

THE ACCREDITATION, CERTIFICATION AND  
QUALITY ASSURANCE INSTITUTE

ACQUIN

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FOR THE

***INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION***

***OF THE "TURAN-ASTANA" UNIVERSITY***

**THE ACCREDITATION IS VALID UNTIL 30<sup>TH</sup> OF SEPTEMBER 2029.**

*BAYREUTH, 5 JUNE 2025*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "A. Krieg".

PROF. DR. ALOYS KRIEG  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

N. 41601507-250077-1

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since 2009*

ИНСТИТУТ АККРЕДИТАЦИИ, СЕРТИФИКАЦИИ  
И ОБЕСПЕЧЕНИЯ КАЧЕСТВА

ACQUIN

ПРИСУЖДАЕТ СЕРТИФИКАТ КАЧЕСТВА



*ИНСТИТУЦИОНАЛЬНАЯ АККРЕДИТАЦИЯ*

*УНИВЕРСИТЕТ "ТУРАН – АСТАНА"*

АККРЕДИТАЦИЯ ДЕЙСТВИТЕЛЬНА ДО 30 СЕНТЯБРЯ 2029.

*БАЙРОЙТ, 5 ИЮНЯ 2025*

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ПРОФЕССОР, ДР. АЛОИС КРИГ  
ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬ АККРЕДИТАЦИОННОЙ КОМИССИИ

N. 41601507-250077-1

*Зарегистрированное общество ACQUIN внесено в Европейский Регистр EQAR (апрель 2009 года) и  
в Национальный реестр аккредитационных агентств Республики Казахстан (июнь 2012 года)*

## **Accreditation Report**

Institutional Accreditation of

**"Turan-Astana" University**

**Astana, Kazakhstan**

### **I Procedure**

**Date of contract:** 21 February 2022

**Date of the submission of self-assessment report:** 11. November 2023

**Date of site visit:** 10 – 14 April 2024

**Attendance by ACQUIN office:** Svitlana Kondratova/Maria Zinsmeister/Dr. Jasmine Rudolph

**Accreditation decision:** 10. March 2025, 05. June 2025

#### **Peer review experts:**

- **Dr. phil. Barbara Gant**, Rector at Private University in the Principality of Liechtenstein
- **Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Hans Gruber**, Chair Holder and Full Professor of Educational Science, University of Regensburg, Germany
- **Prof. Dr. Klaus Kreulich**, Vice President for Innovation and Quality of Education at Munich University of Applied Sciences, Germany
- **Dr. Maigul Nugmanova**, Head of the Center for Gender Economics Research at Narxoz University, Kazakhstan
- **Prof. Marina Skiba**, Rector, Finance Academy under President of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- **Dr. Sonja Mikeska**, FH Münster University of Applied Sciences, Quality Management and International Cooperation, Germany
- **Christopher Bohlens**, Student of Economics with a minor in Political Science, Leuphana University of Lüneburg as well as Law, LLB, Distance Learning University Hagen, Germany

The **Assessment Report** of the peer-review experts is **based on** the self-assessment report of the Higher Education Institution (HEI) and extensive discussions with the HEI management, the board of trustees, representatives of the holding company, deans, heads of study programmes, lecturers, staff representatives, students, and alumni.

The basis of the **Assessment Criteria** is part 1 of the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG) in the current official version. Further, the assessment considers criteria for the institutional accreditation of non-state higher education institution of the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR) („Guidelines for the accreditation of non-state higher education institutions” Section B.IV). At the same time the national context, particularly the national regulations regarding the establishment of study programmes, are taken into account.

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## **II Introduction**

The experts would like to thank the representatives of the HEI as well as students that they have taken part in the discussions and willingly shared information and their views during the site visit. The discussions are valuable not only for the assessment of the institution, but also for a better understanding of the legal and sociocultural context of the local higher education system.

Evaluation basis for the peer-review experts is the self-assessment report of the HEI as well as intensive discussions during the site visit with the HEI management, board of trustees, representatives of the holding company, deans, head of study programmes, study programme coordinators, teachers, lecturers, administrative staff, students, and graduates.

Main objective of the accreditation procedure is to assess the quality of the study programmes and compliance with the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG). The ESG standards are applied as main assessment criteria in the international accreditation procedure. They are completed with criteria for the institutional accreditation of non-state higher education institution of the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR) („Guidelines for the accreditation of non-state higher education institutions" Section B.IV). In addition, the respective country-specific criteria and standards are taken into account.

A group of experts was set up, which ensured that all areas relevant to the accreditation procedure (e.g. legal, structural, social etc. aspects) as well as the ESG, the WR criteria, and national criteria were considered. The peer-review experts include professors, representatives of the professional practice and the student representative. A certificate with the ACQUIN seal is awarded upon accreditation of the institution.

### **1 Short profile of HEI**

Turan-Astana University is a higher educational institution that provides training for educational programs in educational programs in the field of Humanities, Economics, Design, Service and Tourism. It is one of the largest higher educational institutions in the region with more than 25 years of history. The university has an official website (<https://tau-edu.kz>) and a unified local electronic system.

The university was founded on May 15, 1998 and the form of ownership is private. The certificate of state license to conduct educational activities No. 0137367 is dated December 29, 2014.

The university provides training on 19 educational programs of higher professional education, 26 master's programs, one doctoral program. The training is conducted in Kazakh and Russian languages and the form of education is full-time. The teaching staff consists of 154 full-time professors.

The total number of students is 2712, including 2380 bachelor's degree students, 328 master students, and 4 doctoral students. In the admission for the 2023-2024 academic year, the applicants amounted to 718 people. The university counted 876 graduates in the 2021. During the years of activity more than 20,000 specialists have graduated from Turan-Astana University.

The university provides training in the following areas of the Classifier of training directions, in accordance with the state license. Educational programs in Turan-Astana University:

#### **Undergraduate studies**

- Finance
- Accounting and Auditing
- Management
- Economy
- Psychology
- Information Systems
- Computing and software
- State and local government
- Evaluation
- Jurisprudence
- International law
- Kazakh language and literature
- Design
- Translation
- Tourism

#### **Master programmes**

- Tourism
- Jurisprudence
- Kazakh language and literature
- Finance
- Accounting and Auditing
- Management
- Economy
- Pedagogy and psychology
- Information Systems
- State and local government

#### **PhD programme**

- Economy

### III Implementation and assessment of the criteria

#### 1 **Institutional Profile and Strategy: Strategic Planning, Mission and Vision**

*The HEI has a clear mission statement in which the institutional profile, strategy, and objectives of the HEI are defined. The mission is consistent and complies with international standards. Academic bodies have adopted the mission, which is publicly available. The HEI has adequate resources to fulfil its mission and strategic planning [Examination Area 1].*

#### **Implementation**

The mission of the university to be committed to delivering top-notch education and equip competitive professionals with the capacity to drive positive transformations in their respective fields of expertise.

The vision that the university has developed for itself is to be “a contemporary fountain of knowledge, research, innovation, a hub for the exchange of ideas, and a nurturing ground for future leaders and societal progress.”

The Mission and Vision of The university are in line with the goals and objectives of the national education and development system, with the Quality Management System and the Quality Assurance Policy of the university. The University Development Strategy for 2020-2025 is the basis for the development of annual work plans of departments and structural units. The new stage of socio-economic development of the country and the current state of the university set new strategic goals, which are reflected in the Strategic Plan of the university. The document represents a set of interrelated procedures and covers the main processes of the university's administrative, academic, research and educational activities. The monitoring of the implementation of the development strategy is carried out at the meetings of the collegial bodies of the university: The Academic Council, the Academic Committee of the School, the Academic Quality Council, and the IQAS Commission.

On the basis of the Strategic Development Plan of the university, key performance indicators of departments, teaching staff and employees have been developed. At the same time, key performance indicators are taken into account in the current remuneration system approved by the Rector's Decree. The indicators of the university's Strategic Plan are closely linked to the indicators of the “Atameken” Rating, which is conducted by the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs (NCE).

The annual report of the Rector, Professor G.A. Japarova, deals with the analysis of the implementation of the "Strategic Development Plan of the University" is presented each year at



the extended meeting of the Rector's Council. Representatives of the practical sector, the team of teachers and of students are invited to this Rector's Council meeting.

### **Assessment**

Turan Astana University (TAU) has emerged as a pioneering and entrepreneurial institution, consistently ranking in the TOP-10 overall rating of the best humanitarian and economic universities in the country. This achievement highlights its competitive advantage and effective enterprise management system. TAU excels in creating and implementing pedagogical and scientific innovations, providing high-quality learning experiences, and promoting personal development. The university's prominence is also evidenced by its annual national rankings, which reflect its success in its core training areas and strengthen its position in the national education market.

TAU's focus on application and innovation fits seamlessly with its mission and vision. The university's mission statement, which is publicly available on its website, states: "Education, Research, Innovation – We are committed to providing a world-class education and equipping competitive professionals with the ability to drive positive change in their respective fields." This mission is complemented by a vision that presents TAU as a modern source of knowledge, a hub for research and innovation, a platform for the exchange of ideas, and a breeding ground for future leaders and societal progress.

The university's self-image, which is intertwined with its mission and vision, is evident in its organizational structure and portfolio of subjects. Particularly noteworthy is the School of Business and Information Technology, which offers an internationally recognized blend of business and digital technologies, thereby creating a solid foundation for innovation. Similarly, the School of Humanities and Law contributes significantly to practical innovation through its mission of training highly qualified, competitive and responsible graduates who are in demand in the labor market and can develop professionally.

The Center for Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in this ecosystem by guiding student teams from the initial technical or social idea to the implementation of new business models. This center embodies the university's commitment to fostering an entrepreneurial mindset in students.

TAU's educational programs are highly innovative and entrepreneurial, combining fundamental knowledge with practical tasks. Each program cycle includes an entrepreneurship module that ensures students are empowered to innovate through real-world projects and entrepreneurial elements. The Division of Student Affairs furthers this mindset by creating conditions that foster students' creative and athletic abilities, support their self-development, and engage them in

student communities. These efforts provide the foundation for the creative and scholarly development of new ideas.

TAU's strategic goals are clearly defined and include teaching and learning, research, and internationalization, all of which are aligned with its profile. The university's strategy for achieving these goals is summarized in its 2020-2025 development strategy, which focuses on five challenges:

1. transforming the internal environment and developing digital infrastructure and modern material resources.
2. Initiating activities for the intellectual, spiritual, moral and physical development of students.
3. Improving interaction with the external environment and integrating into the global science and education area.
4. Diversifying the financial base.
5. Fostering an entrepreneurial culture.

Although TAU's mission places an emphasis on research, it is recognized that this area is still developing. The university's commitment to expanding its research capacity was evident during the accreditation process, with university leadership and professors demonstrating a clear intention and fundamental efforts toward achieving this goal.

The strategic goals are supported by specific, realistic implementation targets. However, it is noted that TAU's strategic concepts, which are well known at the management level, require broader dissemination and participation by all university members. Effective change management, aimed at transforming traditional university structures into an application-oriented, entrepreneurial institution, requires a systematic, long-term process model, which is lacking.

The self-evaluation report shows that TAU has sufficient human, spatial and financial resources to achieve its current goals by 2025. For longer-term development, particularly in research, the number of professors with a doctorate should also be increased. A more detailed analysis of TAU resources can be found in chapter 5.

Overall, TAU has effectively conceptualized and documented its mission, vision and goals. However, broader engagement and stronger awareness among all university members are essential for realizing these strategic goals. The university's commitment to education, innovation and a possible expansion of research positions is a good prerequisite for continued success and transformation into a leading innovation-oriented entrepreneurial institution.

The expert group therefore imposes the following conditions:

1. The university's process of change towards an innovative and entrepreneurial university should be reflected and implemented at all hierarchical and structural levels of the institution. A concept for this change process must be presented that defines a strategic approach that actively involves all members of the university in the change process. In particular, the concept must show a way to achieve the following goals:

The Faculty must have an excellent understanding of TAU's mission and vision and their intended impact, and be motivated to support them. To this end, university management must create appropriate communication channels and incentives that regularly prompt faculty to align their teaching and research activities with TAU's mission statement.

