



Quality Assurance Policy
of
Azerbaijan Technical University

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Introduction

The Quality Policy of Azerbaijan Technical University (AzTU) aims to train creative, highly qualified personnel and specialists in accordance with the requirements of the labor market through the organization of higher education at a high level and increasing its international competitiveness, based on educational policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the development prospects of the society.

The Quality Assurance Policy aims quality assurance of education and its continuous development in accordance with the goals of the strategic development plan of the University.

The Quality Assurance Policy pursued at the University is based on the provisions of the Bologna educational process, the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Education", the "National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan", "Standards and Regulations on Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area", the state's policies in this field and relevant documents and normative-legal acts of the Ministry of Science and Education Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Quality Policy document establishes the key criterion for all divisions, departments and executives at the University.

Implementation of Quality Policy in different organizational units might differ.

Therefore, this Policy document obligates each organizational unit to identify list to do to meet quality requirements continuously and sustainably.

Organization of Activities and Quality Management

The Quality Policy of Azerbaijan Technical University is based on the education policy and modern quality management of the Republic of Azerbaijan in its structuring and managing the throughout the departments and chairs of the University, and explains the main elements to be accepted by all employees.

The policy assumes existence of communication systems, decision-making, counseling, approval and monitoring processes in performing management functions between different divisions and departments within the University, and existence of regular and sustainable interdepartmental relations, cooperation and coordination to ensure the implementation of a standard educational program designed for the needs of the students.

Coordination between teaching - training and research activities is strengthened and supported as a result of the interaction of the respective structures and departments.

Regular meetings, meetings and joint activities are held to strengthen coordination and cooperation between structural units.

All structural units plan and implement their strategies and functional duties in accordance with the activities required to achieve the University's strategy, mission and goals.

The effectiveness of the measures implemented to achieve the University's strategy, mission and goals is evaluated based on the data and relevant decisions are updated as necessary.

Achievements and continuous improvement are controlled regularly.

Regular meetings are held between the University management and the chiefs of structural units to determine necessary academic and administrative staff, infrastructure, equipment and other facilities

for development and improvement of the quality of teaching and training and research activities as primary objective of the university.

The priorities as per the mission, goals and targets of the University are determined jointly with University management and the chiefs of structural units.

The necessary resources to achieve the set priorities and to improve the quality are to be provided by University management.

The main determinant factors in provision and allocation of the necessary resources are established as the result of the measurement and evaluation of activities.

Each employee has job descriptions which are prepared and regularly updated to define their duties, competencies, responsibilities and qualifications.

In order to maintain knowledge and skills of employees, as well as the competencies required from them, the appropriate needs are determined and executive development training is delivered.

Planning of the personnel is to be carried out in accordance with the strategic development plan of the structural units and departments.

Personnel planning is carried out based on expected changes and workloads in structural units and departments considering the goals and objectives specified in the strategic plan in the university.

It is clear that the staff who is responsible for teaching, training and research must have sufficient knowledge and skills to conduct teaching, training and research.

Appropriate resources and training are provided to support these skills.

Evaluation of the performance of the academic staff is carried out regularly based on the established criteria.

Appointment of administrative personnel is carried out in accordance with the criteria established in their job instructions.

Continuous measures are regularly taken to improve the performance of the administrative staff and to develop their knowledge and skills.

Cooperation with other enterprises and organizations is planned and implemented in accordance with the university's strategy, mission, goals and objectives, including corporate principles.

Quality Assurance in Education

The Quality Assurance in Education is an integral part of AzTU's strategy and is the basis for planning its educational activities.

The main goal of AzTU's Quality Policy in the field of education is to prepare competitive graduates who would sustain in the country and abroad, to serve for modernization and development of professional fields at the level of world advanced achievements.

The responsibilities of AzTU in the direction of the quality of education to achieve this goal are:

To meet the needs of a knowledge-based society, to initiate personnel training in the new areas and improving the structure and content of educational programs, to ensure development of a continuous and multi-disciplinary education system;

To expand infrastructure for innovative development and training in the field of knowledge and technology transfer;

To develop the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary fundamental and applied scientific researches as the basis of high quality of graduate training;

To support the leading scientific and pedagogical environments as the basis of high-quality university education at all pillars of education and to take steps towards comprehensive development;

To expand and strengthen the cooperation with local and foreign higher education institutions and other organizations;

To expand the interaction with the main employers, to involve them in determining the content and forms of the educational process and material and technical support to educational processes;

To strengthen the material and technical base of the educational process by acquiring modern scientific and educational equipment and developing the related infrastructure;

To develop independence and leadership qualities of students, the formation of a highly cultured, socially active and harmoniously developed personality with the need for continuous improvement of knowledge;

To develop an advanced management system that would guarantee the high quality of education and fostering a quality culture in the collective, taking into account the development trends of world education and the experience of the Bologna process.

