

Final Internal Quality Evaluation Report

(October 2016 - October 2019)

Prepared by the project team of Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) with contribution from Karsı State University

1 Purpose and methods of internal quality assurance

As stated in the Internal Quality Assurance Plan, the objectives of internal quality assurance (QA) were to contribute with the specific tools of QA to the timely progress implementation of the work plan, to achieve the specific objectives (SO 1-4), the milestones (M1-M14) and the deliverables (D) of the five work packages (WP). Quality control and evaluation of the project progress were a responsibility shared by all partners, while the Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) functioned as the work package coordinator ELTE (P5) and was supported by KARSU (P12) from the Uzbek part of the consortium.

Activities of internal quality assurance were as follows:

- Internal Quality Assurance Plan was developed, discussed and accepted by the UZDOC-partners.
- A Template of Evaluation Questionnaire to be filled in by the Uzbek participants related to all events was developed.
- The Evaluation Questionnaire was filled in at each event of the project (see Annexes).
- Evaluation questionnaires were processed; evaluation reports of the events were prepared and disseminated among the members of the Consortium.
- Mid-term Quality Evaluation Report was prepared and presented at the meeting of the Consortium. (Among others, it raised the attention to the issue of JDP.)
- Evaluation of the activity of the Uzbek Local Coordination Board (ULCB) was produced by Karshi State University.
- A final internal evaluation questionnaire concerning the project as a whole (main deliverables, the most important gains and weaknesses, etc.) was prepared and filled in by the members of the Consortium in October 2019.

2 Overview

Most of the project activities envisaged were successfully implemented according to the work-plan. Uzbek participants found these activities useful from the point of view of their activity in the Uzbek doctoral education. (The Annexes present the concrete evaluations.)

Due to new reform and changing legislation in Uzbek doctoral education, some elements of the work plan required modification. The plan for the establishment of Joint Doctoral Centre was replaced by the goal of a virtual network of (regional) centres for doctoral education.

Table 1 provides an overview of the implementation of the project deliverables and Table 2 presents the overall evaluation concerning the professional content of the events. The Annexes contain the detailed evaluations.

Table 1: Summary of the main achievements concerning the project deliverables

Outputs (tangible) and Outcomes(intangible):	Evaluation
WP1	
D1.1. Optimized work plan	Due to new reform and changing legislation some elements of the work plan were revised in order to develop a feasible and sustainable structure of cooperation between the Uzbek partners.
WP2	
D2.1. Developed Joint Doctoral Centre implementation guidelines	The plan for the establishment of Joint Doctoral Centre was replaced by the goal of a virtual network of (regional) centres for doctoral education (Virtual Doctoral Centre).
D2.2. Established Joint Doctoral Centre in Uzbekistan	<p>New equipment was purchased based on the list assembled by the ULCB in order to ensure the technical conditions for the operation of the VDC.</p> <p>Guidelines for the Virtual Doctoral Centre were prepared.</p> <p>The Virtual Doctoral Centre has been officially launched upon the signature of an agreement among all the Uzbek project partners on 12 September at Karakalpak State University in Nukus.</p>
D2.3. Shared best practices between European and Uzbek partners on doctoral education	<p>Two knowledge sharing events were organized:</p> <p>Turin (POLITO) – 15 May 2018</p> <p>Budapest (ELTE) – 13 March 2019</p>
D2.4. Raised awareness on quality assurance in doctoral education	<p>QA Consultation workshop was held (Tashkent, 5-6 February 2018)</p> <p>QA Seminar was held (Tashkent, 7-8 February 2018)</p>
D2.5. Performed exercise in creating a model of a new joint doctoral programme	<p>Exercise in the designing of a model of JDP was performed at the Quality Assurance Consultation workshop (Tashkent, 5 – 6 February 2018)</p> <p>ELTE prepared a detailed task description for the preparation of the documents concerning JDP.</p> <p>Detailed proposals (and draft agreements) for two JDP were elaborated:</p>

	<p>(1) Joint postgraduate research programme between Tashkent Institute of Finance (TIF) and Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service (SIES);</p> <p>(2) Joint postgraduate research programme between Tashkent Chemical-Technological Institute and Qaraqalpak State University and Institute of Inorganic and General Chemistry of Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan.</p> <p>The proposals were presented at the Consortium meeting held in Budapest on 12 March 2019.</p>
D2.6. Developed and performed trainings for supervisors, administrative staff and doctoral candidates	<p>The 1st Training for students and supervisors was held in Tashkent on 8-9 February 2018</p> <p>The 2nd Training for students and supervisors was held in Namargan on 1 July 2019</p>
D2.7. Developed and performed job shadowing events	1st Job shadowing event was organized by POLITO (Turin, 9-13 October 2017)
	2nd Job shadowing event was organized by UGR (Granada, 3-7 September 2018)
D2.8. Raised awareness on the need for career development and career planning for doctoral candidates	Round table with business and industry sector was held in Tashkent (October 2018)
D2.9. Developed and performed training for career development of doctoral candidates	Workshop for career development was organized (Nukus, September 2019)
WP3	
D3.1. Produced internal quality assurance plan and evaluation reports	<p>Internal quality assurance plan was prepared</p> <p>Evaluation reports of all the events were prepared and disseminated</p> <p>Mid-term Quality Evaluation Report was prepared</p> <p>Final Quality Evaluation Report was prepared</p>
WP4	
D4.3. Produced project website content	<p>Project website was created.</p> <p>The mid-term evaluation by the EU-EACEA emphasized that much more information should be provided on the website. The content of the website considerable improved in the second half of the project</p>

