback skills** and prepares students for **teamwork and evaluation processes in professional settings**.

SLTA Example: Encouraging Cross-Cultural Understanding

- Promotes cultural awareness and reduces stereotypes through collaborative learning.
- Uses team-based projects, discussions, and case studies to explore cultural perspectives.
- Encourages critical reflection and problem-solving in diverse contexts.

Example

SLTA Example: Engaging In-Class Activities Assessment to Encourage Active Participation

Grade	Criteria for evaluating student in-class performance
0	✓ Absent
1 -2	✓ Present, not participating ✓ Attempts at responding to a question but does not demonstrate adequate knowledge ✓ Hardly ever gets involved in class discussion and activities
3 - 5	✓ Shows only basic preparation ✓ No sufficient evidence of facts interpretation or analysis ✓ Very little contribution to discussion with a little evidence of factual knowledge and understanding
6 - 8	✓ Well prepared ✓ Interpretations of information are based on analysis of facts, determining relationships between constituent parts ✓ Contributes frequently to discussion, engages in arguments by discussing opposing ideas
9 - 10	✓ Demonstrates excellent performance, relating interpretations to course material ✓ Evaluates information intelligibly, based on criteria and standards - coming to convincing conclusions which takes the discussion further ✓ Contributes significantly to the cooperative argument-building, demonstrates very active involvement and creative approach

SSLTA Example: Building Skills Through Small Tasks

Why it Matters

- Helps students develop skills gradually.
- Encourages continuous learning and engagement.
- Provides both formative feedback and final assessment.

How It Works

- Portfolio Approach: Students complete small tasks that add up over time.
- Step-by-Step Learning: Each task builds on previous ones.
- Balanced Assessment: Mix of ongoing feedback and final evaluation.

Benefits

- Tracks progress effectively.
- Encourages reflection and deeper learning.
- Reduces stress from one-time exams.

SSLTA: Ensure Consistent, Fair, Transparent, and Relevant Assessment

Key Principles

Fairness & Consistency: Assessments are applied equally to all students, following established procedures.

Transparency: Assessment criteria, marking schemes, and methods are published and explained in advance.

Relevance: Assessment aligns with **module level, cognitive demand, and university marking criteria**.

Quality Assurance: Ensures assessments support **student progression and future careers**.

SSLTA: Incorporate Diagnostic, Formative, and Summative Assessment

1. Diagnostic Assessment

- **Purpose:** Identifies prior knowledge, strengths, and areas for improvement.
- **Examples:** Pre-course quizzes, skills audits, self-assessments.

2. Formative Assessment

- **Purpose:** Provides feedback during learning to guide improvement.
- **Examples:** Draft submissions, peer reviews, in-class exercises.

3. Summative Assessment

- **Purpose:** Evaluates the achieved learning outcomes.
- **Examples:** Final exams and coursework, major projects, dissertations.

SSLTA: Best Practices for Effective Assessment

Clear & Aligned Criteria

- Assessment tasks should reflect learning outcomes and be appropriate for the level of study.
  Marking criteria must align with university and departmental standards.

Robust Quality Assurance

- Multiple Examiners: Where possible, assessments should be reviewed by more than one examiner.
  Training for Assessors: Faculty should receive support in developing fair and effective assessment methods.
  Consideration for Mitigating Circumstances: Policies should account for special student needs.

Transparent Feedback & Appeals Process

- Feedback: Regular, structured feedback linked to academic progress.
- Communication: How student requests and complaints have been actioned.
  Appeals Mechanism: A clear process for students to contest grades in a structured manner.

SSLTA: Ensuring Transparency – Making Assessment Information Available

Publishing Assessment Guidelines

- Provide students **with clear assessment criteria** and expectations.
- **Share** marking rubrics, deadlines, and weightings in advance.

Access to Feedback & Appeals

- Outline how students will **receive feedback** and opportunities for improvement.
- Ensure a structured **grade appeal process** is available.

Clear Communication Channels

- Use **learning management systems** to publish assessment details.
- Hold **Q&A sessions** to clarify expectations and procedures.

SSLTA: Monitoring and Enhancement

Key Evaluation Methods

Student Feedback: Collected through module evaluations, course rep discussions, and surveys.

