

**Stakeholder Satisfaction Driven Quality Management in Higher Education**

How the voice of stakeholders can be considered to improve Quality Management Systems of Higher Education Institutions

Gdańsk, 2025

# Stakeholder Satisfaction Driven Quality Management in Higher Education

# Abstract

# INTRODUCTION [10-15]

## Background on Higher Education Management (JPSZ) [2-3]

## The Role of Stakeholders in Higher Education (JPSZ) [2-3]

**1. Introduction: Reframing Quality Through a Stakeholder Lens**

📝 **Target: ~100–120 words**

**Focus:**

* Open with the changing context of higher education (complexity, accountability, evolving societal needs).
* Emphasize that *quality* is no longer a closed, internal function but shaped by diverse actors.
* State the **purpose** of the chapter clearly:

*“This chapter introduces the role of stakeholders in higher education quality management, explaining why their inclusion is essential to building responsive and sustainable institutions.”*

**2. Understanding Stakeholders and Their Influence**

📝 **Target: ~150–170 words**

**Focus:**

* Define who stakeholders are in the HEI context: students, staff, alumni, employers, funders, society.
* Explain how each group interacts with institutions and evaluates “quality” from different standpoints.
* Introduce the idea that this diversity adds complexity but also value to the quality management process.
* Include a **short example**, e.g., students contributing to course design, employers shaping curriculum relevance.

**3. Why Stakeholder Engagement Matters for Quality Management**

📝 **Target: ~180–200 words**

**Focus:**

* Explain that traditional quality assurance (focused on internal compliance or performance) is insufficient.
* Introduce **Total Quality Management (TQM)** principles (continuous improvement, inclusion, systems thinking).
* Link to **stakeholder theory** (Freeman) and **ISO 21001** (Clause 4.2, etc.) to show how modern standards embed stakeholder engagement.
* Highlight that institutions that listen and adapt to stakeholder feedback foster legitimacy, trust, and relevance.

**4. Looking Ahead: Stakeholders as Strategic Partners in Quality**

📝 **Target: ~100–120 words**

**Focus:**

* Argue that stakeholder input should be integrated not just during evaluation, but in planning and strategy.
* Emphasize the **leadership role** in building inclusive systems and quality culture.
* End with a **forward-looking sentence** linking to upcoming chapters (e.g., stakeholder theory, communication, quality systems):

*“The following chapters will explore how institutions can build systems that not only meet quality standards but co-create them with those they serve.”*

## Importance of Stakeholders Satisfaction (JPSZ) [2-3]

**1. Introduction: Satisfaction as a Quality Indicator**

📝 *Target: 80–100 words*

**Focus:**

* Briefly define *stakeholder satisfaction*.
* Link it to *quality management frameworks* (TQM, ISO 21001).
* Establish the argument that satisfaction is not only a subjective feeling, but a **measurable and strategic dimension of quality**.
* End with a purpose statement:

*“This section explores the importance of stakeholder satisfaction in higher education, with attention to its role in shaping institutional performance, legitimacy, and long-term improvement.”*

**2. What Does Stakeholder Satisfaction Mean in HEIs?**

📝 *Target: 130–160 words*

**Focus:**

* Show that satisfaction varies across stakeholder groups (students, staff, employers, funders).
* Satisfaction may relate to **service quality**, **learning outcomes**, **communication**, **support**, **inclusivity**, or **relevance**.
* Emphasize that HEIs face a challenge in **balancing** often conflicting stakeholder expectations.
* Mention that **perceived satisfaction is closely tied to institutional reputation, retention, and credibility**.

