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1.10. An innovative management mechanism for internal quality assurance system for education based on the example of the Robert Elworthy Economics and Technology Institute

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In modern conditions, education has become one of the key factors in improving a country's competitiveness. Quality improvement is a global strategy of modern higher education development. 2022, the year of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, was an incredible challenge for Ukraine's higher education system. As a result, the institute buildings were damaged or destroyed; hundreds of thousands of

teachers and students moved abroad or to other safer places in the country; higher education institutions under occupation or in the war zone were relocated and had to re-establish their activities in a new location.

The analysis of the quality of higher education in Ukraine shows that, despite the difficulties, the processes of ensuring the quality of education continue. The higher education system in Ukraine continues to function, and the efforts to ensure compliance with the requirements of the European Higher Education Area are practical.

The Ukrainian education and science system will focus primarily on developing globally competitive citizens, integrating into the European Education and Research Area, and ensuring inclusiveness and accessibility of education for the entire population.

Robert Elworthy Economics and Technology Institute (ETI) is the first private institution of higher education in Kropyvnytskyi, Ukraine. Today, ETI is one of the leading higher education institutions in Kropyvnytskyi and the region. The Institute has a robust material and technical base, allowing it to carry out the educational process at a modern level and train specialists per the needs of the times and the region.

The ETI has a high-quality educational process supported by well-trained personnel, scientific methods, information and the necessary material and technical resources.

ETI's Internal Quality Assurance System ensures adequate implementation and control of all activities related to the implementation of the educational programme and revision and improvement of the curriculum.

The quality assurance system at ETI is organised under the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education". It is based on the principles in the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and the national standard of Ukraine "Quality Management Systems" DSTU ISO 9001:2009.

The internal quality assurance of educational activities and quality of education includes all procedures carried out by ETI to continuously improve the quality of the educational process in which the quality of academic programmes, the quality of learning and teaching, the quality of learning outcomes, learning opportunities and resource provision meet the approved standards, the needs of students and the requirements of bodies providing external quality assurance of education.

The primary goals of ETI's internal quality assurance system are to maintain and enhance the quality of educational activities and higher education, ensuring they meet national licensing requirements for educational services and state, European,

and international educational standards. Additionally, it aims to establish sustainable confidence in all educational programs offered by the institute in Ukraine and abroad, to train graduates based on the modern labour market requirements, and to understand, consider, and coordinate the provision of higher education needs in Ukraine and beyond.

The objectives of the ETI internal quality assurance system are:

1. Implementation of the ETI policy on quality assurance of educational activities and higher education, which includes planning of quality of education; development and updating of the regulatory and methodological framework for quality assurance of educational activities and higher education; preparation of proposals and recommendations for improvement of the internal system of quality assurance of education at the ETI; coordination of the work of the Institute's structural units on quality of educational activities and quality of higher education.

2. Organising and implementing the monitoring of the quality of educational activities and higher education in the quality of the educational process, quality of the educational process, and quality of the results.

3. Organising and conducting marketing, monitoring and socio-psychological studies of stakeholders, namely target groups of applicants, parents, students, teachers, graduates, and employers, to determine external and internal requirements for the quality of education and areas for improvement of educational activities.

4. Ensuring the functioning and continuous improvement of the ETI information system for effective quality management in higher education.

5. To analyse and summarise the quality of higher education and ETI's educational activities.

Measures and procedures to ensure the quality of educational activities at ETI are set out in the "Regulations on the system of internal quality assurance of higher education at ETI" (Table 1).

The main principles of the *functioning of the quality assurance system* at ETI are: student centrism (a model of educational development in which a student is transformed from an object to a subject of educational activity, i.e., an active participant in the educational process); systematism and consistency; complexity and universality; transparency (openness of information, transparency of the educational institution); objectivity (fair assessment of the results of students' learning activities); involvement of all stakeholders; subsidiarity (coordination of delegated powers etc.)

