

**Accreditation Report**

Institutional Accreditation of  
**University of Tripoli, Lebanon**

**I Procedure**

**Date of contract:** 8 January 2025

**Date of the submission of self-assessment report:** 25 June 2025

**Date of site visit:** 29-31 July 2025

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**Accreditation decision:** 25. September 2025

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**Content**

<b>I</b>	<b>Procedure .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1	The Higher Education System in Lebanon .....	3
2	Short profile of HEI.....	5
<b>III</b>	<b>Implementation and assessment of the criteria.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1	Institutional Profile and Strategy: Strategic Planning, Mission and Vision.....	6
2	Governance, Organization and Administration .....	10
3	Teaching and Learning .....	16
4	Research .....	20
5	Resources.....	25
5.1	Human resources.....	25
5.2	Financial Resources.....	29
5.3	Facilities and Equipment .....	31
6	Quality Assurance.....	34
7	Internationalisation.....	38
<b>IV</b>	<b>Recommendation to the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN.....</b>	<b>42</b>
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).....	42
2	Accreditation Recommendation .....	44
<b>V</b>	<b>Decisions of the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN.....</b>	<b>45</b>

## II Introduction

The experts would like to thank the representatives of the University of Tripoli 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 University of Tripoli as well as intensive discussions during the site visit with the University of Tripoli management, board of trustees, representatives of the holding company, deans, head of study programs, 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 **The Higher Education System in Lebanon**

Lebanon operates a binary higher education system consisting of one public provider—the Lebanese University—and a diverse range of private institutions. The Lebanese University, with its nineteen faculties, three doctoral schools, and sixteen branch campuses, is the sole recipient of direct government funding. In contrast, approximately fifty private institutions operate under tuition-based funding models, supplemented by donations and grants. This structural asymmetry has direct implications for governance, accountability, and quality assurance. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) serves as the central

regulatory authority, supported by three specialized directorates, thereby ensuring oversight of general education, vocational training, and higher education.

The quality of higher education provision is anchored in Lebanese Law 285/2014, which sets standards for institutional objectives, licensing procedures, programme recognition, and internal governance. From a QM perspective, this law provides a baseline for compliance, monitoring, and institutional accountability. However, the degree of implementation varies, and systematic enforcement mechanisms remain limited. Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is legally mandated, requiring institutions to establish documentation systems, reporting structures, and continuous monitoring processes.

A Lebanese National Qualifications Framework (LNQF) with eight levels was developed in 2012, though it has not yet been fully adopted or implemented. In the absence of an operational framework for higher education, comparability and benchmarking of qualifications remain challenging. From a QM perspective, the lack of an approved and binding qualifications framework represents a gap in system-wide coherence and prevents the establishment of transparent learning outcomes across institutions. For vocational education, a six-level framework has been introduced, providing a partial model for structured progression.

Lebanon has not yet established a fully functional national quality assurance agency. Although the Lebanese Quality Assurance Agency (LQAA) was legally foreseen in 2012, it has not been ratified by parliament. Currently, quality assurance processes are managed by MEHE through licensing audits and recognition procedures. Institutions are obliged to maintain IQA systems and prepare for external evaluation by either the future national QA agency or international accreditation bodies. In practice, Lebanese universities often rely on international programme accreditation providers such as ABET or AACSB. This reliance creates a fragmented accreditation landscape, lacking centralized coordination and shared standards.

From a QM standpoint, the Lebanese higher education system is confronted with several structural and procedural challenges. Political instability and economic crises undermine the continuity of planning cycles and resource allocation. Underfunding limits the effectiveness of internal QA processes, while fragmented governance structures hinder system-wide standardization. Furthermore, there is an evident misalignment between academic programme portfolios and labour market requirements. Monitoring and evaluation processes are often inconsistent, with limited availability of systematic key performance indicators (KPIs).

To align Lebanon's higher education system more closely with QM principles, several measures are recommended: (1) the formal adoption and implementation of the LNQF to

ensure transparency and comparability of qualifications; (2) the establishment of a functioning national QA agency to provide consistent external evaluation; (3) the development of standardised KPIs and monitoring tools to enhance accountability; and (4) stronger stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and QA processes. In addition, sustainable funding mechanisms are required to ensure the stability of institutions and to support continuous quality improvement cycles.

## 2 Short profile of HEI

The University of Tripoli (UT) was founded in 1986 under the name Tripoli University Institute for Islamic Studies. It was granted university status in 2009. Today, it consists of four faculties: Sharia and Islamic Studies, Literature and Humanities, Business, and Education. UT is a private, non-profit institution licensed by the Lebanese Ministry of Education. The university's licence is held by the Islah Islamic Organisation.

UT was the first institution in Lebanon to offer undergraduate degrees in Sharia and Islamic Studies. Since its founding, it has maintained a strong focus on this area and is regarded as one of the most specialised institutions in the country in the field.

The university seeks to combine academic study with ethical and civic responsibility. It aims to integrate Islamic values with broader global knowledge. This approach is reflected in its statutes, most recently revised in 2024, which define eight overarching objectives. These include high-quality teaching, research, community involvement, and adherence to both national and international academic standards.

UT's values outlined in Article 4 – including "divine belonging", moderation, excellence, authenticity, modernity, and universal engagement – guide decision-making across the institution's academic and administrative structures

According to its statutes, UT has an independent legal identity, its own budget, and the right to own property and enter into contracts. Articles 5 and 6 affirm the university's academic, administrative and financial autonomy. Its main sources of funding are student fees and donations. Article 14 of the statutes states that external funding is only to be accepted if it does not compromise academic freedom.

### **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 University of Tripoli (UT) is a private, non-profit university in Lebanon, founded in 1986. It identifies itself as a specialised institution in Islamic studies, alongside its programmes in humanities, business, and education. According to the university's own account, its mission is: "The University of Tripoli is committed to providing high-quality university education and pioneering scientific research, keeping pace with the latest developments and priorities of the era, and building effective partnerships to contribute to the development of society within the framework of Islamic values, locally and internationally."

This statement serves as the foundation for the university's strategic direction, as outlined in its internal planning documents.

According to its official statutes, the University of Tripoli is guided by a set of values that reflect both its religious foundations and its academic orientation. These include a strong sense of divine belonging and ethical commitment, which the university identifies as the moral basis of all academic and institutional activity. The university emphasises moderation in intellectual and social approach, authenticity in content, and high academic standards. It also stresses the importance of a modern educational style that responds to contemporary needs while remaining rooted in tradition. Furthermore, UT describes itself as committed to the universality of knowledge and innovation, to creativity, leadership and integrity, and to a culture of transparency, accountability and loyalty. Effective communication, continuous improvement, and adherence to quality assurance principles are also identified as core institutional values. These values, as stated by the university, inform not only strategic decisions but also programme design, governance culture, and community engagement.

As described in the Self-Assessment Report, UT follows a structured and participatory approach to strategic planning. The process includes an evaluation of the previous strategic cycle, a SWOT analysis involving key internal and external stakeholders, and the formation of a Strategic Planning Committee. This committee, according to UT, consists of university leadership, faculty deans, administrative heads, students, alumni, an international consultant,

and external partners. The university states that its strategy is translated into operational plans by each faculty and administrative unit. These are aligned with UT's overall mission and embedded into programme learning outcomes, thereby integrating institutional values into academic content and delivery.

In its self-description, UT presents a governance model that includes the Board of Trustees, University Council, Administrative Council, and several specialised committees such as the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council and the Strategic Planning Committee. According to the university, these bodies oversee academic policy, institutional planning, finance, and external relations within a clearly defined decision-making framework.

The university claims to prioritise internal quality assurance and continuous improvement, using mechanisms such as self-assessments, benchmarking against national and international standards, and application of the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle (PDCA). These systems are described as central to both academic and administrative oversight.

