

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL
EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE FOUNDATION
ARMENIA**

**SYSTEM-WIDE ANALYSIS
2012-2015**

Yerevan 2016

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INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education institutions have a crucial role in supporting the development of knowledge-based economies and the construction of socially cohesive societies. There has recently been an increased demand for quality assurance systems designed and implemented in the professional education system, both internal and external. Since its establishment ANQA has been striving to promote quality culture in Armenian HEIs and is committed to contributing to the quality developments in higher education institutions. Taking into account the internal quality assurance system of HEIs, ANQA encourages them to act in conformity with national and international quality standards and continuously improve the quality of provisions in higher education.

In the view of this, the second system-wide analysis of the tertiary education performance in the sphere of quality assurance is conducted to serve several important functions:

- to reveal the state of arts in quality assurance in Armenian tertiary education system;
- to respond to the interest of the RA Government on the state of arts on tertiary education quality and quality assurance as part of system-wide reforms in tertiary education;
- to assess the changes occurred throughout the last three years in the quality assurance system and analyze the impact ANQA had on the quality assurance system;
- to provide recommendations for educational planning and management.

The initiative builds upon the first system-wide analysis (2009-2011) and focuses on three major aspects of quality assurance in Armenia:

- internal quality assurance of tertiary level institutions;
- external quality assurance;
- quality assurance of teaching and learning.

Accordingly, the report covers only the challenges and recommendations for these three quality areas.

The data for the analysis stems from multiple sources, including:

- survey on the state of arts on quality assurance in general and that of teaching and learning in particular addressed to tertiary level institutions;
- desk research conducted to reveal background data on tertiary level education in Armenia;
- comprehensive analysis of accreditation process conducted in 2014;
- expert panel reports on accreditation processes.

The recommendations provided in this report are drawn from the major findings and are aimed at fostering the development of the system's capacity, improving decision making at

tertiary level institutions, and in the long-run, promoting cohesion of the system.

The report consists of four sections. The first section describes the developments and the challenges of the external quality assurance in Armenia throughout the last three years. The second section addresses the practices and the structures of the internal quality assurance of tertiary education institutions, providing a comparison between the current state of the quality assurance practices in Armenian TLIs with that of 2011 marking the impact of the establishment and operationalization of the accreditation system, while the third section focuses on the quality assurance of teaching and learning among Armenian TLIs.

BACKGROUND

DATA ON TERTIARY LEVEL EDUCATION

The professional education system in Armenia consists of public, private, and transnational education provider institutions. Professional education includes all the institutions that educate students for employment and research, which involves both higher education (HE) and vocational education and training (VET). Higher education is provided by two major types of institutions, universities and other institutions such as institutes, academies and a conservatorium, whereas, vocational education is provided by colleges and technical schools. In 2015 there were 64 higher education institutions and 83 colleges in Armenia.

Table 1. Higher Education Institutions

	Public ¹	Private ²	Foreign TLIs		
			Transnational institutions ³	Branches of foreign private universities	Branches of foreign state universities
Number of HEIs	20	31	5	3	5
Number of students	95,322				
Number of teaching staff	11,388				

Source: RA Ministry of Education and Science, RA National Statistical Service

1 Source: RA MoES website <<http://edu.am/index.php?id=261&topMenu=-1&menu1=93&menu2=145&arch=0>>.

2 Source: RA MoES website <<http://edu.am/DownloadFile/405arm-cucak-buheri-2016.pdf>>.

3 Intergovernmental universities are the ones established on the basis of agreement between two countries. Intergovernmental universities belong to both the Armenian education system and that of the partner country and the awarded qualifications are recognized in both countries.

In 2015 there were around 95 thousand students enrolled in public and private HEIs in Armenia, of which 79,623 (84%) were Bachelor, 14,476 (15%) were Master students and 1223 (1%) were PhD students.

Table 2. Vocational Education Institutions

	Public ⁴	Private ⁵
Number of VETs	72	11
Number of students	28,483	
Number of teaching staff	4,316	

Source: RA Ministry of Education and Science, RA National Statistical Service

STATE OF ARTS: EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE (2012-2015)

Through the recent years ANQA has achieved significant progress in relation to its 2010-2015 strategic goals.

- **Capacity building:** ANQA has established itself as an institution implementing institutional accreditation, conducting trainings and other services.
- **Nurturing quality area:** An external quality assurance system for tertiary education was established aligning the quality assurance policies and procedures with the international standards.
- **Establishing quality culture:** ANQA has encouraged the formation and reinforcement of internal QA units in all the HEIs. The heads of institutions are proactively involved in QA processes as a result of which HEI management approaches have been improved, the culture of regular self-assessment has been formed, benchmarking is used by HEIs regarding different activities, the role of internal QA units has been revalued, in the domain of management of institutions and academic programmes an importance has been given to the alignment with predefined mission, transition is being made to the learning outcome-based approach, students' assessment methods are being reviewed putting the emphasis on the assessment of practical skills and the increase of research component in academic programmes is highlighted.
- **Establishment of QA expert database:** As a result of a number of trainings and meetings a database of local and international experts was formed and includes

⁴ Apart from public colleges there are also 7 HEIs, 4 Foundations and 4 education establishments implementing vocational education programs <<http://edu.am/DownloadFile/229arm-Qole2j.pdf>>.

⁵ Apart from private colleges there are also 16 private institutions implementing vocational education programs <<http://edu.am/DownloadFile/733arm-mijin-masnagitakan-1.pdf>>.

professionals from different state and private universities, managers, academic staff, employers, etc.

- **Internationalization:** Memorandums of cooperation have been signed with several international QA organizations. International experience has been observed and localized; close connections have been established at the regional level. Consequently, ANQA is the carrier and disseminator of international experience and is recognized by international and foreign organizations.

QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES

Throughout the last three years ANQA has made a considerable progress in relation to promoting and developing the quality framework in Armenian HEIs and VETs.

The accreditation process of HEIs has lunched since 2011. Since then, 10 public and 6 private HEIs have already undergone institutional accreditation by ANQA, 1 out of which was granted accreditation for 6 years, 9 state and 1 private HEIs received accreditation for 4 years, 3 private HEIs received conditional accreditation for 2 years and 2 private universities were rejected in institutional accreditation. Essential adjustments to accreditation procedures were agreed with the HEIs and experts, both national and international.

In relation to voluntary program accreditation, as of now ANQA has conducted 7 pilot reviews, two out of which were implemented within the framework of World Bank ARQATA project, and five within the framework of Tempus MAHATMA and PICQA projects. To encourage TLIs to apply for program accreditations, making the procedure more effective and cost-efficient, a financial policy on cluster accreditation is currently being developed.

Starting from 2011, pilot accreditation procedures were also carried out in three VET institutions. Currently regular meetings and discussions with VET institutions and their representatives are carried out for nurturing quality assurance culture in VET institutions. Moreover, the QA criteria and standards for VET system are being clarified.

Upon the completion of the 15 pilot accreditation ANQA embarked a phase of improvement and review of the regulatory documents, methodology and the process itself based on the stakeholder's feedback in relation to the effectiveness of the accreditation process, revealing the shortcomings and obstacles. Based on the revealed needs steps towards the improvement of the procedure were undertaken and the area regulatory documentation was revised.

Firstly, the regulatory framework (Accreditation Statute, ANQA Charter, Accreditation Manual) was developed in full consultation with the stakeholders: tertiary level institutions, ANQA coordinators, local and international experts and MoES. Changes to the ANQA accreditation policies, procedures were also made drawing on the pilot accreditation procedures conducted by ANQA. As one of the major results of changes inclusion of “conditional accreditation” was made. Secondly, the procedures on composition and operation of the Accreditation Committee and the composition of the Expert’s Panel as well as the Accreditation Manual were approved. The Statute of Accreditation Committee was refined with full involvement of stakeholders. In the Statute of Accreditation Committee some changes were made and accordingly the number of members, the decision making process and the regulation of electing the president were changed. Thirdly, based on the results of the comprehensive analysis of accreditation process conducted among HEIs and experts rubrics/guidelines on the accreditation standards and criteria have been developed. In its further steps, stipulated in the new strategic plan for 2016-2020, ANQA envisions accreditation in foreign countries as well as promotion of joint accreditation procedures.

NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

During the period of its establishment the main challenges for ANQA were the formation of quality areas, quality culture and capacity-building, while at the current stage, when it has proved itself as a well-structured organization with efficient QA system, the challenges mainly arise from the needs of the stakeholders.

Currently the adequate support of the enhancement of internal QA systems in TLIs, the effective and efficient organization of the programme accreditation and ensuring its public recognition, protecting competition and the rights of consumers in the market of educational services, managing the risks, promoting local TLIs internationally, ensuring the transparency and availability of information about the quality of education are the main challenges ANQA will face in the upcoming years. Heading toward these challenges, the strategic priorities for upcoming development are the following:

- Efficient organization of programme accreditation process, its recognition, focus on student-centered learning, and the establishment of cluster accreditation,
- Promotion of the establishment of cluster accreditation in the country, and the Agency’s internationalization with both regional and European vectors aiming at enhancement of international recognition of Armenian tertiary education,
- Development of the agency’s potential as an institution realizing external quality assurance in the field of tertiary education,
- Launch of accreditation process for VET institutions.

INTERNATIONALIZATION OF ANQA

Since its inception, ANQA has taken active steps to internationalize its activities and to succeed in its desire to achieve recognition within international organizations. The activities aimed at ANQA internationalization evolve around the following major processes:

- Active collaboration with agencies from EU and post-soviet countries;
- Development of the external quality assurance drawing on the ESGs;
- Active participation in and contribution to quality dialogue through involvement in ENQA and INQAAHE activities;
- Pro-active participation in World Bank and European Union projects.

With regards to its participation in international QA networks ANQA has established broad collaboration ties with INQAAHE, ENQA for experience exchange and learning from peers. ANQA has been involved in ENQA working groups on LLL and Quality Assurance Agency staff capacity building. Moreover, it has signed Cooperation Agreements with the German accreditation agency for Study Programmes in Engineering, Informatics, Natural Sciences and Mathematics (ASIIN), the Polish State Accreditation Committee (PKA), the Russian National Centre for Public Accreditation, the Independent Kazakhstan Quality Assurance Agency in Education.

Since 2011 ANQA has also been active in the implementation of different projects. At this level, the impact is tangible with regard to ANQA staff professionalization, refinement of the developed mechanisms based on the feedback of international experts, development of tools for external quality assurance, research of different educational issues, as well as professionalization of TLI quality assurance staff. ANQA partakes in 11 Tempus and 1 Twinning projects in which it embraces a leading role at the national level. All the projects entail capacity building of internal and external quality assurance. These Tempus projects evolve around the current challenges the Armenian tertiary system faces and are connected to ANQA accreditation criteria and standards.

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF ANQA

Since its establishment ANQA has been working hard on adopting a model of its internal quality assurance that would drive its effective management. Many strategies have been put into practice to promote its effective and efficient functioning. Thus, starting in 2012 a bottom-up approach to ANQA internal quality assurance has been opted for enabling establishment of a system that works and yields positive outcomes.

ANQA has developed a system for quality assurance that:

- Provides appropriate policy and procedures regarding the internal quality assurance processes making them visible and transparent for the Armenian society and those on the international level.
- Allows frequent evaluation of the results and structured plan for improvement (by following the PDCA cycle)
- Makes the results of the evaluation of ANQA's internal and external activities visible and transparent, and have a process in place to determine whether these results meet the organization's goals and contribute to the overall quality of the organization.
- Develops improvement measures and proposals based on the results of the evaluation.
- Ensures involvement of all stakeholders by means of an open dialogue with these stakeholders,
- Prepares ANQA for the external evaluation.