The mission statement must be anchored in the content and methodology of all degree programs. A strategic path must be developed and documented for the expansion of applied research at TAU. Consequently, the majority of teaching staff must meet the university's criteria for publishing and conducting research projects. The path to embedding more research must be supported with sufficient resources. A concept for this strategy must be presented.

## Conclusion

The criterion is **not fulfilled**.

The expert group imposes the following **conditions**:

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## 2 Governance, Organization and Administration

*Responsibilities, decision-making processes, and decision-making competencies are clearly defined and integrated into statutes. Organisation and management structures are adequate to the tasks and objectives of the institution and assure freedom in teaching and learning [Examination Area 2].*

### Implementation

The activities of the university are carried out on the basis of the Charter of the university approved in the established manner and in strict accordance with the current legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan regulating the activities of the university in the field of education and science, youth policy and areas of its statutory activities. The university "Turan-Astana" is a non-profit educational institution. In accordance with section 11 "Availability and types of entrepreneurial activity" of the Charter, the university can engage in income-generating activities that do not contradict the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Income from entrepreneurial activities remains at the disposal of the university and is used independently for statutory purposes.

According to Article 39 of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On non-profit organizations", a non-profit organisation is not entitled to pay remuneration to the members of its supreme governing body for the performance of their functions, except for compensation for expenses directly related to participation in the work of the supreme governing body. In this regard, all the income received by the university from its educational activities shall be used to improve the material base, the quality of the teaching staff and to attract the best foreign specialists in order to maintain the current high rating among the educational institutions of the Republic.

The educational activities of the teaching staff are accompanied by the work of special departments (Dean's Offices, DAA, QAD, Department of international cooperation, OR, etc.). The infrastructure of the university includes such general administrative units as the Human Resources and Legal Support Department, Accounting, IT department, Library and Information Center, printing house, Department of economic support.

### Governance

The organizational structure of the university is guided by the principles of purposefulness, flexibility and adaptability, as a combination of centralization and decentralization in its governance. The university structure includes Schools, Departments, Centres and other structural units, as the Department of Academic Affairs, the Registrar's Office, the Department of Science and Innovation, the Quality Assurance Department, the Department of Human Resources and Legal Support, the Library and Information Centre, etc.

The governing bodies of the university "Turan-Astana" are the Academic Council and the Board of Trustees. The general management of the university is carried out by the Academic Council. It consists of the Rector (Chairman), Provost, Vice-Provosts, Deans of Schools, Heads of structural units, Heads of Departments and students. The Academic Council has the task of ensuring the quality of education and monitoring the implementation of the requirements of state educational standards, e.g. accreditation. The Board of Trustees is a collegiate governing body of the University, created to assist in the formation of a strategy and long-term plan for the development of the University.

Management is carried out in accordance with the University's Charter, the Rules of the internal labour regulations and quality assurance guidelines. In each structural division, Regulations on the Division, Schools, Departments and Job Descriptions have been developed.

The activities of the Academic Quality Council (AQC) are aimed at improving the content, means and methods of the University's educational activities and developing the professional competence of the teaching staff. The AQC coordinates the work of the Faculty Quality Assurance Commissions, the Academic Committee, whose activities are aimed at the continuous improvement of the quality of the EP and the educational process as a whole. These collegial bodies consist of the heads of divisions, heads of departments, most experienced teachers with experience in the development of curricula and work programmes of the disciplines and other stakeholders.

## **Organization**

The work of each collegial body is evaluated by a higher collegial body. The Academic Council is accountable to the General Meeting of Founders. During the meetings of the Academic Council, reports are held on the results of pedagogical and methodological work, as well as on the activities of the University's Quality Assurance Commission. Every year, the Vice-Rector for External Relations, Accreditation and Ranking presents a report on the implementation of the University's development strategy, assessing the fulfilment of key development indicators in various areas of activity.

The report on the work of the Academic Committee at School is included in the annual report of the Dean on the work of the School. The results of the activities of School advisers-curators for the academic year are considered by the Academic Committee.

The practice of inviting representatives of the labour market, business and government to participate in the University's collegial bodies is ongoing. Individual representatives of the business environment and other stakeholders are invited to attend meetings of the Academic Council, Faculty Councils and Quality Commissions on a one-off basis. At the School level,

the members of the Academic Committee are practitioners from the relevant fields of education.

Students, employers, scientists, representatives of public associations and organizations, parents of students are also involved in the work of collegiate bodies.

The participation of students in the management of the university takes the following forms

- Student self-government - work in the YAC; in the Student Council;
- Participation in the work of collegial bodies - Academic Council, Academic Committee at School;
- Activities of student associations e.g. "Alliance of Students of Kazakhstan", "League of Volunteers", "Congress of Youth of Kazakhstan"

### **Management and monitoring**

The management of the university pays attention to the development of professional competence of managers. Heads of Department participate in international and national conferences, training seminars and webinars in the field of management and quality assurance in education. Compliance with ethical standards at the university helps employees navigate difficult situations, reduces the risk of possible violations, and helps to form a sustainable commitment to corporate interests. To resolve and prevent conflicts at the university, internal documents have been developed that regulate uniform rules of conduct, ethical and moral standards (Academic Policy, Student Honor Code, Academic Integrity Code of teaching staff, staff and students), and a Disciplinary Commission has been established. This body regulates the disciplinary responsibility of employees who have committed disciplinary offences, as well as illegal acts and improper performance of their work duties. In this case, internal investigation are carried out, efforts are made to clarify the actual circumstances in a timely, comprehensive, objective and complete manner, and, if necessary, disciplinary measures are taken.

The success of management depends on the organisation of monitoring, i.e. a diligent system of control actions aimed at obtaining up-to-date, objective information on the state of study subjects (components of the educational system). For example, one of the important indicators of university effectiveness, an indicator of transformation effectiveness, is the degree of faculty, staff and student satisfaction with the management system. It uses such forms and methods of control as: regular meetings with the Rector and Vice-Rectors for areas of activity, heads of departments; surveys on issues related to the development of the socio-cultural sphere, educational activities, organisation of free time activities, quality of cultural events, work of the

library; surveys, interviews, tests, the Rector's blog on the University's website. According to the university, the management has a sufficient level of managerial competencies, is ready and able to change the management activities. It takes the responsibility for the implementation of all the processes that ensure the achievement of the mission.

### **Personnel Policy**

The personnel policy is carried out in accordance with the main priorities of the university's strategy. Indicators of the qualitative and quantitative composition of the teaching staff confirm the availability of human resources necessary for the implementation of educational programmes. Personnel management processes are regulated by internal documents of the organization. The university operates an effective and transparent personnel policy, which clearly reflects the criteria for accessibility of management, stimulation of the teaching staff, advanced training and self-improvement of teaching staff, free access of teaching staff to university resources. The strengthening of the University's staff with qualified specialists is carried out in accordance with the principles of the University's personnel policy.

An important condition that stimulates the types of activities that are relevant for the university, compliance with corporate ethics, is the rating system for evaluating the activities of teaching staff. The main goals of the rating system are to indicate the level of educational services by evaluating the work and organizing the educational process and scientific work of the teaching staff, the department, the faculty to develop a further policy for the development of competitive educational activities of the university and material incentives for the teaching staff. The database of results of the rating of teachers is formed annually.

According to the Regulations on the Rating System of Teaching Staff Activities at «Turan-Astana» University, the rating of teaching staff is calculated as the sum of points scored by the teacher in the main areas of activity according to the position held: Professor, Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer. The analysis of the database and the evaluation of the teachers' activities are carried out by the Rating Commission. Based on the conclusions of the rating commission, the Academic Council of the University makes further decisions.

Employees' performance ratings are discussed at the Appraisal Committee meeting and a decision is made to reward employees. A database of teachers' ratings was created, which is used by selection committees during competitions to fill vacant teaching and research positions at universities. This database is also used to nominate candidates for the national "Best Teacher" competition.



«Turan-Astana» University, which operates in a priority sector of the economy, is aware of the social responsibility assigned to educational institutions and is working to improve quality indicators and the material and technical base. The effective implementation of priority tasks in the field of education directly depends on sufficient financial resources.

### **Financing and funds**

The financial activity of the university is implemented on the basis of the legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan, regulated by internal documents, accounting policies and a long-term development plan. The procedure for determining and distributing the total financial resources of the university is built as a sequence of management decisions (budget planning) both for the long term, ensuring the achievement of strategic goals, and for the short term, planning current activities. The operational level of planning is the budget for the financial year broken down by department, with the allocation of planned tasks to ensure all areas of activity.

The main budget of the university is the income and expenditure budget, which reflects all receipts and expenditures of the university. The process of forming the university budget for the current year includes determining the revenue and expenditure base. The sources of funding for the institution are:

- provision of paid educational services;
- financing of the state educational order from the budget of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
- implementation of research, commercialization of start-ups and other work;
- provision of services for accommodation in a hostel;
- bank loans;

The budget of the university is based on the adequacy of the financial support of the implemented programmes. The financial independence of the university is ensured by the skilful reform of the management structures and the search for additional income such as income from the scientific activities of the university and the provision of other paid services for students. The data of the financial statement confirm that the financial activities are transparent and legitimate, and that the principle of the optimal use of the budget funds of the higher education institution to meet the needs of the educational programs in relation to the amount of revenue generated is observed.

### **Assessment**

University "Turan-Astana" is committed to maintaining a transparent and efficient organizational and management structure that aligns with its objectives and statutory tasks. The University operates in compliance with the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, ensuring that



responsibilities are clearly defined and officially formulated in binding statutes. This structure guarantees academic freedom in teaching, learning, and research, while ensuring that all members of the HEI are sufficiently involved in decision-making processes.

The University's organizational structure is designed to support its educational and research objectives, adhering to principles of resolve, flexibility, adaptability, optimal centralization and decentralization, transparency, and controllability. The structure comprises various units reflecting the University's key areas of activity.

Responsibilities are clearly distributed among different management levels, heads of structural divisions, and performers. Each structural division operates under regulations, school and department guidelines, and job descriptions that outline the qualification requirements, duties, rights, and responsibilities of managers, department heads, teaching staff, and employees. These documents ensure that responsibilities are well-defined and that the University operates in a cohesive and organized manner.

University "Turan-Astana" maintains educational standards and operational efficiency, but there is a need to optimize its decision-making processes regarding the criteria for closing study programs, especially when demand is low. Currently, the criteria for program closure may lack transparency and consistency. To address this, the University should develop clear, comprehensive criteria that include both quantitative metrics, such as enrolment numbers and employment outcomes, and qualitative assessments, like student feedback and alignment with strategic goals. Implementing a regular review process involving key stakeholders and creating a structured decision-making framework will ensure that program closures are well-justified and strategically sound. Engaging students, faculty, and external stakeholders in this process will enhance transparency and responsiveness to changing educational needs.

The University is governed by several bodies, including the Board of Trustees and the Academic Council. The Board of Trustees assists in forming the University's strategy and long-term development plans. It includes representatives from local government bodies, the scientific community, employers, social partners, media, public organizations, parents, students, teachers, alumni, and supporters. The Academic Council oversees general management, focusing on implementing State Educational Standard requirements, monitoring educational programs, and promoting research and quality assurance.

The organizational structure ensures academic freedom, with the main responsibility for teaching, learning, and research lying with professors and academics. The recruitment of academic staff is based on clearly defined scientific standards, ensuring the hiring of qualified personnel with academic degrees and titles. The management and funding body are distinct from the academic staff to maintain objectivity and integrity in the University's operations.

Different areas of the HEI are interconnected through a systematic approach that views the University as an educational system comprising goals for educational activities, a management system, a methodological system, and a pedagogical process. This approach ensures adherence to systemic principles and effective management of all structural units in accordance with regulatory guidelines.

The University's financial management follows transparent and well-defined regulations. The procedure for determining and distributing financial resources involves a sequence of management decisions, including budget planning for both long-term strategic goals and short-term activities.

