

European University of Tirana

Internal Quality Assurance Strategy

2017 - 2022

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I. Historical background of European University of Tirana

- 1.1 European University of Tirana, referred from this moment onwards as EUT, is under the ownership of the commercial firm “U.E.T.” Ltd., registered by Decision No. 36117, of the Tirana District Court of Law, dating July, 7th, 2006. EUT is currently located at the following address in Tirana: ‘Gjergj Fishta’ Blv., Nd. 70, H.1, Postal Code 1023.
- 1.2 Through the Council of Ministers Order No.636, dating 20th September 2006, EUT was licensed as a higher education institution including two faculties, the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Social Sciences.
- 1.3 The first expansion in terms of study programs dates the academic year 2007-2008, (exactly one year after initial licensing of the Institution), with the opening of the Faculty of Economy, and only one year later, in 2009, several Master Programs were licensed. The third stage of study programs expansion occurred in 2011, with Doctoral Study Programs and the transition of EUT from a Higher Education Institution to University. During the same academic year, other study programs at the Bachelor and Master Level were also opened, e.g., Psychology, Education Sciences, Sociology, Social Anthropology, Economic Informatics, and Design. During the last five years EUT has temporarily stopped its expansion and the institutional priorities have shifted towards the quality and consolidation of teaching processes and scientific research, in line with national quality standards as well as the best international practices.
- 1.4 EUT got the first institutional accreditation as well as the accreditation of the first Bachelor study programs, on 2009, by Order No. 246 of the Minister of Education and Science. Additionally all study programs provided by EUT, across the three levels of study (10 Bachelor Programs, 11 Professional Master Programs, 10 Master of Science Programs and 3 Doctoral Programs), are accredited in accordance with existing legislation.
- 1.5 EUT got the periodical accreditation on 07 April 2017, by Order No. 12 of the Accreditation Board. All programs offered by EUT are periodically accredited.
- 1.6 With the opening of Doctoral Study Programs in 2011 and in line with the Strategy for Scientific Research, the focus of institutional efforts shifted towards promoting scientific research of academic staff both at the individual and group level. Also efforts to increase EUT participation in national and international projects have been quite evident in the recent years.

II. Vision, priorities and strategic objectives

- 2.1 Vision: To be a leading University for developing knowledge in Albanian society, a centre of excellence in terms of academic training, a expertise centre specialized in like socio-political, economic, law, education and information technology field in

Albania, with the influence in regions and beyond, and also a centre of excellence for scientific research.

2.2 Mission: To provide students with a qualitative education by folding it into a valuable scientific research; to avail knowledge through teaching, creativity, scientific achievements and also through labour market partnerships.

2.3 To realize its vision and mission, EUT has some strategic objectives:

- 2.3.1 Excellent achievements in all fields of academic and research activities.
- 2.3.2 Keeping of excellent professors that master the highest professional values and abilities.
- 2.3.3 High quality in academic processes and infrastructures of the institution.
- 2.3.4 Providing the graduates with the best education and the chance to deepen their knowledge, abilities and their valuable experience.
- 2.3.5 Building of national, regional, international bridges of cooperation.
- 2.3.6 Creating challenging environment for the professors, employees and students.
- 2.3.7 Securing of a sustainable environment to follow the excellence.
- 2.3.8 Securing flexibility and responsibility.

III. The organization and its management

3.1. EUT and its academic and administrative structures are established and operate in accordance with the Higher Education Law in the Republic of Albania. Internal activity of the institution is based on a set of particularity documents, where the main document is the Statute, in implementation of which are also designed other acts such as Regulation of EUT, Brochure of Documents, regulations and study programs, as well as orders and other guidelines.

3.2 The internal regulatory acts reflect the vision, the development strategy of the institution and the philosophy of its founders, so that the academic and administrative staff are clear of their rights and duties and organizes and carries out their duties in the right way and in coordination with each other.

3.3 Documents are continuously revised/reviewed and improved, processes which are developed at the end of the academic year, so that the approved changes can be implemented next year, after receiving the approval of the Academic Senate. Reviewing of the regulatory documents aim to address the concerns and the problems encountered during the academic year; to adapt the best contemporary practises, and to face with the

economic, social, political dynamics developments, in regional and national level and beyond.

3.4 The management and administration of the institution is organized according to provisions of the statute:

- A. Counselling Bodies/Authorities
 - Trust Board
 - Labour Market Board
- B. Academic governing/leading bodies
 - Academic Senate
 - Rectorate
 - The Faculty Council
 - Ethics Council
 - Professors Council
- C. Academic governing/leading Authorities
 - President
 - Rector
 - Pro-Rector
 - Dean
 - The head of the department/ The research and development centre
 - Director of the Doctoral School
- D. Other leading Authorities
 - General Secretary
 - Vice Rector
 - Chancellor

3.5 In the statute and other acts are included competences, duties, and the function of each of the structures and the relationships between them, in order to ensure the qualitative and efficient management and administration of the institution. Statute guarantees that for the academic nature issues, academic bodies and governing authorities have the right to make decisions without the intervention of the authorities responsible for economic and financial management of the institution. For the implicated financial issues it is necessary the approval of the Administrator of the U.E.T. shpk companies.

