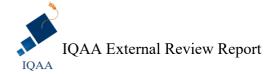**IQAA**

**INDEPENDENT AGENCY
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION (IQAA)**

**EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION
Coventry University Kazakhstan**

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

Astana 2025

REVIEW PANEL

Chair of the External Expert Panel:
1)   **Iskakov Rinat Maratovich** – Dr., Vice-Rector for Science and Innovation, Doctor of Chemical Sciences, Professor, Atyrau Oil and Gas University

International Expert

2)   **Ha Jin Hwang** – Dr., Professor and Director of the School of Creative Industries (SCI) at the Astana IT University (AITU)

Employers' Representative

3)   **Daulet Yermanov** – Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at the TIDAAR AI Solutions, Almaty, Kazakhstan

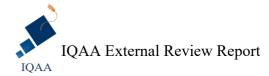**Students' Representative**
4)   **Nurzhigit Kairullayev** – Student at the Maqsut Narikbayev University (MNU), Bachelor's Degree in Finance, Minor in Economics and Econometrics, Minor in Financial Engineering

IQAA COORDINATOR

Daulet Kalanov – Director of Administrative and International Relations Department
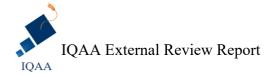
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

Miras Daulenov – Dr., Vice-Chancellor (President) of the Coventry University Kazakhstan

THE LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT WITH THE ACTUAL STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE UNIVERSITY FOR EACH STANDARD

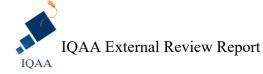| Standards	Indicate the level of compliance of the self-assessment report with the actual state of affairs at the higher education institution for each standard			
	Full Compliance	**Significant Compliance**	**Partial Compliance**	**Non-Compliance**
Standard 1 – **Mission, Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Policy**	+			
Standard 2 – **Ethics and Academic Integrity**	+			
Standard 3 – **Management and Information Management**		+		
Standard 4 – **Student-Centered Learning, Teaching and Evaluation**	+			
Standard 5 – **The Admission of Students, Learning Outcomes, Recognition and Qualification**	+			
Standard 6 – **Educational Programs: Development, Effectiveness, Continuous Monitoring and Periodic Evaluation**	+			
Standard 7 – **Faculty and Teaching Effectiveness**	+			
Standard 8 – **Research (Creative Activity)**		+		
Standard 9 – **Resources and Student Support Services**	+			
Standard 10 – **Public Awareness**	+			

CONTENT

CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE AUDIT

Introduction

Coventry University in Kazakhstan (CUK) underwent an external review on March 11-12, 2025 as part of its primary institutional accreditation with IQAA by members of the External audit expert panel, namely Rinat Iskakov, PhD; Ha Jin Hwang, PhD; Daulet Ermanov; Nurzhigit Kairullayev. An expert panel evaluated CUK against ten IQAA standards through analysis of the university's self-assessment report, on-site observations, and interviews with stakeholders. The review process was comprehensive and aligned with IQAA guidelines, examining all aspects of the university's operations – from its mission and governance to teaching quality, resources, and public information. The panel paid special attention to student educational achievements, quality assurance mechanisms, and the improvements made since the university's establishment. In particular, the external experts reviewed CUK's initial cohort outcomes (where available) and the systems put in place to ensure long-term quality education.

Self-Assessment Methods: CUK prepared a detailed self-assessment report ahead of the review, documenting evidence for each accreditation standard. The self-assessment was developed in a collaborative manner: CUK's Academic Board and management formed working groups to evaluate institutional performance, collect data, and compile supporting documents. The methods included internal audits, policy reviews, and stakeholder feedback surveys, ensuring that the self-study was evidence-based. For example, the administration and teaching staff actively participated in developing the quality assurance system and provided input, alongside external stakeholders such as the Board of Governors, in assessing the university's practices. Draft policies, minutes of meetings, and various operational data were appended to the report to substantiate CUK's claims. This inclusive approach meant the self-assessment was a realistic reflection of the university's status, covering strengths as well as areas needing development.

Level of Preparation and Participation of University Staff: The university staff demonstrated a high level of preparation and engagement throughout the accreditation process. CUK's management and faculty were deeply involved in both the self-assessment and the external review. During the site visit, staff at all levels – from senior management to support departments – were available for interviews and provided candid insights into institutional processes. The thoroughness of the self-assessment report, which included extensive appendices for each standard, attests to the staff's commitment. Key academic and administrative personnel showed clear ownership of quality assurance processes; for instance, students and faculty alike were aware of the university's codes of conduct and policies, indicating effective internal communication and training. The review panel noted that the university's team was well-prepared with documentation and was responsive to requests, reflecting a strong culture of cooperation. Overall, the combination of a rigorous
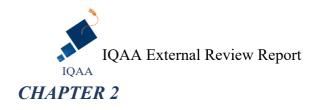
CHAPTER 1

self-study and active staff participation provided a solid foundation for the external review and facilitated an objective evaluation of CUK's compliance with IQAA standards.

Main Characteristics of the Higher Education Institution

Coventry University in the UK, founded in 1843, is a forward-looking, modern institution with a proud tradition of providing high-quality education. Coventry University Kazakhstan, as a licensed campus in accordance with the Minister of Science and High Education decree order No. 305 dated June 19, 2024, opened its doors in September 2024 to its first cohort of students at its brand-new campus at Korgalzhyn Highway 13A, Astana, Kazakhstan 010000. It offers world-class facilities, including interactive study spaces, a vibrant social space, a well-stocked library, and café facilities. The university provides a diverse range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, delivering education that equips students with practical skills and global perspectives. This aligns with the UK's education system while catering to Kazakhstan's rapidly developing economy. The university offers foundation courses in Business and Computer Science, as well as the MBA Global Business from January 2025 for which the General Licence No. KZ70LAM00000588 for Educational Activities in Higher and Postgraduate Education was issued on December 3, 2024. Next year, it will offer bachelor's degrees in Business and Computer Science, along with foundation courses in Finance, International Relations, Construction Management, and Art and Design, which will receive approval in April 2025. The university is reviewing and approving 20 new academic courses and working to obtain licenses for its bachelor's programs. Since it only opened in September 2024, the first cohort of graduates will be in 2028 who will receive Coventry University UK degrees, and they will be the University's first recognised agents of positive economic and social change. Coventry University Kazakhstan proudly stands as the first British university campus in the heart of Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan. The university is committed to fostering academic excellence, innovation, and community engagement.

Coventry University Kazakhstan is the trading name of Coventry Kazakhstan LLP, which operates the modern city-center campus in Astana and is licensed by Coventry University, UK, and delivers Coventry University courses. The university operates within the legal context of the Republic of Kazakhstan and is licensed by the government, specifically the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, to deliver educational services. Coventry University UK conducted the course approval and institutional approval process over several months. The institutional approval and course approval by Coventry University UK were finalized on 4 June 2024, enabling Coventry University Kazakhstan to offer courses to students. The CUK Charter of the university, approved on December 20, 2024, is the key governing document, setting out legal and structural responsibilities. The Decree Order No. 305 was amended by Decree Order No. 599, dated December 10, 2024, to incorporate provisions for the funding of state scholarships by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

CHAPTER 2

EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT OF THE REVIEW PANEL

> *Introduction*

The external review of Coventry University Kazakhstan (CUK) was conducted as part of its **initial institutional accreditation process** based on the **Independent Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (IQAA)** standards. The review panel, consisting of national and international experts, conducted a comprehensive evaluation based on **documentary analysis, on-site verification, interviews, and facility inspections**. The review covered all **10 IQAA institutional accreditation standards**, with a focus on how well the university aligns with its mission, quality assurance mechanisms, student-centered learning, faculty effectiveness, research, infrastructure, and public engagement.

CUK is a **newly established transnational higher education institution** that launched in **September 2024**, offering **a foundation program in seven disciplines** as part of its initial student intake. It follows the **academic and quality assurance frameworks of Coventry University (UK)**, ensuring that teaching, learning, and assessment are aligned with **international best practices**. The university **does not yet have graduates**, as it is in the early stages of its **academic and institutional development**, but it has already set high standards in **teaching, student support, governance, and industry engagement**.

> *Compliance with the Institutional Accreditation Standards*

> **Standard 1. Mission, Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Policy**

Evidence and Analysis:
Coventry University Kazakhstan has a clearly articulated mission and strategic plan that guide its development. The mission, adopted from Coventry University UK's ethos, emphasizes "creating better futures" and is built on values such as integrity, innovation, inclusivity, and collaboration. This mission has been formally aligned with CUK's governance and quality assurance processes; for example, the university's Management Board and Academic Board have ensured that the mission and strategic goals are integrated into the current management system and policies. CUK's **Strategic Plan 2035** (initial strategy document) maps out long-term goals and objectives in line with this mission, focusing on delivering first-class UK education in Central Asia and contributing to regional development.

Quality assurance (QA) is embedded in CUK's strategic framework. The university has developed a draft Internal Quality Assurance Policy based on Coventry University UK's standards, outlining processes to maintain and improve academic quality. In practice, CUK has already implemented key QA mechanisms. The **Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF)** is in place to drive continuous improvement in teaching, learning, and the student experience. This framework promotes a culture of innovation and reflection, including

regular monitoring and review of academic activities. QA responsibilities are clearly defined: CUK's Academic Board oversees internal quality, and there are plans to establish a dedicated Quality Assurance Committee (in collaboration with Coventry UK) to further formalize QA oversight. Evidence shows that feedback loops are active – the university collects input from students and staff and uses it to inform decision-making and strategic adjustments. CUK's mission and strategic planning are clearly defined and largely implemented through a developing quality assurance policy. There are minor gaps (such as the not-yet-formalized QA Committee and Policy), but the institution demonstrates a strong commitment to meeting the standard.

Vice-Chancellor/President and Chair of the Board of Governance provided a tour around the university campus, presented strategic plans for future development of the CUK and were interviewed by the review panel.

- The vision, mission, values, and strategic goals are well stated, which are aligned with Coventry University UK and CUK's available resources, opportunities, and labour market demands.

- It is critical to CUK's mission to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary for them to contribute to the economic, legal, technological, and social development of the   country.

- The courses at Coventry University Kazakhstan are designed within international frameworks and adapted to the local context through delivery. Learning outcomes are defined for each course, with quality assurance and enhancement frameworks driven by Coventry University UK, the Management Board, and the University's Academic Board forming a core component of the quality assurance system.

- CUK plans to recruit students from across Kazakhstan and Central Asia as well as other foreign countries. During the strategic plan period up to 2035, CUK intends to enhance recruitment efforts in Central Asian countries to increase the number of international students.

- Students have the freedom to participate in academic mobility programs and select internship options. Quality assurance policies and processes are in place to foster a strong culture of quality within the university. Staff members are actively involved in maintaining and enhancing the internal quality assurance system, ensuring collective responsibility for continuous improvement and excellence.
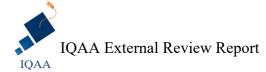
- Strategy 2035 has clear goals for CUK, which are as follows:
  - ☐ Be a leading UK university in Central Asia, recognised for its first-class UK degrees and the delivery of innovative approaches to learning;
  - ☐ Be recognised regionally as one of the best universities for employability of its graduates;

☐ Be recognised regionally for the impact to the innovative development.

- CUK has a draft Internal Quality Assurance Policy, based-on Coventry University UK. It outlines the standards and processes for maintaining and improving academic quality across the institution.

- CUK's internal Quality Assurance policy is aligned with the university's strategic plan, vision, mission, values, and core objectives. The Quality Assurance policy supports the strategic goal of enhancing academic excellence by creating a culture of continuous improvement and ensuring that all programs meet high educational standards.

- The policy focuses on student-centered learning, effective teaching methods, and the integration of industry-relevant skills. It also ensures continuous monitoring and enhancement of faculty competencies and administrative processes to meet CUK's strategic goals.

- Coventry University Kazakhstan promotes active student involvement in both internal and external quality assurance processes through student surveys, focus groups and student representation. Transparency of audits and follow up actions is maintained.

- CUK uses the results of its quality assurance evaluations to inform long-term development goals. The systematic analysis of feedback from internal audits and student surveys allows the university to adjust its strategic priorities, ensuring it remains relevant in a changing environment and market conditions. The University also has student staff representatives who meet weekly with Head of Academic Support to discuss matters regarding teaching and learning, and quality assurance. Student voice is an important part of the university in meeting the high-quality standards it aims to uphold.

It has been ensured that CUK's mission aligns with the current management system and the quality assurance procedures, as adopted by the Management Board and the Academic Board of the university. At its core, Coventry University Kazakhstan has a desire to contribute to the economic development of Kazakhstan and Central Asia. The CUK Strategic Plan 2035 has set its mission and vision, and addressed all relevant areas of the university strategy and its management/operations.

Positive practice: CUK has adopted quality assurance system established at Coventry University (UK). Communication channels are well established. Close coordination between CUK and Coventry University (UK) is observed.

CUK exhibits several best practices under Standard 1. First, the strong alignment with the established UK university's mission and quality culture has given CUK a running start – the mission and values are not just rhetoric but are supported by concrete strategies and guidelines inherited and adapted from Coventry University UK. This includes adopting

proven quality enhancement practices (like the QEF and annual monitoring) that exceed what many new institutions implement in their early years.

Second, stakeholder involvement in strategic planning is notable. The university has set up advisory boards with industry and government partners to ensure its programs and goals remain relevant to Kazakhstan's economic and social needs. This collaborative approach grounds CUK's strategy in real-world demands and exemplifies a commitment to its mission of contributing to regional development. Another positive practice is the inclusive development of policies: faculty, staff, and students are given roles in QA processes (students even serve as Academic Board members and provide regular feedback), which fosters a shared quality culture from the outset. Collectively, these practices indicate a forward-looking institution that is building a robust internal quality assurance system alongside its strategic growth.