Funds are allocated according to established criteria and regulations, ensuring transparency and fairness in financial management. The budget is designed to support the University's programs and achieve financial independence through management reforms and additional income from scientific activities and other paid services.

University "Turan-Astana" should ensure that sufficient financial resources are available to support the number of study programs offered. To achieve this, it is recommended to implement a comprehensive risk management system. This system should continuously monitor the financial requirements and resource allocation for each study program. By doing so, the University can proactively identify potential financial shortfalls and address them promptly. This approach will help maintain the quality and sustainability of the educational offerings, ensuring that all programs are adequately funded and resourced. Introducing such a system will enhance the University's financial stability and strategic planning capabilities.

By maintaining this organizational structure and transparent financial management, University "Turan-Astana" ensures effective implementation of its educational and research missions while upholding the principles of academic freedom and institutional integrity.

## Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

The expert group imposes the following recommendations:

1. Specific criteria should be defined that are used for the decision on whether to close an existing study programme, e.g. if the demand is too low. In this regard, the risk management, which constantly monitors resources and student numbers, should be given more emphasis and long-term measures should be taken to increase student numbers. When closing the loop of the PDCA cycle, recommendations for action should be derived and documented in a systematic way. The university should optimize

its decision-making processes as to which criteria are used to close study programmes, for example if demand is too low.

2. It should always be ensured that sufficient financial resources are available with the number of study programmes. A corresponding risk management system should therefore be considered and introduced, which constantly monitors the required resources.

### 3 Teaching and Learning

*Objectives and content of study programmes are in accordance with the HEI's mission and strategy. Study programmes have an adequate academic standard, are well structured and have an adequate workload. They comply with national legal regulations. The processes of creating and implementing as well as revision of study programmes are clearly defined. The HEI offers professional support services for students. Support services have adequate staff [Examination Area 4, ESG Standard 1.2, ESG Standard 1.3, ESG Standard 1.4].*

#### Implementation

The university reports to work with a unified concept of teaching and learning in accordance with ESG standards. The goals and content of the educational programmes are consistent with the profile and strategy of the university. The purpose, structure, content of disciplines, learning outcomes of educational programmes are discussed in the above-mentioned collegial bodies of the University. In accordance with the strategy of development of the University for 2020-2025, the university is aiming to be an innovative and entrepreneurial university. The educational programmes of the University "Turan-Astana" are developed taking into account various aspects:

- the existing traditions of the university in training specialists in a particular field;
- the main directions of scientific research and existing scientific schools of the university;
- specifics of socio-economic development and the needs of the region;
- the needs of employers;
- educational needs of students.

The content of educational programmes complies with the national requirements, i.e. the State Compulsory Standard of Higher and Postgraduate Education (SCES) and the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education".

In accordance with the purpose of the EP, the learning outcomes are formulated, then the disciplines are determined, within the framework of the study of which the designated learning outcomes can be formed. A distinctive feature of the University's educational programme is its innovative and entrepreneurial focus. Each EP in the cycle of basic disciplines has an entrepreneurship module. Advanced teaching methods and innovative learning technologies are implemented. Methodological seminars on the application of modern innovative teaching technologies are held annually.

#### Development of Educational Programmes

Educational programs go through several stages of discussion within the university: at the level of the department, Faculty, University. At the departmental level, the discussion of the EP takes

place within the framework of the departmental meeting. Students, employers/professional representatives are invited to the departmental meeting. Every year, a survey on students satisfaction with the programme is carried out for all existing programmes, and new disciplines can be recommended. When necessary, the educational program can be updated. The renewal of the EP is carried out taking into account the interests of the labour market. At the moment, 34 educational programmes of the University are presented in the Register of educational programs of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, of which 11 are new EPs.

One of the important factors in the implementation of the EP is the availability of joint educational programs (JEPs) with foreign partners. The coordination of work on the implementation of the JEP is carried out at the level of the department with appointed Programme Responsibles.

The EP includes a set of the following interrelated documents: educational programs on a modular basis (MEP), catalogues of elective disciplines (CED), working curricula (WC), individual curricula for students (ICs), as well as a complex of various types of educational and methodological documentation: professional practice programs, guidelines for the implementation and defence of theses/master's theses, the syllabus and the content of the educational discipline. For the implementation of the educational program, a CED is developed annually, which describes the disciplines of the elective component with an indication of the summary, pre- and post-requisites and competencies in accordance with the Dublin descriptors.

### **Teaching techniques**

The teaching of disciplines is carried out using modern educational technologies, comprehensive methodological support of all its components. The educational process of the EP is provided with all the necessary information and learning resources. For lectures there are multimedia projectors, interactive whiteboards, computer classes, there is a copying equipment. Equipping the educational process with multimedia classrooms, specialized classrooms is constantly carried out in accordance with the requirements of the standards.

In the study of disciplines, different types of lectures are used, such as “problematic” lectures, multimedia lecture or a lecture-discussion. Various approaches, methods, technologies, techniques and types of practical exercises are used e.g. creative tasks, work in small groups, collaborative learning, role-playing and business games. For instance, the active and innovative teaching methods of case analysis or the project method have been introduced. In addition, video lectures and MOOCs on the TAU platform BILIM as well as online classes through the ZOOM videoconference were organized. Teaching staff also share their experiences in the

School of Pedagogical Excellence (SPE) and ongoing master classes, trainings, open classes and methodological seminars.

Monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of innovations and the use of active teaching methods, their impact on the educational process is carried out on a regular basis at the level of each department. The main criterion is the current, midterm, final control. The progress of students, their satisfaction with the educational process is assessed. Furthermore, reviews of employers and the employment is taken into account.

### **Quality Evaluation**

Evaluation of the quality of the EP is carried out in three directions:

- Forms of external evaluation: accreditation, rating of universities, independent quality assessment of education, certification of educational programs, international examination of educational programs, examination of individual elements of the educational program.
- Forms of internal quality assessment of the EP: self-examination, internal verification of the compliance of the educational program.
- Indirect evaluation is carried out in various forms. This is a professional certification of EP graduates; passing external exams or passing independent tests on various elements of the EP by students and/or graduates; participation in professional and scientific competitions, conferences, receipt of scientific and professional awards by students and graduates of the EP; studies of career trajectories and employment of graduates, etc.

The university reports to base its educational process on the four goals of higher education defined by the Council of Europe which are educating students in an active citizenship, choosing a future career, supporting personal growth, creating a broad base of modern knowledge, stimulating research and innovation.

### **Development of students**

The University pays great attention to the progressive promotion, personal growth and overall development of the student in the process of mastering the programme. In order to educate students to active citizenship, to support personal growth, the university has various student-centred structural divisions, where students have the opportunity to unite according to their interests and develop universal skills, abilities and reveal their abilities e.g. in the Youth Affairs Committee (YAC) and other associations.

In the study of disciplines, the personal development of the student is realised due to the fact that among the learning outcomes of the EP there are universal learning outcomes aimed at the formation of the personality, teamwork and various communicative skills

### **Internships and employment**

Internship take place at all levels of education and are a university component. The main task of the professional practice of students is to consolidate and deepen the theoretical knowledge gained in the learning process, to acquire practical experience and skills in the specialty being studied. Total internship volume: for bachelor programs - 21 credits; master's programs – 5 to 13 credits; doctoral programs - 20 credits.

The program is developed by the graduating department, coordinated with the enterprises identified as practice bases, and approved by the Rector of the university. The professional practice program is periodically updated and reflects the latest achievements in science and technology, innovative technologies applied on the basis of practice. At «Turan-Astana» University, each academic year ends with an internship. The duration of the practice is determined in accordance with the current legal acts. An agreement is signed with the practice bases for each educational program.

Annually monitoring is undergoing on the employment of graduates in the first year after graduation from the university. The percentage of those employed in the first year after graduation is at least 75% for all EPs, with a rate of at least 50% specified in the Standard Rules for the Activities of Organizations of Higher and Postgraduate Education.

### **Support of talented students**

Talented students are identified through various competitions and olympiads, and the University management provides them with comprehensive support: scholarships, tuition discounts, financial support for participation in international competitions and olympiads. Information on support programmes is available on the University's website, and general information can be found in the Academic Policy, the Guide and the Content Regulations. It should be noted that the creative, innovative activity of students has increased recently.

In order to encourage active and talented students, the University organises competitions for the best student and the best group. The winners of the competition for the best student receive a scholarship from the Rector of the University for one year of study. In order to support talented graduates, a 10% discount system is offered for further education in a Master's programme. There is also a system of discounts and benefits for admission.

### **Students with special needs**

At the university students are provided with equal opportunities for learning. Thus, different age groups with different basic training (on the basis of secondary general education, on the basis of secondary vocational education, on the basis of higher education) are trained, as well as multinational groups, people with special needs; students with different family and social status (married and having children, orphans who served in the army) and material support,

foreign students, persons belonging to different religious denominations. In the learning process, their needs are constantly identified through conversations and questionnaires. The group advisor plays the main role in this process.

The university has created conditions for teaching people with special needs: there are places in the library, ramps, lifts, parking spaces. A hostel is available for non-resident orphans. For students with disabilities and students having children, an individual training schedule is drawn up.

### **Monitoring learning outcomes and assessment**

The following parameters are used to monitor the learning outcomes: the rating of a particular student; the results of the current, midterm and final control by groups, faculties; statistical analysis of controls; academic debts of a student, group, EP; the results of the final attestation of a particular student, group; evaluation of graduates by employers. The criteria for the student grading system are set out in the Academic Policy and in the course syllabus published on the Platonus AIS. Students are informed about the current grading system in the first year during meetings with the Dean, Heads of Departments and Advisors during the Orientation Week. The main provisions of the assessment system are also presented in the first-year student handbook.

According to the Academic calendar and the schedule of the educational process, approved by the Academic Council of the University, during the academic year, activities are carried out to assess learning outcomes, including periods of progress, intermediate control and final certification. The progress control is systematically carried out during classroom and extracurricular activities during the academic period, midterm control - twice a semester, final - at the end of it.

To check educational achievements, various forms of control are provided. The control and evaluation of student learning outcomes are based on the point rating system (PRS) and provide for the following distribution of points in percentages: 60% of the total number of points in the discipline is allocated for progress and intermediate control, and 40% for final control. Educational achievements are evaluated in points on a 100-point scale corresponding to the letter system adopted in international practice (positive marks, in descending order, from "A" to "D", "unsatisfactory" - "FX", "F") and with the corresponding digital equivalent on a 4-point scale.

The form of the examination in each discipline is approved by the decision of the Academic Council of the University no later than one month before the session. The organization and conduct of the intermediate certification (examination session) of students is carried out by the SSC.



Examination session of students is carried out in the form of creative exams, open book exams, oral exams, computer testing, presentation of reports on professional practice with mandatory assessment. Students who do not agree with the result of the final examination can submit an appeal to the Appeals Commission.

Since 2021, upon completion of the educational program, all students are issued a diploma of original design and a diploma supplement in three languages. Since 2019, graduates are issued with a supplement to a diploma comparable to the European one (upon request). The issuance procedure is described in the Academic Policy Section 13. The procedure for issuing a European Diploma Supplement of Higher Professional Education.

### **Student admissions**

In order to implement a systematic policy of forming a contingent of students, the University carries out a number of measures that ensure a positive image of the University in the region and the Republic as a whole. The policy of forming a contingent of students is aimed at admitting those applicants who are best prepared for university studies, who have consciously chosen the EP and scored the required number of points based on the results of entrance examinations.