**3. Why Satisfaction Matters for Quality Management**

📝 *Target: 180–200 words*

**Focus:**

* Explain how satisfaction drives **continuous improvement** and **organizational learning**.
* Show links to TQM: customer focus, feedback-driven processes, long-term commitment.
* Cite ISO 21001’s focus on *interested parties* (e.g., Clause 9.1 on monitoring satisfaction).
* Note how **unmet expectations** may lead to:
  + Student attrition
  + Public criticism
  + Reduced funding or partnerships
  + Low staff engagement

**4. Monitoring and Acting on Satisfaction**

📝 *Target: 120–140 words*

**Focus:**

* Outline typical mechanisms: surveys, focus groups, alumni tracking, employer consultations.
* Emphasize the difference between **measuring** and **managing** satisfaction.
* Discuss the need for **responsive systems** (feedback loops, actionable planning).
* Mention challenges in **quantifying satisfaction in complex services**.

**5. Conclusion: A Pillar of Stakeholder-Oriented Quality**

📝 *Target: 50–70 words*

**Focus:**

* Reiterate satisfaction as a core metric in modern HEI quality systems.
* Highlight that **satisfaction reflects both values and effectiveness**.
* Prepare the reader for the next chapter (e.g., tools for stakeholder analysis or satisfaction measurement frameworks).

**✅ Summary Table**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Section Title | Target Word Count | Key Focus |
| 1. Introduction | 80–100 | Define satisfaction as a quality element; set the purpose |
| 2. What Satisfaction Means in HEIs | 130–160 | Variation across stakeholder groups; multidimensional concept |
| 3. Why Satisfaction Matters | 180–200 | Strategic value; risks of neglect; quality alignment |
| 4. Monitoring and Acting on Satisfaction | 120–140 | Tools, feedback loops, measurement vs. action |
| 5. Conclusion | 50–70 | Reaffirm satisfaction’s centrality; link to next subchapter |

## Overview of Quality Management in Higher Education (PGR)

## Objectives and Structure of the Monograph (PGR)

# Understanding Stakeholder Satisfaction in Higher Education [25-30]

## Definition of Stakeholders in Higher Education (JPSZ) [7-8]

**1. Introduction: Why Stakeholders Matter in Higher Education**

📝 *Target: 250–300 words*

**Focus:**

* Introduce stakeholder theory as a **critical framework** in understanding HEI governance and performance.
* Highlight the shift from internalist quality assurance to **stakeholder-inclusive quality culture**.
* Pose the central question: *"Who are stakeholders in higher education—and how do we define and prioritise them?"*
* Outline the structure of the subchapter.

**2. Theoretical Underpinnings of Stakeholder Theory**

📝 *Target: 400–500 words*

**Focus:**

* Present a **brief history** of stakeholder theory:
  + **Freeman (1984)** – foundational definition
  + Evolution into strategic and normative streams
* Application to **non-profit and public sectors**, especially education (cf. Donaldson & Preston, Mitchell et al.)
* Discuss tensions between **shareholder vs. stakeholder models** and **corporate vs. civic missions** of HEIs.
* Include a comparison table: *Strategic vs. Normative Stakeholder Approaches in HE*

**3. Stakeholders in the Context of Higher Education Institutions**

📝 *Target: 600–700 words*

**Focus:**

* Deep dive into stakeholder types:
  + **Internal:** students, academic staff, non-academic staff, management, faculty unions
  + **External:** alumni, employers, parents, funding bodies, accreditation agencies, government, community partners, partner HEIs
* Discuss **direct vs. indirect**, **primary vs. secondary**, and **active vs. passive** stakeholders
* Use a **visual stakeholder matrix or map** (e.g., salience model)
* Discuss **competing interests** and how HEIs navigate these tensions (e.g., balancing student-centeredness with research excellence agendas)

**4. The Dynamic and Contextual Nature of Stakeholder Identification**

📝 *Target: 400–500 words*

**Focus:**

* Argue that stakeholder identities and relevance vary depending on:
  + Institutional type (public vs. private, research vs. teaching-focused)
  + Mission (e.g., local service vs. internationalisation)
  + Time (strategic plans evolve)
* Discuss tools like:
  + **Mitchell’s stakeholder salience model**
  + **Power–Interest grid**
* Add a case example: stakeholder mapping in a specific university initiative (e.g., curriculum reform)