UT reports that external stakeholders—including employers, alumni, and community representatives—are regularly involved in shaping strategic decisions and curriculum development. According to the university, this engagement shall ensue that its educational offerings remain aligned with labour market needs and societal expectations.

As outlined in its institutional strategy documents, the University of Tripoli has defined six strategic priorities through to 2029:

- Enhancing the quality of education in line with international benchmarks
- Expanding research to address local and global challenges
- Strengthening partnerships at national and international levels
- Modernising the learning environment, with an emphasis on technology and lifelong learning
- Promoting ethical and socially responsible development grounded in Islamic values
- Improving governance and administrative efficiency through updated systems

UT states that it monitors progress through a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which include graduate employability, student learning outcomes, research productivity, participation in international programmes, and financial health. According to the university, each strategic initiative is tied to specific milestones and review mechanisms.

In its self-report, UT emphasises its commitment to long-term financial sustainability through tuition revenue, external funding, and partnerships with the public and private sectors. The

university also highlights its focus on internationalisation through academic exchanges, joint research, and multilingual instruction, aiming to align with international accreditation standards and prepare students for global engagement.

## **Assessment**

The University of Tripoli has developed a mission statement, vision, and set of values that are not only clearly formulated but also meaningfully embedded in all areas of institutional activity. These guiding principles provide the normative and strategic framework for decision-making across all governance levels and are consistently reflected in the university's strategic and operational documents. In this way, the institution has established a realistic and distinctive profile that aligns with its academic aspirations as well as its broader societal responsibilities. The role of the University of Tripoli within the national higher education system and society at large is thus clearly defined and actively fulfilled. To ensure transparency and accessibility, the mission, vision, and values are published in multiple languages on the university's website, thereby underlining the institution's openness to its diverse communities and stakeholders. Within its strategic plan for 2029, the university has formulated six strategic objectives, each accompanied by defined key performance indicators (KPIs) and an implementation timetable. This structured approach demonstrates the institution's commitment to measurable progress and systematic development. The attainment of these objectives is closely tied to a continuously evolving quality assurance system, which not only monitors outcomes but also provides feedback for ongoing improvement. To support this process, the university has allocated the necessary resources for strategic planning and implementation, while competencies and responsibilities are embedded in a transparent governance framework that encourages accountability and participation across different institutional levels.

Among the university's strengths, it is particularly noteworthy that the mission and vision reflect a deep sense of social commitment and ethical responsibility. The strategic plan integrates regional development priorities and sustainability concerns, positioning the university as a driver of societal advancement and innovation. Moreover, members of the University of Tripoli community consistently demonstrate a strong sense of institutional ownership, professionalism, and dedication to achieving the strategic and educational objectives. This collective commitment represents an invaluable resource for the university's future development.

The recommendation of the expert panel to introduce more clearly defined performance indicators and to benefit from systematic monitoring instruments in evaluating the implementation of the university's strategic objectives is already in the process of being

implemented at the University of Tripoli. By aligning its strategic planning framework with measurable and transparent indicators, the university ensures that progress can be assessed in a consistent, reliable, and evidence-based manner.

These measures are designed not merely to refine what is already a functional and well-structured planning process, but to raise it to a higher level of inclusiveness and robustness. By systematically involving all academic and administrative stakeholders, the institution fosters a culture of shared ownership and responsibility for its strategic development. This broad engagement of the university community strengthens institutional accountability and simultaneously enhances the legitimacy and comprehensiveness of strategic decision-making.

Ultimately, these efforts underscore the University of Tripoli's commitment to continuous improvement and to embedding a participatory and transparent approach into its governance structures. By doing so, the university creates an environment in which strategic objectives are not only well-defined but also broadly supported, thereby ensuring that they can be implemented effectively and sustainably.

In conclusion, the review panel acknowledges the University of Tripoli as a committed and evolving institution that plays a vital role in the Lebanese higher education landscape. The University demonstrates a clear sense of mission, strong community engagement, and a genuine dedication to continuous improvement across its academic and administrative structures. The staff's commitment and institutional ownership were particularly evident throughout the evaluation process. With its ongoing efforts and openness to external feedback, the University of Tripoli is well positioned to strengthen its academic profile and institutional capacity in the years ahead.

## Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## 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 University of Tripoli (UT) is a private, non-profit Lebanese university licensed by the Ministry of Education. Its legal licence is held by the Islah Islamic Organization. According to the university's revised Statutes (2024), UT possesses independent legal personality, its own budget, and the right to acquire property and enter contracts (Statutes, Arts. 1–2). The Statutes grant the university academic, administrative, and financial autonomy (Arts. 5–6). Article 14 safeguards institutional independence by prohibiting donor conditions that would compromise academic freedom.

UT's governance is structured across multiple clearly defined bodies, each with legally codified responsibilities:

- Board of Trustees (meets  $\geq 2\times$ /year): highest governing body; approves statutes, appoints senior leadership, authorises budgets and strategic direction (Arts. 14–17).
- University Council (monthly): chaired by the President; manages academic strategy, teaching quality, research development and programme approval (Arts. 19–20).
- Administrative Council (monthly): responsible for financial governance, HR, infrastructure and risk management (Arts. 21–22).
- Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council ( $\geq 6\times$ /year): oversees quality policy, internal reviews, and approval of self-assessment reports (Arts. 23–24).
- Strategic Planning Committee (annually): drafts five-year strategic plans, reviews KPIs, reports to the Board; includes leadership, faculty, students, alumni and external stakeholders (Arts. 8–9).
- Faculty Councils (monthly): responsible for local academic governance, curriculum oversight, and programme improvement.

All formal decisions follow defined quorum and majority rules (Statutes, Art. 15b, Art. 16). The President—appointed by the Board for a six-year term—chairs the key councils and bears legal responsibility for institutional compliance with Lebanese higher education law (Law 285).

Each faculty is led by an elected Dean (3-year term) supported by Heads of Department (Arts. 10–11). Faculties operate their own Faculty Councils and Faculty QA Committees. Responsibilities are defined as follows:

- Dean: leads faculty governance, chairs the Faculty Council (Art. 33)
- Faculty Council: designs curricula, sets admissions criteria, prioritises research (Art. 35)
- Faculty QA Committee: monitors compliance and prepares annual improvement reports (QA Policy, Art. 5)
- Department Heads: manage daily teaching and research operations (Statutes, Art. 11)

Two new bodies—created as part of a recent organisational reform—clarify formerly overlapping responsibilities:

- The Quality Council is now the first instance for QA decisions, separating it from the University Council.
- The Administrative Council replaces the former Administrative Committee and holds full decision-making authority over non-academic matters.

An Internal Audit Unit has been established (Art. 18) and will report directly to the Board of Trustees, further reinforcing independent oversight.

The university's decision-making structure is built on two complementary dimensions: a clearly defined vertical chain of responsibility and cross-functional horizontal coordination mechanisms: Vertically, decision-making processes are structured by domain. Academic matters typically move from the department level to the Faculty Council, then to the University Council, and—where applicable—to the Board of Trustees for final approval. Quality assurance processes follow a separate but similarly clear path, beginning with the Faculty Quality Assurance Committees, proceeding to the central Quality Assurance Division, and ultimately reaching the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council. Administrative and financial matters are handled through a sequence from the respective Head of Division to the Administrative Council. Research-related decisions flow from research groups through Faculty Research Committees and on to the university-level Research Division and Council structures.

In parallel, UT has established several horizontal integration instruments to ensure coordination across units and prevent organisational silos. For instance, inter-faculty working groups—particularly in areas such as digital pedagogy—are coordinated by the e-Learning Division. A university-wide Community Needs Guide is used to channel faculty research efforts toward identified societal priorities. The continuing professional development (CPD) calendar, managed by the Human Resources Division, enables staff from any faculty to offer micro-credential workshops to peers and external learners. In addition, the Quality Division coordinates institution-wide accreditation projects in collaboration with Faculty Quality Committees, ensuring consistency in academic standards and reporting.