**Measures/Procedures of the Internal Quality Assurance System
of Higher Education at ETI**

Components of the Internal Quality Assurance System	Measures/Procedures of the Internal Quality Assurance System of Higher Education
Quality Assurance Policy	1. Formation of the quality strategy as separate documents that define specific goals and objectives of the Institute; 2. Determination of the decision-making procedure, division of powers, definition of processes and quality assurance measures; 3. Form a system of indicators for monitoring and correcting the quality assurance policy.
Development and Approval of Programs	1. Regulation of the procedure for the development, review, approval and closure of educational programmes; 2. Formalisation of the criteria for determining the compliance of educational programmes to the Elworthy ETI Development Strategy and programmes of activities for the relevant period; 3. Regulation of management of the educational programme.
Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment	1. Formation of individual educational trajectories; 2. Formation of a system of participation of higher education students in the development of and monitoring of educational programmes and ensuring the quality of education; 3. Formation of a system of evaluation of higher education students.
Learning Resources and Student Support	1. Determination of the material and other resources necessary for the implementation of the educational programme; 2. Development of resource support for educational programmes and educational activities; 3. Academic and non-academic support of higher education applicants; I. Information support for students at the Institute.
Information Management	1. Ensuring effective processes for collecting, analysing and use of information on educational programmes and other activities of the Institute 2. Collection and analysis of information on the performance indicators of the Institute ga separately for each programme; 3. Information support for management decisions.
Public Information	1. Publication of information on the website of the Institute and its subdivisions information about their activities, ensuring regular updates public information in the state and English languages; 2. Providing information about the activities of the Institute, including through external information resources (publications in the media, speeches, responses, and inquiries, etc.)

Current Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of a formalised mechanism for annual monitoring of individual educational components and educational programmes as a whole; 2. Development of a formalised mechanism for periodic review of educational programmes and amendments to them; 3. Informing all stakeholders about changes to the educational programme based on the review results. Of the curriculum based on the results of the review.
Cyclical External Quality Assurance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The procedure for preparing documents for mandatory external quality assessment; 2. The procedure for deciding on voluntary (including international) quality assessment including international) quality assessment.

ETI guarantees a continuous process of internal quality assurance of the educational programme and its improvement with the involvement of all members of the academic community in the educational process following the ETI Charter.

The internal quality assurance procedures of ETI are implemented by maintaining a set of values, principles, norms, and rules of conduct that constitute a culture of quality education through academic autonomy, trust, transparency, partnership, objectivity, subsidiarity, academic integrity, academic freedom, communication, collegial responsibility, prevention of corruption, etc.

The functioning of the internal system of higher education quality assurance at ETI involves the distribution of decision-making and assessment powers among five levels of quality assurance:

- The Supervisory carries out the fifth level of higher education quality assurance. The Supervisory Council, the Rector, and the Academic Council implement the fifth level of higher education quality assurance. It provides for the general organisation of the educational process under the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education". At this level, the following are carried out: determination of the strategy and perspective directions of development of educational, scientific and innovative activities of the institution; making institution-wide decisions on the formation of quality assurance strategies and policies; approval of regulations, action programmes and specific measures; approval of educational programmes and curricula for each level of higher education and specialities; decision-making on the organisation of the educational process, etc.

- The fourth level of quality assurance in higher education at the Institute is implemented by the following structural units and working bodies are the Centre for Management and Monitoring of Educational Quality, the Commission for Ethics and Conflict Management, the International Relations Department, the Admissions Committee, and the Human Resources Department. At this level, the following are

carried out: definition of the system and procedure of internal quality assurance of education, evaluation of structural units' educational, scientific and pedagogical activities; implementing the principles of academic integrity and business ethics of employees and students; effective management of the educational process through information systems; systematic inspections of departments; organisation and support of mutual control of the quality of educational activities; provision of training and foreign placements for researchers.