**5. Challenges in Defining Stakeholders in HEIs**

📝 *Target: 300–400 words*

**Focus:**

* Discuss practical and conceptual challenges:
  + Ambiguity in defining “student as customer”
  + Stakeholders with conflicting expectations
  + Overlooked or underrepresented groups (e.g., adjunct faculty, local communities)
* Brief note on **ethical responsibility vs. strategic interest**

**6. Conclusion: Toward a Stakeholder-Responsive HEI Framework**

📝 *Target: 150–200 words*

**Focus:**

* Summarise key points
* Emphasise that **defining stakeholders is not a one-time task** but a process
* Prepare for the next subchapter: understanding stakeholders' **needs and expectations**

**✅ Summary Table of Sections**

| Section Title | Word Count Target | Key Elements Included |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Introduction | 250–300 | Context, importance, framing questions |
| 2. Theoretical Underpinnings | 400–500 | Freeman, strategic/normative theory, nonprofit sector adaptations |
| 3. HEI Stakeholder Categories | 600–700 | Typology, examples, mapping models |
| 4. Stakeholder Dynamics and Tools | 400–500 | Context dependency, stakeholder salience, mapping models |
| 5. Challenges in Definition | 300–400 | Conceptual tensions, ethical vs. strategic prioritisation |
| 6. Conclusion | 150–200 | Recap, transition to needs/expectations |

## Key Stakeholder Groups for HEI (JPSZ) [7-8]

* **1. Introduction: From Stakeholder Definition to Stakeholder Mapping**

📝 *Target: 150–200 words*

**Focus:**

* Link to Subchapter 2.1: *“Now that we have defined stakeholders, who exactly are they in the context of HEIs?”*
* Emphasize the **need for structured stakeholder identification** to inform quality and engagement strategies.
* Introduce typologies (internal/external, direct/indirect, active/passive) to be used throughout the subchapter.
* **2. Internal Stakeholders of HEIs**

📝 *Target: 450–550 words*

**Focus:**  
Detailed descriptions of **internal stakeholder groups**, their roles, interests, and contribution to HEI quality:

* **2.1 Students**
* Primary service users and co-creators of value
* Variation by level: undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, part-time, international
* Satisfaction areas: teaching quality, support services, employability
* **2.2 Academic Staff**
* Lecturers, researchers, supervisors
* Role in curriculum delivery, research, mentoring
* Dual role: service provider and stakeholder
* **2.3 Non-Academic / Administrative Staff**
* Managers, support services, IT, HR
* Their satisfaction and engagement affect service delivery quality
* **2.4 Institutional Leadership**
* Rectors, deans, department heads
* Strategic vision, stakeholder coordination, and policy-making
* **3. External Stakeholders of HEIs**

📝 *Target: 500–600 words*

**Focus:**  
Detailed overview of **external stakeholders**, categorized by relationship strength and influence:

* **3.1 Alumni**
* Represent long-term value output of HEIs
* Involved in branding, mentorship, donations, reputation
* **3.2 Employers and Industry Partners**
* Concerned with graduate preparedness, innovation, skills alignment
* Influence curricula, internships, lifelong learning
* **3.3 Government and Regulatory Bodies**
* Ministries, accreditation agencies, funders
* Policy compliance, funding priorities, quality assurance alignment
* **3.4 Civil Society and Local Community**
* NGOs, citizens, municipal governments
* Social responsibility, inclusion, cultural partnerships
* **3.5 Other Educational and Research Institutions**
* Cooperation in research, networks, mobility programs
* Also include *peer competition and benchmarking*
* **4. Stakeholder Roles and Influence: A Comparative Matrix**

