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E-Quality

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General report on Best Practices on Quality Assurance

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Unione delle Università del Mediterraneo
Mediterranean Universities Union
Union des Universités de la Méditerranée
إتحاد الجامعات المتوسطية

Neapolis University Pafos

ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΠΕΙΡΑΙΩΣ
UNIVERSITY OF PIRAEUS

INTRODUCTION

This document serves as a survey template designed to collect best practices in Quality Assurance (QA) from our partners. The goal of this survey is to gather proven methodologies, tools, and strategies that have been successfully implemented to enhance quality processes, improve efficiency, and ensure compliance with industry standards. The survey consists of a structured table where respondents are asked to provide details on a specific QA best practice they have applied. The collected data will contribute to a comprehensive knowledge base, enabling organizations to learn from each other and adopt effective QA practices.

Each column in the table represents a key aspect of the best practice:

Title of the Best Practice
The name or brief description of the best practice.

Scope
The specific area, industry, or process where the best practice was applied.

Deliverables
The tangible outputs or materials produced as a result of implementing the best practice (e.g., reports, guidelines, tools).

Impact
A detailed analysis of how the best practice influenced key stakeholders and processes, covering:

- Target Groups – The individuals, teams, or organizations that benefited from the best practice.
- Results – The improvements or positive changes achieved.
- Indicators – The metrics or key performance indicators (KPIs) used to measure the success of the best practice/ performance rate/ reflections/satisfaction levels

The partners involved into the survey are the followings:

- Greece - University of Piraeus Research Centre (Coordinator)
- Italia -UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union
- Bulgaria - St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo, College of Pedagogy – Pleven
- Poland - Polytechnic University - Bialystok
- Cyprus - Neapolis University
- Cyprus - Enoros Consulting Limited

Higher education is a key factor in the development of society, the economy and scientific research. Universities not only transmit knowledge and skills to students, but also form future leaders, innovators and specialists who will contribute to social and economic progress. In a rapidly changing environment, higher education institutions must adapt to new requirements by implementing effective strategies and good practices aimed at improving the quality of education, scientific activity and academic life. Among the key good practices in universities are modern pedagogical methods that place students at the center of the educational process. The integration of practical knowledge through internships, joint projects and guest lectures by experts from different fields also plays an important role in preparing students for their professional development. Another key aspect is quality management, which guarantees high academic standards. Accreditation systems, monitoring of teaching effectiveness and analysis of student satisfaction are important tools for ensuring high-value educational content. In addition, universities are developing sustainable development strategies that include promoting research, interdisciplinary learning and international cooperation. The introduction of digital technologies and modern educational platforms is significantly changing the way students acquire knowledge. Online courses, virtual laboratories and automated assessment systems increase the accessibility and personalization of learning, providing greater flexibility for learners. This report examines successful Good practices implemented in universities, with the aim of deriving effective models for improving the educational process. By presenting established approaches and analyzing trends in the academic environment, the report will offer recommendations for the sustainable development of higher education.

The developed 25 Good Practices reflect the previously approved 4 main criteria's for their development – see the table

Countries/Organizations Greece - University of Piraeus Research Centre (Coordinator) Italia -UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union Bulgaria - St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo, College of Pedagogy – Pleven Poland - Polytechnic University - Bialystok Cyprus - Neapolis University Cyprus - Enoros Consulting Limited – working together with Neapolis UNI	**Criteria's** Title Scope Deliverables Impact	**Number of Good practices**
A. Greece - University of Piraeus - research center 1. Establishment of Internal Quality Assurance Unit 2. Certification of Internal Quality Assurance System 3. Institutional Quality Assurance Policy Statement 4. University of Piraeus, Code of Conduct and Good Practice 5. High level of external exposure as evident by the many awards and the high number of Erasmus students	Cover	5