- The third level of higher education quality assurance at ETI is implemented by the Dean of the Faculty of Economics and the Student Self-Government bodies. The faculty is responsible for organising and administering the educational process at this level. This includes planning and implementing internal control measures to ensure the quality of education, analysing their effectiveness and making necessary adjustments. The faculty is also in charge of designing and administering academic programs, monitoring them annually, and ensuring that they meet the needs of the industry labour market. Additionally, the faculty is responsible for creating conditions for external control over the quality of educational activities and higher education. The faculty also oversees the educational process carried out by the departments. This includes ensuring the teaching load is appropriately distributed among the teachers, ensuring the quality of academic and methodical documentation, and monitoring compliance with the requirements for registration of current and final control results. The faculty also works with student self-government to maintain quality control of educational activities and higher education. Finally, the faculty supports the formation of an individual academic trajectory for each student of higher education.

The second level of quality assurance of higher education at ETI is implemented by the heads of departments, guarantors of educational programmes and teachers. The second level includes ensuring the organisation of the educational process at the department, development and implementation of educational programmes, ongoing monitoring, monitoring the quality of scholarly disciplines; monitoring the implementation of individual plans of teachers, monitoring the frequency of professional development of research and teaching staff; collecting and generalising benchmarks for the quality of educational activities of students and teachers; ensuring the teaching of disciplines of the educational programme on a proper scientific and theoretical basis.

Students implement the first level of quality assurance of higher education at ETI. The first level includes direct participation in the educational process, fulfilling the requirements of the educational programme; participation in discussing and solving issues of improving the educational process; participation in activities

(processes) to ensure the quality of educational activities and the quality of higher education; making proposals on the content of educational programmes; ensuring the actual implementation of measures for academic integrity.

ETI carries out continuous monitoring and periodic review of programmes to ensure that they achieve their objectives and meet the needs of students and society. Education Programs are regularly reviewed and updated as needed. This is done through various methods, such as analysing the labour market, taking into account feedback from employers and students, and conducting surveys. The review process includes assessing the program's content in light of the latest research in the field of study, ensuring that it meets the higher education standard requirements and aligns with the changing needs of society and the labour market. It also considers the workload of students, their performance, and their program completion, the effectiveness of assessment procedures, the expectations, needs, and satisfaction of students, the learning environment, and student support services. All of these factors are evaluated to ensure the program meets the purpose of the higher education institution and maintains a high-quality standard. The programmes are regularly reviewed and updated, involving students and other stakeholders. The information gathered is analysed and adapted. The ETI publishes the relevant draft on its official website at least one month before the approval of the study programme or changes to it to receive comments and suggestions from interested parties (stakeholders).

The autonomy of the Institute and academic freedoms are recognised as fundamental principles of educational activity. They are specified in the «Regulations on the Academic Mobility of Students and Academic Staff». In its activities, the ETI is guided by the principles of the European Higher Education Area. The «Regulations on the Organisation of the ETI Educational Process» guarantee the right to academic freedom of teachers and students.

Fundamental Academic Freedoms of the ETI:

- the Institute is responsible for developing the rules of admission to the Institute, ensuring clarity, detail and transparency of the characteristics of study programme expectations of applicants following the concept of educational activities of the educational institution;
- the Institute shall be open to all applicants who meet the conditions set out in the Admission Rules;
- the Institute provides applicants with equal access to the use of material and technical facilities and all educational services; the Institute provides pedagogical and scientific-pedagogical staff with uncensored access to international computer networks databases necessary for their teaching, scientific or research activities; the

teacher in the classroom should encourage applicants to have free discussion, arouse the desire to learn and express their own opinions;

- the applicant must be protected from subjective assessment based on any discrimination or negative personal attitude of the teacher;
- information about the opinions and political views of candidates that teachers receive during training is confidential; discussion of the candidate's abilities and character is possible only with the candidate's consent;
- teaching, research and scholarly activities are carried out in full compliance with ethical and professional standards.

Teaching and research staff are empowered to choose learning and teaching methods that contribute to achieving programme learning outcomes. The choice of teaching methods is made autonomously and independently, depending on the characteristics of the discipline and the form of higher education; they are allowed to fill the content of the disciplines creatively. The compliance of learning and teaching methods with the principles of academic freedom is ensured by the free choice of academic staff within the disciplines and the consideration of the Education Programs through the independent application of pedagogical methods and tools in the planning and implementation of teaching. Students, in turn, are free to choose the content, forms and methods of their academic work. In lectures, seminars, and practical classes, participants in the educational process discuss educational issues in the form of free and open discussions.