D5.2. Organized and performed project Kick-off, consortium meetings, final event and Uzbek Local Coordination Board meetings	6 Consortium meetings and 3 Uzbek Local Coordination Board meetings were held during the project. These meetings served well the implementation of the project by reporting, evaluating and planning the particular events of the project.
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3 Evaluation of the events by the Uzbek participants

Evaluation Questionnaires were filled in by the Uzbek participants at each event of the project. The annexes contain the evaluation reports presenting the results from these surveys.

The table below provides a summary of the overall evaluation of each event by the Uzbek participants. (Based on the answers for the following question: Have you found the **professional content of the event as a whole** useful from the point of view of your activity in the Uzbek doctoral education?)

Evaluation concerning the professional content of the events as a whole			
	very useful	useful	Mean (Max=4)
Job shadowing, Turin, October 2017	57.1%(n=12)	42.9%(n=9)	3.6
Quality Assurance Consultation workshop, Tashkent, 5 – 6, February 2018	81%(n=13)	19% (n=3)	3.8
Quality Assurance Seminar, Tashkent, 7 – 8, February 2018	64% (n=9)	36% (n=6)	3.6
Training for doctoral candidates and supervisors, Tashkent, 8 – 9, February 2018	50% (n=7)	50% (n=7)	3.5
Knowledge sharing event, Turin (POLITO), May 15, 2018	84.2% (n=16)	15.8% (n=3)	3.8
Job shadowing event, Granada (UGR), 2-8, September 2018	100% (n=13)		4.0
Workshop on the role of support staff in doctoral education, Tashkent, October 2018	78.6% (n=11)	21.4% (n=3)	3.7
Round table with business and industry sector*, Tashkent, October 2018	29.4% (n=5)	64.7% (n=11)	3.2
Knowledge sharing event, Budapest (ELTE), 13 March 2019	63% (n=10)	37% (n=6)	3.6
Workshop on supervision of PhD candidates, Namargan, 1 July, 2019	78.6% (n=11)	21.4% (n=3)	3.7
Final event and 2 nd Training, Nukus**, September, 2019	68.7% (n=11)	18.8% (n=3)	3.6

*/ one participant (5.9%) evaluated the event as only partly useful

**/ 2 participants (12.5%) evaluated the event as only partly useful

The Table shows that the highest score was given to the *Job shadowing event organised by UGR, the Knowledge sharing event organized by POLITO and Quality Assurance Consultation workshop (Exercise in designing a model of a joint doctoral programme organised by ELTE)*. The lowest score was given to the *Round table with business and industry sector*. The detailed evaluation reports can be used to identify the topics that would deserve further discussion under the framework of the Virtual Doctoral Centre.

4 Evaluation of the activity of the Uzbek Local Coordination Board (ULCB)

The ULCB was established to ensure coordination and communication among the Uzbek partners as well as to monitor the work being performed at Uzbek partner HIEs. The activity of the ULCB was evaluated by the team of Karsi State University. (For more detailed information, see Annex 1.) The most important lessons from the evaluation report are as follows.

The ULCB served well the implementation of the project through communication and coordination among the Uzbek partner HIEs.

The ULCB formulated some relevant suggestions for the qualification of persons and profile of institutions to be involved in the implementation of the project. It was suggested that fluency in English should be used as selection criteria during events where the working language is English to make the interactions and the whole communication process easier and more efficient.

The establishment of the virtual network of (regional) centres for doctoral education required some substantial infrastructural developments (e.g.: video-conferencing equipment). It was an important activity of the ULCB to develop an agreed proposal for the equipment list.

5. Overall evaluation of the project

It was considered of great importance to have a comprehensive picture on the impressions, experiences of the consortium members related to the project implementation, as well as related to the knowledge, competencies and skills the consortium members could develop. Therefore, ELTE-team prepared a final internal evaluation questionnaire. It was modified at the Consortium meeting and filled in afterwards by 17 professionals working at the participating institutions.