B. Italy - UNIMED – Unione Delle universita del mediterraneo 1. Presence of a Delegate of the Rector for Quality – University of Pisa 2. The centrality of the student in the Governing Bodies dedicated to Quality Assurance – University of Pisa 3. Quality Assurance Board (PdQ) representing the main components of the academic community – University of Pisa	Cover	3
C. Bulgaria - St Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Turnovo - College of pedagogy – Pleven 1. "Early bird" program 2. Evaluation of faculty teachers 3. Questioners Surveys for future, present and former students 4. Academic mentoring	Cover	4
D. Poland - Polytechnic University – Bialystok 1. Constant monitoring and improvement of the quality of education at BUT 2. Study of the professional careers of University graduates and analysis of the needs of the labor market, taking into account the opinions of employers 3. Improving and verifying the work of academic teachers and other people conducting classes 4. Verification of the quality of administrative support for students 5. Providing infrastructure and support measures for students 6. Improving procedures for ensuring the quality of education 7. Elements of the Education Quality Assurance System	Cover	7
E. Cyprus – Neapolis University 1. Monitoring and Data-Driven Improvement (BI & AI Tools) 2. Internal Quality Assurance Committees and Continuous Evaluation 3. Regular Administrative Staff Performance Evaluation 4. Annual Academic Staff Performance Evaluation 5. Systematic Student Course Evaluations (Moodle-Based) 6. Integrative Quality Management via the PROSE Platform	Cover	6

F. Cyprus – Enoros Consulting Limited		
Total		25

University quality is a multifaceted concept that encompasses educational standards, teaching methods, research, infrastructure and academic environment. Ensuring high quality is a process that requires continuous improvement, adaptation to new technologies and compliance with international trends.
According to the information including in the Reports of the project partners connecting to the Good practices we can see four main aspects with more of the examples of Good practice:

1. University teachers and administrative staff: Competent and motivated university teachers with up-to-date knowledge and commitment to learning.

- (BG) Good practice: Evaluation of faculty teachers – including criteria for teaching work like: fulfillment of the academic workload norm, number of taught academic disciplines, development or updating of training courses - programs and learning resources, number of new lecture courses introduced, work with students
- (GR) Good practice: Code of Conduct - The aim of the Code of Conduct is the designation of a system of principles, ethical values, and conduct and good practice regulations regarding the academic, administrative, and scientific issues of the Institution's operation with a view of fulfilling the academic and social mission of the Institution as well as safeguarding and enhancing its prestige. The current Code is to be applied without any exemption by all members of the university community. In particular, as members of the academic community are regarded the faculty members, the laboratory teaching staff, the technical training staff and the rest categories of teaching staff, the members of the special technical laboratory staff, the administrative staff, the technical staff, the researchers, the seconded staff, the students of all degree courses, as well as any external collaborators and bodies
- (GR) Good practice: Certification of Internal Quality Assurance System – The target groups: students, university teachers, administrative staff, and external partners in its QA processes. This inclusive approach ensures that diverse perspectives contribute to continuous improvement. As a result: It works to the benefit of students, parents, the Higher Education Institute itself and employers because it ensures that a graduate of a study programs has acquired a specific combination of knowledge, competencies and skills (learning outcomes) that are reflected in the accreditation criteria. It ensures that an educational program meets the minimum quality criteria as developed in the European Higher Education Area. The indicators are based on Annual Internal Evaluation Reports and covering academic activities, research performance, administrative functions and student services.

2. Curricula: Content that meets the requirements of the labor market and includes practical components.

- (PL) Good practice: Improving and verifying the work of academic teachers and other people conducting classes - Verification of the qualifications, competences and commitment of an academic teacher that affect the quality of teaching and corrective procedures and methods in this area are an important mechanism for improving the quality of education. Target groups are academic teacher, the results include verification and improvement of the quality of the employed academic staff, protocols of observations of didactic classes, and results of student surveys are an element of the periodic assessment of academic teachers.

- (PL) Good practice: Study of the professional careers of University graduates and analysis of the needs of the labor market, taking into account the opinions of employers - The professional career study is a valuable source of information about the needs of the labor market, which should be taken into account in the study programs implemented at the University and when establishing admission limits for individual fields of study. Alumni Cooperation Office collects data on graduates and the institutions employing them.
An element in the process of studying the professional career of graduates are the opinions of employers, used during the assessment of the graduate's profile in the procedure of designing the study program and in the procedure of cyclical monitoring of study programs
- (CY) Good practice: Key Performance Indicator (KPI) monitoring - system**,** enhanced by business intelligence (BI) and even artificial intelligence (AI) tools, to drive decision-making. The scope of this practice spans across academic and administrative domains – it involves collecting and analyzing data on student demographics, progression, outcomes, and other performance metrics to inform quality improvements. The university has defined multiple KPI categories; for example, one category centers on student metrics such as student satisfaction rates, dropout rates, graduation rates, and employability of graduates**.** Another might focus on institutional efficiency or faculty performance. NUP utilizes a BI software (Targit) that is integrated with its CRM and Moodle systems to automatically gather data for these indicators. This means real-time data flows from various sources – enrollment databases, course management systems, alumni employment surveys – into dashboards that administrators and the QA team can review regularly. Moreover, NUP has developed an in-house AI-driven tool to enhance forecasting; notably, this AI tool analyzes historical data, open data (e.g., demographic trends), and even Google search information **to** predict the number of new students likely to enroll in each program**.** Such predictive analytics allow the university to anticipate changes and plan proactively (for instance, if the AI predicts a surge in interest in a certain program, the university can allocate more resources to that program ahead of time). In essence, the scope of this best practice is taking QA into the realm of data science – ensuring that behind every quality initiative there is measurable evidence or insight guiding it.

