UNIVERSITY OF TROMSØ UIT

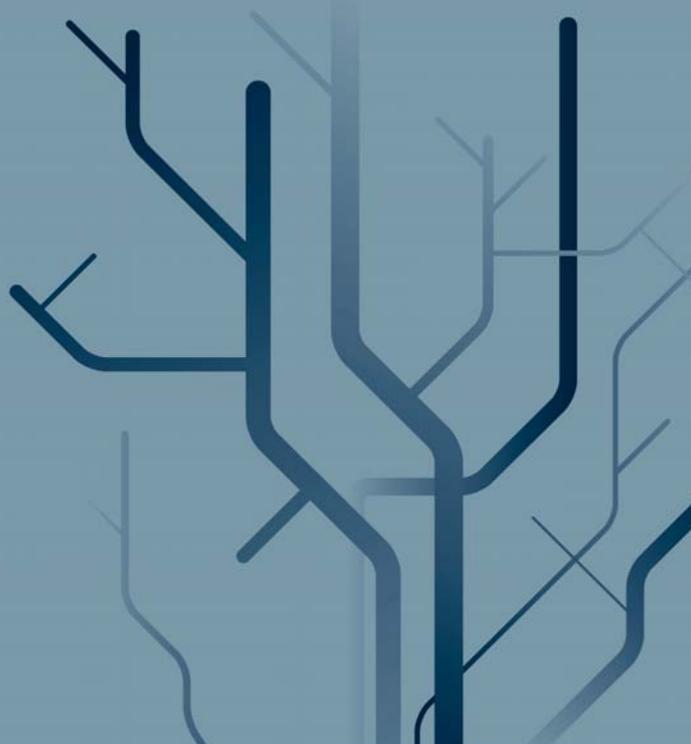# QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TROMSØ

CONTENT

1. OBJECTIVE AND STRUCTURE

Introduction
At its meeting of June 16, 2009, the University Board adopted a new joint Quality Assurance System for the educational activities at the University of Tromsø (case S 47-09[1]). The system and the elements which comprise it came into effect on 1.8.09.

The University of Tromsø's Quality Assurance System for the Educational Activities provides a description of UiT's strategic and systematic efforts involving the quality of education. The system description is for the most part a description of the joint elements which are included in the work with quality assurance of the educational activities, and the distribution of work and responsibility for the quality assurance and management of the programmes of study. Each unit shall prepare procedural descriptions for the tasks for which they are responsible. These descriptions must not be at variance with the joint quality assurance system.

The work to develop the quality of the programmes of study at UiT shall be well integrated among managers and staff members at all levels of the organisation. The departments and individual academic staff members have a significant role to play in the effort to offer courses and programmes of a high academic and pedagogical quality. The students also have an important role to play in the work to develop the quality of education through among other things participating actively in the teaching activities and providing constructive feedback to the academic environments.

The quality assurance system covers activity relating to teaching quality and the students' learning environment. The system's descriptions apply for all courses and programmes for which UiT is responsible, as follows:

- Courses
- One-year programmes
- Bachelor's programmes
- Master's degree programmes
- PhD programmes
- Programmes of professional study
- Continuing and further education

Objective
The quality assurance system is a tool that shall:

- Contribute to creating a culture in which the focus is on developing and improving the quality
- Identify the strong points, reveal the flaws and contribute to rectifying these flaws

The efforts involving the quality of education shall be documented and highly visible for all participants in the university community.

Quality of education
Efforts concerning the quality of education involve all processes within the educational activities – from information to prospective applicants through to graduation and from strategic goals through to the implementation of measures. All units have a responsibility to define work routines and measures so that the goals for the educational activities are attainable.

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[1] Archive ref. ePhorte 2009/3062-13

The following seven aspects include all processes associated with the efforts involving the quality of education.

Management quality
Covers the university's ability to manage and develop the quality assurance of its own educational activities

Framework quality
Covers the university's work with the physical, psychological and organisational learning environment of the students/PhD candidates or, in other words, all conditions of significance for the their learning, health and welfare

Relevance quality
Covers the relevance of the educations in relation to society and employment arena's competence requirements, and the long-term added value that the courses and programmes contribute to for the society, culture and the individual student

Entrance quality
Covers the previous knowledge and capabilities of the students when they are admitted to a programme as these are emphasised in the admission regulations and programme descriptions

Programme quality
Covers the programme's academic content and the organisation of the various components that form part of the programme

Teaching quality
Covers the academic and pedagogical level and the implementation of the educational activities and academic supervision

Result quality
Covers the academic achievements and learning outcome of the students/PhD candidates

Goals for UiT's work with the quality of education
UiT has the following overall goals for the educational activities:

The University of Tromsø shall offer good and relevant courses and programmes based on research and academic and artistic development work. The university shall maintain breadth and diversity in its combined educational provision.

UiT's defined goals for efforts involving the quality of education are entrenched in the university's strategic plan[2] and form the basis for administration, management and implementation of the quality assurance efforts.

The university's goals for the educational activities are as follows:

- UiT shall educate candidates that are attractive on the labour market both nationally and internationally. The formulation of relevant programmes of study shall occur through good interaction with the employment and social sector.
- UiT shall in collaboration with the practice field have an innovative approach to practice in the programme.
- UiT shall be a national leader in flexible education.

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[2] cf. Board case *S 37-09 Strategi og handlingsplaner for Universitetet i Tromsø (*Strategies and action plan for the University of Tromsø*)* (archive ref. ePhorte 2009/3873)

- The degree programmes at UiT shall be internationally organised and allow for quality assured student exchange periods. A minimum 15 % of the students at UiT shall be international students. This increase shall occur partly through the doubling of the number of self-financed students and partly by increased recruiting of foreign citizens settled in Norway.
- UiT shall increase the conformity between the student's planned length of study and the actual length of the study period, and reduce the intrinsic drop-out rate in all programmes.
- UiT shall increase recruiting of external continuing education students in close collaboration with the practice field.
- UiT shall offer programmes of study at a level and of a quality to satisfy national and European standards.

