

Quality Assurance Plan

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Introduction

This Guide provides approaches for meeting the quality assurance requirements and criteria required for implementing the Erasmus+ Capacity Building Higher Education project "Transition to University Autonomy in Kazakhstan" / (TRUNAK).

1.1. Purpose

This Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) details the overall approach to quality assurance activities for the TRUNAK project. This QAP documents how the project defines, implements and assures quality during the projects' life period. The QAP is a communication vehicle for the entire project team, including the project managers and key persons from each partner university. The Management Team (MT) of the project will be responsible for the controlling of QAP implementation and monitoring.

1.2. Scope

This document is associated with the management of TRUNAK project. The role of the project's management is to develop the overall project strategy; establish requirements and performance expectations; manage the Grant Agreement; monitor and assess performance; and proactively anticipate and resolve issues that impact on project success. The methods and references described in this QAP do not add, modify, or delete any requirements identified in the TRUNAK proposal.

1.3. References

The QAP refers to the following documents:

The approved TRUNAK project proposal ref 586205-EPP-1-2017-1-KZ-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP, in particular the documents Detailed Description and Detailed Budget.

The European University Association (EUA) report "University Autonomy in Europe III. The Scorecard 2017", by Enora Bennetot Pruvot and Thomas Estermann. <http://www.eua.be/Libraries/publications/online-transversal-report-17-05-2017>

2. Project Objectives and Quality objectives

The main purpose of the TRUNAK project is to develop a model of university autonomy for Kazakhstan that can be used by Kazakhstani universities and be recognized by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The model of autonomy is intended to help the universities to take decisions about the level of fiscal and academic self-governance that is desirable. The proposed model will seek to achieve the following outcomes:

- Extended freedom of governance for the higher education sector as a foundational basis for the development of quality higher education
- Strengthened human resource, educational and research capacity

The specific objectives of TRUNAK are:

1. to make an analysis of needs of the Universities, so that the project's partners have a common structured basis for developing a “desirable” model that fits the needs of the Kazakh sector.
2. to develop recommendations / suggestions for a governance model suitable to the higher education sector of Kazakhstan, on the basis of the indicators of each of the four dimensions of the EUA University Autonomy Scorecard.
3. to develop the Basic Model of Autonomy which is approved by the Discussion Group; the model should follow the EUA model, i.e the four autonomy areas and the indicators for each area.
4. to implement the Basic Model of University Autonomy at the Partner Universities (six Universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan).
5. to develop a communication and information strategy, which includes a Dissemination Plan for national exploitation of the project's results, and designing of information materials, on paper and digitally.
6. to organize a National Conference with participation of 70 representatives of higher education institutions of Kazakhstan and 7 Partner European Universities. The results of the Conference will be development of guidance materials to support reform implementation at institutional level. The guidance material will provide practical elements to support higher education institutions in Kazakhstan in their efforts to implement the governance reform.
7. to establish and to achieve a sustainable functioning of the AICG (Autonomy Implementation Consulting Group).

2.1. Quality Indicators

The quality indicators and the corresponding objectives are, in the short term, to encourage the development of improvements in the implementation process of the current project, and in the long term they will be used to evaluate the sustainability of the project results and, presumably, they will be related to an external evaluation.

The targets set by TRUNAK help to monitor progress throughout implementation and provide a basis at the end of the project whether the objectives have been achieved.

All indicators under TRUNAK project will be expressed in quantitative terms in order to be able to measure results and outputs objectively, but they will also be complemented by qualitative aspects. Standardized forms will be used to assess the quality of meetings and other activities carried out as part of TRUNAK.

3. Quality Indicators by Work Package

Work Package 1 Preparation

Survey and analysis: The quality of this work depends on the quality of questionnaires that are used. The management team should be able to control the adequacy of questions and indicators of autonomy. The questionnaires should represent the real needs of universities in any types of autonomy.

Development of recommendations and suggestions for the Kazakhstani universities and ministries: These recommendations can be a departure point for the implementation of the policy and rules of academic autonomy for Kazakhstani universities. They should be based on the methodology and indicators of organizational autonomy (University Autonomy Tool, Autonomy Scorecard) which have been developed by the EUA and should consider the main directions of university autonomy. The quality of such recommendations would be assured by comparing them with the indicators of organizational autonomy mentioned above and by benchmarking against the most successful examples of national policies in this area.