Remarks: While CUK meets this standard to a full extent, there are a few areas to refine. Notably, some QA structures are still in the process of being formalized. The Internal Quality Assurance Policy is currently a draft awaiting full adoption, and the Quality Assurance Committee that will steer QA policy is in development rather than fully functional. This means that certain quality assurance responsibilities (e.g. systematic review of all criteria) may not yet be institutionally entrenched beyond the interim measures handled by the Academic Board. Additionally, given the university's recent establishment (opened in September 2024), the strategic plan and QA policy have not been tested by time. Many initiatives (such as internal audits and strategic KPI tracking) are newly launched, so their effectiveness is based on design rather than long-term evidence. The panel also observed that some strategic objectives are ambitious (for instance, rapid program expansion by 2025) and will require continuous quality oversight to ensure the mission is upheld during growth. While CUK's foundation is strong, the university should proceed from planning to full implementation of its QA structures to achieve long-term compliance.

Areas for improvement: In the long term, the Strategic Plan should include research strategy which strives for research excellence.

The university should continue training staff and faculty on the QA framework and their role in it. As new personnel join, especially with the university's growth, ongoing workshops on quality assurance processes will help maintain the shared understanding of CUK's mission and standards.

Compliance level:
Overall, CUK's activities demonstrate full compliance with Standard 1: the institution's mission and strategic planning are well-defined and linked to a QA policy that, while still being fully finalized, is largely in operation, ensuring alignment with IQAA standards.

Standard 2. Ethics and Academic Integrity

Evidence and Analysis:

Coventry University Kazakhstan has established a comprehensive framework to uphold ethics and academic integrity across the institution. A robust policy infrastructure is in place to promote academic honesty among students and staff. All students must adhere to a **Student Code of Conduct** (and staff to a Staff Code of Conduct) that clearly defines expectations for ethical behavior and academic honesty. To enforce academic integrity, CUK utilizes Turnitin plagiarism detection software for all student written work – an effective measure that checks originality and deters plagiarism from the outset of coursework. The university has formal procedures for handling academic misconduct: cases of plagiarism or cheating are referred to a Student Academic Misconduct and Disciplinary Committee, ensuring due process and consistent consequences for violations. This system is aligned with Coventry University UK's practices, indicating a high standard of integrity oversight.

Beyond academic honesty, CUK actively fosters an ethical campus environment. The university enforces a **zero-tolerance policy for corruption and bribery**, guided by Coventry University's UK Bribery Act compliance standards. Staff and students receive induction training to raise awareness of anti-corruption rules and ethical expectations, which underlines the commitment to integrity from day one. The administration also promotes fairness and transparency in non-academic areas – such as **human resources processes** (hiring, evaluation, promotions) – through policies that ensure equal opportunities and merit-based decisions. In admissions, CUK similarly guarantees fairness: the Admissions Office provides easily accessible, accurate information on entry requirements and follows clear rules so that all applicants are treated consistently. These measures collectively illustrate that **CUK meets Standard 2 in full** – ethical principles are ingrained in its policies and daily operations, despite the institution's young age.

The Head of Academic Department, 7 faculty members and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for strategy were interviewed. CUK has put in place all necessary policies and mechanisms to ensure ethics and academic integrity. The university's codes of conduct, anti-corruption measures, and academic honesty systems meet IQAA requirements fully. Ongoing efforts are needed to maintain this culture, but no significant gaps in compliance are identified under Standard 2.

Positive practice: CUK's approach to ethics and integrity shows several strengths that could serve as exemplars. One notable practice is the integration of Coventry University's established ethical standards into CUK's operations. By adopting the UK parent university's policies (e.g. the Bribery Act guidelines, research ethics statements, and codes of conduct) and tailoring them to the Kazakh context, CUK ensures international best practices are followed from inception. This provides credibility and rigor to its integrity systems. Another positive practice is the proactive education of its community: the university doesn't just have rules on paper, but actively trains students and staff on ethical conduct during orientations

and via continuous awareness programs. For instance, all written assignments being screened through Turnitin has normalized academic honesty as part of the learning process, and students understand from the beginning that originality is required. CUK also promotes a culture of openness and feedback which bolsters integrity – students are represented in decision-making bodies and are encouraged to voice concerns (weekly class representative meetings and open-door management policies), reflecting an environment where issues can be raised transparently.

Lastly, the emphasis on values in CUK's stated ethos (integrity, respect, inclusivity) is not just rhetorical; it manifests in daily practices like non-discrimination clauses, support for diversity, and clear grievance procedures that ensure everyone is treated with respect and fairness. Together, these practices indicate a healthy ethical climate.

Remarks: The main challenge for CUK under this standard is not the absence of policies – those are well in place – but the ongoing cultivation of an integrity culture in a newly established institution. Since CUK is in its first year of operation, many of its ethical policies (plagiarism checks, disciplinary committees, etc.) have only recently been put to use. There is a limited There is a limited track record yet of how effectively they function. Due to the university's recent launch, only a few academic misconduct cases have occurred to test the system's efficacy. This means the university must remain vigilant to ensure that the written policies translate into consistent practice as the academic community grows.

Another point is that while the framework is comprehensive, continuous reinforcement is needed. The self-assessment report and interviews confirmed that CUK leadership is aware of this need – they plan ongoing training and have designated an Academic Conduct Lead to oversee academic integrity matters.

Areas for improvement: The university should implement regular workshops or seminars on academic integrity and ethics for both students and faculty. For example, annual sessions on avoiding plagiarism, understanding citation, and ethical research should be scheduled, possibly in partnership with Coventry University UK's Academic Integrity Unit.

Compliance level: These measures collectively illustrate that CUK meets Standard 2 in full – ethical principles are ingrained in its policies and daily operations, despite the institution's young age.

Standard 3. Management and Information Management

Evidence and Analysis:

Coventry University Kazakhstan has developed a management system that is both effective and in line with international best practices. **Governance Structure:** CUK's organizational and decision-making structure is clearly defined and documented. The university operates in compliance with the *Law "On Education" of the Republic of Kazakhstan* and mirrors the governance framework of Coventry University Group (UK) to ensure global standards are met. The governance model is notably participatory and horizontal – rather than a strictly top-down hierarchy, CUK involves various stakeholders at multiple levels. For example, the Managing Board (with approved Terms of Reference) oversees strategic planning and policy, but faculty, staff, and students also play integral roles through committees and consultative bodies. Student representation is embedded in governance: the Student Government exists and student representatives sit on institutional committees, including the Academic Board, contributing to decisions on academic quality and student life. This inclusive approach ensures management decisions are informed by those affected and enhances transparency.

- The Managing Board, guided by a well-defined Terms of Reference oversees institutional operations, strategic planning, and policy development. Job descriptions of all structural divisions are maintained within the HR Department, ensuring clarity in roles, responsibilities, and accountability across the institution.

- To foster transparency and participatory governance, CUK engages faculty, staff, and students in decision-making processes. Regular meetings, performance evaluations, and stakeholder consultations ensure that the institution remains adaptable and aligned with evolving academic and industry needs.

- A key feature of CUK's governance approach is the active involvement of the Student Government in institutional committees and boards. Student representatives contribute to decision-making processes, particularly in areas concerning academic quality, student services, and campus life. This participatory model ensures that student voices are heard and integrated into institutional policies.

- CUK is in the process of developing a Policy on Incentives and Rewards, aimed at recognizing and valuing contributions from all members of the university community. This initiative is expected to foster motivation, professional development, and institutional commitment.

- State-of-the-art digital tools and platforms are available at CUK to enhance academic and administrative efficiency. CUK employs the following licensed digital tools such as Microsoft Office 365, Turnitin, Moodle, Platonus 6.0, Coventry University (UK) Online Library Access.

- To ensure data security, accessibility, and efficiency, CUK has implemented strict information management protocols aligned with both local and international standards.

  At the highest level, CUK has established key performance indicators aligned with its mission and strategic priorities. These include:
- Academic Excellence: Student retention rates, graduation rates, student satisfaction scores, and research output.
- Operational Efficiency: Financial sustainability, staff-to-student ratios, and regulatory compliance.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Industry partnerships, employer satisfaction with graduates, and alumni engagement.
- Innovation and Digitalization: Integration of digital learning tools, cybersecurity compliance, and IT system efficiency.

8 administration members, including HR, Marketing, IT Department, Head of the Library, Academic Affairs Department and the Office of Registrar were interviewed. The management system is underpinned by formalized processes and documentation. All structural divisions have clear job descriptions and delineated responsibilities maintained by HR, which promotes accountability. There are regular strategic meetings and performance evaluations of units, indicating a systematic approach to operational management. An example of proactive management practice is that CUK is developing a **Policy on Incentives and Rewards** to recognize contributions of faculty and staff – an initiative aimed at motivating personnel and aligning their goals with institutional objectives.

Information Management: On the information technology front, CUK has invested in modern digital infrastructure to support both administration and learning. The university employs state-of-the-art licensed platforms: **Microsoft Office 365** for collaboration and document management, **Moodle** as its Learning Management System, **Turnitin** for plagiarism checking (as noted in Standard 2), and **Platonus 6.0** for student information and academic record management. Additionally, CUK provides access to Coventry University (UK)'s LMS system Solar, online library resources, giving students and faculty a wealth of academic materials. These tools are integrated under strict information management protocols conforming to local and international standards, ensuring data security and reliable, real-time information flow across the institution. For instance, Platonus helps with enrollment and compliance with national education data requirements, while Moodle centralizes course information and student engagement. CUK actively analyzes data from these systems for decision-making: the self-assessment report mentions that regular student satisfaction surveys and feedback data are systematically collected and used to create action plans. Quality assurance is also tied into information management – the Quality Assurance Committee (once fully operational) will utilize data from these platforms to benchmark against global standards and drive improvements.

Positive practice: CUK has established a comprehensive governance and management system that ensures institutional effectiveness and alignment with international best practices. The university's management system operates in accordance with the "On

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Education" Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan" and follows the governance framework of Coventry University Group (UK). This alignment ensures that decision-making processes, strategic initiatives, and operational policies are structured, transparent, and globally competitive. The Chair of the Board of the Governors is commended for vision and commitment to excellence. The Vice Chancellor's leadership fosters a forward-thinking academic environment at the university.

The inclusive governance model is a significant strength. Involving independent members and students in bodies like the Board of Governors and Academic Board not only improves decision-making quality but also ingrains a sense of shared governance and transparency. This practice of student participation is relatively advanced for a young university and aligns with modern higher education governance trends.

Secondly, CUK's data-driven management is notable. The usage of analytics from student surveys, internal audits, and key performance indicators (KPIs) is already evident; for instance, CUK has outlined key institutional KPIs (student retention, graduation rates, etc.) aligned with its strategic priorities and monitors them through a cascade model down to each division. This structured performance management approach shows a maturity in operations, ensuring that the whole organization is moving cohesively towards its goals.

Another positive practice is the early adoption of global best practices in administration – CUK uses IFRS standards for financial reporting and is part of a corporate group (Primus Education/Primus Capital) that provides professional oversight and support in management. This adds financial discipline and external accountability to the university's management.

The integration of technology is exemplary: by providing the campus community with tools like Office 365 and an online library from day one, CUK has established a modern, digital campus environment conducive to both learning and administrative efficiency. The comprehensive Academic Support Department (see Standard 9) also indicates that management has thoughtfully centralized support services, enhancing coordination and service delivery. These practices collectively suggest that CUK's management culture is proactive, transparent, and quality-focused. The information management systems will also face new demands with expansion – e.g. Platonus and Moodle will handle more data, and cybersecurity will require continued attention. The review panel notes that CUK should keep its IT infrastructure and policies (data protection, access controls) under review to match the increased scale of operations. Lastly, given CUK's ties to the Coventry University Group, it should continue balancing local autonomy with external guidance. The reliance on Coventry UK's approval for certain decisions (such as faculty appointments) may be beneficial for quality now, but as CUK matures, it will aim to develop its own managerial capacity. There's no immediate issue, but overreliance on external approval could be a challenge in the future.

Remarks:
During the interview with students, there was a case mentioned about a faculty member being fired after complaints from students. While a prompt response to student feedback

may be a positive practice, the review panel has raised concerns about the university taking the side of students without a balanced review and protecting rights of faculty members. However, it was further elaborated by students that the whole procedure after initial complaints took around two months, and that the university has carried out its own review of the faculty member in question, and the university has concluded that indeed the faculty member did not adhere to the university standards. The university has further clarified that the faculty member was on a contracted three-month probation period, and was released at the end of it after reviews and being provided performance improvement support. The university should take more efforts in order to make the recruiting process of faculty more effective and enforce more checks to make sure only faculty members corresponding to the university standards are hired.
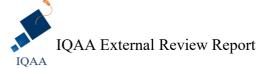
Areas for improvement:

While management and information systems are strong, the panel identified a few areas to monitor as the university grows. One remark is that certain *planned initiatives* in management are still underway – for example, the Policy on Incentives and Rewards for Staff is not yet implemented. Until such programs are realized, some aspects of staff motivation and retention rely more on informal practices or the general appeal of working in an international campus. It will be important for CUK to complete this and similar initiatives (like formalizing all committees and fully staffing administrative units) to maintain momentum. Another consideration is the scalability of the current management model. The inclusive and horizontal approach works well with a small initial cohort and team, but as the university doubles or triples in size with new programs, CUK will need to ensure its decision-making processes remain efficient. The self-assessment report indicates awareness of this, with plans for regular reviews and possibly delegating certain decisions to sub-committees.

Compliance level:

In summary, CUK significantly complies with Standard 3. The university's management is characterized by clarity, inclusiveness, and strategic alignment with its mission, and its information management leverages technology to enhance efficiency and evidence-based decision-making. The governance and IT systems, despite the university's short track record, are sophisticated and largely operational. At the same time, the university should concentrate more resources for hiring staff to make the process more effective and consistent.