UT involves key internal and external stakeholders in its governance and quality processes. According to its Stakeholder Engagement Policy (2025), ten stakeholder groups are formally recognised, including academic and non-academic staff, students, alumni, employers, and community partners.

Professors and staff participate through Faculty Councils, Quality Committees, and central bodies. Students have voting seats in faculty-level and strategic planning committees and contribute via surveys and forums. External stakeholders are included in QA structures and ad hoc advisory panels.

UT is primarily funded through tuition fees (76%), with additional income from investments (14%), donations (9%), and research grants (1%). To reduce tuition dependence, the university aims to lower its tuition share to  $\leq 70\%$  by 2028 through expanding lifelong learning and endowment fundraising (Strategic Plan 2029).

Nearly half of UT's expenditure is dedicated to scholarships and fee waivers.

## **Assessment**

The University of Tripoli has, in recent years, undertaken significant efforts to refine, expand, and professionalize its organizational and management structures in order to align institutional activities more closely with the updated mission, vision, and strategic objectives. This reform process reflects a conscious and deliberate move towards strengthening institutional governance and ensuring that operational processes effectively support the achievement of long-term strategic goals. The updated structure has enabled the university to manage its efforts with greater coherence and efficiency, thereby fostering an institutional culture in which strategic planning, decision-making, and implementation are clearly interlinked.

A central strength of the current governance model lies in the clarity of responsibilities and duties. These are formally codified in the university's statutes, which represent binding legal

and institutional frameworks for all units and offices. The statutes define in detail the responsibilities of those entrusted with decision-making and managerial authority, including academic leaders, administrative heads, and supporting committees. This codification not only provides transparency but also establishes accountability mechanisms across the institution, ensuring that authority is exercised in a clearly delineated and legitimate manner. As a result, the distribution of roles and responsibilities within the institution has been clarified, and operational processes have gained both reliability and legitimacy.

Standardized documentation practices further reinforce this governance framework. At all levels of the university, official records and procedural documents are maintained, ensuring consistency, transparency, and traceability in decision-making and administrative operations. These practices are essential in supporting internal quality assurance, providing an evidence base for external audits or accreditation, and facilitating institutional learning through systematic record-keeping.

While the current structure has already led to significant improvements in institutional governance, it continues to evolve. At present, the university operates without vice presidents due to previous displacements. Nevertheless, the leadership has expressed clear plans to expand and consolidate the governance model by reinstating these positions in the future. The reintroduction of vice presidents will not only strengthen the capacity of senior leadership but also allow for a more differentiated distribution of strategic and operational responsibilities. This step is expected to further enhance the university's ability to steer complex academic, administrative, and societal processes in a proactive and sustainable manner.

Taken together, these developments attest to the University of Tripoli's growing maturity in institutional governance. By aligning its structures with its mission and objectives, codifying responsibilities in binding statutes, and introducing standardized documentation practices, the university has laid a solid foundation for effective, transparent, and accountable management. The planned expansion of leadership roles underscores a forward-looking orientation and a continued commitment to refining governance capacities in line with future challenges and opportunities.

In terms of objective governance, the management and the funding body is separated to avoid conflict of interest. Several Statutes grant the University academic, administrative and financial autonomy. University's main funding streams are tuition fees and donations. Through the Articles, donor interference has been safeguarded. The University maintains financial transparency through regular audits, and this creates confidence and trust among the members of the institution and the stakeholders.

The University has a clearly defined Stakeholder Engagement Policy which lists the categories of stakeholders and prescribes their roles in councils and committees. Different stakeholders are involved in decision making processes, including the students and academicians.

The academic members of the University are actively involved in decision making processes through channels like various boards and committees where they can comment on issues related to teaching, learning and research. This shows that the major responsibility about teaching, learning and research do belong to the academicians. Criteria for recruiting academic personnel are explicitly outlined and grounded in scientific principles, ensuring that hiring procedures are transparent and based on merit.

The Strategic Plan 2029 binds all the units and interconnects the core functions of the University. All units report on identical indicators. Vertical decision paths and horizontal integration instruments are clearly defined. The various offices of the University are well interconnected through regular communication channels, and they can work together towards common goals. Administrative coordination is handled through structured communication chains. These workflows are supported by regular meetings and mutual understanding of responsibilities.

The University of Tripoli has already taken concrete and valuable steps towards the implementation of recommendations, the review panel suggested: With regard to the responsible and pedagogically sound integration of Artificial Intelligence in teaching and learning, the university has initiated the development of comprehensive institutional guidelines designed to ensure the safeguarding of academic integrity while simultaneously creating structured opportunities for innovation and the enrichment of the learning environment.

In addition, the university is in the process of expanding the systematic use of plagiarism detection tools. Preparations are underway to conclude a university-wide framework agreement with a professional service provider, accompanied by the adoption of harmonised policies that will guarantee consistent application across all faculties and study programmes.

Finally, in line with the panel's recommendation to enhance transparency, participation, and accountability, work has begun to make the university's process management framework readily accessible to the entire academic community. A technical solution based on a central intranet or SharePoint platform is currently being prepared, ensuring that operational processes are both transparent and user-friendly for all stakeholders.

In a nutshell, the governance and organizational structures of the University are well designed and they support the vision, mission and the objectives of the University. Responsibilities and decision-making processes are clearly defined under various Statutes. Decision making processes include internal and external stakeholders. Academicians are involved in different

committees and boards where they can actively participate in decisions related to learning, teaching and research which ensures academic freedom and integrity. There is clear communication between different units of the University supporting effectiveness of operations. Financial management is transparent and accountable.

### **Conclusion**

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

### 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 [Exmination Area 4, ESG Standard 1.2, ESG Standard 1.3, ESG Standard 1.4].*

#### Implementation

According to its documentation, the academic programmes at UT are designed in alignment with its institutional mission and the strategic priorities outlined in the Teaching and Learning Strategy 2024–2029. The university describes this strategy as a binding reference for faculties, centred on themes such as programme development, student-centred learning, assessment reform, inclusion, and community engagement.

UT reports that all programmes follow the American credit-hour system and comply with Lebanese national regulations. Undergraduate programmes range from 96 to 135 credit hours and include university-wide, faculty-specific, and discipline-specific requirements. The university outlines a curriculum design process that maps course learning outcomes to programme competencies, which are, in turn, linked to institutional goals.

The university indicates that student workload is calculated at 45 hours per credit hour per semester, and that alignment is reviewed through satisfaction surveys and performance analysis. Course syllabi follow a standardised template that includes Bloom's taxonomy-based learning outcomes, assessment tools, and workload expectations.

UT states that it embeds at least one practical component in every programme—such as internships or capstone projects—and that these are linked to transferable skills and labour-market demands.

Programme proposals reportedly undergo a structured process beginning at faculty level and proceeding through the University Council and Board of Trustees before submission to the Lebanese Ministry of Higher Education. The university outlines a multi-step internal procedure involving feasibility studies, curriculum development committees, and stakeholder consultations. Approval by the Ministry requires a separate two-stage process: initial authorisation and final degree recognition.

According to UT, programmes are reviewed regularly by faculty-level committees in collaboration with the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Division. Examples of recent

revisions include updates to the Bachelor in Sharia and Islamic Studies, partly in preparation for accreditation by the Turkish Islamic Accreditation Agency.

The university reports a progressive shift towards student-centred and competency-based teaching and assessment. Since 2014, UT has revised its course templates and grading models to reduce emphasis on final examinations and incorporate practical assessments such as projects, portfolios, and presentations. These reforms are supported by training workshops, internal guidelines, and documentation requirements, including standardised course files.

The university claims that all learning outcomes and assessment tools are aligned through formal matrices and reviewed as part of the regular quality cycle. Student feedback is collected each semester to evaluate instructional practices.