Task	Indicators of Quality	Deadline	Responsible partner
1.1 Organizing of training seminar about University Autonomy Scorecard methodology			
1.1.1 Sending of the letters of invitations for participants	Number of Universities (key persons from each Universities) represented on seminar/ Each Partner University should be presented on Seminar.	19-20 of March 2018	EUA,
1.1.2 Organizing of Survey about the Quality of Seminar	Feedback of the Participants of seminar about Quality of Seminar: • understanding of participants how to adapt the University Autonomy Scorecard methodology to the approach and objectives of the project.	20 of March 2018	QA Team
1.2 State of play of university governance in Kazakhstan: data collection and analysis			
1.2.1 Development of a contact database to optimise response rate by identifying potential respondents in the institutions	Number of respondents (75 % of existing number of Universities in Kazakhstan)	15 of April 2018	MT, Ministry of Education
1.2.2 Development of autonomy survey based on the four dimensions of the EUA Autonomy Scorecard	Draft of Questionnaire	1 of April 2018	EUA
1.2.3 Discussion and approval of the Questionnaire	Approval Questionnaire Quality of questionnaire (include one question in the questionnaire regarding the quality)	15 of April 2018	EUA
1.2.4 Dissemination of Survey and monitoring of response rate, actions to increase response rate	Targeted reminders follow-up with potential respondents		MT, QA Team
	Feedbacks and results	15 of May 2018	Partners Universities, MT

1.2.5 Data analysis, identification of areas where autonomy is deemed most important	Report. Approval of the report by members of MT	1 of July 2018	EUA, MT
1.2.6 Discussion and approval the results of the Survey	Minutes of the meeting (Skype conference)	15 of July 2018	EUA, KSMU
1.3 Suggestions and recommendations for university governance model (including structured guidance for the reform process)			
1.3 Development of recommendations/ suggestions for a governance model suitable to the higher education sector of Kazakhstan	Number of EU partners who participate in the process of developing recommendations and suggestions	15 of October 2018	MT, European Partner University
1.3.1 Discussion and development comments by external experts from the Ministry of Education and Science of RK and the Ministry of Healthcare of the RK in response to suggested models of university governance that are feasible in the Kazakhstani context.	Report from the experts of Ministry of Education and Science of RK and the Ministry of Healthcare of the RK The quality of the report and its relationship to the discussion at the seminar	15 of November 2018	Ministry of Education and Science of RK, Ministry of Healthcare of the RK, MT
1.3.2 Development of the final list of suggestions and recommendations by MT	Minutes of the meeting (Skype conference)	15 of December 2018	MT, EUA

Work Package 2 Development

Results of Discussion Group: Kazakh and European partners together analyze the identified needs. EU partners will present the models of autonomy applied by EU countries.

Pilot implementation: The quality of this process is based on the agreed model of autonomy that would be implemented in the partner universities. The main goal of this stage is to collect and to systematize the experience and information gathered during the pilot phase.

Communication and information strategies: The work of the Discussion Group and the agreed model of university autonomy must be communicated to the universities. Such communication would be provided on the basis of the information strategy.

Guidance material to support reform implementation at the institutional level: The guidance material will provide practical material to support higher education institutions in Kazakhstan in their efforts to implement governance reform.

Creation of the University Autonomy Implementation Consulting Group: The aim of the AICG is to provide consulting services to other Kazakh universities during the implementation phase of the project and to provide a basis for sustainability of the project beyond the initial period of funding

Task	Indicators of Quality	Deadline	Responsible partner
2.1 Discussion Group			
2.1.1 Establishment of Discussion Group	Number of participating members of the Discussion Group (1 - 2 from each Partner University and European University)	30 of May 2018	MT
	Number of meetings of the Discussion Group (once in a 2 months – Skype-conferences). Minutes of meetings.	25 day of each second month	MT
2.1.2 Workshop in EU university	Number of Universities (key persons from each Universities) represented on seminar/ Each Partner University should be presented on Seminar.	15.01.2019	Lund University