In the course of the autumn semester 2009, the strategy's goals will be defined in an action plan for the educational activities for the period 2010-2013.
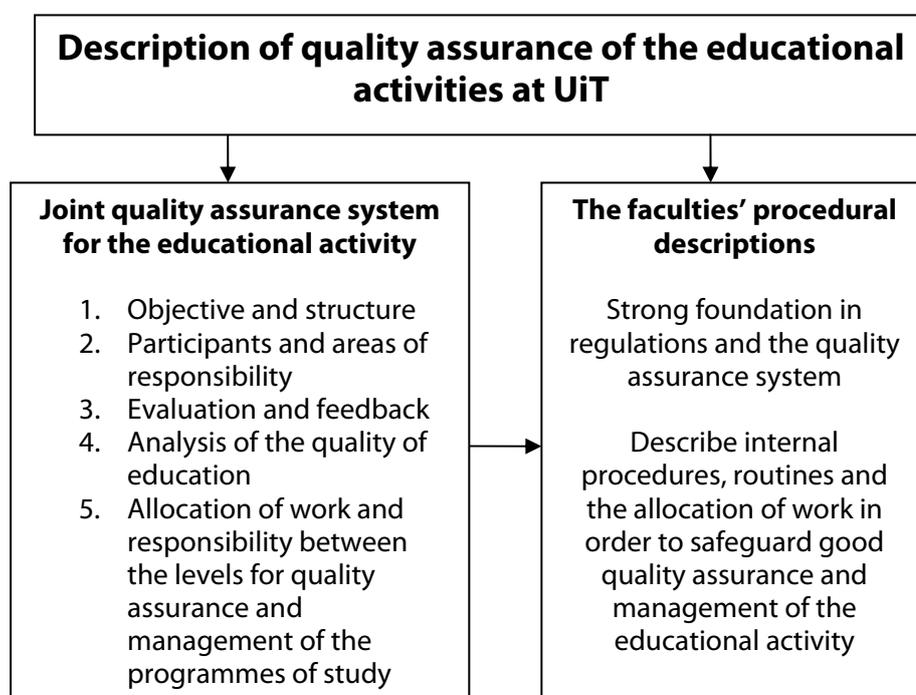
The University Board gives annual management signals for following up the goals.

The structure of the quality assurance system
The quality assurance system has been prepared on the basis of provisions in UiT's strategy documents, prevailing legal acts and regulations, experience with quality work and management signals.

The system description of the quality assurance efforts at UiT is divided into two parts:

- A general part, which describes the purpose, participants and areas of responsibility, evaluation and analysis and the distribution of work and responsibility for quality assurance and management of the programmes of study[3]
- The faculties' procedural descriptions of tasks for which they are responsible (see next paragraph)

Description of quality assurance of the educational activities at UiT

Joint quality assurance system for the educational activity	The faculties' procedural descriptions
1. Objective and structure 2. Participants and areas of responsibility 3. Evaluation and feedback 4. Analysis of the quality of education 5. Allocation of work and responsibility between the levels for quality assurance and management of the programmes of study	Strong foundation in regulations and the quality assurance system Describe internal procedures, routines and the allocation of work in order to safeguard good quality assurance and management of the educational activity

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[3] The work with planning of the guidelines for quality assurance of academic quality in courses and programmes of study are described in Chapter 5 in Part 5 of the system: Quality assurance of educational provisions and courses at the University of Tromsø.

The faculties' procedural descriptions
The procedural descriptions shall contribute to the faculties' routines and implementation of areas of responsibility being properly quality assured and entrenched in the quality assurance system. The faculties shall each prepare these descriptions within the scopes of the regulations and UiT's joint quality assurance system. These procedures shall take care of local conditions such as organisation of responsibilities and the distinctive character of the faculties and programmes of study, which a joint quality assurance system cannot capture.

As a minimum, procedural descriptions should exist for the following areas:

- Examination administration
- Admission
- Quality assurance of practice in the programmes of study[4]
- Establishment/discontinuation/change of the courses and programmes
- The distribution of work and responsibility for fixing course descriptions and programme descriptions/curricula
- Calculation of the duration of study rights
- Processing of applications for leaves of absence
- Recognition/specific recognition
- A system for external evaluation of the programmes
- Quality assurance of convention-related educations. A system for handling flaws and rectifying measures shall form part of this, and minimum descriptions should exist at department level.[5]

The faculties are free to prepare supplementary descriptions in the light of the requirements the faculty has for attending to high academic quality in the programmes and good management of these.

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[4] Refer also to the paragraph about evaluation of practice in Part 3: Evaluation and feedback
[5] For the Bachelor's programme in Aviation, a procedural description shall be prepared for quality assurance of the education in accordance with the regulations, requirements and standards stipulated by the Civil Aviation Authority. For the Bachelor's programme in Nautical Engineering, a procedural description shall be prepared for quality assurance of the education in accordance with the regulations, requirements and standards stipulated by the Norwegian Maritime Directorate. These descriptions are in addition to the university's joint quality assurance system and the faculties' procedural descriptions.

2. PARTICIPANTS AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility for efforts concerning the quality of education is placed at all levels in the organisation. UiT's internal distribution of responsibility is founded on legal acts, regulations and guidelines adopted by the Ministry of Education and Research and UiT.

The efforts involving the quality of education occurs both through the Ministry's governance as owner of the institution, and through the university's governance and management of the educational activities.

The Ministry's governance of the educational activities
The Ministry governs the national education policies and the activities of the individual institution through:

- budget
- legislation
- annual governance meeting

UiT's corporate governance
The work involving the quality of education forms part of the university's joint corporate governance covering:

- management signals
- risk management
- budget and budget allocations
- planning documents
- reporting

The internal management signals are provided in light of the University Board's priorities and assessments of the quality of education. The annual Report on Educational Attainments provides management signals for selected fields in accordance with the strategic goals for the quality assurance efforts.

Risk management forms an integrated part of corporate governance at the university. The use of risk management identifies factors that can result in the goals for quality assurance efforts not being attained, the consequences of this and the assessment of relevant measures. The risk assessment forms the basis for prioritisation in efforts involving educational quality assurance.

In the budget allocation and budget dialogue between the university management and the faculties, the quality of education and the resource priorities are linked together. As part of the internal goal and result management, work involving budget proposals and reporting for the annual Report on Educational Attainments[6] are coordinated. The units report annually on the status of efforts involving educational quality and following up of the University Board's management signals.

The University Board
Efforts involving the quality of education are an institutional responsibility, and the University Board has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the university is organised in such a manner that efforts involving the quality of education are practiced in an appropriate and planned manner. The Board has the overall responsibility for stipulating goals, performance requirements and management signals, and shall monitor follow-ups and results.

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[6] Annual report to the University Board about quality assurance efforts

The Board:

- Stipulates and amends strategies and action plans
- Sets provisions for the university's quality assurance efforts concerning the educational activities
- Considers the Report on Educational Attainments about the university's efforts concerning the quality of education, and provides provisions and management signals for areas of commitment and priorities for the next period
- Initiates larger evaluations of academic environments and programmes of study
- Stipulates and amends regulations pertaining to admission, academic studies and examinations, and central guidelines for educational activities
- Establishes and discontinues programmes of study and programme options
- Stipulates supplementary designations for degrees
- Adopts the admission capacity and dimensioning of programmes of study
- Determines which faculty is responsible for each programme of study
- Assesses performance attainment and adopts the budget and management signals in accordance with the goal attainment

University Director
The University Director has responsibility for ensuring the resolutions and management signals of the University Board are implemented.
The administrative departments reporting to the University Director have responsibility for attending to various parts of the university's effort concerning the quality of education.