In the case of Master's programmes, admission is granted to those who have scored the required number of points based on the results of passing the Complex Testing. Admission of foreign citizens to study on a paid basis is carried out based on the results of an interview conducted by the admissions committee of the university during the calendar year. For PhD programs persons who have scored the required number of points based on the results of passing entrance exams in a foreign language and in a specialty are accepted. The university is interested in attracting first-year students who are well-trained in specialized subjects. To this end, the admission committee of the university conducts a set of marketing activities:

- EP directories in Russian, Kazakh and English have been prepared for applicants
- competitions for scientific, social and business projects to attract talented youth
- preparatory language courses, open lectures, master classes for master students
- specialized exhibitions and forums
- flexible pricing policy, improvement of the system of benefits and discounts
- Orientation Week in the first semester for international students

### **Assessment**

The set of study programmes consists of 15 Bachelor programmes, 10 consecutive Master programmes and 1 PhD programme. This set of programmes fits into the strategic profile of

the Turan-Astana University, and it covers all relevant areas, in particular Humanities, Economics, and Services. Modern IT-based programmes are present as well as programmes that focus on the Kazakh culture. The available resources are appropriately used, the number of students is carefully calculated to be able to continue with appropriate provision of study programmes. Only in the longer run, the Turan-Astana University might consider introducing more PhD programs together with a further development of research activities. Objectives and content of study programmes are in accordance with the HEI's mission and strategy. Study programmes have an adequate academic standard, are well structured and have an adequate workload. They comply with national legal regulations. The processes of creating, implementing and revising study programmes are clearly defined.

The most important and specific characteristic of Teaching and Learning in the Turan-Astana University is the feature of an entrepreneurial university. The most important and specific characteristic of is the feature of entrepreneurial thinking and acting which is one of the main competences the students are aimed to achieve. The HEI offers professional support services for students. Support services have adequate staff.

Entrepreneurial thinking and acting is one of the main competences the students are aimed to achieve. While entrepreneurial thinking and acting competences are not easy to measure, there is a broad and common understanding among all stakeholders at the Turan-Astana University that these competences are at the core of studying at Turan-Astana University. Many students showed enthusiasm for entrepreneurial issues and reported that they deliberately had decided to study at the Turan-Astana University because of this feature which provides very good chances for higher positions and competitive jobs on the labour market.

While it is obvious that the entrepreneurial approach favours student-centered learning concepts, such a concept is not yet explicitly worked out. In order to match the focus on entrepreneurial competences in students with the innovation in the workplace, it is advisable that the Turan-Astana University should develop a differentiated and progressive student-centered learning concept that is continuously evolving. This would help to fulfill the Turan-Astana University's mission of becoming an entrepreneurial and research-oriented university.

The Turan-Astana University provides good networks for relating students to innovative companies and services both in the international and in the regional market, it focusses substantially on adequate internship places and monitors the learning processes in internships, and it provides an own training centre for entrepreneurship. Although it is true that the field of Business and Management is closest to entrepreneurial ideas, the basic concept can be found at the Turan-Astana University in much broader contexts. Entrepreneurial and practice-based modules are present in every study programme.

The content and structure of educational programs fully comply with the Kazakh state requirements but also with international standards, for example the ESG Guidelines. The processes

of creation, evaluation and development of study programmes are transparently and adequately organised, students and external stakeholders are systematically involved in each step. New developments are based on a) trends in the working life and discussions in professional communities, b) data collected within the study programmes in systematic surveys, including those of employers, alumni, and graduates. The involvement of all stakeholder groups and the strategic planning of study programmes and their development safeguard that the Turan-Astana University is most interested in rich feedback and evaluation information, including consideration of the academic standard of the study programmes, of the appropriateness, and eventually innovativeness, and of teaching methods and assessment procedures. Ample support services are provided. Their coordination is facilitated by the immediate vicinity of all parts of the Turan-Astana University.

## **Conclusion**

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

The expert group imposes the following recommendation:

3. The university should develop a more differentiated and progressive student-centered learning concept that is constantly evolving in regard of the university's mission to becoming an entrepreneurial and research-oriented university.

## 4 Research

*Research activities fit into the mission of the institution. The structure of the HEI and the general conditions support research activities. The teaching workload allows room for research. Recruitment policy should correspond to the research activities and research strategy of the institution [Examination Area 5, ESG Standard 1.8]*

### Implementation

The development of scientific-research activity (SRA) of the university over the past 5 years has been carried out in accordance with the Development Strategy of the University "Turan-Astana" for 2020-2025 and Strategic Plan for 2021-2025. The content and activities of scientific-research activity are fully consistent with the Mission of the university: "We are committed to delivering top-notch education and equipping competitive professionals with the capacity to drive positive transformations in their respective fields of expertise."

The University has the following strategic goals and objectives of in accordance with the Strategic Plan for the Development of the University for 2021-2025:

1) Provision and development of university research structures:

- Methodological and technological support for research;
- Developing cooperation with international research centres.
- Strengthening the staff for research.

2) Integration of education, science, innovation and production:

- establishment of research and production relations with industrial enterprises, business structures and other organizations;
- commercialization of scientific developments created in the research structures
- updating scientific research and development.

As part of the implementation of the Strategy, the university aims to form a competitive scientific and innovative university ecosystem that ensures the relevance, relevance and synergy of the results of the university's scientific and innovative activities in the education market, in business and in the real sectors of the economy.

### Research strategy

Research institutes and departments initiate scientific research of a fundamental and applied nature in scientific areas and interests of scientists, taking into account the direction of the strategic development of the University. The Thematic Plan of Scientific Research of the University within the framework of Departments and Research Institutes is prepared and corrected annually, where new topics and research projects are formulated within the framework of

emerging scientific schools. The University and its researchers are interested in developing a cluster approach to research and its interdisciplinarity.

The results of scientific research are harmoniously integrated into the implementation of educational programmes by:

- involving students at all levels in the research conducted by the faculty, which develops their research skills and enables them to produce high-quality final projects (theses, dissertations) within the framework of university research;
- development of new elective courses corresponding to the innovative entrepreneurial orientation of the university (see table 2.4.1);
- release of scientific, scientific-methodical, educational, educational-methodical literature, supplementing and enriching the educational process;
- publications of teaching staff and students;
- release of innovative products.

Incentives for different categories of researchers include the award of certificates and material prizes. The university annually holds the competition "The Best Scientist of the Turan-Astana University" since 2018. The purpose of the competition is to support the scientists of the Turan-Astana University, who are actively conducting research work, and to popularize their scientific achievements. According to the results of the competition, a certificate and a material prize are awarded: 1st place - 100% of salary, 2nd place - 50%, 3rd place - 30%. The University organises the competitions "Best Student" and "Best Graduate" on an annual basis, where one of the selection criteria is a research component.

An instrument for motivating scientific research activity is the system for evaluating the performance of teaching staff, which includes indicators and criteria for assessing scientific research and innovation activity. In addition to material and moral incentives, favorable working conditions are created for researchers, the necessary material and technical equipage, equipment and literature are purchased.

The cooperation of the University "Turan-Astana" with external partners: universities and other organisations of Kazakhstan, CIS and far abroad, contributes to the development of its scientific potential. Therefore, the management of the University, together with the teaching staff, annually establishes new scientific contacts and develops the already existing ones. Currently, the university has more than 24 cooperation agreements, including research, publication, and innovation.

Raising funds to finance research and development is carried out on an ongoing basis and is an important aspect of strengthening the scientific and innovative activities of the university.

An important direction of the scientific and educational activities of the University is the training of scientific and pedagogical personnel. PhD students are being trained at the University in the direction: economics. For the period 2021-2022 the contingent of doctoral students is 4 students. Doctoral students actively participate in research conducted by the scientists of the University and publish their results (including jointly with scientific consultants) in publications recommended by the qualification requirements.

The International Laboratories deal with issues of scientific cooperation with foreign countries, with the aim of jointly publishing monographs, textbooks, teaching materials and obtaining international scientific grants.

### **Laboratories and research centers**

- In the context of the global trend of digital transformation, a modern laboratory complex called "Digital Lab" has been established. On March 6, 2023, at Turan-Astana University, the opening of the "Robotics and 3D Printing" laboratory took place under the auspices of the Department of Information Technology
- The laboratories of the Department of Information Technology are engaged in activities in the fields of electronics, robotics, physics, programming, information system design, computer networks, and graphics.
- The laboratories of the department "DST" carry out works on creation of new design products, development of tourist methods and design of tourist routes. These laboratories involve scientists and researchers who share their expertise with students.
- The Department of Business Administration (BA) operates a scientific-practical school "Analytics," with a branch of the department located at the enterprise "Taymas" LLP. Within the activities of the "Analytics" school and the department's branch at "Taymas" LLP research work is conducted by both students and faculty members.
- The "Entrepreneurship Center" (EC) operates at the university to carry out applied scientific research projects, apply acquired knowledge in practice, and cultivate entrepreneurial culture among students. An important aspect of the EC's activities is facilitating the employment of students through social partners
- International Center for Cognitive Linguistics and Translation
- International Center for Practical Psychology, Ethnopsychology, and Intercultural Communication Psychology

## Research activities of teaching staff

The teaching staff of the departments initiate fundamental and applied scientific research in accordance with the scientific trends and the interests of the scientists, taking into account the strategic development goals of the University. Annually, a thematic plan of scientific research is drawn up and adjusted at the University level, taking into account the departments and research institutes, where new topics and research projects are formulated within emerging scientific schools. The University and researchers are interested in promoting a cluster-based approach to research and interdisciplinary collaboration

Scientists of the University conduct scientific research totalling about 88 million tenge. Special attention is paid to the implementation of scientific and technical achievements in the fields of education and science with a focus on Kazakhstan's content, regional and global leading experiences, and achievements to attract material resources, and human intellectual capital, close to world standards of quality of education and scientific potential.

As part of the implementation of the Development Strategy 2020-2025, the University conducted fundamental scientific research on the basis of grant funding. The university was allocated grant funding for a total amount of 23,752,109.00 tenge over a 3-year period to carry out scientific research on the topic "Assessment of readiness of Kazakhstani higher education institutions for transformation in the context of the "Triple Helix" " with the project leader R.E. Andekina, PhD.

Each year, the scope of research conducted by faculty and students is expanded and updated, focusing on the implementation of the 2020-2025 Development Strategy through the development of strategic innovation clusters.

The university creates certain conditions for teachers who are actively engaged in research. The teaching load is reduced, scientific grants of up to 5 million tenge are provided for conducting research and supporting publication activities. The university organises annual competitions for scientific, social and business projects to attract talented young people, and the Centre for Entrepreneurship organises business training courses such as "Team Building and Principles of Successful Teamwork", "Training for Trainers", "Innovation and Project Competition", "Creating a Successful Business" and "Best Startup Project".

The departments have startup projects, such as:

- Department of "Information Technologies" - project "Method of neutralisation of chimney emissions".

- The work of the Entrepreneurship Centre is carried out in close cooperation with the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs "Atameken", Development Fund "Damu", JSC "Kazakhstan Centre for Industry and Export "Qaindustry".

In the organizational structure of the University, scientific - research and innovation activities (SRI) are clearly structured according to the levels and directions of organisation and management. This serves as the basis for a systematic approach to the research and innovation activities of the teaching staff, their effective planning, organisation, motivation and control. In addition, the University has developed a Code of Ethics for Science and Innovation, the purpose of which is to set out the principles, norms and standards of science and innovation ethics that should guide researchers, scientists, teaching staff and students of the University.

### **Staff selection**

In the selection of staff, one of the criteria for admission to the University's teaching staff is scientific, innovative and entrepreneurial potential, as well as the desire to integrate their scientific interests with the research priorities within the strategic directions of the University's development.

SRI activities are one of the important components of the teaching load of teachers. When planning their annual workload, teachers include certain areas and types of scientific - research and innovation activities according to the calculated time standards. According to the norms of time by type of pedagogical activity for 2021-2022, in the category of non-teaching load (generally ranging from 550 to 750 hours) the amount of workload for scientific research for a doctor of science, professor is 300-450 hours; for a candidate of sciences, associate professor - 100-200 hours; for a master of sciences, lecturer - 50-150 hours. At the same time, faculty members at all levels have opportunities to increase their involvement in:

- development and implementation of scientific projects and research;
- publication of research results;
- implementation of the results in the educational process and in the real sectors of the economy and business.

Achievements in the field of research at all levels are confirmation of the fulfillment of the load of teaching staff on SRA and Innovation activities: interim and final reports of SRW; scientific publications; innovative products; approbation of scientific results at conferences and other scientific events; membership of teaching staff in scientific organizations and professional associations, Councils, editorial boards and collegiums.