By fulfilling the set tasks, AzTU commits the followings:

It organizes the educational process taking into account the quality criterion, creates and improves teaching-methodical and other normative documents on the quality of education. Provides conditions for using new educational technologies.

It applies to relevant local and foreign organizations for both program and institutional accreditation. It holds scientific-methodical meetings on the problems of education quality management.

Forms mechanisms for ensuring direct and feedback communication with scientific institutions, employers and institutions implementing the educational process.

It attracts scientific institutions and employers to provide experience bases, material and technical supply of the university's laboratory and demonstration centers and participate directly in the educational process, including in organization of classes, development of educational plans and programs.

Systematically engages students in scientific and practical activities and develops practical training forms to improve their organizer role. It creates conditions for revealing the creative potential of students, helps them realize their personality.

It organizes the study of the education quality and improves the system of upgrading the scientific and pedagogical qualifications of the academic staff. The university creates conditions that stimulate the interest of employees in improving the quality of education. It regulates duties and powers of employees in respect to quality of education.

It performs as analytical-expert to evaluate employability capacities of university graduates.

Resource Management and Safety

One of the important factors affecting the quality of the services to be provided by the University in accordance with its mission is the quality of the available resources (rooms, equipment and materials) used in performance of these services.

This is closely related with the security of University staff and students. The University prepares and implements the necessary plans to ensure this. These plans are mentioned below:

- Emergency Plan;
- Fire safety and evacuation plan;
- Maintenance, repair and monitoring plan of course tools;
- Maintenance and repair plans of the venues such as classrooms, laboratories, offices;
- Maintenance, repair and monitoring plan of facility equipment (elevator, air conditioner, heating systems, energy systems and so on.);
- Maintenance and renovation plan of IT infrastructure hardware and software;
- Safety plan for hazardous substances and chemicals.

Firstly, an inventory survey is conducted in order to prepare these plans and registration of all plant and equipment is maintained. The registration system ensures that the plant and equipment that are registered are traceable.

Priorities in execution of plans, estimated costs, and resource allocation are determined jointly with decision of the responsible department and the management. In relevant circumstances, the trainings (evacuation drills, fire safety drills, etc.) are also included in the plans.

Management of Knowledge Resources Supporting Education and Research

The University assures the adequacy of the necessary resources for students to get the knowledge and skills they need and the relevance of the educational programs.

Along with instructors responsible for teaching, students should also have easy access to resources that will contribute to their learning.

These resources include libraries, laboratories, ICT resources, Internet access, and physical resources.

The institution should organize the information resources and internet access in its library and sections according to the needs and expectations of the students and maintain their readiness for the use by students and researchers.

The resources for learning and research are regularly controlled and improved by the University.

The processes necessary for education, training, research and other services provided within the University are standardized to generate unified approach by each structural unit and department staff.

General rules and principles, necessary procedures and responsible staff are defined for the purposes.

The processes of preparation, updating, approval and implementation of curricula, syllabus of relevant subjects are determined and managed with the participation of stakeholders.

Appropriate monitoring techniques are taken into consideration to check the needs, training resources, students' learning outcomes and development in the teaching process.

The process of graduation of students, expulsion from the university, and the processes for issuing relevant documents and references are carried out and regulated based on established rules.

Research and scientific work are planned in accordance with the strategic goals and objectives of the University and the necessary support procedures should be formed.

Necessary procedures for the implementation and monitoring of these processes are determined and a control mechanism is established.

A control mechanism is formed in order to ensure resource efficiency in processes.

The processes for the services rendered to students, staff and the community are determined and managed.

Execution of the processes is monitored and controlled by the relevant department.

If necessary, improvement measures are implemented. The principles of continuous improvement are adopted in all the processes.

The expectations and feedback of internal and external stakeholders are taken into account in continuous improvement of all processes.

Quality Culture and Quality Improvement

General Quality management is the management approach of the enterprise.