Department of Academic Affairs

- Secretarial, system and operational responsibility for the quality assurance system for educational activities
- Maintenance and amendment of guidelines for management of programmes of study
- General student guidance and academic information
- The admission and receiving of students
- Student exchanges
- Following up of the *Handlingsplan for tilrettelegging og tilgjengelighet* (Action plan for special adaptations and accessibility)
- System ownership responsibilities for FS, LIST and Syllabus (including responsibility for user training)
- Compilation and dispatching of selected key data
- Offer training in the use of web-based assessment tools
- Secretarial responsibility for the university's Appeals Committee
- Secretarial responsibility for the Learning Environment Committee
- Preparatory work with the annual Report on Educational Attainments about the university's efforts concerning the quality of education

Department of Research and Development

- Secretarial, system and operational responsibility for the quality assurance system for educational activities (PhD programmes)
- Responsibility for the Regulations for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD)
- Compilation and dispatching of selected key data
- Preparatory work with the annual Report on Research Attainments and contribute to the annual Report on Educational Attainments (PhD programmes)

- Responsibility for offering training in the use of FS during the training component of PhD programmes
- General student guidance and academic information
- Conferring of doctorates

Department of Communications and Public Relations

- Student recruitment and marketing of UiT's courses and programmes
- Updating the *Handlingsplan for studentrekruttering* (Action plan for student recruitment)
- Overall responsibility for UiT's websites
- Arranging a joint welcome event for new students
- Career guidance for students

Department of Finance

- Reporting and corporate governance
- Budgeting

Department of Human Resources and Organisation

- Efforts concerning Health, Environment and Safety (HES)
- Organisational development
- Recruitment of personnel
- Training and competence development aimed at staff

Department of Information Technology

- Supplier of joint IT services and user support for the students
- User surveys

Department of Property Management

- Mapping, maintenance, upgrading and adaptation of the students' physical learning environment in line with the requirements concerning *universal design*
- Secretarial responsibility for the Learning Environment Committee

The Learning Environment Committee
The Learning Environment Committee at the University of Tromsø has been given an important role in the university's efforts to improve the students' learning environment and academic situation. The Learning Environment Committee shall ensure the students' participation in matters involving the learning environment.

The learning environment shall be completely sound based on a total evaluation of the students' health, safety and welfare. In the university's efforts to arrange for a good learning environment for the students, consideration should be given to the technical and social development in society and the actual programme of study and the academic arrangements.

The Learning Environment Committee at UiT has the following mandate:

- Contribute to the provisions in Section 4-3 of the Act relating to universities and university colleges being implemented
- Participate in the planning of measures to safeguard and develop the quality of the learning environment and the programmes of study, and follow the development in questions concerning student safety, welfare and the learning situation
- Keep an eye on UiT's efforts to follow up the *Action plan for special adaptations and accessibility*
- Shall be informed about and may give an opinion about any complaints from students to the university about conditions concerning the students' learning environment
- Submit an annual report about the university's efforts concerning the students' learning environment

The University of Tromsø's [Learning environment manual for students](#) provides a more in-depth description of the university's goals for the learning environment and outlines the existing organisation and distribution of tasks in efforts involving the students' learning environment.

Appeals Committee

- Considers appeals relating to individual decisions concerning students and applicants for academic studies at the University of Tromsø (local admission)
- Considers appeals relating to procedural errors in examinations, cf. Section 5-2 of the Act relating to universities and university colleges
- Considers appeals pursuant to Sections 4-7 (Annulment of examinations or tests), 4-8 (Exclusion), 4-9 paragraph 5 (Exclusion owing to criminal offences) and 4-10 (Exclusion following aptitude assessment) of the Act relating to universities and university colleges

Aptitude Committee

- Considers student applications presented by the person at the institution responsible for aptitude assessments
- Provides a report to the university's Appeals Committee with an assessment of whether the student is suitable or not in relation to the programme in question

The faculties
The faculties are the authority for the academic content and educational aspects of all courses and programmes of study offered by the faculty. The faculty is responsible for ensuring the programmes of study fulfil NOKUT's requirements for qualifications for the academic staff members teaching the programme.

Central areas of responsibility:

- Undertake prioritisation and resource management in the light of management signals and the faculty's own goals for efforts concerning the quality of education
- Provide a report to the University Board about the programme portfolio the faculty wishes to offer
- Establish and discontinue courses and one-year programmes
- Stipulate curricula/course descriptions/programme descriptions for the faculty's courses and programmes of study and notify the University Director
- Assess and coordinate the distribution of courses and teaching resources between the programmes of study attached to the faculty
- Stipulate a degree of delegation of decision-making authority to the academic programme management

- Determine the academic administrative arrangements for the individual programmes of study at the faculty's departments
- Administrative responsibility for inter-faculty programmes if the University Board has resolved to allocate the management of such to the faculty
- The faculty determines which department has administrative responsibility for a programme of study/one-year programme should disagreement arise
- Receiving of students at all levels
- Appoint Programme Boards (PhD Committee) for the faculty's PhD programmes
- Admission of PhD students
- General student guidance and academic information at all levels
- Periods of study abroad for PhD students
- Undertake lager scale evaluations as required or on commission from the University Board
- Prepare a system for external evaluation of programmes of study and the implementation of these
- Responsibility for the students' learning environment, including ensuring that the HES work aimed at students is taken care of and implemented in accordance with the prevailing legislation and regulations
- Prepare local procedural descriptions for management of the programmes
- Consider the Programme Boards' reports about the quality of education, including responsibility for following up and implementation
- Prepare an annual report about the faculty's efforts concerning the quality of education

The departments

The focus of the departments' responsibility is questions of an academic nature, including securing a good academic and pedagogical quality of the teaching. The department coordinating the programme shall take care of the totality of the programme and ensure the thematic organisation of this, regardless of the organisational delimitation that the departments and faculties represent. The courses which form part of the programme must represent an academic unit and an academic specialisation. Further, the department manages the teaching resources in collaboration with the faculty, and is responsible for development of the academic competence among its academic staff.

The tasks for which the department has responsibility may be delegated to the academic programme management, cf. the University Board's resolution in case *S 15-09 Styring og ledelse av studieprogrammene* (Administration and management of the programmes of study*).

Departments should strive for an appropriate distribution of tasks associated with the quality assurance of courses and programmes, including the carry out and following up of evaluations of courses and programmes of study. The programme management evaluates the programmes of study. The Department may delegate the task of evaluating courses which form part of a programme of study to the programme management to ensure that the totality of the programme is attended to.