ETI students have the right to receive a quality education, to develop their scientific interests and abilities, to form themselves as specialists in conditions of transparency, truthfulness and conscientious work, as well as in an atmosphere of mutual respect and dignity; they have the right to express their own opinions and to disagree with the interpretation of events covered in the programme material, but they are obliged to learn the required amount of material following the requirements of the educational component and to master the necessary amount of knowledge.

ETI Students have the following fundamental academic freedoms:

- to get assistance and support from ETI teaching and research staff in the implementation of individual study plans, as well as consultations in all subjects and from all teachers; may participate in double degree programmes;
- to express their opinion on the learning process and evaluate the quality of teaching in a format agreed with the student self-governing bodies and the Rector of the Institute;
- to use the library and information bank, information systems, databases and material resources of the Institute;

- to receive information on their academic performance; attend additional classes not related to their immediate field of study;
- to organise student clubs and participate in conferences of the Institute and other educational institutions; transfer to another higher education institution;
- to study in several fields of education;
- to choose variable disciplines;
- to change the form of study;
- to take part in international academic mobility programmes;
- to take a leave of absence and resume their studies at the Institute;
- to independently choose the place of OJT and industrial practice, topics of coursework and qualification work.

Information on the organisation of the educational process is understandable and accessible to students.

Candidates (as internal stakeholders) have the right to participate in the discussion and resolution of issues related to the improvement of the educational process, research, scholarships and grants, leisure, welfare and health.

Maintaining academic integrity is one of the main tasks of the Institute's development strategy and is part of the Institute's internal quality assurance system.

Adherence to academic integrity by students at all levels of education includes:

- independent completion of academic tasks, tasks of ongoing and final control of learning outcomes (for persons with special educational needs, this requirement is applied taking into account their individual needs and abilities);
- references to sources when using ideas, developments, statements, and information;
- compliance with copyright and related rights legislation;
- providing reliable information about the results of their own educational (scientific, creative) activities, research methods and sources of information.

The following tools will be used to address breaches of academic integrity in the educational programme:

- clear information to students about the unacceptability of plagiarism;
- a system for checking papers for plagiarism, namely the Strike Plagiarism online anti-plagiarism system.

The Rector manages the academic integrity process at the institution-wide level and coordinates the work of the Ethics and Conflict Management Committee

The Centre for Quality Management and Monitoring in Education constantly monitors the processes guaranteeing academic reputation and freedom to prevent intolerance or discrimination against students or teachers.

The main functions of anti-bullying in ETI are to diagnose social and psychological issues among students, teachers, and staff. It involves monitoring individual students' social processes and mental development and identifying the reasons that hinder personal growth, learning, and team relations. The next step is to implement psychological and pedagogical measures to correct deviations in mental and emotional development and behaviour and to overcome various forms of deviant behaviour. Finally, rehabilitation involves providing psychological and pedagogical assistance to students to help them recover from the effects of bullying.

ETI is fully engaged in European research and education and is a leading advocate of democracy and equal opportunities. A key focus is implementing gender equality principles in education to prevent gender discrimination. To this end, ETI has developed a Gender Strategy, which outlines the main principles, objectives, and targets for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for all genders in education. This strategy focuses on values like democracy, education, humanism, openness, and tolerance. The gender strategy of ETI is based on equal rights and opportunities, inclusiveness, tolerance, and non-discrimination. It also aims to achieve gender equality as one of the primary objectives of sustainable development, overcome gender stereotypes, prevent discrimination based on gender, ensure equal participation of women and men in decision-making on the Institute's activities, conduct educational activities, and advocate a culture of gender equality among the Institute's students and staff.

The research showed that teaching and learning processes at ETI meet all recommendations and standards of the European Higher Education Area. However, achieving full compliance requires appropriate reforms and transformations at the state, institute, faculty and department levels, which is currently in progress.

The results of the study can be used to implement and/or improve the mechanism of internal audit of the system of education quality at universities.

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