3. Student engagement: Opportunities for participation in the academic process, including participation in projects and exchange programs.

- (BG) Good practice: "Early bird" program - Target group: Student and Master's candidates; Result: Fast e-registration process. Guaranteed reserved place in the candidate's chosen specialty; Indicator: Successfully implemented admission plan before the deadline. Guaranteed place in the chosen specialty.
- (GR) Good practice: High level of external exposure as evident by the many awards and the high number of Erasmus students - The International Relations Office is responsible for coordinating and managing the Scientific Cooperation Agreements signed by the University with equivalent Universities or equivalent Higher Institutions in the Region of Europe, Western Balkans, Neighborhood East, South Mediterranean countries, Sub-Saharan Africa, Russian Federation, Asia, Central Asia & USA. Annual Reports measuring the

quality of the implementation of Erasmus projects, the level of satisfaction of the participants of the Erasmus project and the quality of the services offered in the incoming students and staff.

- (CY) Good practice: Systematic Student Course Evaluations - Conducting student course evaluations every semester for all courses**,** using an online system to gather anonymous feedback In practice, toward the end of each semester, students fill out questionnaires (accessible via the Moodle e-learning platform) to rate various aspects of their courses – from the instructor's teaching effectiveness to the course content, workload, and even the adequacy of facilities. These evaluations are a routine part of academic life at NUP; lecturers often remind students, sometimes with a lighthearted prompt ("*Your feedback helps me improve this course for the next cohort!*"), to complete the surveys. The scope of feedback isn't limited to teaching performance – the questionnaires invite students to comment on academic support, administrative services, and infrastructure related to the course as well, ensuring a holistic view of the learning experience.

4. Quality and accreditation: Mechanisms for assessing quality through students, employers and independent institutions.

- (BG**)** Good practice**:** Academic mentoring - Target Groups: Student Groups Results: The academic mentor introduces students to their basic rights and obligations, arising from the Higher Education Act, the internal university and faculty regulations; the structure of the University and its website, containing full information on the possibilities for using the dormitory, receiving scholarships, the mobility offered, internships, internships, etc. Each meeting has been recorded. The topics discussed are described, the specific date of the meeting is indicated, and the students certify their presence with a signature. At the end of each academic year, the academic mentor prepares a report on his/her work, accompanied by the minutes of the meetings held with the students. Indicators: Improving academic results: Increasing the average grade point average and success in exams; Reducing student fatigue and dropout; Increasing student motivation and engagement: - Strengthening the relationship between students and teachers. - Encouraging active participation in the learning process and all activities held at the college. Developing professional skills; Preparing students for their future careers; Developing communication, organizational and analytical skills; Supporting social integration; providing psychological and academic support.

- (IT) Good practice: The centrality of the student in the Governing bodies dedicated to Quality Assurance - the culture of quality is strengthened through active student engagement, contributing to the continuous improvement of study programs, teaching, services, and organization. Greater Integration of the Student Voice: students can directly contribute to improving the quality of training and services, positively influencing university governance. Increased Student Satisfaction: student involvement in decision-making processes increases their sense of belonging and, consequently, their overall satisfaction with the university experience; Greater Transparency in Decision-Making Processes: decision-making processes become more transparent, and students feel more involved in improving the institution; Improved Accreditation Performance: student inclusion helps build a solid academic reputation, which favors positive results in external evaluation and accreditation processes.

- (IT) Good practice: Quality Assurance Board representing the main components of the academic community - Greater transparency in decision-making processes; More deeply rooted quality culture within the university; Greater communication between PdQ and peripheral structures; Balanced and representative presence of all components of the academic community (teachers, students and technical-administrative staff): this guarantees a more complete and participatory vision of university dynamics and promotes a more

effective quality assurance process, since decisions and actions are shared and reflect the needs of all parties involved; Constant updating of skills and greater innovation in quality management practices thanks to the rotation of members; Stability and consistency over time of QA measures thanks to the continuity guaranteed by the maintenance of some members between mandate cycles.