Central areas of responsibility:

- Academic, financial and personnel-related responsibility for the programmes associated with its subject area or which the department is allocated through resolutions. This also applies to continuing and further education programmes
- Propose academic governance arrangements for the programmes of study the department offers
- Arrange for a good flow of information between the department and programme management about finds from and the following up of evaluations

- Academic responsibility for courses (at all levels including PhD and continuing and further education courses), both courses which are taught separately and those which form part of the programmes of study
- Quality assurance and quality development of its own teaching
- Provide recommendations to the faculty about the programme and course portfolio the department wants to offer/be included in
- Collaborate with other units concerning proposals for programmes
- Dialogue with other departments which wish to make use of courses within the department's subject area
- Responsibility for ensuring good academic quality in the courses which comprise the programme of study, evaluated from a perspective of the totality the courses shall enter into
- Allocate the teaching resources within the scope set by the faculty. This task also covers the planning of competence development and new appointments at the department, cf. requirements set by NOKUT
- Responsibility for the day-to-day and systematic efforts involving the learning environment and the running of local activities at the unit
- Evaluation, follow-ups and implementation of measures in courses for which the department is responsible
- Consider quality reports for the programmes in which it participates, and follow up feedback from the students, faculty and University Board
- Submit a combined report to the faculty about quality assurance efforts for all programmes for which the department is responsible
- Inform the University Library about reading lists and changes to reading lists

Academic programme management

The academic programme management is responsible for attending to the totality of the programmes of study.[7]

A department may delegate tasks that the department is responsible for implementing to the programme management.

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[7] The division of work and responsibility for the programmes of study is outlined in the University Board's resolution for case *S 15-09 Styring og ledelse av studieprogrammene* (Administration and management of the programmes of study) (archive ref. ePhorte 2009/174).

The University Board has adopted three possible models for academic management of educational programmes, organised at department level:

Model	Authorities	Composition	Function
1. The Head of Department chairs the Programme Board	The Head of Department with his/her authority chairs the Programme Board	Comprises lecturers and students in addition to the Head of Department	Coordinating and reporting function, considers questions of an academic nature associated with the programme
2. The Head of Department appoints a Programme Board chairperson	The Chairperson of the Programme Board has delegated authority and given financial authorities within set scopes	Comprises lecturers and students	Coordinating and reporting function, considers questions of an academic nature associated with the programme
3. The faculty appoints a Programme Coordinator following a recommendation by the Head of Department	Financial and HR responsibility within defined authorities	The Programme Coordinator holds meetings with students and academic staff members	Coordinating and reporting function, considers questions of an academic nature associated with the programme

The goal of the models is to establish close academic follow-up of the students and to secure qualitative good teaching and academically good content in the educational programmes.

Central areas of responsibility:

- Coordinating and reporting function – shall ensure the programme has an academic totality and an academic concentration, as well as taking care of the quality of the programme
- Ensure that legal acts, regulations, rules and other provisions for the programmes are being followed, including responsibility for ensuring that the quality assurance system is being followed
- Present proposals to the faculty about amendments to the programme
- Organise the educational activities and the pedagogical work in the programme
- Follow up evaluation results and student feedback, and give feedback about this to the students
- Responsibility for ensuring that the budgeted funding specifically allocated to the programme is used based on academic priorities and within the stipulated scopes
- Academic assessments during the admission of students
- Ensure relevant offers are in place for student exchanges at overseas educational institutions
- Present recommendations about external examiners to the department
- Ensure arrangements are in place to strengthen the academic and social learning environment among students in the programme
- Undertake an annual evaluation of the programme(s)
- Prepare an annual report about the quality of the programme.

Programme management/PhD Committees for PhD programmes
The programme management/PhD Committee is responsible for attending to the totality of the programmes.

Central areas of responsibility:

- Ensure that PhD students receive the training provision they are entitled to
- Evaluation, follow-up and implementation of measures for courses which form part of the training component
- Undertake an annual evaluation of the programme
- Attend to the students' academic and social environment
- Annual implementation of progress reporting. The reports are submitted by the PhD student and his/her academic supervisor
- Prepare an annual report about the quality of the programme

University Library (UB)
The University Library has responsibility for the students having access to learning and information resources in both printed and electronic form. UB also has responsibility for ensuring the physical and electronic facilities are modern and functional, and that the students receive instruction in the use of the library's resources.

Central areas of responsibility:

- Publication and dissemination
- Learning arena
- Access to information resources
- User surveys
- Provide courses on information literacy

U-VETT
The University's Centre for Flexible Education U-VETT is UiT's competence and resource centre for the organisation and implementation of flexible education and continuing and further education.

Central areas of responsibility:

- Develop continuing and further education provisions for external actors in collaboration with the academic environments
- Develop new flexible education provisions in collaboration with the academic environments
- Initiate, motivate and develop use of ICT in teaching in collaboration with the academic environments

Programme Board for university pedagody
The programme board has the overall responsibility for ensuring the university pedagody activities maintain a high quality and that the courses and programmes are run effectively in accordance with the prevailing legal acts, rules and regulations. The programme board shall present proposals of strategies for the subject area university pedagody in line with UiT's strategic documents and regulations for appointments in research and teaching positions, as well as annual plans for courses within the subject area university pedagody.

Central areas of responsibility:

- Develop and synchronise the courses and programmes within the subject area of university pedagody in collaboration with the academic environments
- Contribute to the development and testing of new teaching and assessment methods
- Approve presented educational portfolios as documentation of pedagogical competence based on a recommendation from the research group and representatives from the subject area university pedagody
- Develop pedagogical portfolios as a provision for all staff members in teaching and research positions
- Ensure that there is a continual evaluation of the courses and programmes and the support services within the subject area

The students
The students have a responsibility to take an active role in efforts involving quality development and quality assurance of programmes of study.

Central areas of responsibility:

- Obliged to keep updated about practical and administrative conditions such as timetables, submission deadlines, coursework requirements, compulsory activities, examinations and approval of the individual education plan
- Participate actively in learning and teaching activities in order to contribute to the best possible learning outcome for themselves and their fellow students so that the learning objectives are attained
- Use their influence and participate constructively in student evaluations which UiT carries out to improve the quality of education
- PhD students shall submit annual progress reports, cf. Section 21 of the Regulations for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD)
- Appoint committed student representatives who will contribute to consultations, decisions and resolutions in boards and committees at UiT

The students' representative is recommended to produce a joint oral or written report to the programme management/PhD Committee no later than the end of each academic year so that the students' views are included in the programme management/PhD Committee's planning of quality improvement measures and further reporting.