As part of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2021-2025, a new approach is being developed to distribute the load, taking into account the definition of teacher positions: professor, professor-researcher, professor-innovator, (and further by category). This approach will allow the teaching staff to realize the research potential in the context of fulfilling the strategic goals and objectives of the university.

The research work at the University is carried out by the teaching staff, the heads of the structural departments in accordance with the long-term plans, by the doctoral and master students in accordance with their individual plans, by students during the execution of research and diploma projects provided by the university's curriculum; in student research clubs and other organizations of student scientific and innovative creativity. All work in progress is reported in detail on the University's official website (<https://tau-edu.kz/en>), is made known to staff and students, and serves as a basis for the implementation of individual staff plans and participation in the annual staff evaluation.

### **Students needs and involvement in research**

A sociological survey was conducted among students in order to identify their needs in research activities, as well as to assess their satisfaction with the organisation of research activities at Turan-Astana University. The general analysis of the obtained data showed that the students are satisfied to some extent with all the mentioned aspects of organizing research activities in the university. However, there are some points, for which students' evaluations are ambiguous. For ease of analysis, aspects of satisfaction levels were considered, such as: High level of satisfaction of students (more than 50% of respondents are fully satisfied) is recorded for such aspects of training as the opportunity to participate in scientific conferences, round tables, seminars (53%), publications in scientific journals (60%) and provision of educational and scientific literature (53%). A moderate level of student satisfaction (with at least 45% of respondents being fully satisfied) is observed in 1.5 aspects of research organisation at the university. This concerns, for example, parameters such as opportunities for scientific research and participation in scientific developments, as well as the provision of educational and scientific equipment. The latter is the most problematic, with one in four respondents expressing dissatisfaction with this aspect of their education. All survey results have been sent to the respondents, the Departments of Science and Innovation, and the heads of departments. These issues are being monitored closely.

To stimulate scientific research and innovation among students and researchers at the university, various scientific-practical conferences, competitions, Olympiads, scientific seminars, round tables, etc., are held. During these events, students, master's students, and doctoral

students present papers, participate in discussions on scientific issues, and engage in other related activities.

In the academic year 2022-2023 the Regulations on Student Independent Work (ROS) were developed and implemented. The ROS activities are carried out by undergraduate and graduate students in project groups or individually under the supervision of a faculty member. The main goals and objectives of ROS are the involvement of students in independent research activities and contributing to the development of the university's intellectual potential. The Scientific and Methodological Committee (SMC) supervises the implementation of the ROS work.

The scientific research and innovation activities of the University of Turan-Astana are announced and reported on the University's official website under the "Science" section and on the University's official social media pages.

## **Assessment**

Turan-Astana University (TAU) is embarking on a promising trajectory of development in the field of research. The university's strategic plan outlines the following key objectives: a) the Provision and Development of Research Infrastructure as well as b) the Integration of Education, Science, Innovation, and Industry. In this context TAU's strategic focus on practical and innovative work aligns well with its goal of expanding research structures. In its self-evaluation report and during the on-site audit, TAU presented itself as an application-oriented institution. When compared to the European and particularly the German higher education systems, TAU can be considered akin to a university of applied sciences, with interdisciplinary research as a core feature.

The institution has significant potential to integrate into the regional scientific and innovation ecosystem. The university's organizational structures, disciplinary breadth, and faculty qualifications indicate that TAU's applied research and innovations are prepared to make increasingly meaningful contributions to the regional economy. While applied research is the primary focus, the potential for conducting basic research also exists, albeit selectively. Given its current resources and activities, however, prioritizing solutions to real-world challenges in business and society appears most advantageous.

TAU hosts a variety of scientific and technical laboratories that support both innovative teaching methods and, to a certain extent, research activities. Notable examples include the Digital Lab, the Laboratory of Robotics and 3D Printing, and the Language Laboratory. These facilities are well-equipped to address practical challenges, fostering application-oriented research and knowledge transfer within a university ecosystem that actively engages with industry partners.

One of TAU's notable strengths is its commitment to fostering interdisciplinary research across departments. A university-wide thematic plan for scientific research promotes collaboration among stakeholders at multiple levels. This approach facilitates the integration of diverse expertise and perspectives, enhancing the quality and impact of research outcomes.

TAU has successfully secured first public research grants. For example, the university received a very good grant to study the "Assessment of the readiness of Kazakhstani higher education institutions for transformation in the context of the Triple Helix." This grant is significant when contextualized within Kazakhstan's research funding landscape, where only about 0.1% of GDP is allocated to research—far below Germany's 3%. In this context, the grant represents a meaningful achievement for state-funded research.

To support its research agenda, TAU has reduced teaching loads for faculty involved in research and allocated financial resources for essential research equipment. New faculty classifications, including "professor," "professor-researcher," and "professor-innovator," aim to align teaching staff roles with the university's strategic research goals.

TAU's research efforts are closely linked to its Entrepreneurship Center, which actively involves students in innovation projects, reinforcing the university's practical orientation and commitment to knowledge transfer. Efforts to internationalize research activities have led to the establishment of specialized centers, such as the "International Center for Cognitive Linguistics and Translation" and the "International Center for Practical Psychology, Ethnopsychology, and Intercultural Communication Psychology."

The university measures its publication output using metrics derived from internationally recognized databases such as Scopus and Web of Science, demonstrating its commitment to maintaining standards of self-assessment and external evaluation. While current departmental publication figures in Scopus-indexed journals remain modest, the strategic and structural groundwork for improvement is evident.

TAU enhances transparency in its research activities by maintaining a publicly accessible list of publications on its website. This not only strengthens the university's reputation but also fosters engagement with potential external stakeholders who may collaborate on research projects.

The university is already training a small number of PhD students, with the expectation that this number will grow as the research strategy evolves. TAU's emphasis on practical relevance offers promising opportunities to integrate doctoral research into applied projects, bridging the gap between academic research and industry needs.

Overall, research at TAU is a strategically prioritized and actively promoted endeavor. Initial research activities span all subject areas, with a strong emphasis on applied science. TAU

demonstrates a clear intent to strengthen regional and national economic development through its research contributions. The university's active engagement with private investment and public-private partnerships facilitates the translation of scientific discoveries into commercial applications.

To further support its strategic objectives, TAU should continue expanding efforts to recruit research-oriented professors and students with an interest in research. By offering attractive measures such as reduced teaching responsibilities and seed funding for research, the university is well-positioned to attract and retain top talent in the field.

### **Conclusion**

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

The expert group imposes the following recommendation:

4. To further support its strategic objectives, TAU should continue expanding efforts to recruit research-oriented professors and students with an interest in research. By offering attractive measures such as reduced teaching responsibilities and seed funding for research, the university is well-positioned to attract and retain top talent in the field.

## 5 Resources

*The HEI has adequate human and financial resources, infrastructure, and equipment to achieve its objectives. The academic staff recruitment process meets academic standards [Examination Area 3, Examination Area 6, Examination Area 7, ESG Standard 1.5, ESG Standard 1.6].*

### 5.1 Human resources

#### Implementation

The implementation of the Human Resources Policy for personnel management can be traced through the key provisions of the following documents: Development Strategy of the University "Turan-Astana" for 2020-2025 years, Quality Assurance Policy of the University "Turan-Astana", Regulations on the system of motivation of teaching staff and university staff, Regulations on the personnel reserve, Regulations on certification of teaching staff, Qualification characteristics of positions of teaching staff and employees and others. Monitoring of teaching staff activities, procedures for evaluating their performance indicators, approaches to assessing the competence of a teacher are reflected in the Regulations on the rating assessment of teaching staff activities.

The University has developed and implemented processes described in the following documents: "Code of Corporate Culture of the University", "Code of Academic Honesty", "Internal Rules Work Routine", "Key Corporate Values of TAU", "Regulations on Personnel Policy", "Rules for the Competitive Filling of Positions of the Teaching Staff of the Turan-Astana University", "Regulations on Personal Data of Employees and Students" and "Regulations on Personnel Reserve".

The total number of staff at the University is 203, including the teaching staff of 154 persons, of whom 57% are women, administrative and management staff - 13, of whom 69.9% are women, educational and support staff - 35, of whom 57.5% are women. The number of full-time teaching staff is 135 - 87.6 %, which corresponds to the qualification requirements. The breakdown of faculty members with academic degrees is as follows: 12 - Doctor of Sciences, 40 - Candidate of Sciences, 12 - PhD and 57- Masters' Degree.

#### Hiring process

The university has impartial and transparent processes for hiring employees. Recruitment is carried out on the basis of an analysis of the needs of educational programs, as a result of which a competition is announced for filling vacant positions.

The main indicators and requirements that characterise the teaching staff are: the academic degree and title, practical experience if available, scientific and pedagogical experience and seniority in the position held, activity in pedagogical and methodological work and research, highlighting, among others, the experience of entrepreneurial, project activities, readiness (ability) and the possibility of acting as a mentors for start-ups.

The policy of gender equality, tolerance, non-discrimination of women at the University "Turan-Astana" is reflected in the internal regulatory document "Code of Corporate Ethics", in which the fundamental corporate values, on the basis of which the activities of the university are built.

All procedures related to recruitment, promotion, dismissal, familiarisation of personnel with rights and duties are carried out by the Human Resources and Legal Support Department (HRLSD) in accordance with the legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan and internal regulatory documents. The results of these procedures are reflected in the personal files of teaching staff and university employees. Employment contracts are mandatory for all employees. The rights and obligations of University staff are set out in the employment contract and job descriptions, which are periodically updated as required. All personnel procedures are reflected in regulations, which are communicated to all university employees regularly.

The requirements for the competence of the teaching staff are defined in the Regulation on the Teaching Staff and Qualification Characteristics for the Positions of the Teaching Staff and in the Job Descriptions. The rights and obligations of the teaching staff of the University are defined in the employment contracts.

The competence model of the teaching staff of the university is implemented through the planning and regular assessment of the individual work of the teacher, reflects the level of his pedagogical skills through the holding of open classes, master classes, readiness for professional growth and self-development, ability to build a career perspective, competencies in the field of pedagogical, methodological, research and other activities.

In order to improve the quality of teaching and to ensure a close link with production, specialists with experience in the relevant industries are involved in the educational process. Teacher-practitioners are selected on the basis of qualification requirements, job descriptions and approved staffing levels, taking into account significant practical experience in the relevant field. On average, practitioners make up 40% of the total teaching staff.

Favorable working conditions have been created at the University, which is expressed in the appropriate equipment of workplaces in departments and offices, providing the educational and working process with the necessary equipment.

## Staff development

The concept of staff stimulation follows from the need to improve the quality indicators of the University. At the university, the procedure of employee motivation is determined by the Regulation "On the Evaluation System for the Assessment of Teaching Staff Activities". The aim of the regulation is to strengthen the connection between the remuneration of employees and their personal contribution to work and the final result of the University's work as a whole, which contributes to staff retention. Each year, the University Management increases the official salary and awards bonuses according to the final results of the evaluation of teaching staff.

The university has a system to encourage the professional and personal development of teachers and staff, which includes immaterial and material incentives. Also, the university has a system of financial support for initiative teachers, such competitions as "The Best Teacher" are held. In addition, the University allocates funds for the publication of textbooks, teaching aids and monographs of its teachers. The teaching staff of the university are published free of charge in the scientific journal "Bulletin of the University" Turan-Astana ".

One of the conditions for ensuring the quality of teaching at a university is the correct planning of the teacher's workload in the teacher's individual work plan. The distribution of the teaching load among teachers is carried out taking into account their qualifications, academic degree, title, position, as a rule, the main subject disciplines of the EP are assigned to full-time teaching staff. Research activities are one of the important components of the teaching load of teaching staff. When planning their annual workload, teachers include in it certain areas and types of scientific research and development.

In general, the university has a system for monitoring compliance with teaching staff and employees of labour discipline. All cases of violation are recorded by the Heads of Unit and, on the basis of their recommendations, decisions are taken on necessary measures and appropriate orders are issued.