ANQA has adopted an input, process and output based approach to its management and quality assurance; thus, all the activities run by ANQA are broken down to 11 quality assurance areas. To manage the processes an organizational tool in the form of a protocol elaborating on the targets, indicators, activity plans and quality assurance tools has been developed. Therefore, the achievements of ANQA are analyzed from the perspectives of those processes, which evolve around:

1. Leadership and Management;
2. Accreditation Committee;
3. Institutional and Programme Accreditations;
4. Internal Quality Assurance;
5. Human Resources Management;
6. International Affairs;
7. Communication and PR;
8. Legal Affairs;
9. Secretariat;
10. Information Technologies;
11. Resources.

STATE OF ARTS: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AT TLIS

SURVEY AIM AND METHODOLOGY

The survey was designed to reveal the procedures the Armenian TLIs have undergone in relation to the internal quality assurance structures, governance as well as and teaching and learning processes. The questionnaire is comprised of two sections. The first section focused on the internal quality assurance structures, while the second section explored the quality assurance of teaching and learning carried out among Armenian TLIs.

The survey aims:

- to reveal the structural/organizational and cultural aspects of the internal quality assurance systems
- to describe the procedures in relation to the quality assurance of teaching and learning

The data contained in the report comes from a sample of 60 tertiary level institutions⁶. Table 3 provides the distribution of those institutions by their type.

Table 3. Survey sample description

	Public HEIs	Private HEIs	Foreign HEIs	Colleges ⁷	Total
Number of institutions	17	15	4	24	60
Number of students in 2015	approx. 87000				
Number of graduates in 2015	approx. 16000				

These institutions provided around **70%** of all the students enrolled in Armenian TLIs in 2015.

Table 4. Survey sample description: qualifications offered by HEIs

Which types of qualifications are offered by your institution?	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor	34	94%
Master	32	89%
PhD	18	50%

⁶ The survey data was collected during the period from December 2015 to March 2016 via questionnaires sent to the respondents by e-mail.

⁷ The survey was conducted within public colleges.

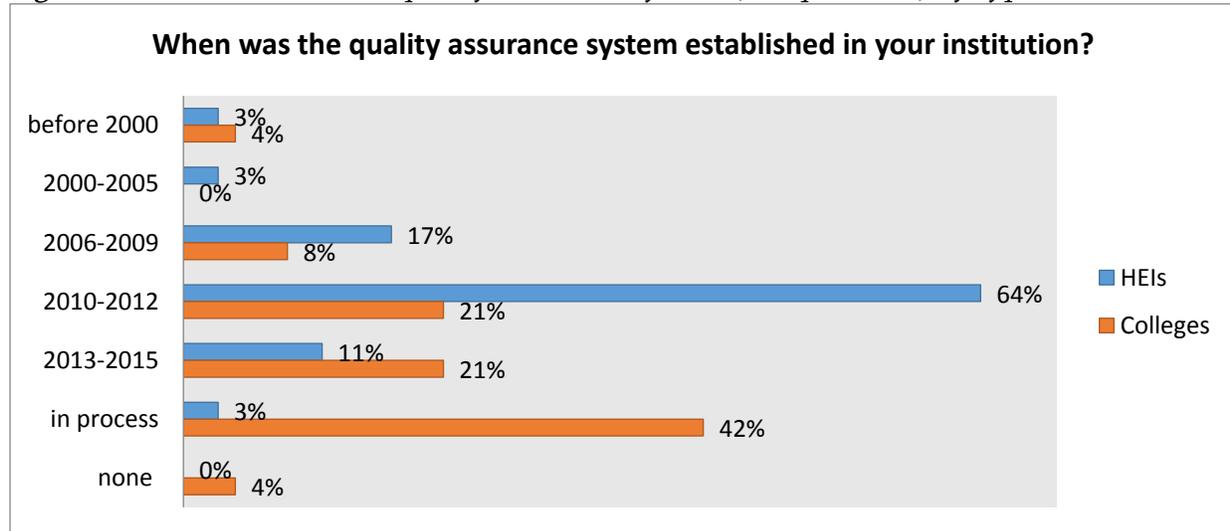
QUALITY ASSURANCE STRUCTURES

To better understand the state of arts in internal quality assurance at TLIs an investigation into the following areas of TLIs' management was made:

- The state of arts in internal quality assurance at TLIs;
 - Mission- and evidence-based approach to QA
- Strategic planning.

According to survey results the timing of establishment of quality assurance systems is marked before its institutionalization at the national and legislative level among some HEIs, however, its main part has initiated the process within the period 2010-2012⁸. The VET system started to introduce quality assurance structures mainly from 2010, however, around half of colleges are doing it currently.