Figure: REPORTING FOR UiT's ANNUAL REPORT ON EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR THE UNIVERSITY BOARD
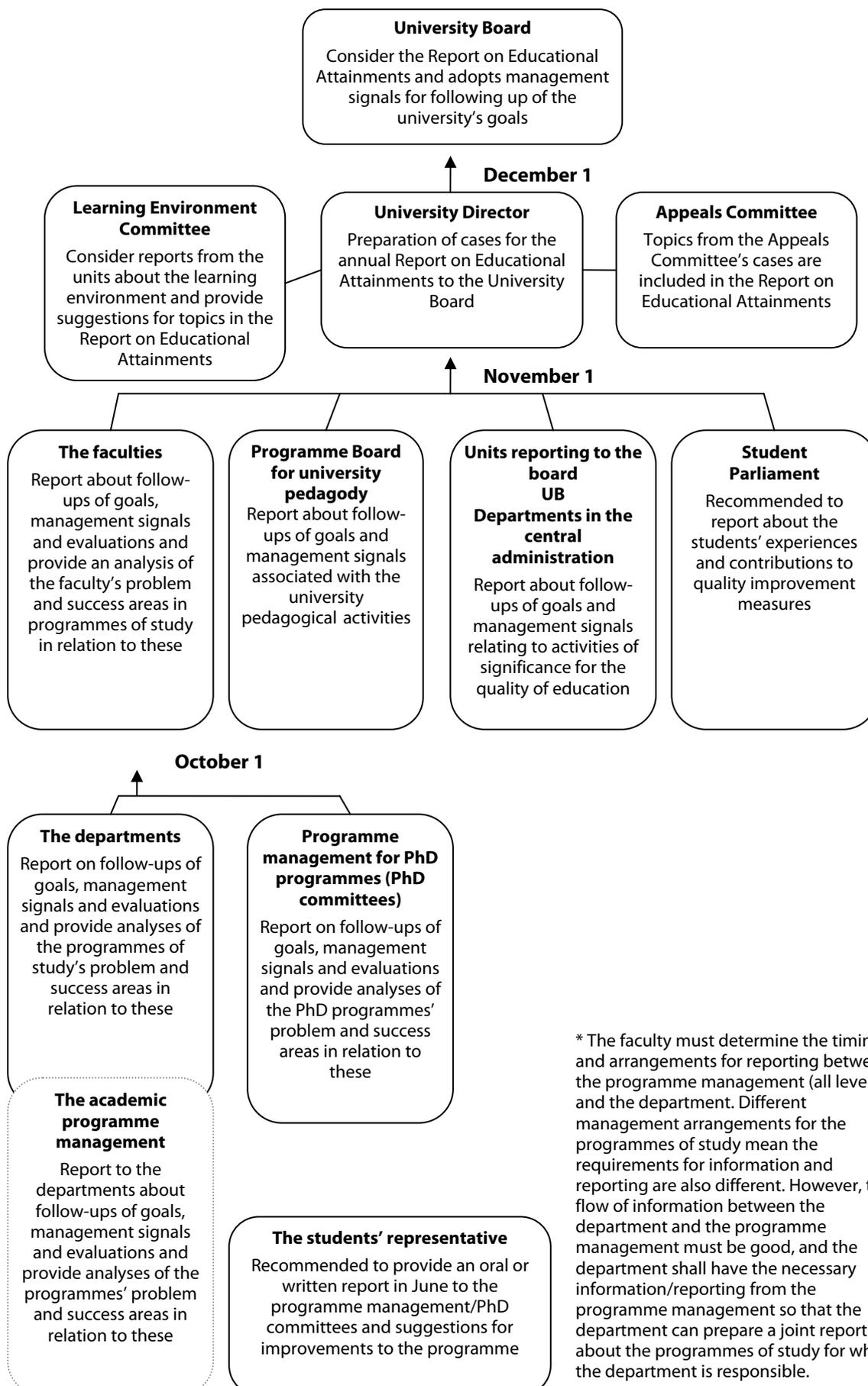
University Board

Consider the Report on Educational Attainments and adopts management signals for following up of the university's goals

December 1

Learning Environment Committee

Consider reports from the units about the learning environment and provide suggestions for topics in the Report on Educational Attainments

University Director

Preparation of cases for the annual Report on Educational Attainments to the University Board

Appeals Committee

Topics from the Appeals Committee's cases are included in the Report on Educational Attainments

November 1

The faculties

Report about follow-ups of goals, management signals and evaluations and provide an analysis of the faculty's problem and success areas in programmes of study in relation to these

Programme Board for university pedagody

Report about follow-ups of goals and management signals associated with the university pedagogical activities

Units reporting to the board UB Departments in the central administration

Report about follow-ups of goals and management signals relating to activities of significance for the quality of education

Student Parliament

Recommended to report about the students' experiences and contributions to quality improvement measures

October 1

The departments

Report on follow-ups of goals, management signals and evaluations and provide analyses of the programmes of study's problem and success areas in relation to these

Programme management for PhD programmes (PhD committees)

Report on follow-ups of goals, management signals and evaluations and provide analyses of the PhD programmes' problem and success areas in relation to these

The academic programme management

Report to the departments about follow-ups of goals, management signals and evaluations and provide analyses of the programmes' problem and success areas in relation to these

The students' representative

Recommended to provide an oral or written report in June to the programme management/PhD committees and suggestions for improvements to the programme

* The faculty must determine the timing and arrangements for reporting between the programme management (all levels) and the department. Different management arrangements for the programmes of study mean the requirements for information and reporting are also different. However, the flow of information between the department and the programme management must be good, and the department shall have the necessary information/reporting from the programme management so that the department can prepare a joint report about the programmes of study for which the department is responsible.

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Table: Reporting deadlines

Deadline	Report	Responsibility
Continuously	Report to the department *The arrangements for annual reporting to the department are stipulated by each faculty.*	Programme management
Continuously	Report to the faculty about the findings and follow-ups of user surveys	University Library Department of Information Technology
June 1	Annual report of the work of the Learning Environment Committee	Learning Environment Committee
June 1	Briefing to the University Board about the work of the Appeals Committee	Appeals Committee
Annually	Briefing to the University Board about the university's following up of the Action plan for special adaptations and accessibility	University Director
Recommended timing: June	The student representative is recommended to provide a joint oral or written report to the programme management/PhD Committee	The student representative for each programme
October 1	Report to the faculties	The departments
November 1	Reporting for the Report on Educational Attainments is submitted to the University Director	The faculties University Library Units reporting to the University Board Programme Board for university pedagody Student Board Departments in the central administration (University Director)
Stipulated by the faculty	Progress reporting by PhD students and their academic supervisor	PhD programmes' programme management/PhD committee
December 1	Prepare the Report on Educational Attainments for the University Board	Department of Academic Affairs
December meeting	Consider the Report on Educational Attainments	University Board

3. EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

The effort to improve the courses and programmes is a continual process. The students should take advantage of the opportunity to provide feedback about their experience of the quality of education. Much of the feedback is given continually in the day-to-day contact between the students and staff. This form of direct communication provides good opportunity for rapid follow-ups. The focus in this day-to-day contact between the students and the university staff should be on dialogue and a willingness to improve.

In addition, information about how the quality of education is assessed by the students, the academic environment and the professional arena should be systematically obtained.

Internal and external evaluations of all courses and programmes for which UiT is responsible [8] shall be implemented in accordance with a cyclic stipulated plan. The evaluations form part of the systematic efforts concerning quality assurance of the courses and programmes.