CUK's management and information systems meet the standard to a significant extent. The institution has clear governance, stakeholder involvement, and modern IT support. The compliance is rated significant (rather than full) because some elements (like staff hiring and incentive policies) are still in progress and the system has not yet been tested at full scale. With relevant refinements in due time, CUK is clearly capable of achiveing full compliance in this area.

Standard 4. Student-centered learning, teaching and evaluation

Evidence and Analysis:

Coventry University Kazakhstan is strongly committed to student-centered learning, employing teaching and assessment methods that cater to student needs and encourage active participation. **Teaching and Learning Approach:** CUK has adopted Coventry University's educational strategies, which are known for being learner-centric. All instruction is delivered in a personalized manner – classes are kept small (a maximum of 25 students per classroom) to facilitate interaction, group work, and individual attention. The university emphasizes an *activity-based and participatory approach*: for example, CUK uses a **flipped classroom** model where students review lecture materials (texts, videos) before class, and valuable face-to-face time is devoted to discussion, problem-solving, and applying knowledge in an interactive setting. This approach actively engages students in the learning process and accommodates different learning styles.
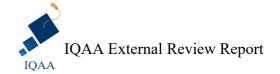
During the assessment process, faculty members and students demonstrated a strong understanding of academic integrity and international best practices in teaching and learning. The institution ensures full compliance with academic conduct policies, as confirmed through interviews with teaching staff and student support services. Faculty members actively assist students by localizing some course materials when necessary and maintaining a class size of no more than 20-25 students. This small class structure allows for an accessible and engaging learning environment as it was mentioned by one of the students.

Students affirmed that instructors provide substantial support when they face difficulties with course materials. They noted that some of the faculty members make themselves available beyond regular working hours, demonstrating a high level of commitment and dedication.

The university also employs robust mechanisms to assess teaching proficiency and effectiveness. The Academic Support Department confirmed that faculty members are continuously evaluated to ensure their teaching methods align with best practices. Students provided an example where they collectively expressed concerns about a particular instructor's teaching method, and after the review by the university, the instructor was replaced. This showcases the institution's responsiveness to student feedback and its commitment to maintaining high teaching standards.

Students also reported clarity in the evaluation process, stating that feedback on grades and assessments is transparent and objective. The evaluation system is structured to provide constructive comments, ensuring students understand their academic performance and areas for improvement.

A hallmark of CUK's student-centered ethos is the **Personal Tutor system**. Each student is assigned a personal tutor (sometimes referred to as a "Success Coach") who guides and supports them throughout their studies. Students are required to meet their personal tutor at least three times a year one-on-one, and they can meet more often as needed. This ensures continuous academic support, allowing individualized monitoring of student progress and well-being. Additionally, for academic skill development, CUK provides extra help: students who struggle or fail assessments are targeted for **Academic Booster classes** and additional tutorials, which are offered weekly to reinforce foundational skills and address learning gaps. This safety net reflects a strong commitment to helping every student succeed.

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Curriculum and Resources: All educational programs at CUK are well-structured with clearly defined learning outcomes and competencies, following the frameworks set by Coventry University. Course specifications and module descriptors – detailing objectives, content, credit weight, and assessment methods – are approved through Coventry's rigorous academic procedures and are made available to students through the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle). This transparency means students know exactly what is expected of them and can track how each module contributes to their overall learning goals. The VLE also houses all relevant study guides, academic policies, and support resources (e.g., guides on academic writing, citation, etc.) for easy student access. Furthermore, CUK's commitment to inclusivity in learning is evident: it has a formal **Policy for Students with Special Educational Needs** and aligns with Coventry's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion framework to ensure that teaching methods and materials accommodate diverse learners. For instance, if any student requires learning support, the university provides it, and the staff are trained to implement inclusive teaching practices.

Assessment and Evaluation: CUK's assessment processes are rigorous, fair, and geared toward supporting learning. The university is compliant with Coventry University Group's assessment regulations, including both **internal and external moderation** of student work. Each assessment is outlined in an Assignment Brief which includes the criteria and expectations; these briefs are pre-moderated by Coventry UK faculty to ensure standards are consistent, then shared with students in advance via Moodle. After students complete assessments, CUK employs a multi-tiered marking system: for example, coursework is first graded by CUK instructors, then samples (including all fails and a selection across grade bands) are second-marked internally, and further sent to Coventry University UK's tutors for moderation, and finally an **External Examiner** from another UK university reviews the sample. Only after this thorough process are marks confirmed at joint Assessment Boards between CUK and Coventry UK. This ensures that the evaluation of students is reliable, unbiased, and aligned with international academic standards. CUK also has clear procedures for handling extenuating circumstances (students who miss or cannot complete assessments due to valid reasons can apply to an Extenuating Circumstances Committee for extensions or deferrals) and for appeals (students dissatisfied with results have a formal appeals process as per Appendix 4.14). Feedback to students is prompt – provisional marks are given within ten working days, which is a good practice to help students learn from each assessment in a timely manner.

Continuous improvement in teaching and learning quality is also a focus. The university systematically collects student feedback on teaching through **Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs)** at the end of each module. The MEQ results (which mirror questions from the UK's National Student Survey for comparability) are analyzed by academic leadership and discussed with faculty for potential improvements. Additionally, CUK plans to conduct an annual student satisfaction survey covering the entire academic experience (similar to the NSS in scope). On the faculty side, a **Review of Professional Practice (RPP)** system is instituted: academic staff participate in scheduled teaching observations, both by management and peer colleagues, to receive constructive feedback

and share best teaching practices. This peer-review of teaching encourages reflective practice and professional development among instructors. Through these mechanisms, CUK ensures that student-centered learning isn't static – it evolves based on student input and educational best practices.
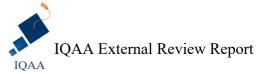
Given the above, **CUK fully meets Standard 4**. The teaching methods are learner-focused and interactive, support systems for students are robust, and assessment methods are transparent, valid, and geared towards learning outcomes. The alignment with Coventry's high standards (such as TEF Gold teaching quality) further reinforces the strength of CUK's approach.

Positive practice: CUK demonstrates exemplary practices that enhance student-centered learning. One major strength is the Personal Tutoring system, which ensures no student "falls through the cracks." By mandating regular tutor-student meetings and offering open availability for consultations, CUK provides personalized guidance that many larger universities struggle to achieve. This is a best practice in fostering academic success and student well-being, and it clearly reflects the institution's learner-first philosophy. Another positive practice is the commitment to faculty development in teaching. All CUK academic staff are part of Coventry University Group's Academic Enhancement and Professional Development programs, meaning they have access to training and certification opportunities (such as the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice, and routes to Advance HE Fellowships). This ensures instructors continually refine their teaching skills and stay current with innovative pedagogy – a benefit that directly translates into better student experiences. Furthermore, the integration of technology in learning (for instance, Moodle as a central hub, and the flipped classroom model using online materials) is a forward-thinking practice that resonates with today's learners and allows more interactive in-class sessions.

CUK's holistic support for students outside the classroom also stands out. The Academic Booster sessions and targeted remedial support for those who underperform on assessments are interventions that show the university's dedication to every student's progress. Instead of letting students repeat failures, CUK actively coaches them to improve, which is a model of student-centric remediation. Additionally, the fact that all course materials and even policy documents are readily accessible online to students ensures transparency and self-directed learning – students are empowered with information about their curriculum (like credit structures, award regulations, etc.) from the start.

CUK fully satisfies Standard 4 with its learner-centric educational approach. The evidence shows an effective mix of personalized support, engaging teaching methods, and rigorous yet fair evaluation processes. The university should keep up these practices and continuously refine them as it gains more experience.

- Strong commitment to academic integrity and international best practices in teaching and learning.
- Faculty members provide individualized support to students, localizing materials if necessary.

- Small class sizes enhance student engagement and accessibility to instructors.
- Transparent and objective evaluation process ensures clarity in grading and assessments.
- Student feedback is valued and acted upon, demonstrating a student-centered approach to faculty performance management.

Remarks: As a very new institution, some aspects of student-centered learning at CUK have yet to be proven over time, but the initial indications are positive. One remark is that outcome measures (like graduate success or long-term student satisfaction trends) are not yet available, simply because the first cohort of students is still in progress (no graduates until 2028). Therefore, the effectiveness of the student-centered approach will need to be confirmed by retention rates, student performance, and feedback as more data emerges. That said, early feedback is promising – for example, a student survey in January 2025 showed 83% satisfaction with academic support services, suggesting that students are responding well to the support structures in place.

Another point is that while class sizes are small now (advantageous for student-centered teaching), maintaining small group learning in the future will depend on resources keeping pace with enrollment. The university should be cautious to ensure that as student numbers grow with new programs, the same level of personal attention can be provided (this is addressed in resource planning under Standard 9).

Additionally, the panel notes that student-centered learning is an evolving practice – CUK should continue to adapt its teaching methods based on the diverse needs of its student body. For instance, as more students from different academic backgrounds enroll, tutors and lecturers might need to adjust pacing or provide additional bridging modules. The existing plans for periodic curriculum review (under Standard 6) should capture any needed pedagogical adjustments as well.

Another remark is that the university's heavy reliance on Coventry University's established processes is extremely beneficial for quality, but CUK should also monitor local context – e.g., ensuring that teaching methods align with Kazakhstan's cultural and educational expectations where relevant.

Areas for improvement: As enrollment grows, recruit sufficient faculty to keep class sizes small and preserve the interactive teaching model. The planning for the 2025 undergraduate intake should include hiring or training additional personal tutors and teaching staff so that each student can continue to receive individualized attention.

Compliance level:
Overall, there is full compliance with this standard; the remarks are made to continue the good practices and verify their efficacy through future data.

Standard 5. The admission of students, learning outcomes, recognition and

Evidence and Analysis:

Coventry University Kazakhstan (CUK) has developed a clear and structured admission process that is aligned with the admission standards and academic policies of Coventry University UK. This alignment ensures that students enrolling at CUK receive the same high-quality education and degree recognition as students studying in the UK.

The university has established transparent and merit-based admission policies, which are clearly outlined for prospective students. The minimum IELTS score requirement for admission is 5.0 for the September intake and 5.5 for the January intake, ensuring that students possess the necessary English language proficiency to succeed in their academic programs. However, the average score of admitted students is 6.5.

To enhance accessibility and attract top-performing students, CUK provides various scholarships and financial aid programs. This initiative supports students from diverse backgrounds, particularly those with strong academic records and financial need. By offering financial incentives, the university ensures that talented students have the opportunity to pursue higher education, regardless of their financial situation.

Student performance and academic progression are closely monitored through data analytics, course reviews, and student satisfaction surveys. The university employs a structured student assessment system to evaluate learning outcomes, ensuring that students achieve the necessary competencies and skills required for their respective fields. Additionally, CUK integrates continuous feedback mechanisms, allowing students to evaluate their courses and faculty performance, contributing to overall teaching and learning improvements.

However, graduate employment tracking has not yet been implemented, as CUK is still in its early stages and has not yet had a graduating cohort. Despite this, the university recognizes the importance of tracking alumni career progress to assess the impact of its academic programs on employability. A structured graduate tracking system will be essential for measuring employment rates, job placements, and industry alignment in the future.

CUK follows UK qualification frameworks and Kazakhstani educational requirements, ensuring that degrees are recognized both nationally and internationally. The integration of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits allows students to transfer to other institutions if needed, further increasing the university's credibility and global reach.

Evidence for this analysis was gathered by CUK Self-Assessment Report, as well as through meetings and interviews with key university leadership, including:
- University Vice-Chancellor and Chair of the Board of Governors
- Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Head of Foundation
- Heads of Departments and Academic Advisor
- Faculty Members
- Students

These discussions provided valuable insights into the university's admission policies, student learning experience, and qualification recognition framework, reinforcing the findings outlined in this report.

Coventry University Kazakhstan ensures that its student admission processes, program learning outcomes, and qualifications awarded are transparent, fair, and aligned with international standards. **Admissions:** CUK's admissions policies and criteria are clearly defined and publicly available. The university follows a published *Admissions Policy* (CUK Admissions Policy, Appendix 5.1) which outlines entry requirements for each program, application procedures, and selection criteria. These admission rules are consistent with Coventry University's standards, given that CUK's programs are effectively the same as Coventry's – ensuring that incoming students meet the requisite academic and language qualifications for a UK-degree program. The admissions section on the university's website provides detailed information on requirements for foundation, undergraduate, and postgraduate courses, as well as guidance on the application process and deadlines. CUK also adheres to principles of fairness and merit in admissions: all applications are reviewed against the stated criteria, and there are policies like the Guidelines for Scholarship Committee and evaluation rubrics for motivational essays to ensure objectivity in any competitive scholarship or selection processes.

The university makes an effort to recruit a diverse student body. As evidenced in the self-assessment data, the first cohorts included students from various cities across Kazakhstan and even some who transferred from studies abroad to join CUK. Admissions for 2024/25 were lower than hoped (104 students in total) mainly due to late start-up timing and selective admissions process, but with increased government scholarship support (200 state scholarships allocated for 2025) and broader outreach, CUK is positioned to grow its intake. Importantly, the admission standards have remained high: despite relatively moderate minimum requirements (e.g., IELTS 5.0–5.5 for foundation), the actual admitted students had an average IELTS of 6.5, indicating that CUK attracted academically strong candidates. This bodes well for maintaining academic quality in line with the intended learning outcomes of programs.