In this framework, the University continues its activities on the development of quality culture and quality improvement.

The studies on the quality improvement need to be carried out across all departments and staff of the University.

Efforts are being made to spread the quality culture at the University under the guidance of the relevant structural departments.

For this purpose, trainings are organized and carried out in order to raise awareness of the academic and administrative staff on the quality management and quality improvement.

The participation of staff in quality improvement activities is supported and encouraged.

Quality Management Experience

The concept of *Plan-Do-Check -Act (PDCA)* is the basis of Quality Management practices at Azerbaijan Technical University.

Within the PDCA cycle:

Continuous improvement measures are planned.

The current situation and available information are evaluated in these plans and goals are set bounded to the results to be achieved after implementation of activities;

The recommendations for improvement are based on the results of analysis to find the core issue.

These analyses are conducted by using the most up-to-date data and methods.

Appropriate guidelines are used whenever possible;

If the planned improvement concerns particularly high-risk, high-volume processes, implementation begins with selected pilot units and is expanded after the results are being observed;

The impact of implementation is estimated and ex-ante and ex-post data are compared.

The state of achieving the expected goal is evaluated.

If failed, appropriate actions are taken and updates are made;

Data are periodically re-evaluated and they are monitored to measure if achieved improvement is sustainable and has a sustainable impact;

All process and system changes are implemented by following and recording the main steps mentioned above.

Rational decision-making mechanisms based on data and evidence are used instead of feelings and emotions.

Quality Indicators to Monitor

The University continuously monitors its main activities.

The activities and quality indicators to be monitored are determined by the Academic Council and the Rector of the University.

The prioritization method to be used for determining the indicators is recorded.

Monitoring is carried out in the following areas:

- Development and success of students;
- Employment of alumni;
- Evaluation of programs;
- Quality of Research;
- Quality of Publications;
- Quality of Services;
- Financial management;
- Efficient use of resources;
- Student satisfaction;
- Employee satisfaction.

The data of the activity indicators are evaluated and analyzed by authorized staff.

The data is compared against the previous years` data of the University and the standards presented in the sources. Necessary measures are planned according to the obtained results.

Public Awareness

The most up-to-date, unbiased and objective quantitative and qualitative information on the education, research and services being to the main area of activity of the University is published.

Public access to information is ensured.

Application to an External Organization for Quality Assurance

External organizations qualified in quality assurance processes assess the effectiveness of the organization's internal quality assurance system.

The organization determines if the internal quality assurance system functions properly by involving external evaluator.

The University has clear procedures for when and how to engage with external quality assurance agencies. The results of external evaluation of quality assurance system are announced inside or outside the University.

Policies Regulating Activities by Area

The policies (policy documents) and appropriate action plans which are developed by the relevant structural units for the different areas and aiming at implementing appropriate strategical development plans at the University perform the function of a roadmap in the establishment and monitoring of internal quality coordination at the same time.

Conclusion

Targeting to become a leading university in education, research and technology with its experience and performance, strategic development goals in teaching & learning and management structure of the university, the quality policy based on participation, transparency and continuous improvement in activities will lead to:

Renewal of education according to global changes, pace of development and needs will create necessary background to compete at the global level, to transform to a competitive university in the national and international arena with the quality of the products and services it offers in all fields of activity;

Supporting interdisciplinary and international interactive education and research for students to develop their talents and competences, with application of unique and innovative approaches;

Providing the academic staff with equal opportunities for research and development;

Creating conditions for competition at the global level within the principles of specialization and diversity;

Achieving an approach in the context of sustainable development of higher education at the master's and doctoral levels and meet the demand for scientific and pedagogical personnel in Azerbaijan and the region, constantly increase the quality and efficiency of education and research at the doctoral level;

Creating and implementing sustainability of the quality management system that ensures the continuity of internal and external control mechanisms;

Implementing trainings and various awareness-raising activities for the dissemination of quality culture;

Promoting research supporting high-tech industry as the basis of quality teaching, innovation and initiative;

Contributing to the organization of educational work in order to correctly define the expectations of the industry by fully establishing "feedback" with graduates;

Planning and implementing the necessary improvement works as a result of measurements and evaluations, apply continuous improvement methods accordingly;

Formulating self-evaluation system which would serve for evaluation of the activities and ensure the quality of the next activities.

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every 2 years. The previous version of the policy will remain in full force and effect until the adoption of new version.