

UT POLICY ON EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

UT QUALITY ASSURANCE TEAM
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UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.



INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the UT Policy on Educational Quality Assurance, replacing the previous UT Policy Framework for Educational Quality Assurance from 2014. It incorporates recommendations and outcomes from the 2019 institutional audit and the 2023 midterm evaluation.

The document addresses two key aspects: first, it defines the University's Vision on Quality Assurance, which is based on guiding principles from UT's mission and strategy document, Shaping2030, as well as the principles for education outlined in the Vision for Learning and Teaching. Second, it details the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycles of quality assurance across different organisational levels, including the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders and their way of working.

Ownership of this policy lies with the Executive Board. This document will be reviewed every 3 years, with a more thorough revision taking place at least every 6 years, in alignment with the institutional audit and midterm cycle. This will be conducted on behalf of the Executive Board by the UT Quality Assurance team. The UT Policy on Educational Quality Assurance comes into effect on 13 January 2025. A web-based version can be found here: [UT Policy on Educational Quality Assurance](#).

1. LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

1.1 Higher Education and Research Act (WHW)

The key legal requirements for Quality Assurance are outlined in the [Higher Education and Research Act \(Wet op Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk onderzoek, WHW\)](#).

Article 1.18 describes requirements related to general quality assurance for, both institutional and programme accreditation, and responsibilities regarding quality assurance.

1.2 NVAO

The [NVAO \(Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie\)](#) establishes the framework that the UT has to adhere to by law. The [NVAO assessment framework](#) serves as the basis for both institutional and programme accreditation which is required for every institution that offers Bachelor's and Master's degrees (funded and non-funded). The NVAO Framework reflects the [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#).

1.3 The institutional audit

The institutional audit (ITK) is a periodic independent assessment of the internal quality assurance of an educational institution, conducted in accordance with the ['Wet accreditatie op Maat'](#). The ITK occurs every 6 years. The UT has gained positive accreditation since 2013. Given UT's institutional accreditation, UT's degree programmes undergo an assessment for accreditation according to the limited framework. Every UT Bachelor and Master programme is assessed every 6 years. A positive assessment is required for diploma recognition, funding, and student loan eligibility.

1.4 UT Administrative and Management Regulations

The [UT Administrative and Management Regulations \(Bestuurs- en Beheersreglement, BBR\)](#), outline the roles and responsibilities related to the management and organisation of the UT.

1.5 Faculty Regulations

Faculty Regulations regarding the organisation and management of the faculty, including regulations regarding education, research and participation.

1.6 Education and Examination Regulations

Each degree programme and its method of examination must be set out in the Education and Examination Regulations (EER). According to the WHW, the EER serves as a formal document that should clearly and comprehensively detail the structure, content, and assessment methods of the degree programme, as well as the rights and obligations of the students. The EER is part of the Student Charter, the [Student Charter](#) describes all rights and obligations of students.

2. UT VISION ON QUALITY ASSURANCE

The UT Vision on Quality Assurance is derived from the guiding principles outlined in the UT's strategy [Shaping2030](#), the [refined mission statement \(2024\)](#) and the [UT Vision on Learning & Teaching](#).

UT's mission is to empower society through sustainable solutions by explicitly combining social science and engineering: "We are the entrepreneurial university of technology, educating the next generation of 'High Tech, Human Touch' innovators to build a better world together." The UT aims to structurally equip students to tackle major global challenges, such as climate change, increased inequality, cultural conflicts, war, extreme weather, pandemics, and other health crises. According to *Shaping2030*, the UT can only contribute to tackling these grand challenges through intensive collaboration between different disciplines and fields, as well as with partners and stakeholders outside the university. UT's educational system incorporates these partnerships, ensuring that we remain responsive to technological developments and societal needs beyond our walls. The key principles entrepreneurial, technology (High Tech Human Touch); and open and inclusive are embedded in the way we teach and the courses we offer.