In order for the university to succeed in its efforts involving quality, the systematic evaluation work and follow-ups must first and foremost be entrenched in the management at all the various levels and not least in the academic environments. The academic staff members have competence to assess important aspects relating to the quality in the individual programme. This relates particularly to the planning and implementation of teaching and learning activities, examinations and assessment of the students' work and the academic content of the programmes.

The university has the goal of offering good academic and pedagogical quality in its programmes at a level which satisfies NOKUT's requirements and international requirements and standards. Therefore, it is decisive that the faculties, departments and programme boards arrange for efforts concerning evaluation and the follow-up of this is well entrenched among the university's academic staff members.

Objective
Internal evaluations contribute to giving the students an active role in the work concerning the quality of education, leads to a greater focus on the student's total learning environment and to entrenching efforts concerning the quality of education in the academic environments. Evaluation is part of the students' learning process and the academic environments' self evaluation.

External evaluations provide valuable information about whether the level and content of the programmes satisfies the national and international requirements and standards.

The findings from the evaluations provide a good basis for decision-making for the choice of measures which can safeguard and further develop the quality of the programmes.

Guidelines for evaluation of courses and programmes at UiT
The evaluations are conducted and processed in accordance with the prevailing regulations[9]. The following delegation of responsibility is recommended for the faculties:

- The departments[10] evaluate courses, periods of supervised professional training, fieldwork and excursions. Courses which form part of the training component for PhD programmes shall be evaluated by the programme management/PhD committees.
- The programme management [11] evaluates the programmes.

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[8] Courses, one-year programmes, Bachelor's programmes, Master's degree programmes, programmes of professional study, continuing and further education provisions and PhD programmes
[9] cf. Processing of personal data at UiT and guidelines for use of the online surveying tool QuestBack at UiT
[10] The departments may delegate the work concerning evaluation of courses to the programme management.

- The faculties conduct external evaluations of the programmes of study.

General guidelines for evaluation:

- The evaluations shall be documented.
- Routines shall be established for follow-ups of the evaluation results.
- The findings of the evaluations are summarised, assessed and commented on before they are made available[12].
- The students shall receive information about results and plans for follow-ups of evaluations in which they have participated.

Evaluation methods
The units may choose between or combine dialogue-based or written evaluation methods. A method shall be chosen to ensure broad participation and good processing of the data material.

Dialogue-based evaluation of courses and programmes of study
Dialogue-based evaluations are conducted with selected students or the entire student group and one or more staff members. The evaluation can either form part of the teaching or be in the form of an evaluation meeting. The students choose their representatives, and there should be a majority of students when undertaking this form of evaluation.

Dialogue-based evaluation shall be documented by written minutes. Topics from the evaluation shall be summarised and made available to the students in question within a reasonable timeframe of the evaluation being conducted.

Written evaluation of courses and programmes of study
Written evaluations are conducted by using anonymous evaluation forms. The units must have a critical relationship to the use of online surveying tools. The questionnaire form must be adapted for the specific course/programme of study. Data from written evaluations shall be summarised, commented on and made available to the students in question within a reasonable timeframe of the evaluation being conducted.

Course evaluations - generally
The faculties have the overall responsibility for ensuring that annual evaluation plans are prepared and made known among students and staff no later than the starting date of each academic year. Course evaluation comprises individual student and lecturer evaluation on selected topics in relation to an evaluation plan stipulated by the Faculty Board.

All courses must be evaluated a minimum of once every third year and always the first time the course is offered. Courses which are not offered every year (e.g. courses which form part of the training component of PhD programmes and continuing and further education courses) must be evaluated a minimum of every third time the course in offered.

As a normal rule, continuous evaluation is recommended. This form of evaluation makes it easier to implement measures while the students are still participating in the learning activities in the course in question. Continuous evaluation can also contribute to motivating the students to increased participation in student evaluations because they experience the usefulness of providing feedback before the course is completed.

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[11] There are three models for academic programme management at UiT, cf. case *S 15-09Styring og ledelse av studieprogrammene (Administration and management of the programmes of study)* (archive ref. ePhorte 2009/174).
[12] Out of consideration to privacy protection, findings from evaluations shall not be published in an unprocessed form.

Student evaluation of courses
Student evaluation of courses shall be conducted during the teaching semester. The evaluations provide the students with the opportunity to express views about conditions of relevance for the quality of the course. If the course comprises several components (e.g. several thematic main parts), each component must be evaluated.

Example of topics:

- Learning environment
- Assess your own effort and prerequisites for taking the course
- Teaching, learning and assessment forms
- Period of supervised professional training, fieldwork, excursion/study trip
- Learning outcome
- Implementation and organisation of the course
- Workload
- Reading list

Lecturer's assessment of the course
The lecturer's written evaluation of the course. The lecturer's evaluation is completed after completion of the student evaluations and assessment of the coursework requirements and examination. The evaluation shall contain the lecturer's assessment of conditions of significance for the quality of the course. Examples of topics include:

- The students' academic prerequisites for taking the course
- Workload for the course
- The relevance of the teaching, learning and assessment forms in relation to the learning objectives for the course
- The students' learning environment
- The students' effort
- His/her own effort
- Proposals for quality improvement measures

Course evaluation – fieldwork, excursions and study trips
In courses which include fieldwork, excursions and study trips, continuous student evaluation of these activities should be carried out.

Evaluation topics should be associated with the following:

- Learning outcomes for the course
- HES training
- Have the students received adequate information about rights and obligations, contact people and safety etc.
- Administration and practical adaptations

The lecturer with academic responsibility for the implementation of the fieldwork, excursion or study trip shall provide an assessment of the conditions of significance for implementing the learning activity. The results of these evaluations should be reported to the programme management.

Evaluation of supervised professional training
The interaction between the learning institution and the training site shall be regulated by a written agreement. The academic competence and infrastructure of the training site must be quality assured before entering into the agreement with the training site. The faculties are

responsible for preparing procedural descriptions for quality assurance of the supervised professional training. The faculties should assess preparing uniform arrangements for quality assurance of supervised professional training for programmes with comparable periods of supervised professional training.

Written information should be available to all parties about the conditions of significance for the implementation of the period of supervised professional training: the learning outcomes for the period of supervised professional training, the requirements for passing the period of supervised professional training, the students' training site and learning institution's responsibilities and tasks and any other conditions of significance for the implementation of the period of supervised professional training. This information should form part of the background material for evaluation and implementation of quality improvement measures.

All programmes which include supervised professional training should have arrangements in place for evaluation, as outlined below. The arrangements outlined below may be simplified for programmes with shorter periods of supervised professional training. However, the evaluation must ensure regular gathering of documented information from all parties with particular focus on the students' learning outcomes for the period of supervised professional training.