Figure 1. Introduction of the quality assurance system (or equivalent) by type of TLI



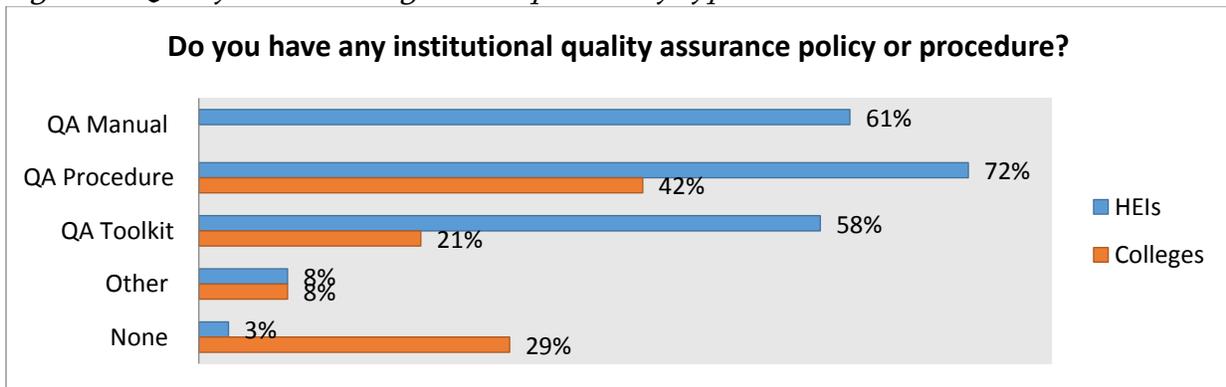
As for the policies and procedures in place there has been a considerable progress among both colleges and higher education providers with 60% of TLIs having developed a Quality assurance procedure, while 43% of them QA toolkit. Only 13% of professional education providers, being only colleges, haven't yet developed QA regulations.

There was a great increase in the number of private and public HEIs, that developed QA Manual compared to 2012 (increase of 62 percentage points), Procedure (increase of 33 percentage points), Toolkit (increase of 28 percentage points).

⁸ The difference between private and public HEIs is not statistically significant.

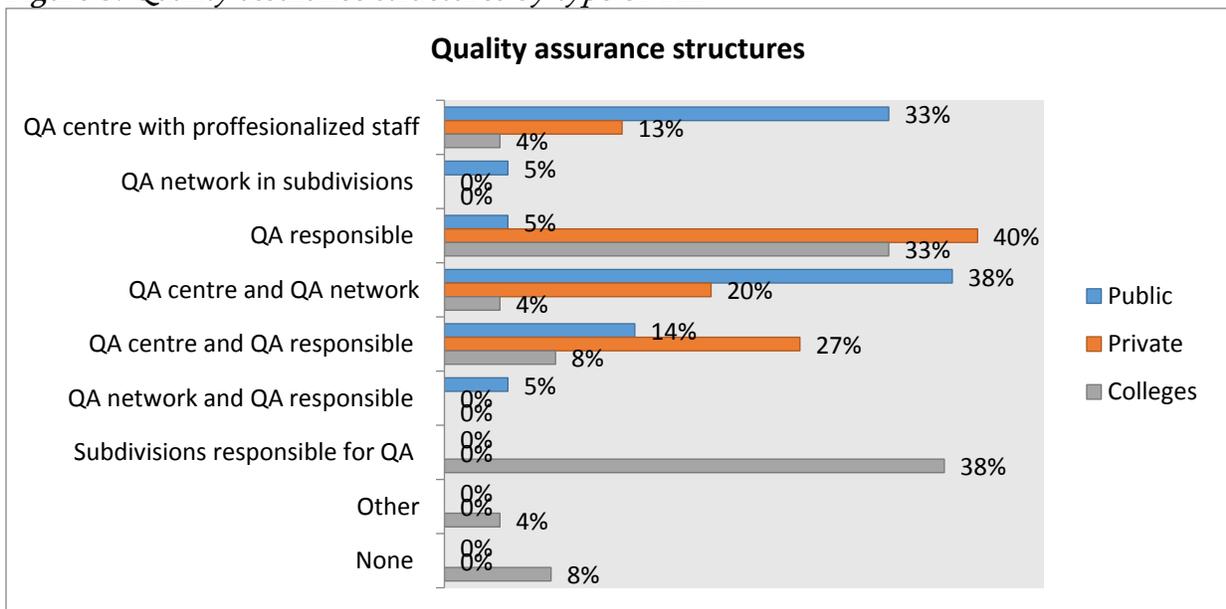
Nevertheless, although having designed a set of documents regulating the quality assurance processes, the implementation of these are often not systematic. The accreditation processes reveal that the PDCA cycle is often not properly integrated within the IQA, the HEIs mainly apply planning and implementation cycles, whereas checking and enhancement are fragmented.

Figure 2. Quality assurance regulations/policies by type of TLI



The establishment of quality assurance systems, as the data illustrates, takes different forms at different TLIs ranging from a responsible person to an elaborate quality assurance network.

Figure 3. Quality assurance structures by type of TLI

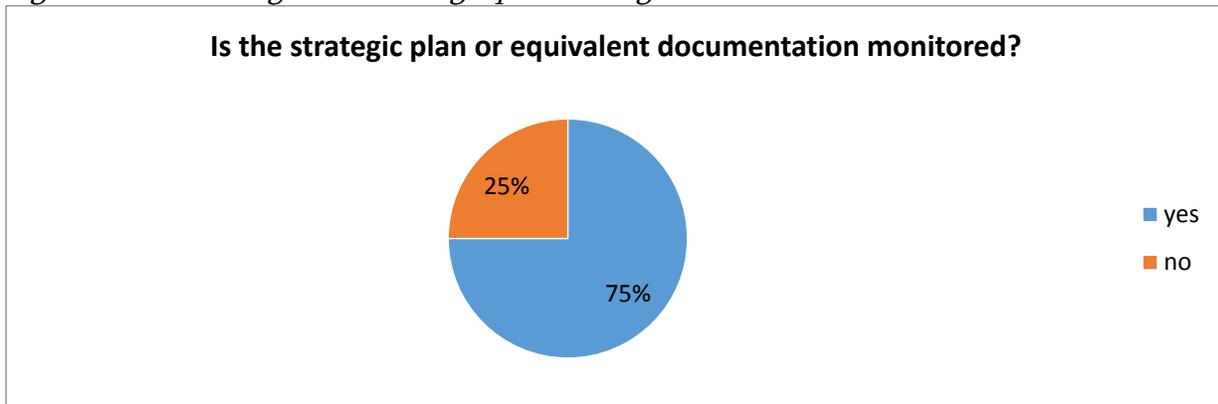


Therefore, in relation to institutionalization of QA in TLIs there has been great progress throughout the recent years. Currently all the public and private HEIs in the sample have established quality assurance systems, whereas it was not the case in 2012. The number of

colleges that are introducing quality assurance systems is increasing. Moreover, the institutions shifted towards more complex QA systems, establishing QA centers with professional staff and developing QA networks, which is especially vivid among public HEIs.