2.1.3 Organizing of Survey about the Quality of Seminar	Feedback of the Participants of seminar about Quality of Seminar: understanding of participants how to adapt the Model of Autonomy	during one week after the seminar	QA Team
2.1.4 Draft of the Model of University Autonomy	Report «Alternative scenarios for increased autonomy of the Kazakh universities»	15 of April 2019	Lund University
2.2 Development of a basic model			
2.2.1 Seminar in Kazakhstan University	Number of Universities (key persons from each Universities) represented on seminar/ Each Partner University should be presented on Seminar.	till 15 of April 2019	Atyrau State University, MT
2.2.2 Organizing of Survey about the Quality of Seminar	Feedbacks of the Participants of Seminar about Quality of Seminar	during one week after the Seminar	QA Team
2.2.3 Development of the Basic Model of University Autonomy	Number of stakeholders that are involved into the process of development of Basic Model of University Governance (1-2 from each RK and EU university)	till 15 of April 2019	Lund University, MT
	Existence of the Model of Autonomy, designed, translated and endorsed by all of the Partners. Report	15/04/2019	Lund University
	Agreement on the Basic Model of University Autonomy in accordance with the EUA Autonomy Tool methodology	15.04.2019	Lund University, MT
2.3 Pilot implementation			
2.3 Implementation of Basic Model of University Autonomy	Number of Kazakhstani partners implementing Model of University	15.10.2020	all Partner Universities from Kazakhstan

	autonomy (7 Partner Universities)		
2.3.1 Systemizing of experiences gained during the implementation phase	Reports about the implementing the Basic Model of University Autonomy from each Kazakhstani Partner Universities, where Partners should describe how far the basic model of university governance is officially integrated into the government policy.	Every 3 months	all Partner Universities from Kazakhstan
2.4 Communication and information strategy			
2.4 Development of the strategy of information	Existence of Strategy for effective communication of the information collected during the Pilot Implementation	Till 15 April of 2019	Lund University
	Existence of a plan for meetings and discussions in the framework of projects, as well as communications via e-mails	30 of May 2018	Lund University, MT
Development of Dissemination Plan for National exploitation of the project's results	Existence of Dissemination Plan	15 of March 2020	Lund University
2.4.1 Dissemination of the results of work of Discussion group	Number of information items such as leaflets, that are disseminated among Kazakhstan Universities (75 % of existing number of Universities in Kazakhstan)	15 of March 2020	Lund University, MT
	Number of Universities which are covered by information strategy (each PU)	15 of March 2020	Lund University, MT
2.5 Guidance material to support reform implementation at institutional level			

2.5 Development of Guidance material about implementation of University Autonomy	Existence of Guidance material in English, Russian and Kazakh languages	15 of February 2019	Lund University
	Number of institutions requesting the guidance material (100 % of HEIs in Kazakhstan)	1 of September 2020	KSMU
2.5.1 Organizing a survey about the Quality among the users of Guidance material	Positive feedbacks from the users on the quality and relevance of the guidance material.	Period from the 15.02.2019 – 1.09.2020	QA Team
2.6 Formation of the University Autonomy Implementation Consulting Group (AICG)			
2.6 Establishing the University Autonomy Implementation Consulting Group	Existence of the Group, that is proofed by documents formalising the Group.	14 of October 2020	MT, Astana Medical University
2.6.1 Providing successful work of the University Autonomy Implementation Consulting Group	Number of institutions contacting the group	5 years after the Project	Astana Medical University
	The Group explores collaboration with Central Asian countries.	5 years after the Project	Astana Medical University
	The service provided is relevant and the activity is sustainable	5 years after the Project	Astana Medical University

Work Package 3 Quality Assurance

Task	Indicators of Quality	Deadline	Responsible partner
Quality Assurance Plan			
3.1 Development of Quality Assurance Plan	Draft of the QAP	14 of November 2017	Karaganda Economic University, Atyrau State University, Aga Khan University
3.1.2 Discussing the QAP among the Partners	Minutes of kick-off meeting	14 of November 2017	Karaganda Economic University, Atyrau State University, Aga Khan University

3.1.3 Approval of the QAP	Final QAP	15 of March 2018	Karaganda Economic University, Atyrau State University, Aga Khan University
3.2 Reports from Management Team regarding QAP	Annual reports	15 of December 2018 15 of December 2019 1 of October 2020	Karaganda Economic University, Atyrau State University, Aga Khan University

Work Package 4 Dissemination & Exploitation

Task	Indicators of Quality	Deadline	Responsible partner
4.1 National Conference on University Autonomy			
4.1 Organizing and marketing of the Conference	National Conference on University Autonomy	15 of June 2020	Lund University, MT
	Conference held on schedule.	15 of June 2020	MT
	Relevant presentation materials, speakers and moderators. Active participation of participants	15 of June 2020	MT
4.1.1. Providing of the participation of big amount of participants	Representative number of participants	15 of June 2020	KSMU
	Letters of invitation	1 of May 2020	KSMU, Astana Medical University,
4.1.2 Advertising of Conference and the results of Pilot implementation	Advertisement in Newspaper, magazines, Internet	15 of January till 15 of June 2020	KSMU, MT
4.2 Marketing and launching of the Autonomy Implementation Consulting Group			
4.2.1 Official opening of the AICG office	Advertisement on TV	14 of October 2020	MT, Astana Medical University
4.2.2 Dissemination of the information about the consulting service provided by the AICG	Report about methods and ways of dissemination of the information about the	1 of October 2020	MT, Astana Medical University

	consulting service provided by the AICG		
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Work Package 5 Management