Learning Outcomes and Qualification Recognition: Each of CUK's educational programs has clearly defined learning outcomes and curriculum structures that align with recognized qualification frameworks. Because CUK delivers programs that are essentially Coventry University degrees, the **learning outcomes are identical to those in the UK** and are approved through Coventry's academic governance. Course and module learning outcomes are documented in course specifications, which are available to students and were reviewed by the panel. These outcomes map the skills and knowledge students must acquire; for example, foundation year programs emphasize academic English and critical thinking to prepare students for undergraduate studies, and the MBA program's outcomes focus on global business leadership competencies. The university ensures that upon completion, students receive a qualification (certificate, diploma, degree) that is **equivalent to a Coventry University award**. In practice, this means a student graduating from CUK will receive a Coventry University UK degree parchment. Thus, the qualifications are

internationally recognized. The self-assessment confirms that in June 2024 Coventry University formally approved CUK's institutional and course offerings, cementing that all graduates will earn *Coventry University degrees*. This recognition is certainly a strength: it guarantees that CUK's qualifications meet global standards and will be accepted by employers and other institutions worldwide.
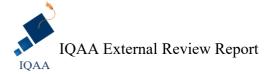
Academic Rules and Continuity: CUK follows a comprehensive set of academic regulations from admission through graduation to ensure consistency. The **Regulations for Assessment, Progression, and Awards** (Appendices 5.2, 5.6, etc.) used at CUK are the same as those at Coventry, covering how students advance, how grades are determined, how resets work, and how final qualifications are conferred. For instance, CUK does not currently permit course transfers or mid-program transfers, because the Coventry framework expects students to follow a set program structure without transferring in credits from elsewhere (a practice that ensures program integrity but might limit flexibility). The university also has a systematic approach to **monitoring student performance and supporting student success**. It collects data on student progress through its internal systems and employs a *Quality Enhancement Framework* to analyze this data for trends. Indicators such as pass rates, dropout rates, etc., are tracked. There are procedures for academic appeals (Appendix 5.7) allowing students to seek review of results, which provides a fair mechanism to address any discrepancies in outcome recognition. Additionally, CUK is beginning to develop career services and track outcomes (although there are no graduates yet) to ensure the qualifications lead to positive next steps (more on this in Standard 10).

One area under this standard is the **recognition of prior learning (RPL)** and mobility. Currently, CUK **does not have policies for recognizing informal or non-formal prior education** for credit transfer. Given that CUK is brand new and focusing on delivering a set suite of programs, they have not implemented RPL or credit transfer schemes yet (besides the general policy of not accepting course transfers as mentioned). However, the self-assessment report notes that the university is working towards establishing academic mobility programs in collaboration with Coventry University, which in the future would facilitate credit recognition for study periods elsewhere. This means that while at present students cannot get formal credit at CUK for prior study or experience, plans are in place to enable such recognition through structured exchange or mobility agreements going forward.

CUK's admissions and qualification processes are largely compliant with the standard. The transparency and rigor in admissions and the high-quality, recognized qualifications indicate strong compliance.

Admissions are handled equitably and transparently, learning outcomes are well-defined and aligned with robust qualifications, and the degrees offered are internationally valid. The only shortfall is the current lack of RPL/credit transfer pathways, which is understandable at this stage but will need attention as the institution evolves.

Positive practice: A very positive practice is the consistency of academic standards – by using Coventry's regulations and frameworks wholesale, CUK ensures that its students receive the same academic experience and recognition as their UK counterparts. This
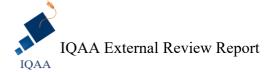
effectively means that students in Astana are held to (and benefit from) the same outcome standards as one in Coventry, which is a boon for the students and for the reputation of the new university.

The clear **documentation and communication** of academic rules is another best practice. Students are made aware of important policies like the credit system, grading criteria, and qualification rules through orientation and readily available documents (e.g., the *Undergraduate Regulations (Mode E)* and *Regulations for Conferment of Awards* are provided to students via the VLE). . This level of openness helps students understand how they can progress and what they need to achieve, thereby preventing confusion or misinformation. Additionally, the structured approach to monitoring performance – using data analytics from day one – means CUK can quickly identify if any student cohort is falling behind and intervene, which is an excellent practice to ensure that learning outcomes are met by all. Lastly, the **congruence of qualifications with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) of Kazakhstan** (as noted for the MBA and other programs) is a positive practice. CUK took steps to ensure its programs not only meet UK standards but also meet local qualification levels (e.g. bachelor's at Level 6 with Diploma/Certificate exit awards at levels 5 and 4). This dual alignment ensures graduates' qualifications are recognized both internationally and within Kazakhstan, adding to their portability and value.

- Transparent admission policies with well-defined and accessible entry requirements ensure that all applicants understand the qualifications needed for enrolment.
- Integration of ECTS and UK degree frameworks ensures that student credits and degrees are internationally recognized. This facilitates academic mobility and increases postgraduate study opportunities for CUK graduates.
- Scholarship and financial aid programs support students from diverse backgrounds, making higher education more inclusive.
- Regular student performance monitoring through surveys, analytics, and continuous feedback ensures that academic quality is maintained and improved over time.

Remarks: CUK's graduate tracking system is still under development. While the university does not yet have graduates, it will be crucial to implement a comprehensive alumni tracking system to measure employment rates, industry placement, and career development after graduation.

The key area where CUK currently has an opportunity to improve in this standard is the recognition of prior learning (RPL) and credit transfer flexibility. As noted, there is no mechanism yet for students who have prior informal/non-formal learning or who started studies elsewhere to receive credit at CUK. In a mature higher education system, RPL is often important for lifelong learning and mobility. Since CUK is new and has a small intake mostly of first-year students, this has not been a pressing issue; however, as the university grows, it will need to address how it handles transfer students or recognizes learning outside the formal programs. The panel understands that this is partly constrained by Coventry University's policies (which currently do not permit course transfers into these franchised

programs), but it is an area for development, potentially through local policy adaptation or special bridging programs in the future.

Areas for improvement: The current small scale of operations has allowed very personalized admissions handling. As intakes grow, the admissions office will need to expand and possibly digitalize further. The university should ensure the admissions experience remains smooth and informative as the number of applicants grows.

- Establish a Graduate Employment Tracking System
    - Implement a structured alumni database to monitor career progression, job placement rates, and employer feedback.
    - Conduct annual employment surveys to assess the effectiveness of the university's programs in preparing students for the job market.
    - Develop an employer partnership network to provide internship and job placement opportunities.
- Consider Developing Policies for Recognizing Transfer Students
    - Establish credit transfer agreements with other universities to facilitate student mobility.

Ensure that all necessary steps are taken for local recognition of the degrees (for instance, if Kazakhstan's education authorities require any nostrification or if there's a need to issue a Kazakhstani diploma supplement alongside the Coventry degree). This will safeguard graduates' ability to use their qualifications for public sector jobs or further studies within Kazakhstan. In conclusion, the remarks are minor: the main gap is in prior learning recognition, and the rest is about planning for future scale.

Compliance level:
Overall, CUK fully meets Standard 5. Admissions are handled equitably and transparently, learning outcomes are well-defined and aligned with robust qualifications, and the degrees offered are internationally valid. The only shortfall is the current lack of RPL/credit transfer pathways, which is understandable at this stage but will require more attention as the institution evolves.

Standard 6. Educational programs: their development, effectiveness, continuous monitoring and periodic evaluation

Evidence and Analysis:
Coventry University Kazakhstan has carefully developed its educational programs to align with both its strategic priorities and international academic standards, and it has put in place mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and periodic review.
Program Development: All of CUK's programs (foundation, undergraduate, and postgraduate) were designed in partnership with Coventry University UK, ensuring they meet rigorous academic criteria. The programs currently offered or planned (such as International Business Management, Business Administration, Business Management,

Business & HR Management, Advertising & Digital Marketing, Computer Science & AI, Information Technology Management, and the MBA Global Business) were formulated according to CUK's mission and values (e.g., "creating better futures" and the core values of innovation, integrity, etc.) and are consistent with the university's strategic plan. Each program's curriculum was crafted to match the **graduate profile** CUK aims to produce – for instance, the business programs emphasize ethical leadership and enterprise, reflecting CUK's goal to contribute to Kazakhstan's economic development. The MBA Global Business program, launched in January 2025 as CUK's first postgraduate offering, is a good example: it was developed according to Coventry University (UK) standards and aligned with the National Qualifications Framework of Kazakhstan (NQF Level 7 for Master's). It incorporates relevant content in leadership, strategy, and innovation, and offers structured progression pathways (MBA, PG Diploma, PG Certificate) within the program, indicating a well-thought-out design that caters to different exit points. Similarly, the undergraduate programs due to start in September 2025 are modeled on Coventry's curriculum at Bachelor's Level 6, with defined exit awards at Level 5 and Level 4 (Diploma and Certificate) for students who may not complete the full degree. This built-in flexibility is a modern approach that recognizes partial achievements and is especially useful in a new market where some students might not attain a full degree.

A notable aspect of program development is the integration of **industry standards and current global trends**. For instance, the Business and HR Management program will incorporate the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) professional map, aligning the curriculum with international HR practice standards. The Advertising and Digital Marketing program integrates the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) competencies. The computer science programs include up-to-date content in AI, cybersecurity, data science, etc., reflecting cutting-edge industry needs. Furthermore, CUK has embedded Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) into its business curricula to cover sustainability and ethics. These alignments illustrate that CUK's program development was not carried out in isolation; it considered the demands of the labor market and expectations of professional bodies, thereby enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of the education provided.

Continuous Monitoring: CUK has established a **Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF)** document that outlines how programs are continuously monitored and periodically reviewed. According to the self-assessment, the QEF includes several key processes: *Annual Monitoring* of courses and modules, *data-led interim reviews* (every three years for each program), and full *Periodic Academic Reviews* (every six years for postgraduate and every nine years for undergraduate programs). This schedule is ambitious for a new university but mirrors Coventry University's own review cycle, ensuring that CUK will regularly scrutinize each program. In annual monitoring, program teams will critically appraise the past year's delivery, looking at student performance data, feedback, and resource adequacy to make incremental improvements. The periodic reviews (once the university has operated long enough to conduct them) will be more in-depth and include external panel members, providing a comprehensive evaluation of curriculum currency and achievement of learning outcomes.

Data and Feedback Utilization: The framework emphasizes using evidence in these
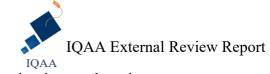
reviews. CUK plans to evaluate program relevance through **employer feedback, student survey results, and professional body requirements**. For example, they will consider input from their industry advisory boards and any changes in sector skill demands to update courses. They will also review the financial viability of programs (ensuring student numbers justify continuation and that resources are allocated efficiently) as part of the evaluation. Importantly, the QEF process includes transparency in communicating changes: "Approval and Review Reports" will document any course revisions and these will be shared, and a **Module Information Directory** is updated annually so students always have the latest information on their curriculum.

Because CUK is in its infancy, these monitoring processes are just beginning. The first annual monitoring will occur after the 2024–25 academic year. However, even within the first semester, there were signs of active monitoring – for instance, the faculty and support staff met regularly to discuss foundation program progress, and adjustments (like additional support sessions) were implemented in real-time as needed. While hard data on program effectiveness (like graduation rates or employment rates) are not yet available, the structure to gather and analyze such data is in place. The self-assessment candidly notes that since no students have graduated yet, *employment tracking has not commenced*, but efforts are underway to develop career support and tracking mechanisms in anticipation.

Program Effectiveness: Effectiveness can be inferred from early performance of the foundation programs. Out of 104 foundation students, retention has been high (only a handful left or deferred, according to interviews), and student feedback on the course content relevance has been good. The foundation year's design, which includes modules on academic skills and critical thinking (as preparation for degree courses), seems to be effectively equipping students; faculty reported that those who progressed into the second term were performing at expected levels. The true test will be when these students enter the bachelor's programs. For now, the **design effectiveness** is strong on paper: programs have clear aims, modern content, and strong alignment with external standards, suggesting that if delivered as planned, they will produce graduates with the intended competencies. The panel also notes that CUK's programs aim to meet *local and global needs simultaneously* – e.g., curricula emphasize local Kazakhstani context applications alongside international perspectives, which is effective in ensuring graduates can operate in the domestic environment and beyond.

Periodic Evaluation and Improvement: Although no full cycle of periodic review has occurred yet, CUK has already shown responsiveness to feedback in its short time of operation. For example, based on initial student feedback, they adjusted scheduling of some classes and increased certain practical content in the foundation IT module. This agility in making improvements between intakes is a positive sign. Additionally, CUK will be subject to external evaluations, like this accreditation and Coventry University's own collaborative provision audits, which contributes to periodic external checking of program quality.

CUK meets the expectations for program development and quality assurance to a high degree. The programs are carefully designed and there is a clear system for continuous

monitoring and review.

Positive practice: The development and monitoring of programs at CUK include some exemplary practices. One is the **integration of international frameworks and qualifications** within the programs, which was mentioned earlier. This forward-looking approach means that CUK's curricula are at the cutting edge of academia and industry. Students learning with CIM frameworks or CIPD standards are effectively getting an education that preps them for certification or practice in those domains, giving CUK graduates a competitive edge. Another positive practice is the **built-in periodic review strategy (QEF)** that CUK has adopted from day one. Many new institutions take years before formalizing such review processes, but CUK has them on the books from the start, which will embed a culture of continuous improvement. The fact that annual monitoring and tri-annual mini-reviews are planned is commendable because it ensures issues will be identified and addressed regularly, not just at long intervals.

The **clear communication to students** about program changes via updated directories and reports is also a best practice; it treats students as partners in the educational process and maintains trust through transparency.

Remarks: CUK is launching many programs in a short time (five undergrad and one postgrad within a year of opening). Managing the development and resource allocation for each could be challenging. The self-assessment hints at financial viability considerations and monitoring of student demand for each program, which is prudent. The panel stresses the importance of continuously evaluating whether all programs remain viable and high-quality as they scale up. It might be that some programs grow faster than others; CUK should be ready to invest more in high-demand areas (like Computer Science, which globally sees high enrollment) and support smaller programs so they don't lag in resources or attention.