These principles are embedded in our Vision on Learning & Teaching through three educational goals:

- **Learning-by-doing:** Students gain deeper and broader knowledge through active engagement in real-life activities. It is the act of 'doing' itself that creates the possibility for developing new academic knowledge and learning. UT students acquire knowledge, skills, competencies, habits and insights, not through memorisation, passive lectures, or observation, but through hands-on, practical involvement with relevant, real-life issues in their natural and social environments.
- **Building inclusive communities:** Students acquire knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes through interaction with peers, teachers, researchers, support staff, and other internal and external stakeholders. Exposure to diverse perspectives broadens and enriches students' understanding and appreciation of different viewpoints and approaches, enhancing their ability to tackle complex problems and grand challenges.
- **Self-development:** Students are encouraged to think independently, make their own choices, try new things, take acceptable risks, learn from mistakes and feedback, and take responsibility for their decisions and actions. Talent development, a key goal of the UT, is also of crucial importance in the context of education.

Aligned with the purpose and objectives of our education, we have established clear roles and responsibilities for quality assurance procedures. This ensures vertical alignment across different organisational levels. At every level, student engagement is facilitated through inclusion in formal participatory bodies. Beyond these formal roles, we encourage horizontal collaboration through programme committees, platforms, and communities that promote innovation and an entrepreneurial mindset. These formal structures foster a learning community that both supports and stimulates innovation and professional development.

With this structure in place, a proactive and open approach is essential for effective learning and programme development. UT actively engages students, both individually and collectively, in enhancing the quality of their educational experience. We utilise quality assurance tools that support a planning and development cycle aimed at addressing challenges and enhancing quality. This cyclical approach involves ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders—students, alumni, teaching staff, and the professional field—and incorporates both qualitative and quantitative feedback and reflection. In the following chapters (3, 4, and 5), we outline the roles, responsibilities, and methods, for quality assurance. Each chapter ends with a list of documentation, that is either required by law or by the UT.

3. INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

The following stakeholders are involved at the institutional level¹:

3.1 The Executive Board

[The Executive Board \(EB\)](#) holds overall responsibility for quality and quality assurance, including maintaining accurate, valid and reliable educational data for quality assurance purposes. The EB holds annual meetings to discuss educational strategy with higher management and Faculty Boards, fostering strategic dialogues. Additionally, the EB stays informed on ongoing developments through annual review meetings with the Vice-Deans of Education ('vlootschouw'). Faculty Annual Plans, Programme Development Plans, and quantitative and qualitative data form the bases for the 'vlootschouw' meeting. The outcomes provide an overview of progress at faculty level and serve as a stimulus for future developments.

3.2 Supervisory Board

The [Supervisory Board](#) is responsible for overseeing the design and governance of the quality assurance system. This responsibility is mandated to the committee concerned with quality assurance on education and research (Commissie Kwaliteit, Onderzoek en Onderzoek (KOO)).

The KOO regularly consults with the Rector Magnificus to review the current status of education and research quality, based on accreditation results and data, and to discuss future developments concerning UT governance.

3.3 University Council

The [University Council](#) is the central participatory body consisting of staff and students. It addresses a broad range of strategic themes, including education, and plays a crucial advisory role by providing input on key decisions and policies. The Council is involved in decision-making processes, consultations on significant changes, and monitoring policy implementation, adhering to procedures outlined in the BBR.

3.4 Quality Assurance team

[The Quality Assurance team](#) supports quality assurance at institutional, faculty, and programme level. It functions as a working group for the institutional audit (ITK), it provides the organisation with policies, frameworks, guidelines and advice. All and all related to regular accreditation processes and specific question derived from that. The QA team represents experts from central service departments and faculties and helps to maintain consistency and effectiveness in quality assurance efforts for the university as a whole.