Task	Indicators of Quality	Deadline	Responsible partner
Ensure respect for the responsibilities and obligations stated in the Grant Contract and in the Partnership Agreements, including the rules about eligibility of expenditures.	Elaborated report of MT of each university and KSMU	15 December of each year	MT
Regularly review progress made towards the achievement of the Project objectives and results through the approval of the: a) Internal Monitoring and Quality Plan; b) Internal monitoring, internal quality and external evaluation reports; c) Interim and final reports to the European Commission on the implementation of the Project.	Elaborated report of MT of each university and KSMU	15 December of each year	MT

4. Quality evaluation methods

The quality assessment will include quantitative and qualitative methods. The evaluations will contribute to the quality of the project's implementation. The evaluations will be by means of different survey instruments such as questionnaires, interviews, documentary analysis, etc., as well as site visits.

4.1 Reviews, monitoring and audits

The QAP include evaluations by reviews, monitoring visits by National Erasmus+ Office (NEO) and external audits:

- Peer Review - the evaluation of the final product of each project's objective (reports, minutes, questionnaires, etc.), or its performance by peers in order to maintain or enhance the quality or performance of the results. All relevant documents and products elaborated by project participants will be revised by the other members of the TRUNAK project. The peer review method will be used to maintain standards of quality, improve performance, and enhance the credibility of the results. If necessary an additional peer review regarding the national reports can be given by external specialists working in the same field.
- Formal Review - a structured examination of results by an assigned formal review team (could be internal and external).

Monitoring visits from the National Erasmus+ Office of Kazakhstan. The purpose of the visits is to learn about the activities realized and products developed so far, as well as to observe if the project has encountered any problems in operational and/or financial implementation that can be discussed and solved.

Audit – external examination and validation of financial and purpose statements of the TRUNAK project to ensure that the records are a fair and accurate representation.

4.2 Evaluation by Online Questionnaire

All participants will be asked to give feedback regarding the results of each work package and communication structure and cooperation within the TRUNAK project as well as an overall assessment.

5. Procedure for non-compliance and corrective actions

After the analysis of the quality of the project and the reports of the partners, the next step will be to identify the areas of non-compliance with the objectives defined in this document. If these areas are identified, the MT will document them and corrective measures will be taken.

Any partner may identify the need for corrective actions and report it to the MT. The problems will be discussed in the MT meetings online and through emails, web conferences, etc. Proposals for corrective actions must be prepared and presented for discussion and approval by the MT. The decisions must be documented.

6. Quality Records

Quality records include documentation established and maintained to provide evidence of conformance to requirements and to the effective operation of the quality management system. Such quality records are meeting agendas, meeting minutes, email correspondence, attendance sheets, training certificates, review results, questionnaires etc., site information, etc.

Quality records shall be archived for three years. Documentation shall be archived for seven years.

7. Risk Management

Name of risk	Measures for minimization and / or risk prevention	responsible for the event
Risks to Specific Project Objective/s		
Not possible to reach a satisfactory agreement between the Partner Universities and the Ministries about the expected degree and model of University Autonomy.		MT
Low number of respondents to the Survey.	<i>Creating a group discussion</i> Discussion of the model with partner universities at the seminar The existence of an alternative model for special spheres (for example, medicine), but according to the European University Association technique	MT
No agreement about the financing of the Consulting Group.	Search of reserve (additional) sources of financing	MT
Risks to Outputs (tangible) and Outcomes (intangible)		
WP1. Low number of respondents to the survey and low quality of answers.	Use of the administrative resource of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan	MT
WP2. The parties, due to external political or	Careful analysis and selection of the most	MT

organizational issues, cannot reach an agreement or compromise around a basic model of autonomy. Slow process of approval of the autonomy reform	appropriate model, applying best practices, priority on the development of integration, taking into account the survey results in the development of the basic model based on the Association of European Universities Involvement of relevant Ministries (Education and Health) will increase the interest in the process of promoting reforms	
WP3. Differences in business culture leads to misunderstandings and communication failures.	Involvement of qualified external consultants and partners	MT
WP4. Low interest in introducing modernization reforms.	Holding of a National Conference to share experience and increase the interest in carrying out reforms Development of relevant information materials and media exposure of research results	MT