The university also describes various internationalisation efforts, including English-language instruction, participation in accreditation processes, faculty exchange agreements, and curriculum content with international relevance. UT monitors the enrolment of non-Lebanese students, noting that 1.143 international students from 40 nationalities were admitted over the past five academic years.

UT reports a range of academic and non-academic support services. These include a university library, digital learning platforms, ICT labs, counselling and career guidance, and on-campus housing. Dedicated centres offer skill development, psychological support, and community engagement opportunities.

The university also maintains a student council, extracurricular activities, and student clubs. Academic advising is available, and students have access to public safety and first-aid training.

The implementation of the Teaching and Learning Strategy is monitored through a set of internal mechanisms, including course evaluations, faculty self-reviews, graduate and employer surveys, and periodic course-file audits. According to UT, these processes involve multiple levels of academic governance, from department committees to the University Council.

Key performance indicators are defined for each of the strategy's strategic axes and are used to track programme relevance, teaching quality, e-learning implementation, and the overall student experience.

## **Assessment**

Teaching and learning at the University of Tripoli are characterised by a structured, student-oriented, and academically supportive environment. The pedagogical formats—lectures,

seminars, and tutorials—are predominantly conducted in small to medium-sized groups, which enables direct interaction between students and academic staff, fosters active participation, and encourages dialogue-based learning. Classes are systematically organised according to study levels (Bachelor, Master, and PhD), ensuring that each cohort receives content, guidance, and academic challenges appropriate to its stage of study. Only in exceptional cases, such as certain language courses, do larger group formats occur; even then, care is taken to maintain a didactic approach that supports inclusivity and effective learning.

The academic structure of the university is organised around four faculties: Sharia and Islamic Studies, Literature and Humanities, Business, and Education. Each faculty possesses its own distinctive profile, disciplinary traditions, and thematic focus, thereby contributing to the diversity and breadth of the university's academic portfolio. This differentiation allows students to pursue a wide range of disciplinary perspectives while benefiting from the synergies created through interfaculty collaboration.

Among these faculties, the Faculty of Sharia and Islamic Studies holds a particular significance, as reflected not only in its comparatively high student enrolment numbers but also in its intellectual and cultural centrality. The faculty serves as the university's academic and ethical core, shaping the institutional identity and providing a strong orientation for teaching, research, and societal engagement. Its guiding vision is to integrate modern disciplines—such as economics, education, and psychology—with the ethical principles of a contemporary and humane Islam. This interdisciplinary and values-based approach seeks to ensure that students are not only equipped with professional knowledge and competences but also with a moral framework that informs their decisions and actions in professional and social contexts.

Through this integration of academic knowledge with ethical orientation, students are empowered to carry the values of responsibility, integrity, and social justice into their future careers. Whether in education, business, public service, or other professional fields, graduates of the University of Tripoli are thus prepared to make a meaningful contribution to the development of society, to act as agents of positive change, and to embody the university's mission of combining academic excellence with ethical responsibility. This alignment of learning, values, and social impact reflects the university's distinctive educational philosophy and represents a significant contribution to the academic landscape of the region.

The academic workload is deliberately structured to allow for in-depth learning. With a maximum of twelve ECTS credits per semester, students are afforded sufficient time for thorough preparation, follow-up study, and exam readiness. Learning resources are well provided for: the central library is appropriately equipped, and its holdings can be complemented through cooperation with nearby institutions. A recommendation has been made to further strengthen digital accessibility—particularly to e-books, journals, and

international research databases—which would further enhance academic study and research opportunities.

It also became evident during the review that ensuring a safe and supportive living and learning environment is of paramount importance to the university community. The exceptional challenges caused by the ongoing regional conflict underscore this need even more. In this respect, the University of Tripoli is reported to be performing in an exemplary manner. This secure and trusting atmosphere not only enables productive teaching, learning, and research, but also facilitates international exchange with other Islamic regions, such as Malaysia or Indonesia, even under difficult geopolitical conditions. Remarkably, this spirit of trust and collegiality is not limited to students and faculty members but extends equally to the administrative staff, thereby reflecting a strong and cohesive institutional culture.

### **Conclusion**

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## 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

UT identifies research as a core component of its institutional mission. According to the university's own documentation, this role is anchored in its statutes, strategic plan, and internal policies. UT defines the purpose of its research activities as advancing knowledge in line with Islamic ethical values, responding to societal needs, and contributing to academic discourse at national and international level.

The University of Tripoli's Research Strategy 2029 outlines four strategic objectives: (1) supporting approved research projects with societal relevance; (2) promoting scholarly publication; (3) attracting and supporting qualified researchers; and (4) strengthening local and international partnerships. These goals are operationalised through a combination of policy instruments, financial planning, internal coordination, and programme-level integration.

A dedicated Research Division oversees research planning and implementation, supported by faculty-level research committees. These bodies prepare research plans, monitor outputs, and contribute to institutional self-evaluation. The university maintains a five-year research cycle, aligned with its broader strategic framework.

Research integration into teaching is described as systematic. At undergraduate level, research methodology is part of all study plans. Graduate programmes require discipline-specific research outputs in each course and culminate in thesis defence. Course learning outcomes are explicitly linked to the university's research objectives. UT also reports that selected research results have been incorporated into teaching materials or adapted into workshops through its community service centre.

Academic staff are expected to contribute to research as part of their role. Teaching loads for full-time staff are capped at 12 contact hours per week, with time set aside for scholarly work. Staff involved in supervision or research projects may receive further reductions. A revised promotion system includes research output as a requirement. An internal incentive system offers additional support for publication and participation in academic events.

The university allocates 5% of its annual budget to research. Covered expenses include conference travel, publication costs, postgraduate support, and infrastructure upgrades. UT also seeks external funding through partnerships and agreements with academic institutions. A number of bilateral cooperation agreements have been concluded in recent years, particularly with universities in the Arab and Islamic world.

Postgraduate programmes are currently offered by the Faculty of Sharia and Islamic Studies and are aligned with UT's research focus. A range of doctoral topics indicates a concentration on contemporary societal and ethical issues. A research support infrastructure has been developed, including writing guides, training workshops, and advisory support.

Research activities are overseen by defined bodies at central and faculty level. Performance is reviewed using published criteria, including number and quality of publications, citations, supervision, and public relevance. Intellectual property and academic integrity are addressed through internal policies, with monitoring and sanctions in place.

The university states that it plays an advisory role in the field of Islamic family law and has contributed to the legislative process in Lebanon through academic publications and expert input. It regards this field as one of its research priorities.

## **Assessment**

The University of Tripoli demonstrates a clear and consistent commitment to research that is firmly anchored in its institutional mission and long-term strategic orientation. The statutory framework, together with the Strategic Plan 2024–2029 and the dedicated Research Strategy 2029, provides a coherent and forward-looking basis for defining priorities, integrating research into teaching, and ensuring that research activities are simultaneously academically rigorous and socially relevant. These documents not only set out the guiding principles for research but also reflect an institutional culture that regards knowledge creation as an essential driver of academic excellence and societal development.

Institutional structures are designed to translate these strategic ambitions into practice. The establishment of a central Research Division, complemented by research committees at faculty level, ensures that planning, implementation, and monitoring are carried out in a systematic and coordinated manner. This layered governance structure facilitates both vertical alignment—between institutional and faculty objectives—and horizontal exchange across disciplines. As a result, research activities are embedded in a transparent, participatory, and quality-assured process that supports continuity, accountability, and innovation.

The university has also created favourable conditions for academic staff to pursue scholarly work. The teaching workload for full-time academics is capped at 12 contact hours per week,

with further reductions granted for supervision, research leadership, or externally funded projects. This deliberate workload management provides meaningful scope for faculty members to engage in research, publish their findings, and contribute to national and international academic debates. Recruitment and promotion policies are explicitly aligned with this agenda: research competence, productivity, and quality are considered central criteria in hiring decisions, career progression, and performance evaluations. This alignment underscores the university's recognition that human resource development and the cultivation of research excellence are inseparably linked.