3.5 The University Committee for Education

[The University Committee for Education \(UC-E\)](#) serves as an advisory body to the Executive Board on educational matters and ensures cross-faculty alignment. The UC-E is composed of the Vice-Deans of Education, representatives from relevant departments, and is chaired by the Rector Magnificus. Student involvement is ensured through the inclusion of two student members, who are nominated by the University Council. The UC-E plays a key role in coordinating and preparing university-wide educational policy and its implementation.

3.6 The UT Platform for Quality Assurance

The UT Platform for Quality Assurance (UTpK) serves as an advisory platform on quality assurance related themes and assures a horizontal alignment (across faculty) on matters that relate to quality on education. The platform represents the quality assurance advisors/coordinators from faculty and service departments whom within the platform share expertise, coordinate processes and procedures and thereby ensure the further development of expertise in the field of quality assurance on education.

3.7 UT Student Survey Team

The Student Survey Team, composed of stakeholders from the S&P, M&C, and CES departments, is responsible for ensuring UTs participation in key nationwide surveys. These include the International Student Barometer (ISB), National Alumni Survey (NAE), National Student Survey (NSE), Trimbos/RIVM (focused on student well-being), and the National Monitor Student Housing (LMSH).

This team structurally presents data to Faculty representatives for further imbedding these in their PDCA cycles.

¹ Responsibilities are described in the BBR

3.8 Quality Assurance Advice Committee for Life Long Learning

The advice committee serves as an independent committee to safeguard the quality of the overall UT offering of LLL education. For this it serves two purposes. On one hand it monitors the total offer and is a sparring partner of the faculty representatives. It provides advice on the quality of the courses in the offer. On the other hand it validates intended offers that should lead to certification through a Microcredential. For this, the committee checks whether, according to national guidelines, the appointment of examiners and the quality of assessment, among other things, are entailed.

3.9 Business Intelligence

Part of the S&P department, [BI studio](#) plays a crucial role in quality assurance by collecting and analysing educational data, creating reports and interactive dashboards to monitor key performance indicators, and tracking trends in educational metrics. It supports decision-making with data-driven insights and facilitates continuous quality improvement by evaluating outcomes and identifying areas for enhancement.

3.10 Student involvement

Student involvement at the central level is structurally organised via the participation of students in the University Council. These student members maintain contact with student members of the UC-E, as well as with the Student Assessors within the faculties.

The [Student Union \(SU\)](#), while not formally responsible for quality assurance, organises [OS meetings](#) (Organisation of Study Associations) to facilitate and enhance student engagement across the UT.

Required documentation

- UT Policy on Educational Quality Assurance
- UT Assessment policy
- UT Vision for Learning & Teaching
- [Educational data](#) (influx, drop-outs, pass rates etc.)

4. FACULTY LEVEL

The following stakeholders are involved at the faculty level:

4.1 Faculty Board (Vice-Dean Education)

By law, the Dean of the Faculty holds full responsibility for quality assurance. At UT, this responsibility is mandated to the Vice-Dean of Education. The Faculty Board (Vice-Dean Education) is responsible for establishing and monitoring the EER, ensuring the professional development of teaching and assessment staff, and maintaining the independent and expert functioning of Examination Boards. The Vice-Dean of Education also serves in the UC-E (see chapter 3).

The Faculty Board ensures that Programme Directors have the necessary resources to effectively manage quality assurance within programmes, primarily through the use of the Programme Development Plan and by providing adequate financial support.

The Faculty Board ensures the professional development of people involved in education. Based on the ["Portfolio allocation model for faculty boards"](#) the Faculty Board has a responsibility for *"Integrated talent and team development of the faculty and specific chair policy and academic career policy"*. The portfolio holder for education is responsible for *"Talent and team development in the field of Education"*. This is further described in the UT Framework Assessment Policy.

The Faculty Board oversees the publication of the programme development dialogue reports derived from the programme accreditations, in accordance with WHW article 5.13 paragraph 6.