Advanced training of teaching staff and employees is organized by various structures of the University (Center for Entrepreneurship, DAA, IQAS commission, departments) and other universities and organizations. For instance, in 2021-2022, 136 teachers completed 72 hours of training within the framework of the School of Pedagogical Excellence. As part of the implementation of the personnel policy of the University "Turan-Astana", development of the Mentoring Institute, improvement of the quality of teaching of young teachers, cycles of master classes and training seminars were held.

In order to improve professional competences in the field, the annual work plan of the departments provides for the completion of internships by employees. Retraining and internships in

foreign educational and scientific organizations are given considerable attention by the management. When forming the teaching staff, the University's management and the EP set as one of the priorities the task of involving teacher-practitioners in the educational process. More than 35% of the full-time teaching staff of the University have practical experience in the field of training specialists.

An important direction in the development of the University's human resources potential is to attract talented young graduates to scientific and teaching activities. In order to realise the scientific potential of young scientists of Turan-Astana University, the Council of Young Scientists was established.

### **Assessment**

The Turan-Astana University is a relatively young HEI and has been clearly planned from the very beginning. Therefore, there are sufficient human resources to fulfil all requirements concerning appropriate teaching, administration and quality management including the development of study programmes.

The qualification, amount, and performance of the academic personnel clearly correspond to the profile of the Turan-Astana University and continuously are being monitored which is in particular important as the entrepreneurial character of the university may often lead to changes in the portfolio of study programmes and of contents.

There are clear and transparent calculations of required and available human resources on a continuous basis. Currently, 87 per cent of the teaching staff has full-time positions on an adequate academic level. The selection and recruitment of staff members follow clearly defined procedures and support the idea of an entrepreneurial university, not least by the involvement of external stakeholders in the process.

The distribution of tasks is transparent and comprehensible; to some degree, compensation can be sought if additional activities are planned, for example can strengthening research work lead to less teaching. The functionality of the study programmes is observed by the deans.



## 5.2 Financial Resources

### Implementation

The procedure for determining and distributing the total financial resources of the university is built as a sequence of management decisions (budget planning) both for the long term, ensuring the achievement of strategic goals, and for the short term, planning current activities. The operational level of planning is the budget for the financial year broken down by departments, with the allocation of planned tasks to ensure all areas of the university's activities.

The main budget of the university is the income and expenditure budget, which reflects all receipts and expenditures of the university.

The dynamics of university funding by type of activity shows that the main source of funding is income from educational programs on a paid basis, funding of students under the state order at the expense of the state budget, income from scientific activities of the university and income from the provision of student accommodation services in a hostel. The university budget is built from the point of view of the adequacy of the financial support of the programs being implemented.

The expenditure part of the budget is formed on the basis of a consolidated calculation of the needs for teachers, teaching and support staff, administrative, managerial and service staff, consolidated requests from structural departments, equipping computer classes and laboratories with educational equipment and materials for the educational process. The planned amount of income required to cover these needs is calculated on the basis of the enrolment plan for the student contingent. Income from the provision of educational and other services is used to pay teachers and staff, to purchase materials and equipment, to pay utility bills, to maintain vehicles used to transport students to the place of study. In terms of the structure of expenditure, the dominant items in the university budget are wages and salaries and the acquisition of fixed and intangible assets. The share of salaries in expenses has always been high, which indicates the fulfilment of the management's intentions to guarantee the material and social well-being of its employees. The main directions for ensuring financial and economic sustainability are: strengthening the income base by increasing the number of students; increasing the funding for internships and training courses; increasing the funding for the development of the material base.

Annually, the university approves a budget for the current academic year. Financial resources are allocated within the framework of the budget planned for the academic year and are aimed at the successful implementation of educational programmes. Basic financial management procedures:

- accounting in accordance with the University's accounting policy;
- weekly control of expenditure in relation to budget lines and departmental budgets;
- control of receipt of student payments in accordance with the Regulation on the Tuition Fees.

The physical assets are built up in accordance with the mission and the objectives of the educational organization, namely the quality education of highly qualified specialists at the university with modern scientific and technical, laboratory and information bases. The university has a sufficient amount of physical assets allocated to expand the material and technical base and update the laboratory and educational base, as well as replenish the library fund and update information resources, which indicates high-quality financial and income planning.

The university annually approves the Regulations on tuition fees for students, master students, doctoral students, which contains full information on the cost of education, payment terms, all types and amounts of discounts, the procedure for paying or refunding tuition in case of expulsion. It is available to students, applicants and parents on the University's website and in the Dean's Offices.

The planned minimum expenses for one year of study correspond to the level of expenses provided for by the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the approval of the state order for the training of specialists. The analysis of the financial activities of the University shows that the management of financial resources is ensured through the analysis of cash flows, the effectiveness and risks of financial investments and the use of appropriate methods. The results of the financial and economic activities of the University clearly confirm that the financial stability is growing from year to year, which makes it possible to strengthen the material and technical base, increase salaries and also use other forms of encouragement and financial support for the staff and students.

## **Assessment**

Budget planning, both long-term and short-term, are part of strategic activities at the appropriate level (university, department) at the Turan-Astana University. Thus solid financial resources are provided. A risk factor concerning financial resources is the number of enrolled students. While enrolment is continuously observed and discussed, some unexpected changes in student numbers happened in the recent past, not least during the pandemic. The

Turan-Astana University mastered those situations. However, it is recommended that the Turan-Astana University should develop a system that it can be ensured that always sufficient financial resources are available with the number of study programmes. A corresponding risk management system should therefore be considered and introduced, which constantly monitors the required resources (compare recommendation chapter 2 of the accreditation report). All parts of the planning of financial resources are solid and plausible and are performed on a good professional level.

### **5.3 Facilities and Equipment**

#### **Implementation**

«Turan-Astana» University has sufficient infrastructure necessary for the successful implementation of educational programmes using the material and technical base (MTB): information resources and technologies, resources for research work and practical training of students.

The University has three academic buildings with a total area of 9277 sq. m. The total training space is 5463.2 sq. m. The University has a sufficient number of classrooms for conducting training sessions.

The auditorium fund consists of 52 classrooms, of which: 1 auditorium has 130 seats, 3 auditoriums – 50-60 seats, 9 auditoriums – 30-50 seats, the rest of the auditoriums have a capacity ranging from 6 to 30 seats. The total area of the sports hall is 565.6 sq.m., 1 hall of residence with a total area of 859.0 sqm and 2 rented hostels.

The university reports that departments have the necessary resources to organize the educational process. The entire educational and laboratory base used in the educational process is equipped with 36 multimedia devices (26 multimedia projectors, panoramic screens, 10 interactive whiteboards). In total, the University has 10 computer classes, all of which are connected to the Internet. 2 classes have special rooms and laboratories with a total area of 4054 m<sup>2</sup>, including the Entrepreneurship Centre "Startup Univer" - 109.5 m<sup>2</sup>, which is used for the development of entrepreneurial skills and the implementation of start-up projects. The total number of personal computers is 341 units. The university has a printing house with modern equipment. More than 10 million tenge have been spent on profound renovation of the printing equipment.

The university has 17 laboratories and 19 special classrooms with the ability to demonstrate multimedia materials using innovative teaching methods, 3 training workshops.

On the basis of the Department of Information Technology, the Center for Scientific Innovation "Digital Lab" operates, which consists of 11 specialized classrooms equipped with modern computer equipment in the amount of 137 units and the same number of jobs for training with a total area of 417.3 sq.m:

- Center for scientific design and legal research;
- Center for Economic Research and Financial Management;
- Laboratory "Physics and electrical circuits";
- Laboratory "Programming";
- Laboratory "Architecture of computer systems";
- Laboratory "Design of information systems";
- Laboratory "Computer networks";
- Laboratory "Design of intelligent systems";
- Laboratory "Information Protection";
- Laboratory "Computer Graphics", equipped with 9 powerful computers for working with 2D, 3D graphics programs and 3D animation programs;
- Laboratory "Electronics and Robotics", which is equipped with 6 workstations complete with laptops and Arduino robots, as well as a 3D printer.

## **Library**

The educational process of the University "Turan-Astana" is provided with information and methodological resources of the Library and Information Center (LIC), educational and methodological materials, scientific and methodological developments of the departments. The LIC in its activities is guided by regulatory documents: The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education", the Regulations on the LIC, Methodological Manuals on Library Science for Libraries of the Education System and other regulatory documents.

The library is equipped with 30 personal computers, 2 printers, and a scanner. All PCs are connected to the Internet. The library provides a connection to electronic resources via IP addresses, which allows users authorized on the territory of the university to receive remote access. These are resources such as RIEL, IPRBOOKS, Polpred Media Review, Clarivate (Web of Science), Elsevier databases (Scopus, Science Direct), etc. subscription to IPRbooks and RIEL.

Since 2019, the library has subscribed and received a connection to the IPR BOOKS electronic library system, which is the leading provider of digital content for educational institutions and public libraries. The resource is actively used by the teaching staff of the University by students, undergraduates and doctoral students. In addition, the library is connected to foreign electronic databases provided by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Springer, Scopus and Web of Science.

The joint activities of the LIC and the departmental coordinators are carried out in order to ensure the quality of the book collection in a permanent working mode. Since 2019, the WEB-KABIS module has been connected, which allows users to use the library system remotely.

The main book stock at the end of the academic year 2021-2022 is 62469 copies, of which 47% educational literature, 19% educational and methodical literature, and 21% scientific literature. The main part of the library fund is educational and methodical literature on disciplines of mandatory cycle and professional programmes and the share of scientific literature is 5%, which corresponds to the valid standards. The share of the main book stock in state language is 47%, which corresponds to the share of students studying in Kazakh. Periodicals are represented by 31 titles.

Library users have access to the database, to multimedia materials, there is a specialized application for use by persons with visual impairments, with voice guidance and the ability to connect a Braille keyboard. The University ensures the effective functioning of the system of individual support and counselling of students in the educational process, including the use of the AIS "Platonus" to gather feedback.

### **Further facilities for students**

Primary health care for students is provided at the first-aid post. Medical care for students takes place at the Municipal Polyclinic No. 3. Meals for students are provided in the canteen. The university has its own student hostel with a total area of 858.9 square metres, for 78 beds.

The university operates support services for students, assisting them with their educational, personal, and career needs: library, employment and career practice center, simulation counselling and relaxation room, educational psychology office, general psychology office, practical psychology center.

One of the tools to prevent intolerance of any kind and discrimination against students is the Youth Affairs Committee (YAC), whose chairman is a member of the Academic Council, also representatives of the students are present at the meetings of AC and are members of the IQAS Commission.

## Assessment

The infrastructure and the equipment of the Turan-Astana University are fitting its strategic profile and are adequate to achieve its mission. Buildings, offices, teaching rooms and service rooms (for entrepreneurship activities, IT pools, library, group working rooms, cafeterias) are present and are adequate in quantity and quality. Ongoing innovation processes are continuously being reviewed and lead to appropriate activities if needs are observed. For example, the library is currently being extended to more electronically available international journals, which reflects the increasing level of internationalisation as well as the shift towards electronic rather than paper-based library services. Both the number of physical workplaces in the library (currently 65 seats) and the access to the electronic library are monitored. The Turan-Astana University is encouraged to continuously update such analyses when study programmes are changing in order to comply with the mission of an entrepreneurial university.

Currently the Turan-Astana University offers 200 dormitory places and 80 places in the residence, but recent analyses showed that a larger number of rooms are required. This led to the design of a project to build a new 9-store dormitory for 500 places. Again, the Turan-Astana University is encouraged to continuously update such analyses.

The institution has adequate human and financial resources, infrastructure, and equipment to achieve its objectives. The academic staff recruitment process meets academic standards.

## Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## 6 Quality Assurance

*The institution has adequate quality assurance procedures and mechanisms to ensure that the results of quality assurance procedures are for continuous improvement [Examination Area 2, ESG Standard 1.1, ESG Standard 1.7, ESG Standard 1.9, ESG Standard 1.10].*

### Implementation

The Quality Assurance Policy is part of its strategic management and reflects conceptually the Quality Assurance and Quality Management System of the University. The university's quality assurance policy expresses the general intentions and direction of activities in the field of quality, formally formulated by the top management of the university.

According to ESG requirements Standard 1.1 the quality assurance policy is available to students, teaching staff and employees, partners and other stakeholders by publishing it on the official website of the university. The current Quality Assurance Policy was revised and supplemented in 2021 after approval by the Academic Council. The requirements for the Quality Assurance Policy, based on ESG compliance, are set out in the Internal Quality Assurance System Manual.

The internal quality assurance system of the University is aimed at ensuring the effectiveness of the educational activities of the university and its compliance with ESG standards.

The intra-university quality assurance system includes regulatory and methodological base of internal documents developed in accordance with external quality standards as well as a quality planning. The quality assurance of the main educational process and all auxiliary activities is provided by a certain system of documents and processes, a documented strategy, mission, quality policy, quality goals. The Education Quality Assurance Policy is reflected in the Guidelines for the Internal Quality Assurance System.

Priority directions of the Education Quality Assurance Policy:

- the preparation of highly qualified personnel of the appropriate level and profiles that are competitive in the labor market;
- further expansion of the range of educational services provided;
- modernization of educational programs in accordance with the trends of the requirements of national and international university rankings;
- provision of practice-oriented and dual training;
- transformation of the educational process into an entrepreneurial model of university development through the integration of science, education and innovation;

- expansion of international relations, search for strategic partners at the local and global level, establishment of external relations according to the triple helix model;
- creation of comfortable conditions for students and teaching staff, formation of an entrepreneurial culture, creation of an atmosphere for self-development, self-improvement and self-realization;
- digitalization and implementation of the SMART-university model.

Ensuring the quality of the educational process is carried out through:

- creation of an appropriate organizational structure for quality management of the educational process, determination of the area of responsibility of structural divisions and key officials to maintain the quality assurance of education, active involvement of students and employers in the quality assurance process.
- The direct organization of the development of documents, management, implementation control, monitoring and other operational issues are carried out by the following collegiate bodies and structural units specially created at the University: Academic Committee; IQAS Commission, Department of Quality Management, Accreditation and Rating, Department of Academic Affairs;
- conducting systematic monitoring and evaluation of programmes taking into account the level of knowledge of students and the competence of teachers, the development of processes, objective criteria and indicators, appropriate procedures for monitoring the quality of education and mechanisms for introducing corrective measures
- creating the resources necessary to ensure the quality of education in relation to each educational programme;
- creating a system for collecting, analyzing and using information that guarantees the openness of the University's activities to the public;
- development of information systems on the level of academic performance, the demand for graduates in the labour market, the satisfaction of students, teachers and employees with the educational process, teaching efficiency, available teaching resources, the main documents of the university, including quality management education;
- implementation of the principle of transparency and decision-making based on collegial discussion and developed rules, information openness to society and openness to criticism.



To determine satisfaction with the quality of education, an annual survey of students and graduates is carried out; training of the university staff on quality management issues is regularly conducted in the leading universities of the country. At the university level, there is a commission on the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), which analyses the quality of lectures and practical classes, offers recommendations for improving the educational process.

The university reports the consistency of the strategy with the program documents of the Kazakh Republic and the region. This includes 6 blocks reflecting the development of unique educational programs and innovative teaching technologies, the formation of a scientific and innovative ecosystem of the university, the implementation of university internationalization vectors, the education of a personality and socially significant activities, the modernization of marketing activities and the promotion of educational products. Each of them reflects the interaction with stakeholders in the relevant areas of activity.

Monitoring of the implementation of the Development Strategy of the university is carried out at meetings of the collegiate bodies: The Academic Council, the Academic Committee of Schools, Academic Quality Council, the IQAS commission.

On the basis of the Strategic Development Plan of the university, key performance indicators of departments, faculty and staff have been developed. At the same time, key performance indicators are taken into account in the current remuneration system, approved by order of the rector.

The indicators of the University Development Strategy are closely related to the indicators of the Rating of "Atameken", organised by the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs.

In order to develop and carry out activities aimed at improving the quality of education, there is monitoring the quality of methodological, educational- methodological and scientific research support of the educational process. Strategic directions for the development of the university, the Academic Committees of Schools, AQC, IQAS are determined. The activities of the collegiate bodies as a whole cover the problematic issues of methodological support and improvement of the educational process, revitalization of the teaching staff.

Heads of educational programs annually take advanced training courses in management in the educational field such as "New approaches to the management of educational activities in the context of transformation into an innovative entrepreneurial type university."

The participation of teaching staff and students in the management of the university is ensured by their right to be elected to collegiate management bodies, to make proposals for improving the educational process addressed to the Academic Council.

Risk management is an important component of the internal system for assessing the quality

of educational services of the university. The issues of assessing risks and determining ways to reduce them are considered at meetings of collegiate bodies, where the degree of threat from the existing risks for the implementation of the EP are addressed. In addition, in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of educational processes an internal audit group operates at the university, which includes members of the IQAS.

The teaching staff, administrative and managerial personnel and university students strictly adhere to the standards of academic integrity in accordance with the Academic Policy of the University and the Code of Academic integrity. Furthermore, the university implements a policy of transparency and objectivity in assessing students' knowledge.

### **Evaluation and feedback**

According to 1.9 ESG Standard "Continuous monitoring and periodic evaluation of educational programs" in the course of its educational activities, the university reports to pay great attention to the monitoring and periodic evaluation of the EP. This work is carried out within the framework of strategic planning with the participation of all structural units and is aimed at achieving the goals of the EP and the university as a whole.

The university has a feedback system with external stakeholders. When developing and updating the study program, employers' feedback on the results of professional internships, the demand for graduates in the labor market and employers' recognition of the quality of training specialists are taken into account.

External quality assessment is carried out through the participation of the University "Turan-Astana" in the annual national rankings (IAAR, IQAA) and the EP rating (IAAR, IQAA, "Atameken" NCE). Annually, according to the results of national rankings, the University "Turan-Astana" is among the 20 best universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Since 2014, "Turan-Astana" University has been successfully undergone the procedure of institutional accreditation and since 2018 the procedure of specialized accreditation in recognized accreditation bodies registered in the National Register of Accreditation Bodies of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, listed in the European Register of Agencies for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (EQAR). The results of the external evaluation and recognition of the quality of the EP (reports, expert opinions, etc.) are made transparent and are posted on the university website.

In order to monitor the effectiveness of the EP, the IQAS Commission regularly evaluates the open classes of the lecturers and the mutual participation of the teachers in the classes. In addition, the quality of teaching is assessed by the members of the Academic Committees members.

## Assessment

TAU's quality management system links both internal and external quality assurance mechanisms.

As far as external quality assurance is concerned, TAU underwent national and international accreditations and participates in national and international university rankings. According to the results of national rankings, TAU has annually been among the 20 best universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

TAU's internal quality assurance system is based on a published Quality Assurance Policy that was recently revised and it encompasses detailed regulations in an Internal Quality Assurance System Manual. During the interviews, the members of the QA department referred to a map of processes, in which all internal QA processes are listed and responsibilities are made transparent. In all sessions during the site visit, it has become evident that TAU places great emphasis on the quality of the educational process and all stakeholders are eager and willing to play their role in quality assurance by contributing to constant optimization based on their wish to offer TAU students best study conditions.

The site visit has shown that an effective monitoring and feedback system for courses and study programmes is in place. Students fill out surveys and anonymous online questionnaires after each course and the response rate lies between 70 and 80 %, which is rather high. The students reported that their teaching staff are always open for any questions, feedback and suggestions they might have and they experienced that their feedback was discussed with them and taken into account. Apart from this informal student feedback mechanisms, the students are represented formally in the Academic Committee, where they can discuss changes for study programmes. The head of the Youth Department also serves as a very close contact person for the students and brings in students' interests. For cases of student complaint, TAU students can use the Rector's Blog or also contact an ombudsperson. The expert group witnessed that students' needs can be articulated via a variety of instruments and it has become obvious that TAU places great emphasis on integrating the students' voice in its quality assurance system. Moreover, it also provides valuable mechanisms for student support services.

When it comes to the integration of other stakeholders in the quality assurance system, the SER mentions the integration of employers when monitoring and evaluating the study programmes to make sure that the needs of the labour market are met. The relevant discussions with them are held at department meetings and, according to the SER, the results are used to make changes to the study programmes.

In the framework of the University Development Strategy, the departments annually determine quality goals in accordance with the strategy indicators and an annual monitoring takes place

at the end of the academic year. The stakeholders reported that if the goals are not fulfilled, they will be modified, as sometimes the goals might not have been realistic (e.g. concerning the time needed for the introduction of a new study programme). As stated in the self-evaluation report, a risk management is in place as part of the internal quality assurance system in the way that possible risks for study programmes are discussed at the collegiate bodies.

For the further development of the internal quality assurance system, the expert group recommends specifying and sharpen the following aspects:

Specific criteria should be defined that are used for the decision on whether to close an existing study programme, e.g. if the demand is too low. In this regard, the risk management, which constantly monitors resources and student numbers, should be given more emphasis and long-term measures should be taken to increase student numbers. When closing the loop of the PDCA cycle, recommendations for action should be derived and documented in a systematic way

## Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

The expert group imposes the following recommendation:

5. Specific criteria should be defined that are used for the decision on whether to close an existing study programme, e.g. if the demand is too low. In this regard, the risk management, which constantly monitors resources and student numbers, should be given more emphasis and long-term measures should be taken to increase student numbers. When closing the loop of the PDCA cycle, recommendations for action should be derived and documented in a systematic way.

## 7 Internationalisation

*This criterion only applies in those cases where internationalisation is part of the institutional strategy [Vision and Objectives on Internationalisation].*

### Implementation

Internationalization is one of the priorities in the development strategy of the university, having established partnerships and collaborations with leading universities worldwide, including Varna Free University (Bulgaria), the Complutense University of Madrid (Spain) and many more. According to the policy of ensuring the quality of education, an important goal of the university is to ensure the academic mobility of students, which is regulated by the Academic Policy of the University, the Regulations on Academic Mobility. Information about academic mobility programs is posted on the website in the International Cooperation section. The goals, objectives and general rules for ensuring and implementing academic mobility correspond to the basic principles of the Bologna process. Academic mobility of students is carried out within the framework of a three party agreement between the student, the sending and receiving university.

When organizing academic mobility, the University actively cooperates with the BPAMC. Every year, the University sends applications for the distribution of grant funds between the universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan under academic mobility programs. The Department of International Cooperation accepts documents from all students wishing to take part in these programs, conducts a competitive selection of applicants and organizes support the entire period of academic mobility.

At the University "Turan-Astana" academic mobility is implemented according to the Rules for the organization of educational process on credit technology of education dated October 30, 2018 № 595, Rules of direction for study abroad, including within the framework of academic mobility as well as the Regulations on the academic mobility of students and faculty of the University that were approved in 2020. The Department of International Cooperation organises academic mobility in international universities and shares information on the website and in social media channels.

During the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year, 5 foreign specialists from Poland, Iran, Russia, and Bulgaria were invited to deliver special entrepreneurial courses, and the activity related to academic mobility of academic staff with both domestic and foreign universities grew. Practice-oriented and dual education is also ensured through the modification of interaction with the external environment. Furthermore, the university welcomed two visiting Scholars in Information Technology and in ICT. Academic staff mobilities within Kazakhstan are also taking place.

The Department of Social and Humanitarian Sciences and Language Disciplines strengthens close ties to develop academic mobility with various universities of the Republic. Several Professors conducted online lectures for other universities.

External outgoing academic mobility is carried out through participation in competitions, partnership programs, internships, etc. according to the proposals of the department of international cooperation or on the initiative of the students themselves. With incoming external mobility, the relevant departments, the Department of Academic Affairs (DAA), the OR, Dean's Offices, and accounting departments participate in organizing the academic mobility of foreign students. Academic mobility of undergraduates and doctoral students is also carried out in the form of scientific and practical internships. If the academic mobility of students is funded by a grant from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, a competition is announced. The procedure for selecting applicants is carried out in accordance with the regulation on the competition commission.