Areas for improvement: Ensure that each program has adequate resources as it starts. For example, laboratories or software for IT programs should be in place before students reach those advanced modules. Similarly, faculty hiring for specialized courses (AI, advanced marketing analytics, etc.) should be done well in advance. This will maintain program quality and effectiveness when those courses commence.
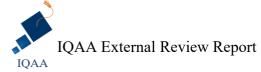
Compliance level:
In conclusion, CUK demonstrates full compliance with Standard 6. The programs are well-conceived and meeting criteria on paper, and the quality assurance processes for monitoring and review are established, though not yet fully tested over time.

Standard 7. Faculty and teaching effectiveness

Evidence and Analysis:
Coventry University Kazakhstan has recruited a qualified faculty body and established policies to ensure teaching effectiveness and continuous professional development of its

academic staff.

Faculty Qualifications and Recruitment: CUK adheres to a stringent and transparent HR policy for faculty recruitment, based on competitive selection and clearly defined criteria. All academic vacancies are advertised, candidates are shortlisted against required qualifications and experience, and interviews are conducted often including a teaching demonstration. Importantly, every faculty appointment at CUK must be confirmed by Coventry University Group in the UK, meaning that CUK's parent institution vets and approves the instructors to maintain quality. For postgraduate courses (like the MBA), Coventry University London also interviews candidates, adding an extra layer of scrutiny for those teaching advanced level courses. This rigorous hiring process has resulted in a faculty where all lecturers meet or exceed the qualification requirements for higher education in Kazakhstan, and in fact, all hold postgraduate degrees. According to the self-assessment, as of late 2024, 40% of CUK's academic staff have a PhD degree, while the rest have Master's or MBA degrees (and in some cases professional certifications). Many faculty also have prior teaching experience in the UK or other international environments, which enriches the teaching at CUK. All hires had to be approved by Coventry University, ensuring they possess not only credentials but also pedagogical skills aligned with the Coventry University Group standards.

In terms of faculty numbers and sufficiency, CUK started with a small but adequate team for its Foundation programs: 8 full-time and 3 part-time faculty were on staff in the first semester (Fall 2024). 7 of them were interviewed by the audit group. This provided a healthy staff-student ratio for the initial 104 foundation students. As the university prepares to launch multiple undergraduate programs and the MBA, recruitment is actively underway to onboard additional faculty in 2025. The hiring plan has been structured to ensure that by the time new programs begin, there are enough qualified lecturers in each discipline. The panel reviewed CVs of existing faculty (Appendix 7.12) and found them to be strong: besides academic qualifications, several have industry experience in their fields which enhances teaching effectiveness by bringing real-world perspectives.

Teaching Effectiveness and Development: CUK has implemented processes to continuously assess and improve teaching quality. A *systematic assessment of teaching* is conducted through multiple feedback mechanisms. **Student feedback** is a primary component: students evaluate the quality of teaching and learning through end-of-module surveys (MEQs, as described in Standard 4) and through more immediate channels like weekly class representative meetings. In these class rep meetings, issues related to teaching (pacing, clarity, support) are discussed and minuted, with action points for faculty or administration to address by the next meeting. Also, personal tutors serve as another feedback relay; because they have one-on-one talks with students, they can catch and report if advisees are struggling with certain teaching methods or need extra help. The student voice, thus, regularly informs faculty about what is working and what isn't in the classroom, allowing timely adjustments.
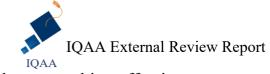
Peer and Administrative Review: Additionally, CUK has instituted a *Review of Professional Practice (RPP)* for faculty, which includes **teaching observations**. There are

two types: (1) Management-led observations, where academic managers observe classes to evaluate teaching performance against set criteria (with documentation and feedback forms); and (2) Peer observations, where colleagues observe each other's classes to share best practices and foster collaborative improvement. This RPP scheme is beneficial in promoting reflective teaching practice. The observed sessions result in constructive feedback sessions and agreed action plans for improvement if needed. According to the RPP overview (Appendix 7.5), this process is meant to be developmental rather than punitive, helping lecturers refine their methods in a supportive way. Early evidence suggests faculty have embraced this, with open classes already happening and positive exchanges on pedagogical strategies taking place.

CUK also encourages faculty development through the **Academic Enhancement and Professional Development (AEPD)** unit of Coventry University Group. All CUK lecturers are enrolled in this unit's programs, which include formal courses (like the PgC in Academic Practice) and resources for continuous learning. This means CUK faculty have opportunities to gain teaching certifications and even pursue fellowship of the UK Higher Education Academy, which is a mark of teaching excellence. New instructors undergo academic induction training via Coventry's systems, ensuring they understand the expected teaching standards and student-centered approach from the start.

Faculty Workload and Support: The number of teaching staff relative to programs is still small, which means each faculty member might wear multiple hats (teaching several different modules, serving as personal tutor, etc.). The university's HR policy delineates rights and responsibilities clearly, including reasonable workload expectations and processes for performance evaluation. Since teaching staff are few, CUK has managed to keep workloads balanced by hiring part-time lecturers in specialized areas and by leveraging online support from Coventry University where needed (for example, some guest lectures or specialized content might be delivered via visiting lecturers from Coventry). The panel found that faculty morale is high, likely due to the exciting environment of building a new university and the support they receive (small classes, good facilities, and strong academic backing from Coventry Group).
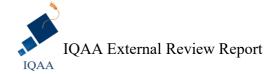
Faculty Achievements and Research: Given the focus of Standard 7 is teaching effectiveness, research is covered under Standard 8. However, a criterion often considered is faculty scholarly activity and recognition. Because CUK is new and teaching-focused at present, faculty have not yet received local accolades (such as national "Best University Teacher" awards) – indeed, the self-assessment notes that such honors are "not applicable" yet due to staff being recently employed and many coming from outside Kazakhstan Additionally, most faculty are not engaged in significant research yet (two are pursuing PhDs, but the institution itself isn't research-intensive). This is understandable in the start-up phase, and the university plans to strengthen research with time (see Standard 8). From a teaching perspective, faculty are primarily evaluated on their pedagogical contribution at this time, and all indications are that they are performing well in that regard. CUK fully meets Standard 7. The faculty are well-qualified and the university has robust mechanisms to ensure and

enhance teaching effectiveness.

The partnership with Coventry University in hiring and training staff is a huge asset. It effectively globalizes CUK's faculty standards – every lecturer is not only vetted by local needs but also by UK standards. This practice ensures a consistency in quality that is rarely seen in new institutions. For example, requiring Coventry UK approval for appointments and involving them in interviews has likely filtered out candidates who might not uphold the pedagogical approach CUK desires.

- The university adheres to a clear and transparent HR policy based on competitive selection and established hiring rules. This includes a shortlisting process, an interview panel (usually with a demo lecture required) and confirmation of all 42 appointments by Coventry University Group. Postgraduate lecturers are also required to be interviewed by Coventry University London. Staff evaluation and staff development procedures are established. The processes of recruitment, selection, adaptation, assessment, and motivation of personnel are defined by the university's HR policy.

- CUK adheres to the qualification requirements for licensing educational activities. All academic staffs have postgraduate qualifications, but only 4 faculty members with a PhD. It was noted that all academic staff hiring has been approved by the Coventry University Group.

- CUK's HR policy includes transparent processes for hiring, promotion, demotion, and dismissal. Internal documents regulate the rights and obligations of staff, including job descriptions. The university keeps accurate and up to date records of the number of full-time and part-time faculty.

- As of 01/09/2024, the university had 8 full time and 3 part-time faculty members, who were academically qualified in line with international standards. It was mentioned that recruitment is currently underway for academic staff for the five undergraduate business and three undergraduate computer science courses starting in September 2025 as well as the postgraduate MBA courses.

- The systematic assessment of the effectiveness and quality of teaching and learning is provided by different interrelated feedback mechanisms.

- Students provide feedback on the teaching and learning process through the weekly class rep meetings. Students also have regular meetings with their personal tutors, who act as the Coventry University 'Success Coaches', guiding and supporting students through their studies, assessments and student life in general. Students also complete the Module Evaluation Questionnaire at the end of each module.

- Academic staff are expected to have open classes, with a program of observation established for staff to share best practice and to encourage reflective practice through professional discussion about concrete shared classroom experiences.
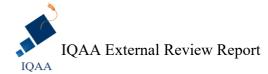
- CUK students will complete an annual survey, based on the UK National Student Survey, in which students evaluate their whole experience at university over the year.

Positive practice: It was observed that students are highly satisfied with their study at CUK. Pride of being members of CUK is evident. The faculty members are turned out to be motivated and dedicated to students' learning and growth.

- Academic staff follow a Scheme of Work from Coventry University UK. All taught resources, including worksheets, tasks, PowerPoints etc. are uploaded onto the VLE for students to access, to prepare for their lectures and seminars and to revise learning and content afterwards. These resources also provide a record of the courses taught.

- Faculty members undergo professional development training provided to all academic staff in the Coventry University group. The Academic Enhancement and Professional Development (AEPD) team supports the whole Coventry University Group.

- CUK academic staff have already received the 'Induction for Teaching Staff Workshop' and have access to the Coventry University Group Teaching Knowledge Base and a range of Academic Development Activities.

- CUK academic staff are encouraged to take part in Advance HE professional recognition via the Coventry University Framework – Professionally Accredited (CUFPA) scheme.

- CUK Academic staff are also required to complete nine essential online training modules, covering topics such as Data Protection, Inclusive, Safe and Secure Campuses, Health and Safety, etc.

The dedication to student feedback loops as part of teaching effectiveness is also commendable. The weekly class rep system with documented follow-ups means that faculty responsiveness to student input is built into the schedule. Students see that their comments can lead to changes (e.g., a too-fast course might be slowed down, or additional examples added if requested), which enhances the learning environment and shows faculty flexibility and commitment.

Remarks: The current faculty-student ratio is excellent, but with five new undergraduate courses and an MBA, CUK will need a significantly larger faculty pool by late 2025. The recruitment is ongoing, and the panel encourages careful attention to maintaining faculty quality during rapid expansion. It can be challenging to hire many new faculty members in a short period of time while keeping standards high. Coventry University's oversight in hiring should mitigate this, but there is a risk of faculty shortage or overwork if hiring doesn't fully meet targets. It's crucial that CUK not overload its existing faculty by making them cover too

many courses – doing so could affect teaching effectiveness.

Areas for improvement: Faculty scholarly engagement is limited so far, which might not impact teaching immediately but could in the long run. As mentioned, CUK's faculty are not yet producing research or publications under the university's banner. While this does not hinder teaching quality now, a lack of engagement in research or innovation could eventually stagnate teaching content. However, given that many faculty bring contemporary knowledge from their recent studies or industry experience, this is not yet a problem. The plan to ramp up research (Standard 8) will help faculty remain intellectually stimulated and up-to-date in their fields, which in turn benefits teaching. Even before Standard 8 initiatives fully kick in, faculty should be encouraged to engage in small-scale scholarly or innovative teaching projects. For example, faculty could do classroom-based research on teaching methods or develop case studies for publication. This can keep faculty intellectually engaged and enhance their teaching content.

Compliance level:
In summary, CUK meets Standard 7 to a full extent. The faculty is well-qualified, hiring practices ensure quality, and there are sound policies and initiatives in place to maintain and enhance teaching effectiveness.

Standard 8. Research work (creative activity)
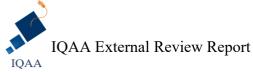
Evidence and Analysis:
Research is a critical component of a university's academic mission, contributing to knowledge generation, innovation, and institutional prestige. Coventry University Kazakhstan (CUK) has recognized this by establishing a research policy that is adapted from Coventry University UK. This alignment ensures that research activities at CUK adhere to international best practices, promoting academic integrity, research ethics, and scholarly impact.

Currently, the university encourages faculty and student participation in research, but as a newly established institution, research output remains limited. While there is a commitment to fostering a research culture, the absence of large-scale research projects, externally funded grants, and a dedicated research budget presents challenges to advancing research initiatives.

To further develop its research capabilities, CUK plans to integrate research into its curriculum by embedding research components in student projects, dissertations, and industry collaborations. Additionally, the university has outlined intentions to establish partnerships with industry and research institutions, which would facilitate applied research, innovation-driven projects, and technology transfer.

Evidence for this analysis was gathered by CUK Self-Assessment Report for IQAA, as well as through meetings and interviews with key university leadership, including:
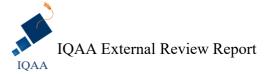- University Vice-Chancellor and Chair of the Board of Governors;

- Deputy Vice-Chancellors;
- Heads of Departments and Faculty Members.

These discussions provided valuable insights into the current status of research at CUK, institutional challenges, and planned initiatives for growth.

As a newly established teaching-focused institution, Coventry University Kazakhstan is in the very early stages of developing its research activities. **Research Policy and Environment:** CUK has expressed a commitment to integrating education, science, and innovation in the future, in line with its mission, but it openly acknowledges that it is *not a research-intensive university at present*. There is currently no significant institutional research output or dedicated research units, which is understandable given that the university is just six months into operations and has been concentrating on launching academic programs. However, CUK has laid important groundwork for a research culture by adopting Coventry University Group's research policies and standards. The self-assessment details that CUK will be localizing and implementing key Coventry research governance documents, such as the *Research Data Management and Sharing Standard*, *Research Ethics and Integrity Statements*, and principles for research conduct. This means that even if research activities are minimal now, the policies that ensure rigorous, ethical, and high-quality research are being put in place. For instance, any research undertaken at CUK will be expected to follow strict ethical guidelines and integrity standards identical to those at Coventry University UK, which is a positive foundation for the future.

Alignment with Mission and Strategy: CUK plans to align its eventual research endeavors with its mission and strategic objectives. The focus will be on applied research that contributes to Kazakhstan's knowledge economy and solves practical problems for industry and society. The areas of research interest mentioned include business innovation, educational technology, and sustainability – fields that directly complement CUK's academic programs and the developmental needs of the region. By prioritizing these areas, CUK intends to develop niche expertise that benefits local industries and communities. This approach is prudent: rather than trying to do research in all areas, the university will concentrate on a few strategic themes that match its strengths and context (e.g., leveraging their business faculty to do research on emerging markets or entrepreneurship in Kazakhstan).