The next target was identifying the TLI's capacity to develop strategic plans. With regard to strategic planning, a tangible progress has been recorded with all the HEIs and 91% of VETs (97% of all TLIs in the sample) stating to have strategic plans or equivalent documentation. However, when it comes to its monitoring or implementation 19% of HEIs and 33% of VETs mentioned to not have monitoring procedures in place⁹.

Figure 4. Monitoring of the strategic plan among TLIs



The monitoring of the strategic plan is performed by TLI's divisions, special commissions, governing councils mainly through regular annual reports, in some cases KPIs, SWOT analysis, etc.

Nevertheless, the accreditation reviews reveal that in some cases, although clearly stated, the goals and objectives of the strategic plans are often not measurable and do not necessarily lead towards the achievement of the stated mission. Moreover, the indicators or procedures to assess the effectiveness of the TLI's strategic plans are in some cases not clear, measurable and realistic.

Compared to 2012 the number of HEIs, both public and private that have developed strategic plans or equivalent documentation has slightly increased (by 7 percentage points reaching to complete coverage), whereas colleges marked an increase of 9 percentage points compared to 2012 sample results. Not surprisingly, there has been a slight decrease in the percent of those who have mechanisms in place to monitor the strategic plans.

Recommendation: The monitoring and assessment of the strategic plan should be conducted using clear and measurable indicators.

⁹ There is no statistically significant difference between public and private HEIs and colleges.

Quality assurance processes most commonly cover student and teacher assessment practices, teaching and learning and the academic programs and syllabi, while services to society and research activities of the institutions are covered in 2 and 4 out of 10 institutions accordingly. The number of areas addressed by the IQA is much lower in colleges, compared to HEIs, whether public or private.

Table 5. Processes addressed/covered by the quality assurance system of TLIs

Which processes are addressed/covered by the quality assurance system at your institution?	HEIs	VETs	TLIs
Academic programmes	88%	65%	79%
Teaching and Learning	88%	75%	83%
Student assessment	69%	65%	67%
Teacher assessment	97%	60%	83%
Research	56%	15%	40%
Service to society	25%	10%	19%
Student support services	53%	30%	44%
Governance and administration of the institution	59%	30%	48%

One common phenomenon noted was the tendency to recognize most QA related processes within a TLI as such. However, when verified with the processes described under each area, in a number of cases the activities listed did not relate to quality assurance.

In relation to assuring the quality of research 81% of those HEIs that have research activities in place happen to conduct seminars to discuss research projects during seminars and publishes related descriptive statistics. 6% of those who have research projects mentioned to not conduct quality assurance of those research activities, while in 13% of the responding institutions research activities are not conducted.

Table 6. Quality assurance of research activities among HEIs

Which of the following processes does your institution have in place to ensure the quality of research activities?	Percent ¹⁰
Seminars to discuss research projects and ideas	81%
Internal peer review of research projects	44%
External peer review of research projects	47%
Statistics on published articles	81%
Analysis of research activities of each staff member, working group, department or faculty	47%

¹⁰ Percent from the number of institutions that carry out research activities.

Quality assurance of research activities is not conducted by our university	6%
Other	9%
Research activities are not carried out by our institution	13%¹¹

Although the institutions stated to conduct various procedures to ensure the quality of their research activities, this area needs massive improvement. The research activities are conducted within chairs with low levels of external involvement, in most cases the students are alienated from research activities of the institution and there is a lack of multidisciplinary research. Moreover, structures coordinating the research activities are present only in large state HEIs and the strategies of research and development are not stipulated, whereas research areas and interests are often not clearly defined.

Recommendation: Develop clear research strategy and foster research and development activities by allocation of financial resources.

There has been made great progress towards engaging graduates by institutions throughout the last years, which is also reflected in the results of the survey. While 95% of the institutions declared offering services to society, 82% of those who do, when asked to specify which processes they have in place, pinpointed on alumni engagement. Another 81% of TLIs offer extension courses. Lifelong learning is provided by only 35% of the responding institutions.

Table 7. Services to society offered by TLIs

Which of the following services to society is provided by your institution?	Percent ¹²
Lifelong learning	35%
Extension courses	81%
Discussions on the public opinion	40%
Activities aimed at ensuring public relations	67%
Activities aimed at engaging alumni	82%
Other	9%
Services to society not provided by the institution	5% ¹³

Almost all HEIs participating in the survey offer basic learning resources, moreover, when asked specifically about monitoring and enhancing them, most of TLIs reported that they regularly improve the services they offer as well as monitor them. Nevertheless, it should be

¹¹ Percent from the number of institutions.