📝 *Target: 200–250 words + table*

**Focus:**

* Introduce a **Stakeholder Influence–Interest Matrix**
* Classify stakeholders by:
  + **Power to influence decisions**
  + **Level of interest in HEI performance**
* Visual: Table or grid with examples per quadrant
* **5. Overlapping Roles and Role Ambiguity**

📝 *Target: 200–300 words*

**Focus:**

* Some stakeholders occupy **multiple roles**:
  + A PhD student may be both student and junior staff
  + Alumni may also be employers or donors
* Discuss **blurring of boundaries** and its impact on communication and satisfaction strategies
* Acknowledge **role ambiguity and tension** (e.g. students as customers vs. learners)
* **6. Summary and Transition to Stakeholder Needs (Subchapter 2.3)**

📝 *Target: 100–150 words*

**Focus:**

* Recap importance of identifying and categorizing stakeholders
* Emphasize diversity of expectations and involvement
* Prepare reader for **next subchapter**, which focuses on analysing **stakeholder needs and expectations** as the next step in building satisfaction frameworks
* **✅ Visual & Content Enhancements (Optional but Recommended)**
* **Figure:** Stakeholder Typology Map (Internal vs. External)
* **Table:** Stakeholder Group vs. Main Interests/Influence
* **Matrix:** Power–Interest Stakeholder Grid (based on Mitchell et al., 1997 or similar)
* **✅ Summary Table**

| Section Title | Word Count Target | Key Focus |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Introduction | 150–200 | Bridge from stakeholder definition to identification |
| 2. Internal Stakeholders | 450–550 | Deep dive into student, staff, leadership roles |
| 3. External Stakeholders | 500–600 | Alumni, employers, government, society, peer institutions |
| 4. Influence–Interest Matrix | 200–250 | Map roles by strategic importance and involvement |
| 5. Overlapping Roles and Role Ambiguity | 200–300 | Complexity and dual-identity cases in stakeholder management |
| 6. Summary and Transition | 100–150 | Prepare for stakeholder needs/satisfaction analysis |

## Expectations and Needs of Stakeholder Groups (JPSZ) [6-7]

* **1. Introduction: From Stakeholder Identity to Stakeholder Expectations**

📝 *Target: 150–200 words*

**Focus:**

* Connect to subchapters 2.1 and 2.2: *Once stakeholders are defined and identified, understanding their expectations is the next step toward building satisfaction.*
* Introduce key terms:
  + **Needs** = fundamental or functional requirements
  + **Expectations** = perceived standards, often shaped by experience or reputation
* Emphasize their role in **shaping perceived quality and satisfaction** (Grönroos, SERVQUAL, TQM)
* **2. Theoretical Approaches to Stakeholder Needs and Expectations**

📝 *Target: 350–400 words*

**Focus:**

* Introduce theoretical frameworks:
  + **SERVQUAL Gap Model**: difference between expected and perceived service
  + **Grönroos Model**: technical vs. functional quality, and their effect on expectations
  + **Disconfirmation theory**: satisfaction = performance – expectation
* Discuss role of **institutional reputation, past experience, and communication** in shaping expectations
* Link expectations to **stakeholder satisfaction** and **perceived legitimacy** of the institution
* **3. Core Expectations of Key Internal Stakeholders**

📝 *Target: 450–550 words*

**Focus:**

* **3.1 Students**
* Quality of teaching, relevance of curriculum, support services, employability, flexibility
* Inclusion, digital tools, well-being, responsiveness
* **3.2 Academic Staff**
* Autonomy, recognition, fair workload, research support, governance participation
* **3.3 Administrative Staff**
* Role clarity, career development, inclusion in decision-making, resource availability
* **3.4 Institutional Leaders**
* Strategic alignment, performance outcomes, stakeholder cooperation, system flexibility

Include **table summarizing expectations vs. needs** for internal groups.