Lecturer Self-Evaluation: Reflection on teaching effectiveness, student participation, and assessment strategies.

Performance Metrics: Analysing student performance data, attendance rates, and engagement levels.

Ongoing Curriculum Enhancement: Adjustments based on **learning outcomes, student needs, and teaching innovations**.

Example

Sustaining Quality: Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Lifelong Learning (LLL) for All

Across All Age Groups	Spans an individual's entire life, from early childhood to adulthood and beyond. Ensures learning opportunities tailored to different stages of life and career development.
Across All Education Levels	Creates connections between different education levels and pathways to include early education, primary and secondary schooling, higher education, adult education, and vocational training.
Across All Learning Modalities	Recognizes formal learning (structured education leading to qualifications), non-formal learning (alternative or supplementary learning opportunities), and informal learning (self-directed and experience-based learning).
Across All Learning Environments	Extends beyond schools to include homes, workplaces, communities, libraries, museums, and digital platforms, bridging formal education and non-formal/informal learning.
For a Variety of Purposes	Empowers individuals to reach their full potential and adapt to evolving societal and economic needs. Promotes lifelong personal, social, and professional growth while fostering inclusive and advanced societies.

What is Lifelong Learning?

Definition: Continuous, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for personal or professional development.

Formal Learning: Structured, institution-based education (e.g., schools, universities, vocational training).
Non-Formal Learning: Organised learning outside traditional institutions (e.g., workplace training, workshops, MOOCs).
Informal Learning: Unstructured learning from daily activities (e.g., self-study, learning from experience, mentorship).
Examples:

- Online courses and certifications
- Apprenticeships and internships
- Volunteering and self-directed learning

LLL: Key Commitments of the HEIs

- Embed Lifelong Learning as a Strategic Institutional Priority
- Provide Inclusive and Flexible Learning Pathways
- Recognise and Validate Prior Learning (RPL)
- Enhance the Quality of Lifelong Learning Provision
- Strengthen Partnerships with Employers and Society
- Promote Interdisciplinary and Innovative Learning Approaches
- Ensure Financial Support and Sustainability for Lifelong Learning
- Support Professional Development of Academic Staff
- Engage in National and International Policy Dialogue
- Use Research and Data to Continuously Improve Lifelong Learning

European university charter for lifelong learning adopted by EUA. https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/european-university-charter-lifelong-learning-adopted-eua

LLL: Examples of HEIs Engagement

Flexible Learning Pathways	Micro-Credentials & Short Courses	Digital transformation - Blended & Online Learning	Collaborations with Industry & Society	Lifelong Learning Support Services
Stackable degrees - modular degree programmes that allow learners to accumulate smaller credentials over time, which can later be combined into a full degree.	Micro-credentials to certify the outcomes of small, tailored learning experiences to complement the current conventional learning opportunities.	MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) - freely available online educational resources that allow learners to access knowledge without financial or institutional barriers.	Work-based learning opportunities, internships and apprenticeships	Career counselling and upskilling programmes
Recognition of prior learning	Short courses for professional development certifications	Hybrid learning models	Recognition of prior experiential learning	Alumni continuing education opportunities
	Customised corporate training	Self-paced learning platforms	Extending faculty expertise to vocational training, e.g., integrating VTC in University structures	Community engagement and public lectures

LLL: General Pitfalls

Limited Recognition: Informal and non-formal learning outcomes may not be widely recognised.
Access Barriers: High costs, digital divide, and lack of flexible learning opportunities.
Fragmented Systems: Weak connections between different education and training systems hinder smooth transitions.
Trust Issues: Employers and institutions may not fully trust non-traditional learning pathways.
Time Constraints: Balancing learning with work and personal responsibilities.

LLL: Future Development

Digital Transformation & Flexible Learning Pathways	• Increased use of online learning platforms and AI-driven education tools. • Microcredentials and stackable degrees gaining acceptance.
Policy Innovations	• Strengthening national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) linked to European qualifications frameworks (EQF). • Promotion of validation of non-formal and informal learning.
Stronger Integration	• Enhanced coherence between higher education, vocational training, and lifelong learning. • Greater employer involvement in designing flexible learning pathways.
Support Mechanisms	• Financial aid for learners • Workplace learning incentives • Guidance and counselling services

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Thank you for your attention!

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