4.2 Faculty Council

The Faculty Council is the key participatory body at the faculty level, consisting of an equal number of staff and student members. It addresses a broad range of strategic issues, including educational quality and policy. The

Faculty Council has the right of consent on certain topics such as the Faculty Regulations (according to WHW 9.14), aspects of the EER (according to WHW 7.13), Faculty Annual Plan, the system of quality assurance (according to WHW 2.18), and quality policies resulting from accreditation outcomes (according to WHW 2.9). The Faculty Council may request input from the programme committees (see programme level) in these processes.

4.3 Quality assurance support

Each faculty has a Quality Assurance Coordinator who has an advisory and supportive role in quality assurance and serves as a link between different organisational levels. The Coordinator also represents the faculty in the UT Quality Assurance platform (UTpK). Additionally, the Coordinator offers guidance at both the programme and course levels to ensure consistent and effective quality assurance practices. This includes supporting programmes in aligning with both internal and external quality assurance standards, ensuring compliance with accreditation standards and institutional goals. To maintain effectiveness and relevance, the Coordinator also ensures that quality assurance processes are reviewed periodically to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

4.4 Student involvement

A student from each faculty is appointed as a Student Assessor to attend meetings of the Faculty Board. The Student Assessor is granted an advisory vote during these meetings and plays a key role in representing the student voice. Faculty Boards may also involve the Student Assessor in projects or meetings related to educational innovation and quality assurance. Additionally, the Student Assessor maintains communication with student members of the Faculty Council and education officers of the study associations, ensuring that student perspectives are effectively represented and integrated into discussions and decisions.

4.5 Alumni and workfield involvement

Alumni and workfield involvement are organised at the programme level, but in some faculties, workfield committees or advisory boards are also organised at the faculty level. Please refer to the programme level (chapter 5) for further information on this aspect.

Required documentation

- Faculty Annual Plan
- Faculty Regulations

5. PROGRAMME LEVEL

The following stakeholders are involved at the programme level:

5.1 Programme Director

The Programme Director is responsible for the overall quality of the programme, including minors and non-accredited education (e.g., pre-masters and Life Long Learning) linked to its programme. The Programme Director ensures that all components of the programme meet educational standards, comply with accreditation requirements, and are financially sustainable. Additionally, the Programme Director advises the Faculty Board on decisions related to EER, programme changes, and external quality assessments. The Programme Director plays a key role in implementing policies and ensuring continuous improvement. Further tasks and responsibilities of the Programme Director are outlined in the programme's EER, such as approving Binding Study Advice (BSA) decisions or handling complaints related to the programme.

5.2 Programme Committee

Each programme or group of programmes has a Programme Committee consisting of an equal number of staff and student members. This committee serves as the participatory body at the programme level. Its main task is to advise on promoting and ensuring the quality of the programme (according to WHW 9.18). The Programme Committee has the right of consent on certain aspects of the EER. Additionally, the Programme Committee is required to review the accreditation report and discuss the Programme Development Plan and relevant educational data with the Programme Director.

5.3 Student Guidance

The initial point of contact for students is the study advisor. Study advisors can arrange special exam facilities (for example extra time, an individual room or the use of a laptop) for students with a functional impairment (as outlined in the EER). They can also refer students with, for example, a disability to [CES-Student Guidance & Wellbeing](#) for additional support and assistance.

5.4 Teacher involvement

Teachers play a crucial role in both the development and execution of the courses in the programme, particularly focusing on aligning course content and methods with the programme's intended learning outcomes. As key members of the professional community, teachers contribute not only to the academic growth of students but also to their personal development. The Programme Director supports teachers by creating opportunities to share best practices and further their professional development within their teaching communities.

5.5 Student involvement

The student voice is primarily represented by study associations, which operate independently but represent the broader student body within the programme. These associations have regular meetings with the programme management and are involved in various quality assurance activities, such as organising evaluation activities, participating in quality assurance processes, and assisting with education-related complaints.