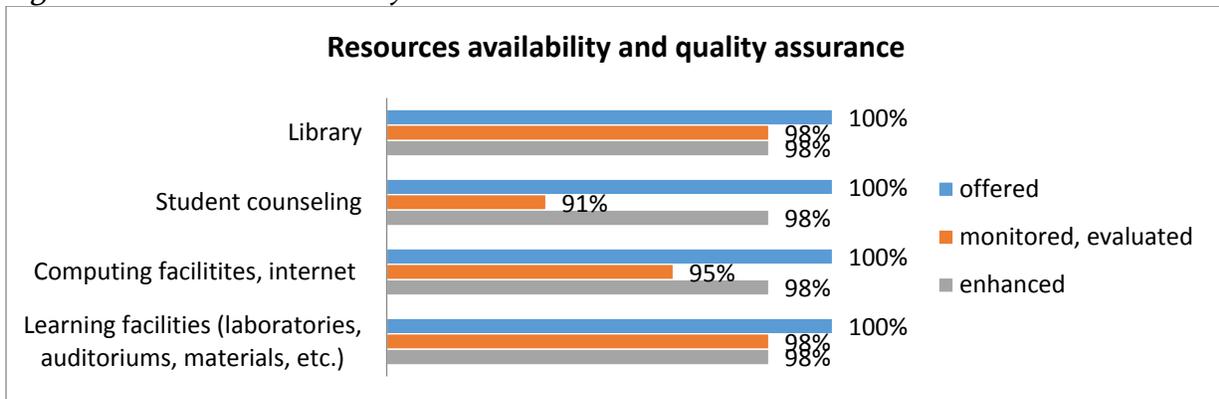
¹² Percent from the number of institutions that carry out research activities.

¹³ Percent from the number of institutions.

noted that although available, these resources are often out-of-date and not offered in sufficient quantities.

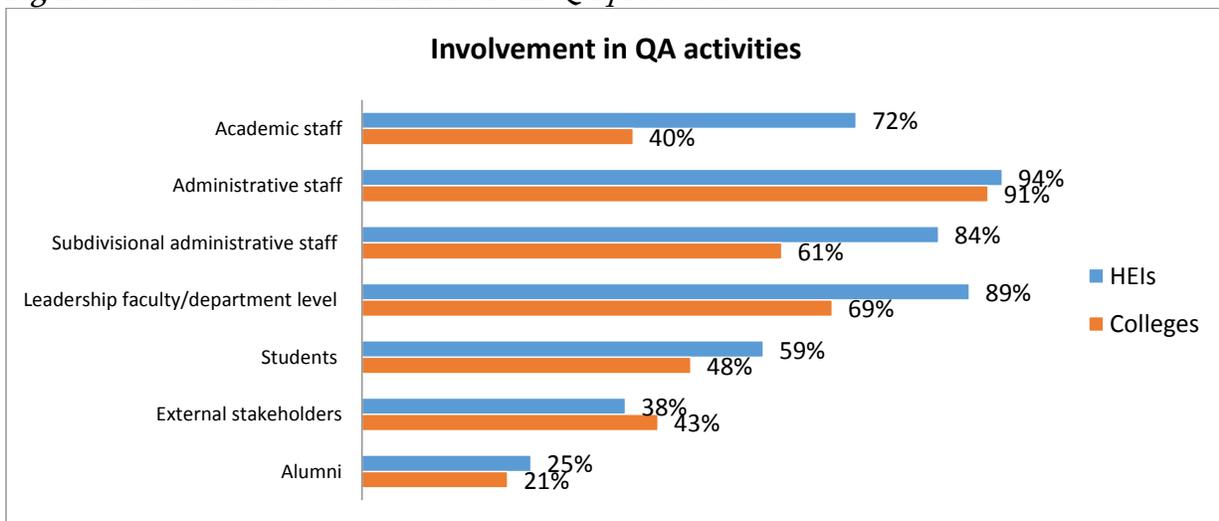
Further, with regard to student support services, although most institutions mentioned to have them in place, it does not necessarily imply that those services are institutionalized and are frequently informal.

Figure 5. Resources offered by TLIs



Another major factor for a TLI quality management is the capacity of its different staff to engage in quality assurance activities. The table below demonstrates the quality assurance activities in which the various stakeholders are involved. The levels of participation are relatively high among academic and administrative staff, and low among external stakeholders, students and alumni¹⁴.

Figure 6. Involvement of stakeholders in QA processes



¹⁴ There is no statistically significant difference between public and private HEIs.

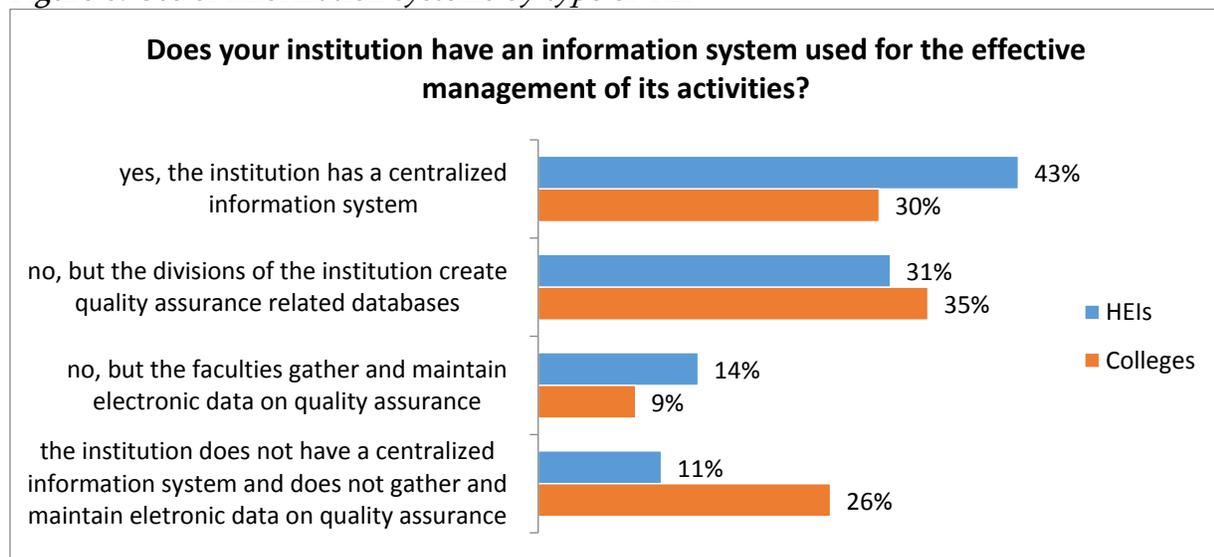
In relation to the involvement of such important stakeholders as the students, alumni and employers TLIs still have a lot of challenges to overcome to ensure their pro-active involvement.