The evaluation of the students' supervised professional training covers:

1. Continuous assessment of supervised professional training
   The objective of the continuous assessment is to reveal whether the implementation of the period of supervised professional training is going according to plan and whether there are conditions which can be improved while the students are still completing the period of supervised professional training. It is recommended that the department/coordinating lecturer and supervised professional training coordinator collaborate on the preparation of a guide to relevant topics for the evaluation. The evaluation may take place on an individual basis or in groups.
2. Training site's self evaluation
   The training site is asked to undertake an evaluation every third year. The evaluation shall cover experiences concerning collaboration with the university, the training site's routines for receiving students, the training site's academic follow-ups, assessment of infrastructure and any other conditions of significance for the implementation of the period of supervised professional training. The training site is encouraged to provide suggestions about any possible quality improvement measures.
3. Lecturer's evaluation of the supervised professional training
   The lecturer(s) associated with the supervised professional training course undertake an annual evaluation of the supervised professional training (individually or combined). The objective of the lecturer's evaluation is to provide a combined evaluation of their own experiences as well as feedback from the students and the training site. The lecturer's evaluation is submitted to the programme management prior to the annual programme of study evaluation so that findings from the supervised professional training evaluation can form part of the combined evaluation of quality of the programme of study.

Evaluation of programmes of study
An annual evaluation of the programme of study shall be undertaken. It is recommended to choose dialogue-based evaluation in the form of meetings with the students and staff from the programme management/academic environment associated with the programme. Students should form the majority. In circumstances which do not permit evaluation meetings between the students and the programme management because the students are not at the campus (web-based or decentralised studies), written programme evaluations may be implemented to acquire information from students and the programme management/academic environment.

The evaluation of the programme of study includes topics of relevance for the quality of the programme, including:

- The composition of courses and academic specialisation
- The students' learning environment
- Assess whether the teaching, learning and assessment forms are suitable for attaining the programme's learning outcomes
- Findings from the student and lecturer's evaluation of the courses and supervised professional training evaluation
- Total workload for the students
- The students' own effort
- Student throughput
- Exchange period
- Relevance
- Information about and administration of the programme

The programme management shall study and assess findings from the programme of study evaluations.

Learning environment surveys
The Learning Environment Committee at UiT initiates larger scale learning environment surveys. Topics for these surveys concern conditions of relevance for the students' physical, psychological and organisational learning environment with focus on relevant issues and challenges at the local level (UiT) and possibly the national level. Findings from the learning environment surveys provide information about how the students experience the learning environment, and shall form the basis for any necessary improvements.

Over and above the learning environment surveys which the Learning Environment Committee initiates, learning environment-related conditions shall be included in the systematic student evaluations of courses and programmes of study. This is designed among other things to map the students' physical learning environment and detect shortcomings concerning the facilities the students use in an academic context. Academic and social environment as well as good and accessible information about student-related conditions are also important topics.

User surveys
The University Library (UB) and Student IT's services constitute an important component of the students' learning environment. UB and Student IT shall undertake regular user surveys (a minimum of every third year) in which students are given the opportunity to evaluate services of relevance to the learning environment. It is recommended that such surveys take place in the spring semester so that findings can be reported to the faculties at the end of the spring semester of the start of the subsequent autumn semester and in this manner form part of the faculties' combined assessment of the quality of the courses and programmes. Findings from the user surveys shall form part of the annual reporting for the Report on Educational Attainments.

Graduate and labour market surveys
The University Board initiates surveys of graduate and labour markets for selected programmes of study. The faculties implement and follow-up the results from these surveys.

System for external evaluations
The faculties are responsible for preparing a system for external evaluation of their programmes of study. The faculties determine the frequency of evaluation. The system is prepared in light of the challenges raised by the Faculty Board. The external evaluations shall cover programmes of study at all levels[13]. As a minimum, the systems shall describe the following elements:

- The composition of the evaluation committee[14]
- Mandate
- Documentation[15]
- Processing and follow-ups

Student representatives
Student representatives shall be elected for all programmes (including PhD programmes). At the start of every academic year, a minimum of one student representative is elected from each year. It is recommended that the student representatives are elected for the entire duration of the programme to ensure continuity and the exchange of experience.

The students elect their own representatives. These may be students participating in the programme in question who are elected to other student representation roles or other students admitted to the programme.

It is recommended that the student representatives within the same programme have regular contact to ensure that new student representatives can make use of the knowledge and experience of the other student representatives.

The student representatives contribute to strengthening the students' role and commitment to the learning environment and quality of education, and they represent the student in matters relating to the quality of education.

The representatives act on behalf of the entire student group in the programme and, as such, must communicate regularly with the other students. If students experience flaws in quality which do not form part of the evaluation plan at a given time, the student representatives contribute to raising the matter with the academic environment, boards and committees.

The students' representatives are recommended to provide a joint oral or written report to the Programme Board no later than the end of each academic year, so that the students' views are taken into account in the Programme Board's planning of quality improvement measures and further reporting.

Response
The students shall have the opportunity to provide continuous feedback of their experience of the quality of education and the learning environment. The students may provide their feedback in conjunction with student evaluations or make direct contact with the faculty, programme management or department.

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[13] From Bachelor's to PhD level
[14] There shall be a minimum of two external academic staff members employed in similar programmes at another education institution.
[15] NOKUT's Forskrift om standarder og kriterier for akkreditering av studier og kriterier for akkreditering av institusjoner i norsk høyere utdanning (Regulations regarding standards and criteria for accreditation of courses and programmes and criteria for accreditation of institutions in Norwegian higher education) should form the basis of the choice of background documentation.

If a student does not wish to make contact with any of these bodies directly, the student may contact the Department of Academic Affairs, which will provide advice about the correct body to contact.

The website about the students' learning environment provides the possibility to give electronic feedback by using the *Response* function. Students may use this to provide both praise and criticism about conditions relating to their studies and the learning environment at UiT.

The units at which the feedback is directed are responsible for following up these matters and providing feedback to the students about the follow-up measures. The organisation and distribution of responsibilities in efforts concerning the students' learning environment , as well as information about rights, obligations, right of appeal, deadlines and the like are outlined in the University of Tromsø's Learning environment manual for students. In addition, the university has a separate system for Health, Environment and Safety and internal controls.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The objective of analysing the quality of education is to find reasons for flaws in quality and success factors so that UiT is in a better position to develop good quality in the courses and programmes we offer. We acquire knowledge about the quality of education through the day-to-day contact between students and the academic environment, and through systematic evaluations of the courses and programmes.

Analysis and quality improvement
Analysis of the quality of education is a tool to find out whether UiT is attaining the stipulated goals, and whether the university is in a position to encounter the changes and challenges resulting from changing framework conditions and requirements for the courses and programmes.