To ensure that the diversity of the student body is reflected in the design and delivery of the programme, clear mechanisms for student engagement and partnership are established. Programme-led activities are often available through multiple channels to accommodate different preferences and ensure broad participation. Students collaborate with the programme team based on principles of openness and trust. This partnership is built on a culture of open feedback, shared goals and values, and regular communication. Students are invited to participate in programme-level evaluation activities, such as surveys (e.g., Exit Surveys, National Student Survey (NSE), International Student Barometer (ISB)) and panel meetings. Outcomes are imbedded in the programme PDCA cycle.

5.6 Alumni and workfield involvement

Alumni contribute feedback through the National Alumni Survey (NAE). Many programmes engage alumni in their workfield committees and involve them in modules/courses through activities such as guest lectures and case studies. Workfield committees provide valuable input to the Programme Director, helping to ensure that the programme's intended learning outcomes align with the needs of the professional field and remain relevant and up to date. Additionally, most programmes have an alumni association that fosters ongoing engagement and networking opportunities in the workfield.

Required documentation

- Programme Development Plan (PDP)
- Development Dialogue Reports
- Educational data
- Accreditation reports

6. MODULE/COURSE LEVEL

The following stakeholders are involved at the module/course level:

6.1 Programme Director

The Programme Director oversees the overall quality of the modules/courses within the programme, ensuring that content, delivery, and assessment methods align with the programme's educational objectives and

accreditation standards. The Programme Director is responsible for addressing any issues raised at the module/course level and coordinating improvements based on feedback from various stakeholders.

6.2 Programme Committee

The Programme Committee, consisting of an equal number of staff and student members, plays a vital role in quality assurance at the module/course level. The Programme Committee reviews feedback from students and teachers, advises on necessary changes or enhancements, and ensures that the modules/courses meet both internal standards and external accreditation requirements. It provides valuable input on the development and evaluation of module/course content and teaching methodologies and participates in regular quality assurance activities to ensure that modules/courses remain relevant and effective.

6.3 Evaluation Committee (if applicable)

If an Evaluation Committee is in place, it typically consists of students, which may include representatives from study associations and/or programme committees. Under the supervision of the Quality Assurance Contact person, the Evaluation Committee contributes to or prepares the module/course evaluation report. The module coordinator/teacher is responsible for describing improvements based on this evaluation.

6.4 Student involvement

Students engage in the quality assurance process by participating in surveys, panel meetings, and focus groups. Their feedback offers valuable insights into course content, teaching methods, and overall learning experiences, helping to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Teachers are easily reachable and provide multiple channels for students to share their feedback, including direct communication and informal discussions. This open feedback culture encourages ongoing dialogue, allowing for timely responses to concerns. It is important for students to know how their feedback is used; if certain suggestions cannot be implemented, clear explanations should be provided to maintain transparency and trust.

6.5 Teacher involvement

Teachers are integral to the quality assurance process, responsible for delivering course content and assessments effectively. They implement quality assurance practices by following the established curriculum, utilising effective teaching strategies, and providing timely feedback to students.