3.6 The institution makes efforts to include in the decision making process the academic and administrative staff as well as students. The composition of governing/leading bodies of the institution, according to the Statute, aims to ensure the representation of all parties in these structures. Before they make a decision, the revision/review of the prepared materials became available to the members of decision-making bodies, in order to consult and express their opinion. The institution promotes the constructive and free debate, till to the moment of decision-making. The decisions implementation is regularly monitored by leading structures, as well as by Internal Quality Assurance Commission.

3.7 Institution pays a special attention the internal qualitative assessment, to guarantee that its activity it's not only in accordance with the provision of the enforce legislation, statute and other internal regulatory acts, but as well to the strategic objectives in accordance with the vision and the mission of the institution which continue to stay in the foundation and to manage the daily activities of the staff and leading structure.

IV. On the organization and the operation of the Internal Quality Assurance System

4.1 Internal Quality Assurance is the assurance of quality during the academic, scientific research, cultural and social activities of the academic staff, students, as well as all administrative and financial activities of EUT.

4.2 Institution pays a special attention the internal qualitative assessment, to guarantee that its activity it's not only in accordance with the provision of the enforce legislation, statute and other internal regulatory acts, but as well to the strategic objectives in accordance with the vision and the mission of the institution which continue to stay in the foundation and to manage the daily activities of the staff and leading structure.

4.3 EUT has achieved to ensure the involvement as a partner in two European projects that are focused on internal quality assurance of higher education institutions (TEMPUS project "ENCHASE" and Erasmus +: QAinAL). The commitment to these projects and training, as was the participation of three leading authorities of the institutions on the "International Quality Assurance Programme" activity organized by the British agency QAA, serve to be update with the best practices of the quality assurance.

4.4 The Principles upon which the Internal Quality Assurance is based are:

- 4.4.1 The conception of a clear and real image of the current situation of EUT in the given moment.
- 4.4.2 The establishment of an Internal Quality Assurance system and the creation of a quality culture in the institution.
- 4.4.3 Assurance of the transparency with the aim at informing all partners and wider public opinion on the performance of EUT, its programmes, curricula, services etc.

4.5 Aims of IQA:

- 4.5.1 The continuous growth of the management quality of EUT, through creation and implementation of policies, strategies and contemporary procedures as well as the engagement in all organizational and managerial levels
- 4.5.2 Continuous application of EUT philosophy on implementing an academic programme that is in accordance conceptually and chronologically with the purposes of EUT

4.5.3 Continuous growth of the quality of students' formation by offering them most contemporary teaching knowledge, methods and techniques, by enhancing students in being more critical and proactive in opinion sharing on current issues.

4.6 Objectives of IQA

4.6.1 Continuous monitoring of the institution's management.

4.6.2 Continuous follow up of the situation of study programmes, and their implementation, revision and update, through the creation and improvement of the official mechanisms of performance, periodical evaluation and the monitoring of the programmes and diplomas.

4.6.3 Continuous follow up of the quality of the academic staff and the assistants, as well as their qualifications.

4.6.4 Continuous monitoring of the teaching process and students' assessment process and the preservation of its quality.

4.6.5 Continuous follow up of the scientific research process in the institution

4.6.6 Monitoring of the inclusiveness of the students in the everyday activity of the institution;

4.6.7 Follow up of the cooperation of EUT with other academic and non-academic institution, both at national and international level.

4.6.8 Expansion of the internal quality assurance system and quality culture in all organizational levels of the institution

4.7 Responsible Structures for the Internal Quality Assurance are:

4.7.1 Hierarchical Organizational Structures (governing bodies and authorities) of EUT

4.7.2 Internal Quality Assurance Commission - IQAC, through the assessment of the efficacy of the activities that are being held at EUT, targeting the continuous improvement of quality.

4.8 The Institution diligently pursues professional staff training and organizes supportive teaching activities and training.

4.9 It encourages further qualifications of the staff by supporting their participation in scientific conferences in the country and abroad; publications of their research work, as well as financial support in the form of individual research grants. Also the professors that have 5 years of experience at the European University of Tirana are entitled to the right of a paid sabbatical semester.

4.10 EUT supports training of professors to pursue their doctoral studies in EUT, as well as in institutions abroad, by awarding paid research periods of several months. The institution cooperates also with foreign professors, inviting them in supervising doctoral theses, and in international conferences organized by EUT.