Research is closely embedded into undergraduate and postgraduate education, ensuring that students at all levels are systematically introduced to academic inquiry. Undergraduate curricula expose students to research methodologies and critical thinking, laying the groundwork for independent scholarship. Graduate programmes build on this foundation by requiring students to produce discipline-relevant research outputs, culminating in a thesis defence that demonstrates methodological rigour and academic maturity. The dissemination of selected research findings into teaching materials and community outreach initiatives illustrates the university's capacity to translate academic inquiry into broader societal benefit. In this way, research not only enhances the quality of education but also strengthens the university's contribution to regional development and global knowledge exchange.

Taken together, these structures, policies, and practices attest to a mature research environment that is both strategically guided and operationally supported. The University of Tripoli succeeds in linking institutional ambition with academic practice, while maintaining a strong focus on relevance, quality, and sustainability. Its approach reflects a holistic understanding of research as a core dimension of academic life—one that connects teaching, scholarship, and societal engagement in a coherent and forward-looking manner.

The university allocates a fixed percentage of its annual budget to research and supplements this with targeted external funding initiatives. These resources are used to support participation in international conferences, cover publication fees for high-impact journals, and invest in infrastructure. The incentive framework for faculty publications and the integration of research performance into promotion criteria encourage quality and productivity.

Outputs are disseminated through publications, conferences, and policy contributions, particularly in the field of Islamic family law, where UT has played an advisory role in national legislative processes. The cooperation agreements with regional and international partners further strengthen collaborative and interdisciplinary research opportunities.

The university has already established a commendable foundation in the field of research. Building on these achievements, further potential lies in enhancing student involvement in

research, refining and consolidating the institutional research strategy, and systematically embedding research practices across the university. Moreover, the fostering of high-impact publications supported by well-designed incentive structures, as well as the promotion of interdisciplinary and collaborative research, would further strengthen the university's profile and visibility:

Particular value may also be derived from advancing interdisciplinary research, especially in socially relevant areas such as Islamic finance, conflict mediation, sustainability, and AI ethics. By fostering partnerships with both local and international institutions, the university could create synergies for joint research projects and broaden access to data, networks, and facilities.

Equally important is the strengthening of a vibrant research culture through the active engagement of students. Structured opportunities such as research assistantships, participation in faculty-led projects, and research-based learning formats would encourage early academic socialisation, cultivate critical inquiry, and nurture the next generation of scholars.

The University of Tripoli is already actively engaged in implementing the following recommendations of the review panel:

In order to strengthen the university's research profile, work has begun on the development of a comprehensive and centralized institutional research strategy. This strategy will include measures to consolidate research practices across faculties, promote engagement with current and socially relevant topics, and create structured incentives for the active involvement of both faculty and students.

Furthermore, to enhance research output and international visibility, the university is advancing initiatives to support and encourage publications in high-impact journals. In this context, targeted incentive schemes, additional funding opportunities, and expanded structural resources are being put in place to foster high-quality, interdisciplinary, and collaborative research activities.

Through these efforts, the University of Tripoli demonstrates its strong commitment to building a sustainable and distinctive research profile that not only serves the academic community but also contributes meaningfully to addressing broader societal challenges.

Overall, the University of Tripoli possesses a strong foundation for sustaining and enhancing its research profile. Its research activities are already embedded in the institutional mission and supported by adequate structures, resources, and policies. By aligning recruitment, workload distribution, and promotion systems with a coherent research strategy, and by systematically integrating research into teaching and societal engagement, the university

ensures both academic quality and societal relevance. Continuous improvement through the expansion of international collaborations, the promotion of high-impact research output, and the fostering of an inclusive and forward-looking research culture will further strengthen its standing in the international academic community.

## Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## 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

UT's human-resources policy is rooted in the Human-Resources Regulations and in the University Statutes, documents that codify transparent recruitment, rank-linked promotion, and clearly delineated rights of appeal and grievance. As of the academic year 2024/25 the University employs 48 teaching staff supported by 34 administrative and technical colleagues. Seven academics double as senior administrators, but continue to teach and are therefore counted once.

Full-time teaching load  $\leq$  12 contact hours/week (based on the rank and involvement in research projects); research supervisors receive a 25% teaching load reduction. Dual-role academics have approved splits (e.g., 60% admin / 40% teaching). Workload norms are reviewed annually to maintain equity across faculties.

With 583 enrolled students, this constellation yields a student-to-teaching-staff ratio of 12:1, comfortably within the Lebanese private-sector median (10-15:1). Rank and gender distributions are balanced: professors and associate professors constitute a third of the faculty body, while women hold 36 % of full -time posts—already above the 30 % interim target set in the Equity & Non -Discrimination Policy. Also, full time workforce includes 15% of non-Lebanese.

Articles 63-65 of the University Statutes empower a central HR Department to manage recruitment, appraisal, promotion, welfare, and discipline. The Human-Resources Regulations lay down transparent procedures—competency-based hiring, three-month probation, merit-based promotion, and a graduated disciplinary ladder (Human Resources Regulations).

The Recruitment Policy and Procedure breaks each appointment into ten auditable steps, starting with a needs analysis and ending with an induction

During the past five academic years the University delivered a structured program of in-house and external courses that map directly onto strategic priorities—leadership, quality assurance, digital pedagogy, and data -informed management, with course content ranging from Strategic Planning in Higher Education, E-Learning Pedagogy to Course File Design.

Over five years these courses delivered on average 20 contact hours per full-time employee. Participation is tracked through the HR department and forms part of the annual appraisal. These are in addition to continuous collaborative workshops to build any Formal degree sponsorship continues in parallel: 16 full-time employees (34 %) are presently pursuing a second bachelor's or master's at UT under the tuition-assistance clause (HR Regulations).

Quarterly full-time employee's appraisal combines self-evaluation, supervisor rating, and student feedback.

Faculty appraisal, happening every semester, combines self -evaluation (yearly), head of department/dean evaluation, and student feedback (for every course). Staff voice and well-being. The anonymous staff-satisfaction survey (Jan 2025, 17 respondents) recorded 100 % positive collegial relations and 93 % psychological safety, but highlighted gaps in stress management (75 % experience stress at least sometimes) and CPD availability (only 29 % say training is "always" or "most of the time" available). These findings underpin the improvement measures will be done by having a personalised development plan for each employee (enhancing UT employee's skills is part of the current strategic plan (2024-2029).

The Equity & Non-Discrimination Policy (2025/154) is operationalised through mandatory workshops and an internal mediation protocol; no unresolved discrimination cases were recorded in 2024/25.

UT's Human-Resources Regulations establish a tiered system of monetary and non-monetary incentives designed to reward high performance and encourage continuous development. Academic staff may claim conference-attendance grants, publication bonuses for articles appearing in indexed journals. Administrative employees are eligible for professional - certification reimbursements. All rewards are linked to their performance scores and are published internally to ensure transparency and perceived fairness. Both academic and administrative employees benefit from a progressive school-tuition discount for their children.

## **Assessment**

The University of Tripoli demonstrates adequate human resource capacity to fulfill its mission and strategic objectives. With 48 teaching staff members supported by 34 administrative and technical colleagues as of academic year 2024/25, the university maintains a favorable student-to-teaching-staff ratio of 12:1, which falls comfortably within the Lebanese private-sector median of 10-15:1. This ratio ensures personalized attention and quality educational delivery, particularly evident in the small class sizes of 10-15 students mentioned in the meeting minutes.

The university's commitment to maintaining appropriate staffing levels is further demonstrated through its structured approach to workload management, with full-time teaching loads capped

at 12 contact hours per week and research supervisors receiving a 25% teaching load reduction. This balanced approach allows faculty to engage meaningfully in both teaching and research activities.