Recommendation: Build on the capacity of the TLIs to build quality assurance mechanisms and tools promoting active involvement of stakeholders.

Recommendation: Improve the mechanisms of engaging external stakeholders in QA activities.

As for the use of information gather for their QA architecture, around 1 out of 3 responding institutions reported that they have a centralized information system in place. In addition, when the respondents do not have a centralized system, half of them have information systems that exist at faculty level or quality assurance related databases. Therefore, the number of institutions that do not use any information system or accumulate data in other ways for monitoring their activities is limited (16%)¹⁵.

Figure 6. Use of information systems by type of TLI



Most commonly, these information systems include student progression and success rates and their profiles as well as data on alumni. The student’s satisfaction coverage is also high among HEIs. Table 9 gives an overview of the different information included in institutions’ information systems.

¹⁵ There is no statistically significant difference between public and private HEIs and colleges.

Table 9. Data included in the information systems of TLIs

Which of the following does the information system or systems include?	HEIs	Colleges	TLIs
Student progression and success rates	94%	65%	84%
Student profile (personal information)	84%	76%	82%
Teacher-student ratio	38%	29%	35%
Alumni	75%	88%	80%
Employers	31%	47%	37%
Students' satisfaction with their programs	56%	29%	47%
Other	9%	12%	10%

Although the use of information systems has not increased significantly within HEIs throughout the last three years, the increase in introduction of centralized information systems is visible in both HEIs and colleges. In relation to the type of information collected by the institution there has been an increase in the number of institutions that collect data related to student's satisfaction (increase of 20 percentage points compared to 2012 sample data).

Recommendation: Consider further establishment and implementation of institutional information management system to promote informative decision-making.

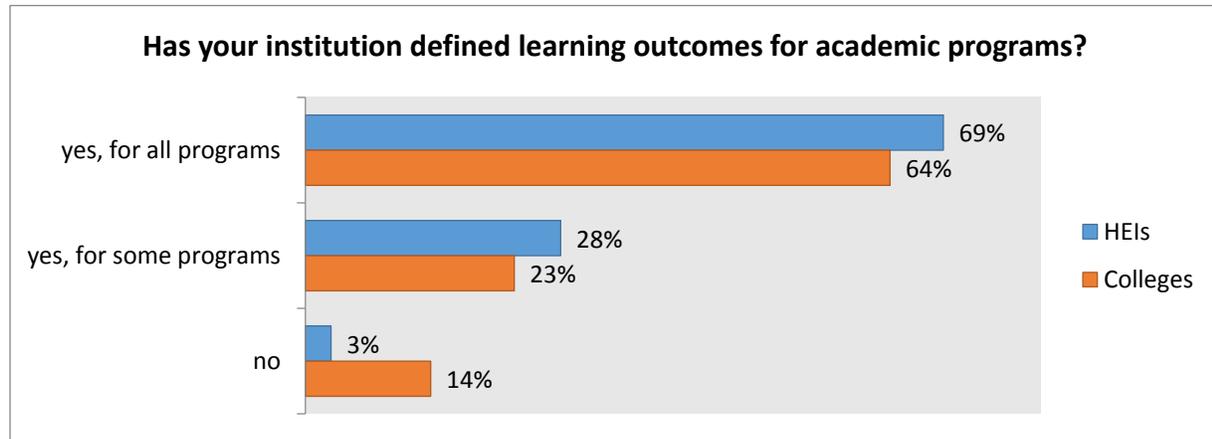
All the responding institutions mentioned that they inform the public about the activities carried out. The means used mainly includes websites, advertisements, social networks, publications, leaflets, etc.

In terms of public information on QA, institutions most typically make publicly available (through websites) the results of the external evaluations (85% of those you have been accredited), but are more reluctant to make publicly available the results of their internal evaluations (42% of all TLIs), another 34% doing it upon request, and 25% not making it available. Although, considering the critical and improvement-driven nature of these documents, the latter is perhaps understandable.

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

When asked whether the institution has defined learning outcomes 67% of all institutions in the sample stated that they have developed explicit learning outcomes for all programs, while 26% stated they have them for some, while 6% do not have¹⁶.

Figure 7. Learning outcomes for academic programs by type of institution



Although the universities have made a great progress towards defining learning outcomes, there are a number of challenges to overcome in relation to their quality. Namely, the accreditation reports demonstrate that these outcomes are often not clear and measurable, hindering the student mobility. Moreover, the teaching and learning and student assessment procedures are not organized in accordance with the learning outcomes and most commonly a clear policy on designing teaching and learning methods is not in place, giving in to traditional methods and practices with no adaptation to specific courses. Nevertheless, steps towards the introduction of the student-centered element to teaching and learning have been undertaken.

Recommendation: Align learning outcomes with specific teaching and learning and assessment methods.