WP5. Difficulty in finding qualified persons for management and operational functions.	Training of project management participants Attraction of the most qualified specialists	MT
Risks to Activities		
Lack of political continuity. Universities not willing or committed to start the process of transition to increased autonomy. Negative reactions by external and internal university stakeholders hindering the reform process.		MT

8. Quality Criteria

WP	Activities	Output/result	Deadline	Quality	
				Qualitative Indicators	Quantitative Indicators
WP1	Analysis of the need of university autonomy in Kazakhstan.	National Report (40 – 50 p.)	15.10.2017 - 15.12.2018	➤ Quality of questionnaires ➤ Report about the results of survey ➤ Relevant and usable information for the next step Seminars	➤ Number of respondents (50 % of existing number of Universities in Kazakhstan)

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Peer review exchange of the reports between the experts from PU and EU ➤ Desk research: Usage of statistics, and reliable and current data ➤ Results of interviews ➤ Clear description of methods regarding surveys and interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ One national report (English, Russian)
WP1.1	Training seminar about University Autonomy Scorecard methodology	Meeting and discussions	15.04.2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understanding of the principles of the University Autonomy Scorecard methodology ➤ Roadmap / action plan development ➤ Results of interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of participants (8 persons from PU, 7 persons from EU)
WP1.2	State of play of university governance in Kazakhstan: data collection and analysis	Meetings and discussions, Report	15.07.2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identification of areas where autonomy is seemed most important and shortcomings of the current governance system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of participants (8 PU, 7 EU)
WP1.3	Suggestions and recommendations for university governance model	Report with Suggestions and recommendations (40-50 p)	15-12-2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Performed Analysis and Report with conclusions and recommendations/suggestions ➤ Presentation of various good models and suggestions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of EU which are participate in the process of developing

					recommendations and suggestions (7 European Universities)
WP2.1	Discussion Group	Minutes of meeting of the Discussion Group Report Agreement on the Basic Model of University Autonomy (10 p)	15.01.2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Convergence of the Universities and Ministries on a path for National reform of university governance ➤ Common and agreed structure of the DG (all partners) ➤ Agreement on the Basic Model of University Autonomy (10p) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of participating members of the Discussion Group (1 -2 from each Partner University and European University) ➤ Number of meetings of the Discussion Group (??????)
WP2.2	Development of a basic model (included alternative models for special areas, for example Medicine)	Report on Basic Model of University Governance (40 – 50 p)	15.04.2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear description of model(s) including references ➤ Report about development of Basic Model of University Governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of stakeholders that are involved into the process of development of Basic Model of University Governance (1-2 from each RU and EU)

WP2.3	Pilot implementation	Implemented Model of University Governance	15.10.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The are Basic Model of University Governance officially integrated into the government policy of universities ➤ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of Partners implementing the Model (each PU)
WP2.4	Communication and Information strategy	Information Strategy (Report) Material, information, channels of dissemination of information	15.03.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Existence of a plan for communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of information materials, leaflets ➤ Number of Universities which are covered by information strategy (each PU and EU)
WP2.5	Guidance material to support reform implementation at institutional level	Guidance material	15.02.2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Existence of guidance ➤ The universities' feedback on the use of the guidance materials is positive ➤ Content of Guidance material wa agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of institutions requesting the guidance materials (100 % of consisting HEI of Kazakstan)
WP2.6	Formation of the University Autonomy Implementation Consulting Group	Established University Autonomy Implementation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The service provided is relevant and the activity is sustainable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Existence of the AICG. ➤ Number of institutions

		Consulting Group		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Group explores collaboration with Central Asian countries. ➤ The University Autonomy Implementation Consulting Group is officially integrated into the structure of the universities 	contacting the group
WP3	Quality Plan	Established Quality Plan	15.10.2017-14.10.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discussed Quality Plan and approved by all partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Report from Management Team regarding QAP (40-50 p)
WP4	National Conference on University Autonomy	Organized National Conference	15.06.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Relevant presentation materials, speakers and moderators. Active participation of the attendants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Performed Conference. Good and representative number of attendants ➤
WP4.2	Marketing and launching of the Autonomy Implementation Consulting Group	Dissemination of information about Autonomy Implementation Consulting Group	14.10.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Group explores collaboration with Central Asian countries. ➤ Positive participants' feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of institutions contacting the group ➤ Number of feedbacks



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