Student Involvement in Research: Even though formal research projects are not yet underway, elements of research are embedded in the curriculum. Most notably, the MBA Global Business program requires students to complete a 15,000-word dissertation project as a capstone. This is a substantial piece of independent research guided by a faculty supervisor, where students identify a business problem, conduct literature review, gather data, and present findings. Through this, CUK's postgraduate students are being trained in research methodology and critical inquiry, which contributes to the research culture by producing scholarly work (even if only at a student level for now). Additionally, undergraduate students are encouraged to engage in project-based and inquiry-based learning (for example, foundation students undertake smaller research assignments to build their skills). The presence of these academic research components in teaching indicates that CUK is instilling

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research-mindedness in its student body early on.

Faculty Research Activity: At the moment, CUK's faculty are not engaged in substantial research projects under the university's banner. Two faculty members are working on completing their PhDs (which they had begun before joining CUK), implying some research activity is happening on an individual level. However, there have been no institutional research outputs (publications, grants, conferences) yet, and no dedicated time or funding allocated for research in faculty workloads so far. This is understandable as CUK's immediate priority has been teaching. The university's stance is that as it becomes more established and after the first graduates are produced, more focus will turn to research.

CUK's strategy to jumpstart research includes **partnering with established research centers and universities** (both locally and internationally) to collaborate on key research areas needing attention. By connecting with renowned research institutions, CUK can seek mentorship, share resources, or participate in joint projects, thereby gradually building its own research capacity. Furthermore, the university plans to adapt Coventry University's structures for supporting research – for instance, Coventry's Doctoral College model and Research Capability Development programs will serve as a template for developing CUK's research ecosystem. Thus, CUK can establish its own doctoral program or at least provide support for faculty to pursue doctorates and post-doc research in the future.

Incentives and Motivation: Recognizing that faculty need motivation and support to embark on research, CUK is exploring suitable incentive programs. This could involve providing more time for research (by reducing teaching loads), seed funding for research projects, or provide rewards for publications and conference presentations. Although nothing concrete is in place yet, outlining this in the self-assessment shows CUK's awareness that it must encourage its staff if it wants its research to grow. Another aspect is involving students in research – CUK indicates it values integrating students in research activities, which aligns with modern pedagogical practices of undergraduate research involvement.

CUK substantially meets Standard 8. The university currently has minimal research output or active projects, but it has laid down policy foundations and expressed strategic intent to develop research. At this stage, research is the weakest link in CUK's portfolio, reflecting its focus on teaching in the start-up phase. Thus, the institution will need to show concrete progress in research in the future.

Positive practice: CUK's intention to eventually establish an ecosystem akin to a Doctoral College or research center means they are thinking systematically about research training and environment for the future, which is logical. Having that vision early can shape how they recruit faculty (maybe looking for those with research potential, even if they mostly teach initially) and how they allocate resources when available.

- Research policies align with international standards, ensuring compliance with global academic frameworks and ethical guidelines.
- Initial steps toward developing a research culture are evident, with faculty and students being encouraged to engage in research activities.
- Plans to integrate research into the curriculum will contribute to the development of

research skills among students.

Remarks:

- Research activity is currently limited, with no major publications, large-scale research projects, or externally funded grants at this stage.
- There is no dedicated research budget explicitly mentioned in the self-assessment report, which may impact the ability to support faculty-led research initiatives.
- There is a current lack of structured faculty research development programs to encourage active engagement in research publications and funding applications.
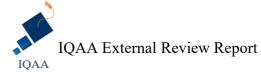
It is evident that research is the weakest area for CUK at present, which is not unusual for a new teaching university. The panel's main remark is that **CUK currently lacks active research and development outputs**, which will be a point of attention in future accreditations. The substantial compliance is acceptable in an initial accreditation given CUK's context, but the university should demonstrate progress in this area by the time of re-accreditation. Specifically, over the next few years, CUK should move from planning to action: e.g., securing at least some research grants or internal funding, having faculty produce publications or conference papers, and involving students in research projects beyond classroom assignments.

Another remark is that **research culture takes time to build**, and it requires buy-in from faculty who right now may be more teaching-oriented. The administration will need to nurture interest in research. Some faculty might have been hired mainly for teaching expertise and might not have strong research backgrounds; those faculty might need support or collaboration opportunities to engage in research. The university could also consider hiring a few research-active academics (even part-time or as consultants) to lead initial projects and mentor younger staff members.

The panel also notes that **funding and resources for research** are not mentioned – presumably, at this stage, there is no dedicated research budget. As finances allow, CUK should allocate some funding for research (e.g., labs for scientific research in computing), including funding for conferences.

Finally, considering CUK's teaching load and current limited staff numbers, the university will have to carefully balance teaching and research. A remark is that CUK should integrate research into teaching where possible (like using class projects to further faculty research agendas) so that they complement rather than compete with each other. Over time, perhaps setting aside some faculty time for research (e.g., summers or a certain number of hours per week) will be necessary to have progress.

Areas for improvement: Formulate a clear research development plan with short-, medium-, and long-term goals. For example: in the next 1–2 years, focus on internal projects and building partnerships; in 3–5 years, aim to launch research centers in priority areas; in 5+ years, consider offering doctoral programs in niche fields. This strategy should include

concrete metrics (number of publications, participation in conferences, etc.) to measure progress.

Increase Research Funding and Grant Applications
- Establish a dedicated research fund to support faculty and student research projects.
- Encourage faculty to apply for national and international research grants through government agencies, private sector partnerships, and global research funding bodies.
- Develop an internal research grant program to seed early-stage research projects.

Encourage Faculty Participation in National and International Research Projects
- Develop collaborations with local and international universities to foster joint research initiatives.
- Provide research training workshops to equip faculty with the skills needed to publish in high-impact journals.
- Introduce incentives and recognition programs for faculty members who contribute to research excellence.

Develop Internal Research Support Programs to Enhance Academic Output
- Establish a Research Development Office to assist faculty in grant writing, publishing, and collaboration opportunities.
- Integrate research components into student learning, including research-based coursework, industry projects, and thesis work.
- Promote interdisciplinary research initiatives that align with Kazakhstan's strategic economic and technological priorities.

Provide training workshops on research skills for faculty – e.g., how to write a research proposal, research methodology refreshers, publishing in journals, etc. Leverage Coventry's research experts to deliver some of these virtually. Identifying faculty who are interested in research and mentoring them will build an initial cadre of researcher-lecturers.

Compliance level:
In conclusion, CUK is significantly compliant with Standard 8. The university has minimal research activity at present, which falls short of full compliance, but it has established a robust policy framework and future-oriented plans that position it to develop research capacity. At the moment, the criteria related to having ongoing research projects, faculty research output, and integration of research and teaching are only met to a limited degree; however, the initial stage of operation of the university is taken into account.

Standard 9. Resources and student support services

Evidence and Analysis:

Coventry University Kazakhstan has invested significantly in resources and established support services to ensure a conducive learning environment and student well-being, as well as provides a comprehensive range of resources and student support services that align with its mission and strategic objectives. The institution offers extensive academic, financial, and well-being support to ensure students have a conducive learning environment. The expert group interviewed six students, two of whom were in the Student Union, and two were living in the dormitory.

The university has established an Academic Support Department that includes the Registrar's Office, E-Learning services, and the Library. These units work collaboratively to ensure seamless academic operations. The library provides a range of subscription databases through Coventry University UK and physical resources. Additionally, students benefit from a range of study spaces, comfortable lecture and seminar rooms around the campus.

Students reported high satisfaction with the support services available at the institution. They shared examples of instances where they sought guidance from the Academic Support Department and received timely assistance in locating academic materials. The institution has also implemented a structured induction program that familiarizes students with available resources and key personnel who can assist them

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Beyond academic support, the university provides dormitory facilities. Students praised the cleanliness of the accommodation, which includes a cleaning service. Additionally, the institution offers medical services and psychological counseling from Student Support Service to maintain students' well-being.

CUK recognizes the financial constraints some students may face and has implemented substantial financial aid options. The university provides merit-based tuition discounts and plans to secure government grants to fund up to 200 students starting next year. This initiative significantly enhances accessibility to high-quality education for a broader range of students.

Physical and Technological Resources: CUK's campus, which opened in September 2024, is a brand-new, state-of-the-art facility in Astana. It features modern classrooms equipped with interactive technology, dedicated study areas, computer labs, and informal learning spaces designed to foster collaboration. Students highlighted the "vibrant social space" on campus and a well-furnished library as key assets. Indeed, the library is stocked with a collection of physical books relevant to the initial programs and provides access to Coventry University's extensive online library databases, granting students a wealth of electronic resources (journals, e-books, research repositories). The campus also includes amenities such as a café, which adds to the comfort of students spending long hours on site. All classrooms have a maximum capacity of 25 which, combined with flexible furniture arrangements, allows for comfortable group work and discussions.

On the IT side, beyond the academic platforms discussed in Standard 3 (Moodle, Office 365, etc.), CUK offers high-speed internet access throughout the campus and has adequate hardware (projectors, smart boards) to support digital learning. The **e-learning infrastructure** is robust: Moodle serves not just as a learning management system but also

as a portal for many student services and information dissemination. The panel found that students can log into Moodle to access lecture notes, submit assignments, check their grades, as well as find links to support services and guides.
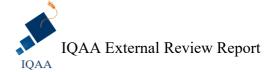
Student Support Services: CUK has centralized its student academic support and services under **the Academic Support Department**. This department includes the **Registrar's Office**, which handles student records, enrollment processes, exam scheduling, and issuance of transcripts. The Registrar ensures that all academic administrative matters (course registration, maintenance of grades, degree audit for graduation) are executed smoothly and in line with both local regulations and Coventry's academic rules. Students reported that the enrollment and registration for their courses were handled efficiently through the Registrar.

An **E-Learning team** is in place to manage the VLE and assist both students and staff in using digital tools. The team has been vital, for example, in training new students on how to navigate Moodle and access online resources during the induction week. They also provide ongoing technical support – if a student has trouble with their online account or a faculty member needs help setting up an online quiz, the E-Learning support addresses it.

The **Library services** are another cornerstone of support. Librarians (or library staff) not only manage the collection but also offer research assistance to students – helping them find resources for assignments, teaching them how to use databases, and guiding them on information literacy. The library provides quiet study areas and also some group study rooms with booking systems, catering to different study needs. Given that CUK's library is tied into Coventry's, students benefit from a much larger resource network than a typical new university library.

Additionally, CUK's student support extends to non-academic needs. The Student Services Guide and Academic Support website list recommended dormitory arrangements or private housing contacts, and staff assist students who need help finding a place to live. Information about health services (like local clinics or insurance) and counseling services are also available. CUK's relatively small cohort means any personal issues can be identified and assisted on a case-by-case basis; for instance, if a student is facing personal challenges, personal tutors or support staff can intervene and guide them to appropriate help.

Induction and Accessibility: A thorough induction program is conducted at the start of an academic year for new students and staff. During induction week, students are introduced to all support services, shown how to access resources, and given contact details for key personnel in each department. They receive, for example, an induction session on library usage, a briefing from IT support about logging in to systems, and meetings with the student services team about extracurricular opportunities and student life. This comprehensive orientation helps students acclimatize quickly and know where to go if they need assistance. CUK ensures that information about resources and support is easily accessible. The Academic Support and Student Services have a presence on Moodle and the (in-development) university website, where students can find the Student Handbook, academic calendars, and guides on things like the Code of Conduct or how to request transcripts. The physical offices for support

services are all located on campus, and because the university is small, students often know the support staff personally, creating a friendly environment to seek help.
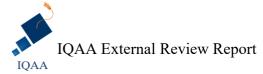
Handling Student Concerns: Mechanisms for addressing student complaints or concerns are clear and varied. Students can raise issues through formal channels (like a written complaint to the Registrar or Academic Support) or informal ones (speaking to their class rep or tutor). CUK encourages students to voice concerns via Moodle forums, Telegram channels (for quick communication), email, or in-person meetings. Depending on the nature of the concern, it's directed appropriately – academic issues go to academic departments, service issues to the relevant support office, etc. Importantly, the culture promoted is one of prompt resolution: the goal stated is to resolve concerns "promptly and efficiently". The weekly class rep meetings mentioned earlier also function as a platform for raising minor issues (like timetable clashes or classroom facilities) which are then resolved administratively. For more serious grievances, CUK would follow a formal procedure (and if academic, Coventry's complaints procedure might also be invoked).

Financial Aid and Scholarships (support aspect): CUK currently benefits from the government scholarships for some students and has internal scholarships. The Financial Aid advising falls under student support as well – guiding students on how to apply for available scholarships or manage tuition payments (payment plans, etc.). The presence of public scholarships for 200 students in 2025 indicates collaboration with the government to support students financially. All 6 students interviewed during the peer review mentioned that they have significant discounts to their tuition fees.

CUK fully satisfies Standard 9 at this stage. The university has excellent facilities and a well-functioning support system for students and staff. Resources are adequately funded and managed with a focus on sustainability. The support services not only meet but in some cases exceed expectations for a new institution. Continued attention to scaling and enhancement will be needed as the university grows, but current compliance with the standard is full.

Positive practice: From the student support perspective, the availability of multiple channels for student support is commendable. Students can get help in person, but also via digital communication means like social media or messaging apps (the mention of a Telegram channel, which is popular in the region is astute). This shows that CUK meets students in their comfort zones and likely resolves many questions quickly (for instance, a student can message a query about a schedule on Telegram and get a near-immediate response from staff). The proactive induction and the assignment of personal tutors (as part of academic support) also works as a student support mechanism for personal development. The emphasis on student feedback in resource planning is noteworthy. Already, CUK surveyed students about their satisfaction with support services, finding 83% are satisfied. Collecting such data and acting on it (say, if 17% were not satisfied, finding out why and improving) is a good practice to ensure the support services remain high quality.