Method

Based on the originally submitted and later amended/upgraded project plan a questionnaire was developed covering all the relevant outputs of the project envisaged and the different type activities implemented during the course of action (see appendix). The questionnaire was distributed on-line (with the utilisation of Qualtrics Survey Software) among the representatives of the participating Uzbek and European universities after the final project event held in Nukus, 11 – 13, September 2019. The questionnaire consisted closed and open ended questions and wanted to get an overall impression on the observations, subjective

evaluation of the project partners. In most cases the respondents had to rate their observations/experiences on 7 and/or 5 grade Likert scale. In some cases free text responses were also allowed to get a deeper and better understanding on the gained experiences.

13 Uzbek and 3 European answers arrived within the period available for filling in the questionnaire.

Results

General description of the respondents

The results will be presented according to the questions.

Please identify the type of your role in the UZDOC.2.0 project

<i>Working at an Uzbek university participating in the project</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Working at a European university participating in the project</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Other</i>	<i>1</i>

76,47% of the respondents represented the Uzbek higher education institutions participating in the project.

How long have you been working in doctoral education?

Most of the respondents (52,94%) participated in some forms of doctoral education at least for 3 years, 25% of them have not been working in the doctoral education at all.

What kind of position do you have at the university you are working at?

<i>Roles</i>	
<i>leader of an academic unit</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>leader in university administration</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>leader of a doctoral programme</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>supervisor in doctoral education</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>other</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>if other, please specify</i>	<i>Teacher Senior lecturer Teacher and ph.d candidate</i>

More than 50% of the respondents defined their role in their respective higher education institution as other, most of them were fulfilling teaching positions and at the same time they were doing teaching jobs as well and foremost. It is a special feature of the Uzbek system that

Ph.D. candidates are having a quite significant teaching responsibility whilst they are working on their doctoral thesis.

Do you have a scientific degree?

<i>yes, Ph.D</i>	9
<i>yes, doctor of science</i>	1
<i>no</i>	7
<i>other</i>	0

Most of the respondents had a scientific degree, 52,49% had a Ph.D. degree.

Observations related to the project envisaged out puts

How much are you satisfied in general with the implementation of the VIRTUAL DOCTORAL CENTRE (use the below scale: 1= fully satisfied – 7= not satisfied at all)

<i>Fully satisfied</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<i>Not satisfied at all</i>
	10	5	2	0	0	0	0	

More than 80% of the respondents proved to be fully or almost fully satisfied with the implementation of one of the most important envisaged out-put of the project, with the implementation of VIRTUAL DOCTORAL CENTRE.

How much is the VIRTUAL DOCTORAL CENTRE operational according to your experiences (use the below scale: 1= fully operational – 7= not operational at all)

<i>Fully operational</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<i>Not operational at all</i>
	9	6	1					

Most of the respondents perceived the VIRTUAL DOCTORAL CENTRE operational, which is a really reassuring observation as this quasi institution was one of the most important developmental tasks to be achieved during the implementation period.

How much are you satisfied with the guidelines related to the VIRTUAL DOCTORAL CENTRE (use the scale below: 1= fully satisfied – 7= not satisfied at all)

<i>Fully satisfied</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<i>Not satisfied at all</i>
	13	4						

The level of satisfaction related to the guidelines developed to make the Virtual Doctoral centre operational was even higher, almost 100% of the respondents found these guidelines

appropriate. It is important to mention at this point that the development of these guidelines was carried in intense cooperation among all partners, the leadership of this task was done by an Uzbek higher education institution. This positive assessment is promising as far as the sustainability issues related to the project are taken into consideration.

The next two questions dealt with the participants' expectations related to the Virtual Doctoral Centre and the development of Joint Doctoral Programmes.

Identified and communicated expectations related to the Virtual Doctoral were as follows:

- Improving the quality of doctoral degree
- Providing a platform for networking among Uzbek higher education institutions
- Create an inter-university transferable skills programme
- The development and implementation of on-line courses (webinars, on-line seminars)
- Community building
- Quality improvement
- Coordination among the different universities
- Enhanced international collaboration
- Training of supervisors
- Increased number of national and international co-tutelles
- Support for students

It was also asked, what was the likelihood that these expectations would become a reality within the coming 5 years.

In this regard the responses showed a bigger variability, though most of responses were closer to the positive end of the scale, especially for their longer term implementability. One respondent indicated doubts regarding the general improvements in the national (Uzbek) collaboration in order to enhance the general quality of the doctoral education. The other item which received a fairly low evaluation was related to the improved position of Uzbek higher education institutions in the international higher education ranking systems. In case of the other expectations related both to the actual situation and the envisaged future were given higher ratings than 4, which means that the respondent had optimistic perceptions on most of above listed items.