* **4. Core Expectations of Key External Stakeholders**

📝 *Target: 450–550 words*

**Focus:**

* **4.1 Alumni**
* Lifelong learning, alumni networks, recognition, employability reflection
* **4.2 Employers & Industry**
* Work-ready graduates, soft skills, collaboration, responsiveness to labour market trends
* **4.3 Government & Accreditation Agencies**
* Accountability, efficiency, alignment with national priorities, compliance
* **4.4 Local Communities and Society**
* Social inclusion, civic responsibility, knowledge transfer, accessibility

Include **short case examples or boxed quotes** from HEI stakeholder surveys or reports.

* **5. Gaps, Tensions, and Conflicts Between Expectations**

📝 *Target: 300–400 words*

**Focus:**

* Show how some expectations may **conflict or diverge**:
  + Students’ need for flexibility vs. staff’s need for structure
  + Research intensity vs. teaching quality
  + Academic autonomy vs. employer-driven curricula
* Use examples to illustrate challenges in **balancing conflicting stakeholder demands**
* Introduce the idea of **stakeholder negotiation** or **prioritization frameworks**
* **6. Conclusion: From Understanding Expectations to Managing Satisfaction**

📝 *Target: 100–150 words*

**Focus:**

* Recap: expectations and needs are **inputs** into the **design of quality systems**
* Reinforce their importance for:
  + Institutional legitimacy
  + Strategic alignment
  + Continuous improvement
* Prepare reader for next section (e.g. measuring satisfaction or feedback tools)
* **✅ Visual & Content Enhancements (Optional but Recommended)**
* **Table 1:** Internal Stakeholders – Expectations vs. Needs Matrix
* **Table 2:** External Stakeholders – Expectations Summary
* **Figure:** Tension Points Map – Stakeholder Needs in Conflict
* **Quote Boxes:** Example stakeholder feedback comments (real or stylised)
* **✅ Summary Table**

| **Section Title** | **Target Word Count** | **Key Focus** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Introduction | 150–200 | Define needs vs. expectations; connect to satisfaction |
| 2. Theoretical Approaches | 350–400 | SERVQUAL, Grönroos, disconfirmation theory |
| 3. Expectations of Internal Stakeholders | 450–550 | Students, staff, leadership |
| 4. Expectations of External Stakeholders | 450–550 | Employers, alumni, government, society |
| 5. Gaps, Tensions, and Conflicts | 300–400 | Contradictory expectations, prioritisation challenges |
| 6. Conclusion | 100–150 | Link expectations to satisfaction frameworks |

## Methods for Measuring Stakeholder Satisfaction (JPSZ) [6-7]

Descriptions of different methods with the focus on the research based on the thesis

Summary of the chapter 2.

# Foundations of Quality Management [40-60]

## The Concept of Quality (PGR)

## Category of Excellence (PGR)

## The Quality Assurance Approach (PGR)

## Quality Culture (PGR)

# Quality Management Concepts and Methodologies for Higher Education [40-60]

## Total Quality Management (TQM) as the Basis of Improvement (PGR)

## Lean Management (PGR)

## Six Sigma and Lean Six Sigma (PGR)

## Normative Management Systems (PGR)

# Applying Quality Management to Enhance Stakeholder Satisfaction [30-40]

## Aligning Quality Management Approaches with Stakeholder Needs (JPSZ) [7-9]

Stakeholders analysis methods and tools

Communication methods and strategies with various stakeholders

## Integration of Quality Management Systems in Higher Education Institutions (JPSZ) [7-9]

Key factors for stakeholder management integration into management system (quality management system)

## Stakeholder Satisfaction Driven Quality Management (JPSZ) [12-16]

SSDQM presentation

## Challenges and Best Practices (JPSZ) [5-7]

Elaboration on the management role for the success of the quality management implementation success (ability to implement changes, etc.)

# Conclusion [10-15]

## Summary of Key Points (JPSZ) [4-6]

## Implications for Higher Education Management (JPSZ) [3-5]

## Recommendations for Future Research (JPSZ) [3-4]

# Bibliography

# Annexes