- Well-structured Academic Support Department, ensuring smooth academic operations.
- High-quality library resources, with access to international research databases.

- Comprehensive student support services, including academic guidance, medical services, and psychological counseling.

- Modern dormitory facilities, including cleaning services and comfortable accommodations.

- Strong financial aid opportunities, increasing accessibility through tuition discounts and government grant initiatives.

- Effective student feedback mechanisms that allow concerns to be addressed promptly.

Remarks: One consideration is the scalability of support services as enrollment grows. With only around a hundred students, a small team can handle student support, but as CUK grows to several hundred or thousand students in a few years, it will need to proportionally expand the support staff and possibly introduce more automated systems (like an online student information system portal beyond Moodle, etc.). The university should plan for this scaling to avoid any dilution of service quality. This includes potentially adding counseling services or dedicated student affairs personnel as the student body diversifies and grows.

Another remark is about accommodation/housing for non-local students. While currently many students are Astana-based, as CUK recruits more widely (including internationally from Central Asia per its strategy), the demand for housing support will increase. CUK might need to broaden partnerships with local dormitories before building its own student housing. Ensuring safe, affordable accommodation for students is part of a supportive environment, especially for those students coming from afar.
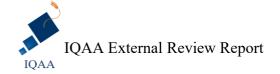
The library, while bolstered by Coventry's digital resources, may need to grow its physical collection in Kazakh and Russian for local curriculum requirements (like Kazakh history) and to support any local research by students. Ensuring some budget and attention to region-specific resources will make the library more comprehensive for all student needs.

Areas for improvement: Develop a plan to increase the capacity of student support services as enrollment rises. This might include hiring additional academic advisors, IT support staff, librarians, etc., and extending office hours or expanding online helpdesk systems to manage queries from a larger student population.

As part of student services, consider strengthening formal counseling/mental health support and more extracurricular or career services. Career services (like a Careers and Employability Center mentioned in Standard 1 plans) should be established ahead of first graduation to help with internships and job placements.

Compliance level:
In summary, CUK fully meets Standard 9 in the context of an initial accreditation. The university has provided excellent learning facilities and ensured that students have the resources and support needed to succeed. Student support services are well-organized and responsive, contributing to the overall positive student experience.

Standard 10. Public awareness

Evidence and Analysis:

Public awareness is a fundamental aspect of institutional credibility, student recruitment, and employer engagement. Coventry University Kazakhstan (CUK) has taken several measures to ensure transparency and accessibility of its academic programs, student services, and institutional policies.

- Website and Social Media Presence: CUK provides detailed and transparent information about its vision, mission, and educational programs via its official website and social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook and YouTube). These platforms offer prospective students, parents, and stakeholders easy access to essential university updates.
- Public Engagement Events: CUK actively promotes engagement through open days, information sessions, and themed events, allowing prospective students and their families to interact with faculty members and administrative staff.
- Printed Promotional Materials: Brochures and flyers are available at the admissions office and during public events to ensure that relevant academic and institutional information is easily accessible.
- Employer and Industry Engagement: While CUK has established collaborations with industry partners, it currently lacks a structured Employer Partnership Program or graduate employment tracking system. Since the first cohort of students has not yet graduated, employer satisfaction data is not available.

Evidence for this analysis was gathered from the CUK Self-Assessment Report for IQAA, as well as through the meetings and interviews with key university leadership, including:
- University Vice-Chancellor and Chair of the Board of Governors;
- Deputy Vice-Chancellors;
- Heads of Departments and Faculty Members;
- Marketing and Student Recruitment Team.

Information Accessibility: CUK makes key information about its mission, goals, and quality assurance policy readily available. While the full official website is still in development, the university has an initial landing webpage and an array of online and print channels conveying its strategic vision and commitments. The "About Us" section on the website highlights CUK's mission, values, and strategic objectives, communicating what the institution stands for. Additionally, the university's **public quality assurance policy** – essentially its pledge to maintain high educational standards – is summarized for public view. This level of openness is crucial for building trust for a new institution.

Multiple Communication Channels: CUK employs diverse platforms to raise its profile and inform the public. It maintains an official website (coventry.edu.kz) where information about academic programs, admission criteria, course structure, and contact details is provided. The site's admissions pages clearly outline requirements for foundation, undergraduate, and graduate entry, tuition fee information, and even allows online applications. Recognizing the importance of social media and digital outreach in

contemporary marketing, CUK has active social media pages on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and TikTok, as well as a presence on YouTube. These platforms are used to share content about the university, such as campus tour videos, student testimonials, announcements of new programs, and highlights of events. The university regularly posts informational and promotional materials – for instance, there are posts on Instagram about their programs and the fact that graduates will receive British degrees. By leveraging social media, CUK reaches younger audiences in the formats they are used to consume, increasing engagement and visibility.

The university also utilizes more traditional means: **brochures, flyers, and prospectuses** are available both on-campus (at the Admissions Office) and distributed during public events. These print materials concisely present the university's offerings, entry requirements, and unique value propositions (such as being the first British university in Kazakhstan, etc.). They also reiterate quality commitments and future growth plans, informing stakeholders of CUK's stability and vision.

Public Engagement Events: CUK has been proactive in engaging the community through events. It regularly hosts **Open Days** and information sessions. During these events (some of which took place prior to the first intake, and ongoing for recruitment of the next intakes), prospective students and parents can visit the campus, meet faculty, and learn about programs and admission. The panel learned that the September 2024 Open Day was well-attended and included sample lectures and Q&A panels, which is effective in building public confidence. The university also attends education fairs and partners with local schools for presentations, which broadens public awareness in the local and regional community.

Accuracy and Relevance of Public Information: CUK strives to keep all public information accurate and up-to-date. Because new programs are being added, the university updates its communications accordingly – for instance, once the MBA launched, it was included in promotional materials and on the website. The university also provides detailed information on educational programs, including course content, duration, and the qualification awarded, to avoid any ambiguity. A specific strength is highlighting the fact that students will earn Coventry University degrees, and explaining what that means (e.g., international recognition). This clarity is important in the Kazakhstani context where a new institution with foreign links might need to provide more information broaden outreach. Furthermore, CUK includes information about **learning outcomes and pathways** publicly: it communicates that its foundation leads to its undergrad programs, its undergrad prepares for global careers or postgrad, etc., giving stakeholders a clear picture of how students progress.

Graduate Outcomes and Public Accountability: Given that CUK's first cohort will graduate in 2028, it has no graduate employment data yet. However, the university has committed to **tracking graduate employment and career progression** and making that information public when available. It plans to use its Career Services (once formalized) to gather data on alumni, such as employment rates and sectors, and will likely publish

summary statistics to demonstrate the value of its education. This openness about future graduate outcomes is a positive intent, showing CUK's understanding that public proof of success will bolster its reputation. Additionally, CUK intends to publish **annual reports** that include key performance indicators and strategic direction updates for public consumption. The first annual report (likely after the 2024–25 year) will highlight metrics like student satisfaction rates, any achievements of the university, and progress on strategic initiatives like partnerships. Such a report increases transparency and public trust, as stakeholders can see how the university is performing against its goals.

Admission and Rules Transparency: All information regarding admission conditions, academic rules (teaching, assessment, grading) is made available to the public, largely through the website and student handbook. Prospective and current students can readily find the grading system explanation, exam rules, and expectations. For example, the admissions page explains the needed qualifications per course, and mentions that a detailed Student Handbook (in development) will outline teaching and grading policies. By doing so, CUK ensures that applicants know what academic life will entail and current students know the rules governing their studies – a key aspect of transparency.
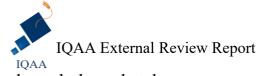
Public Awareness of Resources and Support: Standard 10 also covers whether the public is aware of the resources and services the university offers. CUK advertises its facilities and support services in its outreach (e.g., telling potential students about the modern campus, library access, personal tutoring system). It also publicizes events and achievements – for example, if a new partnership is signed, CUK shares that news via a press release or social media, thereby enhancing public awareness of its growing profile.

CUK fully meets Standard 10. The university has been very active and mostly effective in informing the public about its mission, programs, and achievements through various channels. Minor improvements, such as completing its website and eventually providing actual outcome data, are yet to be attained. At this stage, however, the level of transparency and outreach of the university is commendable, fulfilling the standard's intent.

Positive practice:
CUK's marketing and communications approach is dynamic and multi-faceted – a positive practice in itself. The use of social media and digital campaigns (email campaigns were mentioned too) demonstrates that CUK meets prospective students on platforms they use, which likely contribute to its enrolment despite a late start. The quick establishment of brand presence (Coventry University Kazakhstan being featured in media as the first British branch campus in the country) has generated interest, which is vital for a new institution's public awareness.

- Well-structured website and public communication strategies ensure information about CUK is easily accessible to stakeholders.
- Strong social media presence and promotional campaigns support student recruitment and institutional branding.
- Transparent policies on admissions, academic integrity, and student support are published

and regularly updated.
- Public engagement activities, such as open days, workshops, and themed events, help strengthen the university's connection with the local community.

Remarks:
- Employer feedback and alumni testimonials are currently unavailable since no students have graduated yet. Implementing an Employer Satisfaction Survey will be crucial for measuring CUK's impact on employability.
- CUK should expand engagement with employers by developing a formalized Industry Advisory Board.

The main official website is not yet fully developed in terms of content depth and perhaps design. Currently, much information is accessible but scattered (some on the initial page, some on social media, etc.). As a matter of professionalism and ease for stakeholders, CUK should prioritize launching the comprehensive official website with all sections (About, Programs, Admissions, Research, Campus Life, etc.) filled out. This will be especially important as the university grows and should not rely solely on social media – a well-structured website should be a primary reference for most public inquiries.

Another remark is related to language accessibility. CUK operates in English, but for public awareness in Kazakhstan, providing information in Kazakh and Russian is crucial for inclusivity and maybe for the understanding of parents of prospective students.
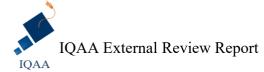
Areas for improvement:

Launch the full official website with all relevant content. Include sections for news and updates so the public can see ongoing developments (accreditations, partnerships, events). Ensure the website is mobile-friendly, as many will access it via smartphones.

Provide key information in Kazakh/Russian in addition to English on public platforms. Perhaps maintain a Kazakh/Russian language social media presence or press releases for local media to reach a broader audience. This will be important for public stakeholders like the government or local community who may prefer information in the state/official language.

Use public platforms to highlight current student experiences – e.g., blog posts or videos by students describing their learning at CUK. Authentic student and faculty voices can enhance credibility and give a fuller picture beyond marketing language.

Expand public awareness beyond prospective students to the local community. Participate in the series of exhibitions provided by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education entitled Study in Kazakhstan. For example, host open lectures or community classes (public can attend a lecture on a trending topic by a faculty member) to raise profile as a thought leader.

Engaging in some CSR or community service that gets local news coverage can also increase public goodwill and awareness of CUK.

Develop Public Reports on Graduate Outcomes and Employer Satisfaction
- Once students graduate, track their employment and career progress.
- Conduct regular employer satisfaction surveys to assess how well CUK graduates meet industry expectations.
- Publish an annual employability report on the CUK website.

Develop an Employer Partnership Program
- Establish an Industry Advisory Board with representatives from finance, IT, marketing, and HR.
- Collaborate with companies to offer real-world projects as coursework assignments.

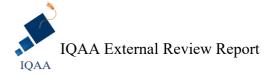Enhance Digital Marketing and Student Recruitment Strategies
- Redesign Facebook and social media ads with higher-quality visuals and engaging content to make them stand out among competing universities.
- Implement A/B testing on digital marketing campaigns to determine the most effective messaging.
- Develop a targeted digital recruitment strategy to attract students from Kazakhstan, the CIS region, and international markets.

Increase Participation in International Admission Conferences (Educational Fairs)
- CUK has not yet participated in international education fairs, which are crucial for expanding global visibility.
- Actively attend international admission events, such as The British Council Education Fairs and NAFSA Conferences.
- Establish partnerships with international recruitment agencies to expand CUK's reach beyond Kazakhstan.
- Develop a structured international student recruitment strategy, focusing on key target markets in Europe and Asia.

Compliance level:
CUK fully meets Standard 10. The university has been very active and mostly effective in informing the public about its mission, programs, and achievements through various channels.

CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSION

Coventry University Kazakhstan, though a very new institution, has demonstrated a strong alignment with IQAA's accreditation standards overall. Key remarks and recommendations for each standard are summarized below.

Remarks and areas for improvement of the review panel on the results of the audit:

Standard 1. Mission, strategic planning and quality assurance policy – full compliance

Remarks: Many initiatives (such as internal audits and strategic KPI tracking) are newly launched, so their effectiveness is based on design rather than long-term evidence. The panel also observed that some strategic objectives are ambitious (for instance, rapid program expansion by 2025) and will require continuous quality oversight to ensure the mission is upheld during growth. While CUK's foundation is strong, the university should proceed from planning to full implementation of its QA structures to achieve long-term compliance.

Areas for improvement: In the long term, the Strategic Plan should include research strategy which strives for research excellence.

The university should continue training staff and faculty on the QA framework and their role in it. As new personnel join, especially with the university's growth, ongoing workshops on quality assurance processes will help maintain the shared understanding of CUK's mission and standards.

Standard 2. Ethics and academic integrity – full compliance

Remarks: The main challenge for CUK under this standard is not the absence of policies – those are well in place – but the ongoing cultivation of an integrity culture in a newly established institution. Since CUK is in its first year of operation, many of its ethical policies have only recently been put to use. There is a limited track record yet of how effectively they function. This means the university must remain vigilant to ensure that the written policies translate into consistent practice as the academic community grows.