- (PL) Good practice: Constant monitoring and improvement of the quality of education - Newly developed and modernized study programs are modern, competitive and consistent with the expectations of the socio-economic environment, and thus correspond to the assumed strategic goals. A university-wide database of HES subjects and elective courses has been introduced, which significantly contributes to the individualization of the student's education process. Verification and improvement of the quality of classes conducted at the University. Transparency of methods for verifying learning outcomes. Each subject has an approved subject card constituting an annex to the study program approved, which specifies, among others, the thematic scope, teaching methods, assessment methods, verification of learning outcomes, recommended literature available in the library. Striving to improve the quality of diploma theses. Adjustment of study programs to the recommendations and recommendations of the Accreditation Committee.

- (CY) Good practice - Annual Academic Staff Performance Evaluation - The primary target group is the academic staff themselves – through this process, each faculty member receives structured feedback and recognition, which can be highly motivating. Department heads and the university administration are also key stakeholders; they gain a clear picture of individual and departmental performance, helping in decisions about promotions, contract renewals, or support needed. Indirectly, students benefit from this practice as well, since one of the aims is to enhance teaching quality and academic guidance – an instructor who grows through the evaluation process ultimately provides a better learning experience. This annual evaluation has led to significant improvements in faculty performance and development. Faculty members often report that the self-assessment prompts them to reflect on their teaching methods more deeply – for example, realizing they could incorporate more technology in classes or engage in more research collaborations. Over the years, the university has observed positive trends: teaching quality (as evidenced by student evaluations and peer observations) has improved as faculty address the areas flagged in their evaluations, and research output has risen, partly because professors set research goals during evaluations and follow through. The success of academic staff evaluations was measured through several indicators. Completion rate of evaluations is one basic metric (ensuring that 100% of faculty go through the process annually. The university also correlates these evaluations with other outcomes: for instance, improvements in a professor's teaching score in student evaluations or an uptick in published research outputs in the year following an evaluation are seen as validation that the feedback loop is working. Another indicator is faculty retention and morale; high retention and positive feedback from faculty about the fairness and usefulness of the evaluations (gauged perhaps through an internal survey or just lower grievances) suggest that the system is respected and valued. In summary, rising performance levels and sustained faculty development attest to the impact of this best practice.

The quality of higher education among the partner countries is shaped by complex interactions between national policies, international standards, and socio-economic factors. It is visible that most of the Good practices among partners are similar and on the other hand very useful. Each of these partners faces unique challenges and achievements in maintaining high academic standards. The project will

improve:

- Alignment with European Standards: All these countries are part of the European Higher Education Area and follow the principles of the Bologna Process, ensuring diploma compatibility and academic mobility.
- Development of Research Activities: Universities in these countries (members of the project) strive to enhance scientific output and innovation, with all countries making significant progress in international academic publications.
- Challenges in Funding: Despite modernization efforts, exist difficulties in financing higher education, affecting the quality of infrastructure and resources.
- Internationalization: All countries actively attract foreign students and faculty, contributing to cultural diversity and the exchange of best practices.
- Practical Orientation: The connection between universities and businesses is crucial for student preparation. All countries have well-developed internship programs and industry collaborations, while Bulgaria and Greece continue to improve these mechanisms.

To ensure sustainable improvements in higher education quality, it is necessary to:

- Increase investment in academic infrastructure and scientific research.
- Strengthen international cooperation through exchange programs and university partnerships.
- Adapt to digitalization and integrate new technologies into the learning process.
- Enhance the link with the labor market to ensure graduates acquire the skills required for successful careers
- High-quality higher education is a key driver of economic and social development. The universities from Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Italy, and Poland, which are members of the project, have the potential to continue evolving and establish themselves as leading academic institutions in Europe.

In conclusion, quality in universities plays a crucial role in the academic success, professional development and public prestige of higher education institutions. Effective quality assurance mechanisms, including accreditation, internal monitoring and feedback from students and teachers, are key to maintaining high standards of teaching and research. Universities must continuously adapt their strategies to meet the challenges of modern education, technological progress and global trends. Only through a commitment to innovation, sustainability and academic integrity can they ensure competitiveness and relevance on a global scale.