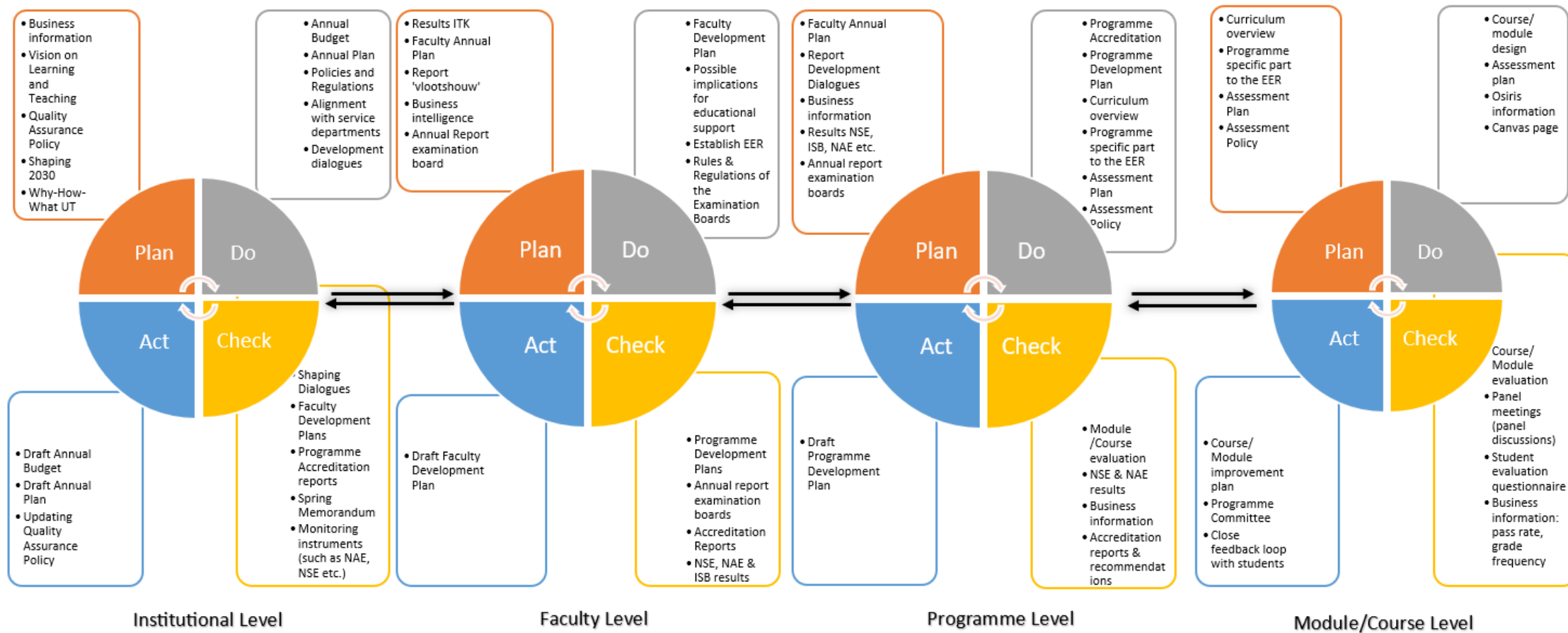
Teachers regularly review evaluations and student feedback to identify areas for improvement. Based on this feedback, they develop an evaluation plan outlining proposed enhancements for the next iteration of the course. These improvements are addressed in collaboration with the Programme Director and Programme Committee. Teachers are also responsible for ensuring that actions taken in response to feedback are communicated to students, fostering a culture of transparency and continuous improvement. Additionally, they manage all administrative tasks related to the course, as outlined in Section 3 of the EER.

Required documentation

- Module/course assessment schedule
- Educational data (SEQ, examination metrics, panel meeting results)
- Module/course evaluation plan

7. UT PDCA-CYCLE QUALITY ASSURANCE

The UT Policy on Educational Quality Assurance consists of interlinked PDCA cycles across different organisational levels: Institutional, Faculty, Programme, and Module/Course.



8. RELEVANT DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [BBR \(UT Bestuurs- en beheersreglement\) / \(Administrative and Management Regulations\)](#)
- [BI-studio \(Educational Data\)](#)
- [Convention of Educational Officers \(CEO\)](#)
- [European Standards for Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#)
- [Executive Board](#)
- [Higher Education and Research Act \(Wet op Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk onderzoek, WHW\)](#)
- [NVAO](#)
- [NVAO Assessment framework](#)
- [Organisation of Study Associations \(OS\)](#)
- [Quality Assurance Team](#)
- [Refined mission statement for the University of Twente](#)
- [Shaping2030](#)
- [Student Charter](#)
- [Student Union](#)
- [Supervisory Board](#)
- [UT Framework for Assessment Policy](#)
- [UT Vision on Learning and Teaching](#)
- [University Committee of Education](#)
- [University Council](#)