The academic personnel's qualifications and performance correspond effectively to the university's profile and strategic plan. The rank distribution shows a mature academic structure with professors and associate professors constituting one-third of the faculty body, indicating substantial academic experience and expertise. The university's strategic focus on research is supported by requirements for PhD students to publish two articles before graduation and encouragement for undergraduate participation in research projects.

Faculty development is systematically addressed through structured professional development programs. Over the past five years, the university has delivered an average of 20 contact hours of professional development per full-time employee, covering strategic priorities including leadership, quality assurance, digital pedagogy, and data-informed management. Additionally, 34% of full-time employees are currently pursuing advanced degrees under the tuition-assistance program.

The university maintains a strong commitment to full-time academic employment, with the majority of teaching responsibilities handled by permanent faculty. This approach ensures continuity in program delivery, stronger student-faculty relationships, and greater institutional commitment. The presence of seven academics in dual administrative-teaching roles demonstrates institutional efficiency while maintaining academic leadership.

Selection and recruitment follow clearly defined, transparent procedures as outlined in the Human-Resources Regulations and University Statutes. The recruitment process involves ten auditable steps, beginning with needs analysis and concluding with structured induction. This systematic approach includes competency-based hiring, three-month probationary periods, and merit-based promotion criteria.

The university's commitment to diversity is evident in its workforce composition, with women holding 36% of full-time positions (exceeding the interim 30% target) and international staff comprising 15% of the full-time workforce. This diversity aligns with the university's internationalization strategy and multicultural student body representing over 35 nationalities.

Selection criteria for academic staff are clearly defined and linked to institutional needs and strategic objectives. The university requires PhD qualifications for academic promotions, along with at least five years of experience and multiple publications for advancement. Performance evaluation combines self-assessment, supervisor ratings, and student feedback, conducted quarterly for administrative staff and semesterly for faculty.

Part-time lecturers, while not extensively detailed in the documentation, are integrated into institutional quality assurance procedures. The university's comprehensive approach to staff

development and performance monitoring ensures all teaching staff contribute effectively to educational quality and institutional objectives.

## 5.2 Financial Resources

### Implementation

According to institutional data for the fiscal year 2023–2024, the University of Tripoli (UT) generated its operational income primarily from four sources:

- Tuition and fees (76%)
- Investments and miscellaneous income (14%)
- Donations and endowment gifts (9%)
- Research grants and contracts (1%)

While tuition remains the dominant income stream, UT states it has recognised the strategic risk of over-reliance on student fees. In response, the university's Strategic Plan 2029 sets a clear financial objective: to reduce tuition dependency to 70% or less by 2028. This goal is to be achieved by expanding revenue-generating lifelong learning programmes and launching an endowment development campaign.

In the Self-Assessment Report, UT highlights a strong commitment to student support and educational access. In 2023–2024, 46% of total expenditure was allocated to scholarships and tuition waivers, making financial aid the single largest budget category. Awards are needs-based and approved case-by-case by the Administrative Council; in parallel, the Study and Work Centre channels additional micro-grants and work-study opportunities to economically disadvantaged students. International students may also apply for partial-tuition grants processed during admission.

- Further expenditure included:
- Salaries and professional fees: 36%
- General operating costs: 10%
- Research funding: 8%

The institution closed the fiscal year with a budget surplus of 4.2%, which, under internal financial regulations, was rolled over into the University Reserve Fund. This reserve is used to support long-term stability, capital investments, and contingency planning.

### Assessment

The University of Tripoli demonstrates solid student development with strategic enrollment management. The institution serves 583 enrolled students across four faculties, with

approximately one-third being international students. This diversified student body provides financial stability while supporting the university's internationalization objectives.

Future planning appears plausible and considers market positioning within Lebanon's higher education landscape. The university's Strategic Plan 2029 includes specific financial objectives, particularly reducing tuition dependency from the current 76% to 70% or less by 2028. This strategic approach acknowledges competition challenges while building on the university's unique positioning as an institution integrating Islamic values with modern academic standards.

The university shows awareness of the need to diversify revenue streams beyond tuition fees. Current income sources include investments and miscellaneous income (14%), donations and endowment gifts (9%), and research grants and contracts (1%). The Strategic Plan 2029 outlines expansion of revenue-generating lifelong learning programs and launching an endowment development campaign.

While third-party funding currently represents a small portion of total income, the university's growing research focus and international partnerships provide foundation for future development. The establishment of the University Center for Capacity Development and Teacher Training demonstrates potential for expanded external engagement and revenue generation.

Financial planning demonstrates sustainability in both teaching and research areas. The university allocates 46% of total expenditure to scholarships and tuition waivers, demonstrating commitment to educational access while maintaining financial viability. Research funding represents 8% of expenditure, supporting the institution's growing research priorities.

The balanced expenditure allocation includes salaries and professional fees (36%) and general operating costs (10%), indicating prudent resource management. The university's ability to maintain a budget surplus of 4.2% while providing substantial student financial aid demonstrates effective financial stewardship.

Financial management appears professional and systematic. The Administrative Council oversees financial decisions, with clear procedures for scholarship approvals and budget management. The establishment of a University Reserve Fund from budget surpluses demonstrates long-term financial planning and risk management.

The university's investment in infrastructure improvements, most notably the solar-photovoltaic system that has reduced electricity costs by 37%, exemplifies a prudent and forward-looking financial policy that aligns operational efficiency with principles of sustainability. This strategic orientation is mirrored in the university's overall financial performance, which is characterised by solid results, positive cash flow, and adequate liquidity. The consistent budget surplus of 4.2% and the maintenance of a reserve fund testify to institutional resilience, while the decision to devote as much as 46% of total expenditure to student financial aid—without jeopardising

fiscal balance—highlights the university's strong social commitment and its ability to combine financial responsibility with educational equity. The current financial model, while heavily dependent on tuition (76%), appears adequate for current operations but requires diversification for long-term sustainability. The strategic objective to reduce tuition dependency recognizes this challenge and outlines concrete steps for improvement.

Financial planning demonstrates conservative approach with contingency considerations. The establishment of reserve funds and surplus management shows awareness of potential fluctuations. The diversification strategy outlined in the Strategic Plan 2029 addresses potential risks from over-reliance on tuition revenue. Income sources are transparent and do not restrict the institution's ability to fulfill its educational mission. The governance structure through the Board of Trustees and affiliation with the Islah Organization provides clear oversight while maintaining institutional autonomy in academic and operational matters.

### **5.3 Facilities and Equipment**

#### **Implementation**

According to its self-assessment report, the UT comprises three principal buildings: an academic block, an administrative centre, and a residential facility. Additional infrastructure includes a mosque, a library and learning commons, sports areas, and landscaped open spaces.

The academic building houses 14 multimedia-enabled classrooms, two auditoria, a dedicated examination hall, and a 20-workstation IT laboratory. It also contains a large auditorium used for ceremonies, cultural events, and academic functions. A studio facility is available for producing e-learning and institutional media content.

The library and learning commons offer an extensive amount of print volumes and access to academic e-databases, alongside a number of quiet-study spaces. The residential tower provides accommodation for students and faculty members, with an average occupancy rate of 78%, which the university considers sufficient to support future enrolment growth.

Support facilities include an indoor gym, an outdoor basketball court, green spaces, a cafeteria, and a health and counselling suite. A 500-person mosque is available for congregational prayer.

The entire campus is covered by Wi-Fi. In 2023, UT installed a 480 Amp solar-photovoltaic system that supplies 38% of the university's electricity demand, reportedly reducing electricity costs by 37% compared to 2022. Accessibility features such as lifts and ramps are being

introduced to comply with Lebanese building codes. The conversion of remaining restrooms to accessible formats is scheduled in the upcoming budget cycle.