Areas for improvement: The university should implement regular workshops or seminars on academic integrity and ethics for both students and faculty. For example, annual sessions on avoiding plagiarism, understanding citation, and ethical research should be scheduled, possibly in partnership with Coventry University UK's Academic Integrity Unit.

Standard 3. Management and information management – Significant compliance

Remarks:
The university should take more efforts in order to make the recruiting process of faculty more effective and enforce more checks to make sure only faculty members corresponding to the university standards are hired.

Areas for improvement:
While management and information systems are strong, the panel identified a few areas to monitor as the university grows. One remark is that certain *planned initiatives* in management are still underway – for example, the Policy on Incentives and Rewards for Staff is not yet implemented. Until such programs are realized, some aspects of staff motivation and retention rely more on informal practices or the general appeal of working in an international campus. It will be important for CUK to complete this and similar initiatives (like formalizing all committees and fully staffing administrative units) to maintain momentum.

Standard 4. Student-centered learning, teaching and evaluation – full compliance level
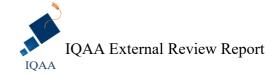
Remarks: As a very new institution, some aspects of student-centered learning at CUK have yet to be proven over time, but the initial indications are positive. One remark is that outcome measures (like graduate success or long-term student satisfaction trends) are not yet available, simply because the first cohort of students is still in progress (no graduates until 2028). Therefore, the effectiveness of the student-centered approach will need to be confirmed by retention rates, student performance, and feedback as more data emerges.

Another point is that while class sizes are small now (advantageous for student-centered teaching), maintaining small group learning in the future will depend on resources keeping pace with enrollment. The university should be cautious to ensure that as student numbers grow with new programs, the same level of personal attention can be provided (this is addressed in resource planning under Standard 9).

Another remark is that the university's heavy reliance on Coventry University's established processes is extremely beneficial for quality, but CUK should also monitor local context – e.g., ensuring that teaching methods align with Kazakhstan's cultural and educational expectations where relevant.

Areas for improvement: As enrollment grows, the university should recruit sufficient faculty to keep class sizes small and preserve the interactive teaching model. The planning for the 2025 undergraduate intake should include hiring or training additional personal tutors and teaching staff so that each student can continue to receive individualized attention.

Standard 5. The admission of students, learning outcomes, recognition and qualification – full compliance

Remarks: CUK's graduate tracking system is still under development. While the university does not yet have graduates, it will be crucial to implement a comprehensive alumni tracking system to measure employment rates, industry placement, and career development after graduation. The key area where CUK currently has an opportunity to improve in this standard is the recognition of prior learning (RPL) and credit transfer flexibility.

Areas for improvement: The current small scale of operations has allowed very personalized admissions handling. As intakes grow, the admissions office will need to expand and possibly digitalize further. The university should ensure the admissions experience remains smooth and informative as the number of applicants grows.

Ensure that all necessary steps are taken for local recognition of the degrees. This will safeguard graduates' ability to use their qualifications for public sector jobs or further studies within Kazakhstan.

Standard 6. Educational programs: their development, effectiveness, continuous monitoring and periodic evaluation – full compliance

Remarks: CUK is launching many programs in a short period of time (five undergrad and one postgrad within a year of opening). Managing the development and resource allocation for each could be challenging. The panel stresses the importance of continuously evaluating whether all programs remain viable and high-quality as they scale up. It might be that some programs grow faster than others; CUK should be ready to invest more in high-demand areas and support smaller programs so they don't lag in resources or attention.

Areas for improvement: Ensure that each program has adequate resources as it starts. For example, laboratories or software for IT programs should be in place before students reach those advanced modules. Similarly, faculty hiring for specialized courses (AI, advanced marketing analytics, etc.) should be done well in advance. This will maintain program quality and effectiveness when those courses commence.

Standard 7. Faculty and teaching effectiveness – full compliance

Remarks: The current faculty-student ratio is excellent, but with five new undergraduate courses and an MBA, CUK will need a significantly larger faculty pool by late 2025. The recruitment is ongoing, and the panel encourages careful attention to maintaining faculty quality during rapid expansion. It can be challenging to hire many new faculty members in a short period of time while keeping standards high. Coventry University's oversight in hiring should mitigate this, but there is a risk of faculty shortage or overwork if hiring doesn't fully meet targets. It's crucial that CUK not overload its existing faculty by making them cover too many courses – doing so could affect teaching effectiveness.

Areas for improvement: Faculty scholarly engagement is limited so far, which might not impact teaching immediately but could in the long run. As mentioned, CUK's faculty are not yet producing research or publications under the university's banner. While this does not hinder teaching quality now, a lack of engagement in research or innovation could eventually stagnate teaching content.

Standard 8. Research work (creative activity) – significant compliance
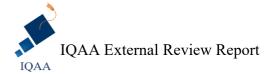
Remarks: It is evident that research is the weakest area for CUK at present, which is not unusual for a new teaching university. The panel's main remark is that CUK currently lacks active research and development outputs, which will be a point of attention in future accreditations. The substantial compliance is acceptable in an initial accreditation given CUK's context, but the university should demonstrate progress in this area by the time of re-accreditation. Specifically, over the next few years, CUK should move from planning to action: e.g., securing at least some research grants or internal funding, having faculty produce publications or conference papers, and involving students in research projects beyond classroom assignments.

Another remark is that research culture takes time to build, and it requires buy-in from faculty who right now may be more teaching-oriented. The administration will need to nurture interest in research. Some faculty might have been hired mainly for teaching expertise and might not have strong research backgrounds; those faculty members might need support or collaboration opportunities to engage in research. The university could also consider hiring a few research-active academics (even part-time or as consultants) to lead initial projects and mentor younger staff members.

The panel also notes that funding and resources for research are not mentioned – presumably, at this stage, there is no dedicated research budget. As finances allow, CUK should allocate some funding for research (e.g., labs for scientific research in computing), including funding for conferences.

Finally, considering CUK's teaching load and current limited staff numbers, the university will have to carefully balance teaching and research. A remark is that CUK should integrate research into teaching where possible (like using class projects to further faculty research agendas) so that they complement rather than compete with each other. Over time, perhaps setting aside some faculty time for research (e.g., summers or a certain number of hours per week) will be necessary to have progress.

Areas for improvement: Formulate a clear research development plan with short-, medium-, and long-term goals. For example: in the next 1–2 years, focus on internal projects and building partnerships; in 3–5 years, aim to launch research centers in priority areas; in 5+ years, consider offering doctoral programs in niche fields. This strategy should include concrete metrics (number of publications, participation in conferences, etc.) to measure progress.

Provide training workshops on research skills for faculty – e.g., how to write a research proposal, research methodology refreshers, publishing in journals, etc. Leverage Coventry's research experts to deliver some of these virtually. Identifying faculty who are interested in research and mentoring them will build an initial cadre of researcher-lecturers.

Standard 9. Resources and student support services – full compliance

Remarks: One consideration is the scalability of support services as enrollment grows. With only around a hundred students, a small team can handle student support, but as CUK grows to several hundred or thousand students in a few years, it will need to proportionally expand the support staff and possibly introduce more automated systems (like an online student information system portal beyond Moodle, etc.). The university should plan for this scaling to avoid any dilution of service quality. This includes potentially adding counseling services or dedicated student affairs personnel as the student body diversifies and grows.

Another remark is about accommodation/housing for non-local students. While currently many students are Astana-based, as CUK recruits more widely (including internationally from Central Asia per its strategy), the demand for housing support will increase. CUK might need to broaden partnerships with local dormitories before building its own student housing. Ensuring safe, affordable accommodation for students is part of a supportive environment, especially for those students coming from afar.
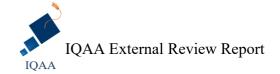
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As part of student services, consider strengthening formal counseling/mental health support and more extracurricular or career services. Career services should be established ahead of first graduation to help with internships and job placements.

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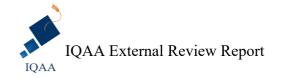
51

Another remark is related to language accessibility. CUK operates in English, but for public awareness in Kazakhstan, providing information in Kazakh and Russian is crucial for inclusivity and maybe for the understanding of parents of prospective students.

Areas for improvement:

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Provide key information in Kazakh/Russian in addition to English on public platforms. Perhaps maintain a Kazakh/Russian language social media presence or press releases for local media to reach a broader audience. This will be important for public stakeholders like the government or local community who may prefer information in the state/official language.

Expand public awareness beyond prospective students to the local community. Participate in the series of exhibitions provided by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education entitled "Study in Kazakhstan". For example, host open lectures or community classes (public can attend a lecture on a trending topic by a faculty member) to raise profile as a thought leader. Engaging in some CSR or community service that gets local news coverage can also increase public goodwill and awareness of CUK.

Annexes

External Review Program
Initial Institutional Accreditation of the Coventry University Kazakhstan
11-12 March 2025

Address: Korgalzhyn Highway, 13A, Astana

№	Session	Location	Time	Participants
		Day 1: 11.03.2025		
1	Arrival of the Expert panel to the University		9:00	H, EG, C
2	University tour	University campus	09:00-10:00	H, EG, C
3	Briefing, discussion of organizational issues	Office of the Expert panel	10:00-11:00	H, EG, C
4	Meeting with the Chair of the Board of Governors and Rector of the University	511	11:00-11:45	H, EG, C, Chair, Rector
5	Discussion of the results of the meeting	511	11:45-12:00	H, EG, C
6	Interview with Vice-Rectors of the University and Head of Foundation	511	12:00-12:45	H, EG, C Provosts
7	Discussion of the results of the meeting	511	12:45-13:00	H, EG, C
8	Lunch	503	13:00-14:00	H, EG, C
9	Interview with Heads of Structural Units of the University	511	14:00-14:45	H, EG, C Deans
10	Discussion of the results of the meeting	511	14:45-15:00	H, EG, C
11	Interview with faculty members	511	15:00-15:45	H, EG, C, Faculty
12	Discussion of the results of the meeting	511	15:45-16:00	H, EG, C
13	Interview with students	511	16:00-16:45	H, EG, C Students
14	Discussion of the results of the meeting	511	16:45-17:00	H, EG, C
15	Discussion within the Expert panel	Office of the Expert panel	17:00-18:00	H, EG, C
16	Departure of the Expert panel from the University		18:00	H, EG, C
		Day 2: 12.03.2025		
1	Arrival of the Expert panel to the University		9:00	H, EG, C
2	Preparation of an external audit report, invitation of representatives of the University at the request of the Expert panel	Office of the Expert panel	9:00-13:00	H, EG, C
3	Lunch	503	13:00-14:00	H, EG, C
4	Preparation of an external audit report, invitation of representatives of the	Office of the Expert panel	14:00-16:00	H, EG, C

	University at the request of the Expert panel			54
5	Discussion within the Expert panel	Office of the Expert panel	16:45-17:00	H, EG, C
6	Meeting with the management of the University, presentation of preliminary results	511	17:00-18:00	H, EG, C Management
7	Departure of the Expert panel from the University		18:00	H, EG, C

Abbreviations:
H – Head of the Expert panel; EP – Members of the Expert panel;
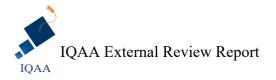C – Coordinator.

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

**The Expert panel for the Site Visit of the Coventry University Kazakhstan
in the Framework of the Initial Institutional Accreditation
11-12 March 2025**

№	Name	Employment, Academic Degree, Academic Title	Panel Member Status, Contact Details
1	Iskakov Rinat Maratovich	Vice-Rector for Science and Innovation, Doctor of Chemical Sciences, Professor, Atyrau Oil and Gas University	**Head of the Expert Panel, Expert**
2	Ha Jin Hwang	Dr., Professor and Director of the School of Creative Industries (SCI) at the Astana IT University (AITU)	**International Expert**
3	Daulet Yermanov	Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at the TIDAAR AI Solutions, Almaty, Kazakhstan	**Employers' Representative**
4	Nurzhigit Kairullayev	Student at the Maqsut Narikbayev University (MNU), Bachelor's Degree in Finance, Minor in Economics and Econometrics, Minor in Financial Engineering	**Students' Representative**

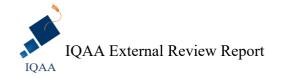## Coventry University Kazakhstan leadership, management, staff, faculty and students interviewed by the External review panel

Leadership	
Alister Bartholomew	Chair of the Board of Governors
Miras Daulenov	President of Coventry University Kazakhstan
Management	
Asiya Zhampeissova	Senior HR manager
Manju Etherton	Head of Academic support
Beknur Karagul	Registrar
Malika Taishibekova	Head of Admissions and Student Recruitment
Alisher Bodaubekov	Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor
Takeyeva Ainagul	Sport manager
Akbope Sikinbayeva	Head of Library
Mukhamed Makatov	IT Support Manager
Dinara Joldaspayeva	Head of Marketing team
Faculty	
Liam Conor Gormley	Course Leader/ EAP Lecturer

Nurly Marshal	EAP Lecturer
Alaister Milne	Senior Business Lecturer
Luca Scaini	Senior Business Lecturer
Meganathan Ramasamy	Senior Computer Science Lecturer
Yermek Adayeva	Kazakh Lecturer
Sanzhar Kusdavletov	Math Teacher
Students	
Kamila Khamitova	Business (student)
Tatyana Bychkova	Computing (student)
Ruslan Nurumbetov	Business (student)
Mariyam Turgyn	Business (student)
Zhaksylyk Akylbek	Computing (student)
Assem Assenbekkyzy	Business (student)

LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED ADDITIONALLY AT THE UNIVERSITY

1. The Charter of the University;
2. Educational Organization Development Program;
3. Structure of the Educational Organisation;
4. Policy and System of Internal Quality Assurance of Education;
5. Academic Policy of the Higher Educational Institution;
6. Academic Integrity and Anti-Corruption Policy;
7. Educational Programs;
8. Syllabuses of Courses.