Table 10. Assessment of academic programs

To what extent are the following statements prevalent to your academic programmes?	Strongly agree	More agree	More disagree	Strongly disagree
Reflects institution's vision, mission, goals and objectives	58%	40%	2%	0%

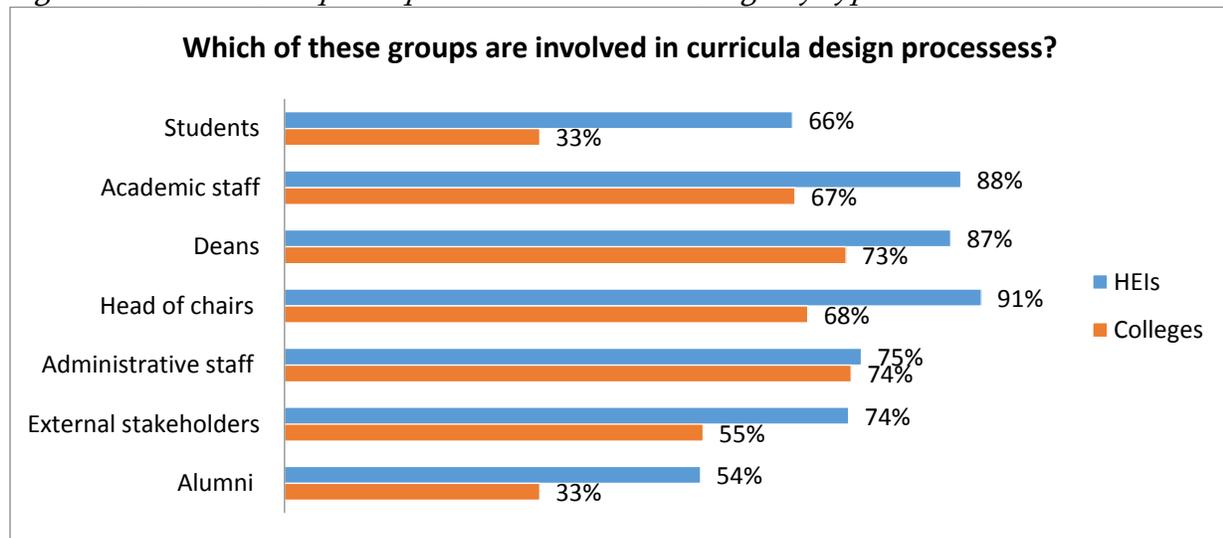
¹⁶ There is no statistically significant difference between public and private HEIs and colleges.

Meets the student educational needs	45%	55%	0%	0%
Reflects the knowledge-skills-competencies link	46%	54%	0%	0%
Reflects the learning outcomes and competencies	46%	54%	0%	0%
Complies to the volume, depth, interconnectedness of the course	46%	51%	2%	0%
Includes information on courses	51%	47%	2%	0%
Reflects market requirements	29%	71%	0%	0%
Reflects learning outcome- teaching and learning link	43%	55%	2%	0%

78% of HEIs and 29% of VETs (57% of all TLIs) participating in the survey have information materials regarding their academic programs, course descriptions and syllabi. The materials are mainly circulated through websites, leaflets, information bulletins, catalogs.

The survey also addressed the participation of different actors of the educational process in curricula design activities. The results are demonstrated in the figure below.

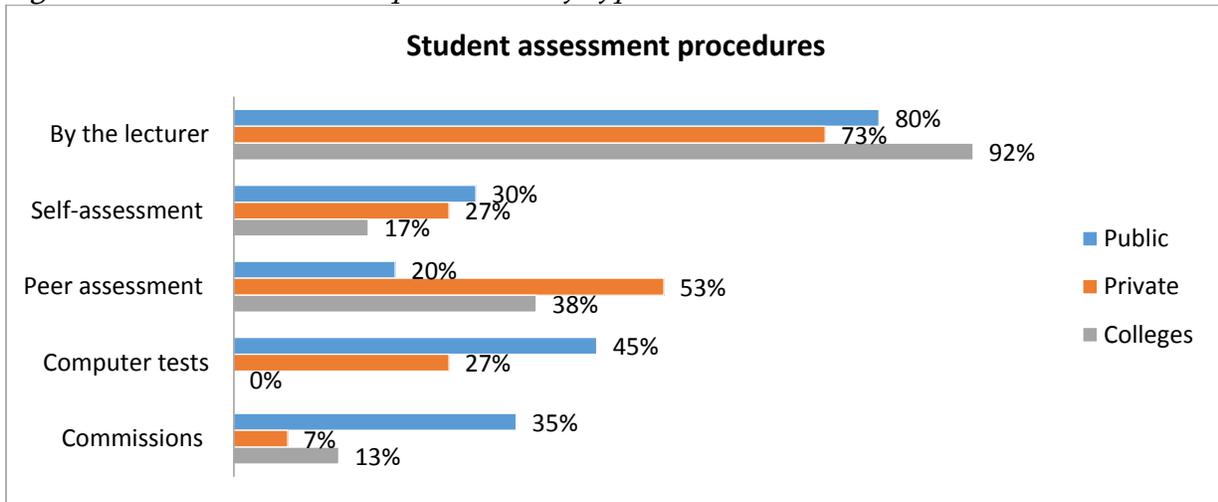
Figure 7. Stakeholder’s participation in curriculum design by type of TLI



Throughout the recent years the tertiary level education system has made great progress towards increasing the role of external stakeholders in designing academic programs, which is also reflected in the results. However, often this is not systematic and well-tailored, hindering the achievement of main strategic goals of institutions.

Figure 8 summarizes the main features of student assessment procedures. 58% of the responding institutions mentioned to have more than 1 assessment procedure in place.

Figure 8. Student assessment procedures by types of institutions



With regard to informing students about the assessment procedures, in case of HEIs 80% of respondents make their assessment methods and criteria publicly available, and 17% rely solely on the teachers to inform or remind students about this at the beginning of the course. Whereas in case of VETs 8% publish the assessment criteria, while in 92% of colleges, the academic staff takes the responsibility. Thus, a clear majority of the institutions seem to be transparent about assessment procedures.

Although to some extent there is a diversity in student assessment methods used by the institutions, the experts reports reveal that few TLIs have a complete, accurate and consistent descriptions of their student assessment systems, moreover, the assessment is oriented towards measuring the knowledge, rather that skills and competencies.

Recommendation: Revise the approaches to student assessment system-wide application of a diversity of methods to student assessment linked to particular learning outcomes.