Digital infrastructure includes campus-wide access to the learning management system “Moodle”, institutional email accounts via Google Workspace, and an Academic Tracking System that supports student information and digital workflows.

The university has also outlined four staff-development priorities for the 2023–2026 period:

- Annual CPD targets for each employee;
- Full implementation of an automated performance appraisal system by October 2025;
- Biannual staff satisfaction surveys;
- Annual international mobility for at least three staff members, beginning with cooperation with Kutahya Dumlupinar University in Turkey.

All actions are documented in an institutional Improvement Register and reviewed twice a year by the University Council.

## **Assessment**

The infrastructure of the University of Tripoli adequately supports its mission and strategic objectives. The three-building campus includes dedicated academic, administrative, and residential facilities that serve the current student population effectively. The 14 multimedia-enabled classrooms, two auditoria, and specialized facilities such as the IT laboratory and studio provide appropriate learning environments. The 78% occupancy rate in residential facilities indicates sufficient capacity for current needs while allowing for enrollment growth. This residential component supports the university's ability to attract international students, contributing to its internationalization strategy. The library and learning commons provide extensive print volumes and academic e-database access, supporting both undergraduate and graduate research needs. However, the meeting minutes reveal limitations in access to licensed databases and electronic journals, with students primarily relying on ResearchGate and Google Scholar for online resources. The university's recent translation of its website into seven languages using AI demonstrates commitment to accessibility and international outreach. The Moodle platform supports digital learning with materials, video guides, and project submissions. Technology infrastructure shows modern capabilities with campus-wide Wi-Fi coverage, Google Workspace integration, and comprehensive learning management systems. The 20-workstation IT laboratory and multimedia-enabled classrooms provide appropriate technology for current educational needs.

The 480 Amp solar-photovoltaic system installation demonstrates commitment to sustainable technology and operational efficiency. Digital infrastructure including the Academic Tracking System and integrated student information systems support efficient administrative operations.

While the University of Tripoli maintains its own facilities, the documentation suggests opportunities for expanded external partnerships. Current collaborations with institutions like Qatar University and planned benchmarking activities indicate developing external resource relationships. Based on the comprehensive assessment and the specific recommendation provided, the following priorities should guide future development:

The University of Tripoli is likewise already in the process of implementing the expert panel recommendation to expand access to digital resources by broadening the availability of academic materials such as eBooks, journals, and research databases. To ensure inclusive and flexible learning, students should be able to access these resources remotely—ideally through secure and reliable systems such as VPN. Efforts are underway to significantly expand access to digital resources by broadening the availability of academic materials, including eBooks, scholarly journals, and research databases. In order to guarantee inclusive and flexible learning opportunities for all students, the university is developing secure and reliable technical solutions—such as VPN-based systems—that will enable remote access to these resources at any time and from any location.

Through these initiatives, the university underscores its commitment to modern, student-centered learning environments and to the continuous strengthening of academic infrastructure in line with international standards. The University of Tripoli demonstrates substantial capability in human resources, financial management, and facilities provision. The institution shows particular strength in maintaining appropriate staffing ratios, providing comprehensive student financial support, and operating with financial sustainability.

The criterion for adequate resources is fulfilled, with the understanding that implementation of the digital resource expansion recommendation will further strengthen the institution's capacity to achieve its educational and research objectives.

## 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

According to the University of Tripoli's Self-Assessment Report, the institution has established a university-wide Quality Assurance and Accreditation Policy as of June 2024. This policy is described as being based on ESG principles and aims to promote a systematic and purposeful process for evaluating and improving performance across academic and administrative areas. The university states that it applies the PDCA (Plan–Do–Check–Act) cycle institution-wide, with the objective of ensuring continuous improvement in teaching and learning, research, services, infrastructure and human resources.

The university reports that its QA and Accreditation Division is responsible for overseeing quality assurance processes, with strategic oversight provided by the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council (QAC), which includes internal and external stakeholders. Operational implementation is assigned to multiple committees at institutional and faculty levels. These include the Institutional QA and Accreditation Committee, the temporary Accreditation Coordination Committee, and Faculty QA Committees, which are said to be involved in the preparation of the self-assessment.

The institution indicates that quality assurance is integrated into its Strategic Plan 2024–2029, particularly under the objective of aligning educational and research services with international standards and labour-market needs. The QA Manual (No. 2023-140) reportedly defines standards, KPIs, review cycles and monitoring tools, covering domains such as strategic planning, teaching and learning, programme design, research, and support services. Self-Assessment and evaluation tools include student, alumni and stakeholder surveys, structured self-evaluation templates, workshops and external expert reviews.

The university highlights the establishment of regular reporting procedures, including an annual QA report structured around the PDCA model, which is to be submitted to the University Council and, from the next academic year onward, to the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council. The report is intended to summarise accreditation progress, performance gaps and recommended improvement actions.

In relation to data management, the institution reports plans to launch a dedicated Statistics and Documentation Unit to standardise data collection, analysis and archiving, with the aim of enhancing the monitoring of KPIs.

The university also refers to its system as being comprehensive in scope, covering all mission areas—Teaching & Learning, Research, Community Engagement and Institutional Management. It reports that QA outcomes are used to inform planning and resource allocation, and that annual and semi-annual evaluations are conducted in line with the Institutional Performance-Management Policy.

As of July 2025, UT indicates that it has submitted its institutional self-assessment to ACQUIN and expects a peer-review visit by the end of the same month. One academic programme—the Bachelor in Sharia and Islamic Studies—is undergoing programme accreditation with IAA (Turkey). All programmes are reported to be licensed by the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

## **Assessment**

Quality assurance occupies a significant and clearly defined role at the University of Tripoli, reflecting the institution's explicit commitment to maintaining and continuously improving the quality of its academic and administrative provisions. To this end, the university has established a dedicated Quality Assurance Department, currently staffed by three qualified employees. This unit serves as the institutional hub for the systematic monitoring, evaluation, and further development of processes across all areas of university life. By providing expertise, methodological guidance, and organizational support, the department ensures that quality assurance is not treated as an isolated activity but as an integral component of institutional governance and academic culture.

One of the core instruments of the department's work is the systematic collection and analysis of student satisfaction data. These surveys are conducted on a regular basis using a fully IT-based system, which guarantees efficiency, transparency, and comparability over time. The digital infrastructure enables not only the rapid processing of quantitative results but also the secure handling of data, thus safeguarding both reliability and confidentiality. By adopting such an evidence-based approach, the university has laid the groundwork for an informed and participatory quality culture in which the perspectives of students are consistently integrated into institutional development.

The results of these surveys are made available to the university administration as well as to the deans and heads of the respective faculties. This ensures that feedback from students is systematically channelled to those who hold decision-making authority, allowing for a direct link between student perceptions and institutional action. In this way, survey results contribute

to closing the feedback loop between stakeholders and leadership, creating transparency and accountability in quality-related processes. Importantly, the accessibility of this information allows for both strategic planning at the central level and targeted improvements at the faculty level, thereby reinforcing alignment between institutional objectives and faculty-specific initiatives.

Taken together, the existence of a dedicated Quality Assurance Department, the systematic use of modern digital tools, and the institutionalised dissemination of survey results reflect an advanced stage of development in the University of Tripoli's internal quality assurance system. These elements not only demonstrate compliance with international standards such as the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) for Quality Assurance in Higher Education but also signal the university's ambition to cultivate a robust, transparent, and participatory culture of continuous improvement.

The University of Tripoli has already begun to translate the recommendations of the review panel into concrete institutional practice. Building on the established structures of its Quality Assurance Department, the university is currently enhancing its mechanisms to ensure that quality assurance becomes even more participatory, transparent, and strategically embedded.

One of the first steps under implementation is the systematic provision of feedback from course evaluations to both teaching staff and students. This measure strengthens the culture of dialogue, enables lecturers to make targeted improvements in their teaching, and recognises the important contributions of students to quality development. In addition, plans are underway to expand the evaluation system by including open-text fields, thereby enriching quantitative results with qualitative perspectives and ensuring that nuanced student feedback can be meaningfully integrated into curricular and pedagogical improvements.