The analyses are based on an overall documentation comprising both qualitative and quantitative quality indicators. The quality indicators shall first and foremost provide us information about actual conditions worthy of closer studying and analysis, including:

- Recruiting to the courses and programmes
- Completion and drop-out rates
- The result
- Learning environment
- Quality of the learning activities
- The relevance of the courses and programmes

The analyses are carried out in light of the knowledge we acquire through:

- Day-to-day contact between students, the academic environment and the administration
- The students' feedback and evaluations of the courses and programmes
- The lecturers' assessment of student work
- The lecturers' and academic environments' evaluations of the courses and programmes
- Internal and external evaluations of the courses and programmes and of the academic environments
- Key data/quantitative quality indicators

The academic environments have knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of the courses and programmes, and the programme boards have the responsibility for disseminating this knowledge in their analyses and annual reporting about the quality of education. The analyses provide the boards with a good basis for making decisions of significance for quality.

The basis for the analyses is UiT's goals for the quality of education, as described in UiT's strategy, management signals and the units' own goals for efforts relating to quality assurance:
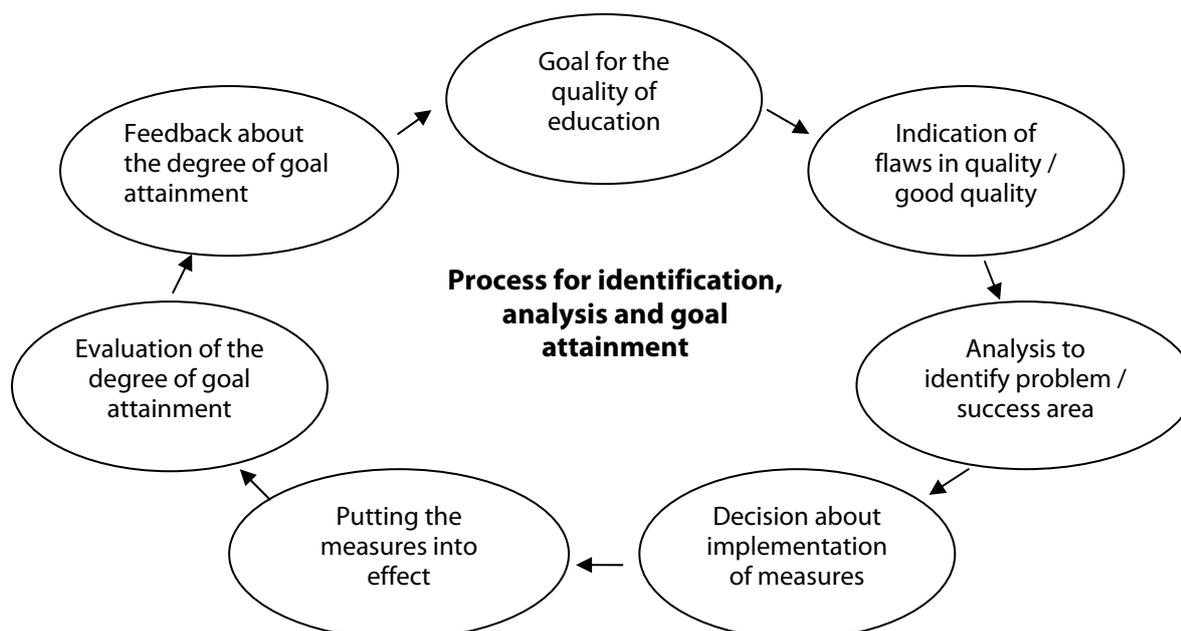
The areas which UiT chooses to analyse will vary for the different programmes and levels. UiT will share some challenges with the sector in general because they reflect long-lasting trends or conditions which are not locally entrenched. Other challenges may be attributed to local conditions associated with, for instance, programme structure or learning activities. Areas of success should also be analysed so we can focus on good quality of education and share our experiences.

The assessment of relevant measures should be carried out in light of the university's goals as well as the requirements for the courses and programmes stipulated in NOKUT's accreditation requirements.

Regardless of the reasons for flaws in quality or success, the university must have the goal of developing the quality, and good analyses are an important tool for attaining this goal.

Key data
Key data is used in conjunction with budgeting work and as background material for identifying and analysing relevant problem and success areas:

- Use of resources (statistics about the course and programme portfolio and financing of PhD contracts)
- Establishment and discontinuation of courses and programmes (application, admission and registration statistics, statistics about the course and programme portfolio and credit production)
- Recruitment to the courses and programmes (application, admission and registration statistics)
- The students' ability to complete the programme (completion statistics and credit production/graduate production)
- The students' academic achievements and learning outcome (statistics about the distribution of grades and failure/reimbursement)

- The degree of internationalisation of the courses and programmes – (statistics about exchanges, exchange agreements and the distribution of international scholarships)
- Management of the courses and programmes (statistics about the length of time from the submission of papers/thesis until the examination result/assessment)

The figures are obtained from the National Student database and Management Information and Statistics (LIST). It is the responsibility of each unit to obtain the figures of relevance for the analyses the unit wishes to carry out.

The Department of Academic Affairs prepares annual statistics about the programmes of study (Bachelor's degree and Master's degree) for use in the analysis. The key data is sent to the programme management in mid-September and mid-March. The programme management is responsible for analysing the data in its annual reporting about the quality of education.

In conjunction with the annual Report on Academic Attainments, the Department of Academic Affairs will prepare key data to shed light on relevant issues associated with the management of the courses and programmes and assessment of the quality of education. This key data shall particularly be used for in-depth analyses in order to find the causes of positive or negative developments for selected programmes or problem areas.

5. ALLOCATION OF WORK AND RESPONSIBILITY BETWEEN THE LEVELS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE COURSES AND PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The management of educational activities constitutes an important part of the systematic work concerning the quality assurance of the courses and programmes.

The chapters in part 5 describe specific responsibility and processes for management tasks associated with the educational activities. This also involves the planning and quality assurance of courses and programmes of study.

Part 5 comprises the following chapters:[16]

4. General information about the processing of student cases
5. Online publication of the programme of study catalogue
6. Quality assurance of programmes of study and courses
7. Management of joint degree collaboration
8. Continuing and further education and decentralised programmes
9. Management of the degree Philosophiae doctor (PhD)
10. Management of admission to programmes and courses
11. Semester registration and updating of the student register
12. Student and career guidance
13. Recognition and specific recognition of external education
14. Exchange agreements and student exchanges
15. Management of examinations and examination results
16. Management of diplomas
17. Management of the processing of appeals
18. Disciplinary reactions to students
19. Aptitude assessment of students
20. Processing of student data
21. Student archive

These chapters[17] are also available as separate documents at:

http://uit.no/utdanning/kvalitetssystem

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[16] The faculties are free to add supplementary descriptions in their procedural descriptions, which are adapted to local conditions or requirements, in addition to these joint descriptions, cf. part 1, paragraph about the units' procedural descriptions.

[17] The chapters are written in Norwegian only.