The expectations regarding Joint Doctoral Programmes were specified as follows:

- Programme quality improvement
- Increased number of joint doctorates
- More in depth content related knowledge
- International publications
- Increased number of doctoral dissertations
- Improved position in higher education ranking systems

As no joint programmes were initiated during the implementation of the project in case of these expectations just the future hopes (likelihoods) could be rated. The most important future expectations related to joint doctoral programmes are envisaged to become a reality in the coming 5 years with a likelihood of higher than 50%.

The next part of the questionnaire tried to get information on general project implementation related questions:

What is your opinion on **the working methods** (job shadowing, training, lectures, workshops, knowledge sharing events) used during the project implementation used during the project implementation? Use the scale below: 1= non effective combination – 7 effective combination

non-effective combination of the methods	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	effective combination of the methods
			2		1	4	9	

More than 75% of the respondents formulated a very positive opinion on the implemented working methods of the project, they thought that the project team used the different working methods in a very effective combination.

What is your opinion regarding the **quality of the intellectual input** provided during the different project activities? Use the scale below: 1=Low value – 7=High value

Low value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	High value
				1	1	3	12	

The invested intellectual input experienced during the project activities was also rated very high, 87% of the respondents perceived it as representing high or very high value.

What is your opinion regarding the **overall project management** of the project? Use the scale below: 1 Low quality – 7= High quality

Low quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	High quality
				1	2	2	11	

Opinions related to the overall project management were also very positive, 64,7% of the respondents viewed it as very high quality, one respondent refused to answer to this question.

The final few questions dealt with the perceived impact of the project on national processes. The most varied responses arrived in this regard.

Did the project trigger **organisational improvement** processes **at the involved universities** in general? Use the scale below! 1= No organisational improvements were triggered by the project – 7= substantial improvements were triggered by the project

No improvements were triggered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Substantial improvements were triggered
			1	1	4	2	8	

Less than 50% of the respondents had the impression that the project triggered substantial organisational improvements in the participating higher education institutions.

Regarding the national processes the same pattern of the responses can be revealed.

Did the project have impact **on national processes** regarding higher education issues? Use the scale below: 1= the project had no impact at all – 7= the project had high impact

No impact at all	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	high impact
				1	1	6	8	

47,6% of the respondents thought that the project has an impact on national processes regarding higher education issues.

The knowledge generated regarding international relationship at both sides (European and Uzbek) was almost unanimously rated as very valuable:

The project was supposed to share and generate knowledge at both sides (Uzbek and EU) on **building international relationships**. How would you evaluate the knowledge gained in this realm? Use the scale below: 1=no relevant new knowledge was produced – 7 Valuable new knowledge was produced

No relevant new knowledge was produced	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Valuable new knowledge was produced
				1	1	1	14	

The very final part of the questionnaire invited the respondents to describe the main strength and weaknesses of the project as well as to share their perceived individual, institutional and national gains. The below table summarises the information gathered in this regard.

Table 1: Strengths – weaknesses – gains

Strengths	Weaknesses	Personal gains	Institutional gains	Gains at national level
EU Teaching methods	Too fast running programme elements	Improvements of scientific knowledge in certain fields	Dissemination meetings	Raising the reputation of science has a positive effect on national governance
Direct communication with EU experts	Lack of language skills of the Uzbek participants	Learning itself, getting to know how to handle different tasks	Fostering the internationalisation of Uzbek doctoral education	Establishing contacts and strengthening the potential of higher education
seminars		Development of the doctoral education in Uzbekistan	To raise the position of the Uzbek higher education institutions in the international ranking systems	To assist the country to do some changes (new rules and regulations)
Establishing networks		Self-development		Tips how to amend existing regulatory documents
To get acquainted with foreign educational systems		Better understanding on why research is so important		
To learn about culture and life styles				
Purchase of equipment				

Annexes

Annex 1: Description and evaluation of the activity of the ULCB

Annex 2: Job shadowing, Turin, October 2017

Annex 3: Quality Assurance Consultation workshop, Tashkent, 5 – 6 February 2018

Annex 4: Quality Assurance Seminar, Tashkent, 7 – 8 February 2018

Annex 5: Training for doctoral candidates and supervisors, Tashkent, 8 – 9 February 2018

Annex 6: Knowledge sharing event, Turin (POLITO), 15 May 2018

Annex 7: Job shadowing event, Granada (UGR), 2-8 September 2018

Annex 8: Workshop on the role of support staff in doctoral education, Tashkent, October 2018

Annex 9: Round table with business and industry sector, Tashkent, October 2018

Annex 10: Knowledge sharing event, Budapest (ELTE), 13 March 2019

Annex 11: Workshop on supervision of PhD candidates, Namargan, 3-4 July 2019

Annex 12: Final event and 2nd Training, Nukus, September 2019