In line with the recommendation to support students through clear and accessible information, the university is also developing a comprehensive student handbook. This handbook, to be provided in several languages and made available online, will serve as a reliable reference point for academic regulations, administrative procedures, campus services, and student responsibilities. In doing so, the university aims to facilitate orientation and empower students to navigate their academic journey with confidence and clarity.

Furthermore, the University of Tripoli is extending the systematic application of the PDCA cycle (Plan–Do–Check–Act) to all academic and administrative processes. By embedding this framework across the institution, quality assurance will become an integrated and recurring process of planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement. The introduction of formal action plans and structured follow-up mechanisms is already underway, reinforcing the university's commitment to continuous institutional development.

Taken together, these initiatives demonstrate that the University of Tripoli not only acknowledges the constructive recommendations of the review panel but has already set in motion the necessary steps to implement them. In this way, the university consolidates its quality culture, strengthens its accountability to both internal and external stakeholders, and affirms its aspiration to meet international standards of good practice in higher education quality assurance.

## **Conclusion**

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

## 7 Internationalisation

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

### Implementation

According to its Self-Assessment Report, the UT integrates internationalisation into both its institutional vision and strategic objectives. The University's Vision Statement refers explicitly to building a distinguished presence "locally and internationally." This aspiration is operationalised through the Strategic Plan 2024–2029, in which Goal 2 focuses on participation in global research networks, and Goal 3 addresses international partnerships.

A formal Internationalisation Policy, adopted on 12 May 2025, defines the scope, terminology, objectives, governance structures, and mechanisms for quality assurance using a PDCA cycle. UT is also a member of various international academic bodies, including the Association of Arab Universities, the Union of Islamic Universities, and ICESCO.

Responsibility for implementation lies with the International Cooperation Division (ICD), while strategic oversight is provided by the International Cooperation Committee, which sets targets and reports to the Quality Council. An International Consultant Committee, composed of experts from six countries, convened for the first time in May 2025.

The university currently maintains 65 active memoranda of understanding with institutions in 28 countries, with a concentration of partnerships in Turkey, Indonesia, and China. All new academic programmes are required to align with international benchmarks, incorporate global learning outcomes, and include a mobility component. Programme proposals undergo review by the QA Department and the University Council to ensure compliance with these standards. The university reports that between five and twenty percent of undergraduate course content is delivered in English, depending on the programme. In addition, the curriculum design includes a global-perspective component in most final-year projects. Support is also offered for international students, including Arabic-language preparation, visa support, on-campus accommodation, and access to university services. Orientation sessions and cultural activities are coordinated by the Student Affairs Division.

Inbound and outbound staff and student mobility is developing. Non-Lebanese nationals constitute 15 percent of UT's full-time academic and administrative workforce. The University has adopted expedited recruitment procedures to attract international faculty. Staff and Faculty exchanges have been conducted in recent years. Seven visiting lecturers were hosted in

2022/23, To support outbound mobility, UT is currently offering intensive English-language training for its students. Regional instability since October 2023 has, however, limited exchange opportunities.

The University's admissions procedures for international students are published online and include clearly defined recognition processes. Transcript evaluations and conversion to ECTS are managed by the Admissions and Registration Department, with decisions reportedly issued within two weeks.

International students are eligible for partial tuition grants, awarded on the basis of academic merit and financial need. The funding is determined by the Administrative Council within the scope of the university's financial-aid policy. In terms of infrastructure, the University provides residential housing, learning resources, and recreational facilities to all international students. It also facilitates visa processes and offers a peer-mentoring system to support integration.

Internationalisation is included in the University's quality assurance processes. The Quality Council monitors internationalisation targets, and improvements are guided by stakeholder feedback and performance indicators. UT is currently undergoing institutional accreditation with ACQUIN and is seeking programme-level accreditation for the Bachelor in Sharia programme through the Turkish body IAA.

## **Assessment**

The University of Tripoli has articulated a coherent and ambitious internationalization strategy that is firmly embedded in its institutional vision and the Strategic Plan 2024–2029. The policy framework adopted in May 2025 clearly defines objectives, governance responsibilities, and quality assurance mechanisms, ensuring that internationalization is pursued in a structured and measurable way.

UT's network of 65 active memoranda of understanding with institutions in 28 countries demonstrates a solid foundation for academic exchange, collaborative research, and intercultural engagement. Strategic focus on partnerships in Turkey, Indonesia, and China aligns with the university's geographic priorities, while maintaining scope for broader outreach. Membership in international academic bodies such as the Association of Arab Universities, the Union of Islamic Universities, and IICESCO further enhances UT's profile and access to global cooperation opportunities.

Internationalisation is effectively integrated into programme design. New academic programmes are reviewed to ensure alignment with international benchmarks, inclusion of global learning outcomes, and incorporation of mobility opportunities. While English-medium content varies between 5% and 20% across programmes, there is a clear trend toward

expanding English-language delivery, supported by faculty language training and international recruitment.

The university has established targeted support for inbound international students, including pre-arrival Arabic language preparation, visa assistance, residential facilities, and cultural orientation. A peer-mentoring system and the Student Affairs Division facilitate integration into academic and social life. Outbound mobility is also encouraged through advisory services, streamlined procedures, and English-language preparation. Although regional instability since late 2023 has temporarily constrained exchange activity, UT has maintained momentum by hosting visiting lecturers and sustaining faculty exchange.

Human and financial resources are adequate to implement the internationalization agenda. The International Cooperation Division is well-defined in terms of mandate, reporting to a committee that includes external advisors from six countries. Internationalisation targets are monitored by the Quality Council, ensuring alignment with the PDCA cycle and integration into institutional quality assurance.

The recommendations of the review panel in the field of internationalization are already in the process of being fulfilled by the University of Tripoli. In line with the panel's advice to ensure consistency across English-taught programmes, the university has initiated a systematic review of curricula and teaching practice to guarantee that instruction, assessment, and student-facing materials are delivered fully in English. At the same time and following the recommendation to further strengthen faculty members' English proficiency, targeted training courses, continuous language development opportunities, and international teaching fellowships will be introduced and are being actively pursued by academic staff.

With regard to mobility, the university is addressing the panel's recommendation for supportive structures and incentives for students and staff academic mobility to the University Council.

The recommendation to expand international partnerships and involve visiting scholars is also already being acted upon.

Finally, the university has begun to implement the panel's recommendation to advance its global positioning by developing a targeted international marketing strategy that highlights its distinctive academic strengths and increases visibility.

Overall, UT's approach to internationalization is deliberate, resource-backed, and consistent with its mission to position itself as a locally grounded yet globally connected university. University of Tripoli has a clear, comprehensive, and well-implemented internationalization strategy supported by adequate structures, partnerships, and resources. The integration of international dimensions into curricula, the breadth of its cooperation agreements, and the support systems for both incoming and outgoing mobility reflect a strong institutional

commitment. Continued expansion of English-medium delivery and active development of joint programmes will further enhance UT's international profile and competitiveness. Taken together, these initiatives demonstrate that the University of Tripoli has already moved from recommendation to action. By aligning policy, capacity building, enabling structures, and incentives, the University is embedding internationalization across programmes and units—thereby strengthening academic quality, enhancing the student experience, and consolidating its presence in the global higher-education landscape.

## Conclusion

The criterion is **fulfilled**.

#### **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.

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.

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 **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 panel recommends **an unconditional accreditation**.

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

Based on the evaluation report of the expert group and the statement of the Higher Education Institution, the Accreditation Commission of ACQUIN decided on its meeting on the 25 September 2025:

**The University of Tripoli is institutionally accredited without conditions. The accreditation is limited until 30 September 2031.**