The Department of International Cooperation, together with the graduating department, provides comprehensive support to students in the course of academic mobility. Regular interaction between the university services and the advisor with students is ensured. The university carefully selects partner universities and coordinates individual curricula and conditions of the students' stay. Upon return, the student submits a transcript certified by the signature of the person responsible for the academic mobility programs and the official seal of the partner university.

External academic mobility is one of the most important areas in the activities of the university. Over the past two academic years, the organization and implementation of international mobility programs at the University was complicated by the influence of external factors, namely, the COVID -19 coronavirus pandemic. Nevertheless, in the academic year 2020-2022 the university was able to organize a virtual academic mobility of 26 students in the A.A. Pushkin Leningrad State University (Russian Federation) and Ural State University of Economics (Russian Federation). New cooperation agreements are concluded annually, work is organized to develop joint programs and double diplomas, and contacts are established with new foreign partners. International cooperation is an integral part of the activities of the university and an important tool for ensuring the quality of education and its compliance with international standards.

The geography of the University's international cooperation is quite wide. At present the foreign partners of the University in the field of educational and cultural cooperation are educational institutions, scientific institutions, international organisations from Bulgaria, Turkey, Latvia, Russia, China, Romania, Spain, Switzerland and other countries. During the years of cooperation with these universities the relations have developed and deepened in various areas.

Within the framework of academic exchange, seminars were held, the speakers of which were leading foreign lecturers, practitioners and specialists. One of the key areas of international inter-university cooperation is the development and implementation of joint educational programmes aimed at providing students with the opportunity to study at foreign universities and obtain two diplomas - the diploma of the university and the diploma of a foreign partner university.

The double degree programme is a programme in which a student studies at a partner university and then obtains a diploma from the partner university and a diploma from Turan-Astana University. The advantages of such an education are international experience, possibility of obtaining two diplomas, Kazakh and foreign, in 4-5 years, employment prospects after graduation, mastery of advanced knowledge of leading teachers. Turan-Astana University's partners in double degree programmes are:

- Chernorizets Khrabr Varna Free University (Varna, Bulgaria);
- Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education "Russian State Academy of Intellectual Property".

The duration of study at both universities is four academic years - a total of 8 semesters, with a total of 240 ECTS credits. The language of instruction for the bachelor's programme is Russian and/or English.

In addition, the possibilities of implementing double degree education with further university partners are being considered and the conditions have been created for the introduction and implementation of the international activities of the teaching staff and students.

## **Assessment**

During the evaluation process, the university's diverse development efforts were clearly evident. These include the development of forward-looking internationalization strategy. From the point of view of the expert group, there is still a need for development here it is to recommend, that the university should develop an international profile and a sustainable internationalization strategy: As part of an internationalization strategy, teaching staff should speak English. To this end, suitable further training opportunities and incentives should be created that can also be used by administrative staff. More courses should therefore be offered in English. At the course level, contemporary English-language academic literature should be considered required reading for students. To make this possible, students should be strongly encouraged to learn English and appropriate language courses should be offered. Incentives should also be created to encourage teaching staff and students to make greater use of academic mobility.

To increase the outgoing rate, students should be continuously encouraged to study abroad or complete an international internship. Possible mobility windows should be defined to make it easier for students to move abroad. The experts also advocate greater international cooperation with universities in the European Higher Education Area. As part of international cooperation, teachers should be given the opportunity to work abroad as guest lecturers, and appropriate support should be provided. At the same time, more guest lecturers should be invited from abroad. Here, recruitment should also be extended to Europe and not just to Central Asia, as has been the case so far.

### **Conclusion**

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

The expert group imposes the following **recommendation**:

### **Recommendation:**

6. The university should develop an international profile and a future-proof internationalization strategy.



#### IV Recommendation to the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN

##### 1 **Assessment of compliance the Standards and Guidelines in the Higher European Area (ESG) in the actual official version and the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR)**

The institutional structures and performance were assessed on the basis of the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG), criteria for the institutional accreditation of non-state higher education institution of the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR) („Guidelines for the accreditation of non-state higher education institutions" Section B.IV), and the national or other relevant regulations.

The expert group concludes that the **ESG standards** 1.1 (Policy for quality assurance), 1.2 (Design and approval of programmes), 1.3 (Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment), 1.4 (Student admission, progression, recognition and certification), 1.5 (Teaching staff), 1.6 (Learning resources and student support), 1.7 (Information management), 1.8 (Public information), 1.9 (On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes) and 1.10 (Cyclical external quality assurance) are fulfilled partially fulfilled.

The expert group concludes that the **WR examination areas** 1 (Institutional conception, profile, and development objectives), 2 (Governance structure, organization, and quality management), 3 (Staff), 4 (Study and teaching), 5 (Research), 6 (Equipment (rooms and facilities)) and 7 (Funding) are fulfilled partially fulfilled.

The assessment criteria are as follows:

##### **Institutional Profile and Strategy (Mission and Vision)**

The HEI has a clear mission statement in which the institutional profile, strategy, and objectives of the HEI are defined. The mission is consistent and complies with international standards. Academic bodies have adopted the mission, which is publicly available. The HEI has adequate resources to fulfil its mission and strategic planning.

The criterion is **partially fulfilled**.

##### **Governance, Organisation and Administration**

Responsibilities, decision-making processes and decision-making competencies are clearly defined and integrated into statutes. Organisation and management structures are adequate to the tasks and objectives of the institution and assure freedom in teaching and learning.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## Teaching and Learning

Objectives and content of study programmes are in accordance with the HEI's mission and strategy. Study programmes have an adequate academic standard, are well structured and have an adequate workload. They comply with national legal regulations. The processes of creating and implementing as well as revision of study programmes are clearly defined.

The HEI offers professional support services for students. Support services have adequate staff.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## Research

Research activities fit into the mission of the institution. The structure of the HEI and the general conditions support research activities. The teaching workload allows room for research. Recruitment policy should correspond to the research activities and research strategy of the institution.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## Resources

The institution has adequate human and financial resources, infrastructure, and equipment to achieve its objectives. The academic staff recruitment process meets academic standards.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## Quality Assurance

The institution has adequate quality assurance procedures and mechanisms to ensure that the results of quality assurance procedures are for continuous improvement.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## Internationalisation

The HEI has an internationalisation strategy which is consistent with the strategy of the institution. The activities in the area of internationalisation fit into the internationalisation strategy.

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## 2 Accreditation Recommendation

The peer-review experts recommend a conditional accreditation with the following **conditions and recommendations**:

### Conditions

1. The university's process of change towards an innovative and entrepreneurial university should be reflected and implemented at all hierarchical and structural levels of the institution. A concept for this change process must be presented that defines a strategic approach that actively involves all members of the university in the change process. In particular, the concept must show a way to achieve the following goals:
  - a) Faculty must have an excellent understanding of TAU's mission and vision and their intended impact and be motivated to support them. To this end, university management must create appropriate communication channels and incentives that regularly prompt faculty to align their teaching and research activities with TAU's mission statement.
  - b) The mission statement must be anchored in the content and methodology of all degree programmes. A strategic path must be developed and documented for the expansion of applied research at TAU. Consequently, the majority of teaching staff must meet the university's criteria for publishing and conducting research projects. The path to embedding more research must be supported with sufficient resources. A concept for this strategy must be presented.

### Recommendations

1. Specific criteria should be defined that are used for the decision on whether to close an existing study programme, e.g. if the demand is too low. In this regard, the risk management, which constantly monitors resources and student numbers, should be given more emphasis and long-term measures should be taken to increase student numbers. When closing the loop of the PDCA cycle, recommendations for action should be derived and documented in a systematic way. The university should optimize its decision-making processes as to which criteria are used to close study programmes, for example if demand is too low.
2. It should always be ensured that sufficient financial resources are available with the number of study programmes. A corresponding risk management system should therefore be considered and introduced, which constantly monitors the required resources.

3. The university should develop a differentiated and progressive student-centered learning concept that is constantly evolving in regard of the university's mission to becoming an entrepreneurial and research-oriented university.
4. To further support its strategic objectives, TAU should continue expanding efforts to recruit research-oriented professors and students with an interest in research. By offering attractive measures such as reduced teaching responsibilities and seed funding for research, the university is well-positioned to attract and retain top talent in the field.
5. Specific criteria should be defined that are used for the decision on whether to close an existing study programme, e.g. if the demand is too low. In this regard, the risk management, which constantly monitors resources and student numbers, should be given more emphasis and long-term measures should be taken to increase student numbers. When closing the loop of the PDCA cycle, recommendations for action should be derived and documented in a systematic way.
6. The university should develop an international profile and a future-proof internationalization strategy.

## **V Decisions of the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN**

### **1 Accreditation Decision**

Based on the evaluation report of the peer group and the statement of the university the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN decided on 10 March 2025:

**The "Turan-Astana" University is institutionally accredited with the following condition:**

- **The university's process of change towards an innovative and entrepreneurial university should be reflected and implemented at all hierarchical and structural levels of the institution. A concept for this change process must be presented that defines a strategic approach that actively involves all members of the university in the change process. In particular, the concept must show a way to achieve the following goals:**
  - **Faculty must have an excellent understanding of TAU's mission and vision and their intended impact and be motivated to support them. To this end, university management must create appropriate communication channels and incentives that regularly prompt faculty to align their teaching and research activities with TAU's mission statement.**
  - **The mission statement must be anchored in the content and methodology of all degree programmes. A strategic path must be developed and documented for the expansion of applied research at TAU. Consequently, the majority of teaching staff must meet the university's criteria for publishing and conducting research projects. The path to embedding more research must be supported with sufficient resources. A concept for this strategy must be presented.**

**The accreditation is valid until the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2026.**

**The Higher Education Institution must submit documents that prove the fulfilment of the conditions by the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 2026. If the Accreditation Commission comes to the conclusion that the conditions are fulfilled, the accreditation will be extended until the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2029. If the Higher Education Institution fails to prove the fulfilment of the conditions in due time, the accreditation will not be extended.**

**The accreditation procedure may be suspended for up to 18 months after response from the Higher Education Institution, with the expectation that the Higher Education Institution will remedy the deficiencies within the given time frame. This statement must be submitted until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 2025.**

The following recommendations are given for the further development:

- **Specific criteria should be defined that are used for the decision on whether to close an existing study programme, e.g. if the demand is too low. In this regard, the risk management, which constantly monitors resources and student numbers, should be given more emphasis and long-term measures should be taken to increase student numbers. When closing the loop of the PDCA cycle, recommendations for action should be derived and documented in a systematic way. The university should optimize**

its decision-making processes as to which criteria are used to close study programmes, for example if demand is too low.

- It should always be ensured that sufficient financial resources are available with the number of study programmes. A corresponding risk management system should therefore be considered and introduced, which constantly monitors the required resources.
- The university should develop a differentiated and progressive student-centered learning concept that is constantly evolving in regard of the university's mission to becoming an entrepreneurial and research-oriented university.
- To further support its strategic objectives, TAU should continue expanding efforts to recruit research-oriented professors and students with an interest in research. By offering attractive measures such as reduced teaching responsibilities and seed funding for research, the university is well-positioned to attract and retain top talent in the field.
- Specific criteria should be defined that are used for the decision on whether to close an existing study programme, e.g. if the demand is too low. In this regard, the risk management, which constantly monitors resources and student numbers, should be given more emphasis and long-term measures should be taken to increase student numbers. When closing the loop of the PDCA cycle, recommendations for action should be derived and documented in a systematic way.
- The university should develop an international profile and a future-proof internationalization strategy.

## 2 Fulfilment of conditions

Based on the evaluation of the submitted documents and statement of the Higher Educational Institution, the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN decided on its meeting on 5 of June 2025:

**The conditions are fulfilled. The Institutional Accreditation of the "Turan-Astana" University is extended until 30 September 2029.**