4.11 The evaluation of the professors is conducted through some procedures such as:

- 4.11.1 The evaluation of the teaching process from the Head of the Department and the Executives of EUT during the academic year.
 - 4.11.2 Internal Quality Assurance Commission monitoring activities.
 - 4.11.3 The students' evaluation (from the on-line questionnaire and focus- groups):
 - 4.11.4 The concluding evaluation at the end of the academic year (The follow-up process).
- 4.12 EUT enhance the quality of study programs through:
- 4.12.1 Monitoring the learning processes from the main authorities, the office of Human Recourse and the staff of the teaching secretariat.
 - 4.12.2 Evaluation of the quality of teaching of the lectures from: the Head of Department/ colleagues; from the students; from the Commission of the Performance Evaluation and IQAC. The results after the evaluation are presented to each member of the academic staff in order to improve their problems.
 - 4.12.3 Evaluation of the results on scientific-research of the staff.
 - 4.12.4 Focus groups/round tables with excellent students in order to get more detailed information.
 - 4.12.5 Involvement of students in the directives bodies of EUT and in the department meetings.
- 4.13 In order to improve the quality of teaching the institution:
- 4.13.1 Conducts several training for teaching methodology and research, where the mentors are EUT lecturers and also guest lecturers and experts;
 - 4.13.2 encourages the engagement of lecturers in projects and research activities, encourages their presence in the professional sphere, public, in the media, in Albania and in the region;
 - 4.13.3 improves and enhances the supporting services (technological tools in each auditory, enrichment of the library, internet access in the EUT premises, the lecturers portal);
 - 4.13.4 Develops the administrative structure which is available for students and for the study programmes.
- 4.14 Quality of the scientific research is built in accordance with the mission and the vision of the institution and is reflected in the Strategy for the Scientific Research. The main research pillars of the scientific research are approved by the Council of Professors and are led by the directors of the respective fields.
- 4.15 Institution periodically monitors and evaluated the results of the scientific work of the academic staff during the Follow-up process, reporting on the performance of scientific research activities, realization of the individual research project and the concrete products such as: national and international publications with impact factor; participations in conferences.

V. Internal Quality Assurance Commission (IQAC)

- 5.1 Internal Quality Assurance Commission (IQAC), has begun working since on the creation of the institution, initially in the form of ad hoc groups, and from the January 2011 in the form of a permanent units of the organizational structure of the institution.
- 5.2 The Commission periodically evaluates the effectiveness of teaching, research, administrative and financial activities of the EUT.
- 5.3 IQAC is established at university level. Its members are proposed by the Rector and approved by the Senate of the University.
- 5.4 Internal Quality Assurance Commission is comprised by the Head of the Commission, two representatives of the lectures of each Faculty, one representative from administrative staff, two representatives from the Students Council, as well as at least one external expert.
- 5.5 The involvement of external Experts in the process of internal evaluation is considered an important experience to provide more objectivity and impartiality in trials and evaluation results, as well as to get feedback by the experts who can bring different points of view and perspectives, to further improve the implemented practises.
- 5.6 Selection criteria of the members are as following:
 - 5.6.1 Professional competence;
 - 5.6.2 Impartiality;
 - 5.6.3 Possibility of accessing and collecting the information necessary for evaluation;
 - 5.6.4 The member should not be part of the governing authorities of EUT.
- 5.7 Each IQAC member prepares the evaluation report for the monitored activity. The Summary Report of Evaluation is prepared by the Head of IQAC or the delegated members by him.
- 5.8 IQAC has operational autonomy and access in institutional data.
- 5.9 The Head of IQAC participates regularly in Rectorate meetings.
- 5.10 Acts as the Institutional Coordinator for the cooperation with Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (QAAHE).
 - 5.10.1 IQAC builds cooperating relations with QAAHE and in accordance with it, creates a contact and institutional visits plan.
 - 5.10.2 IQAC creates and maintains continuously the relations with institutions participating in the European Network of Quality Assurance, which based on the Rectorate's decision, can be invited to conduct the external evaluation of UET.

- 5.11 Represent IQAC in activities and projects related to internal and external quality assurance.
- 5.12 Cooperation between IQAC and Faculties and Departments
- 5.12.1 IQAC has at least one representative from each Faculty.
 - 5.12.2 Members are nominated by the respective Deans of Faculties.
 - 5.12.3 The Review Reports, prepared for each Faculty, are made known to Deans.
 - 5.12.4 Measures that have to be taken to enhance the quality of the academic process are discussed with the Deans and Heads of Departments.
 - 5.12.5 Faculties' members are part of trainings for quality assurance and other academic/methodological aspects.
 - 5.12.6 IQAC works closely with Deans and Heads of Departments in the monitoring process of the activities that need to be implemented and evaluated, for example:
 - 5.12.7 Syllabuses – whether they fulfil the University standards.
 - 5.12.8 Completing the plan for lectures and seminars – Dean/Head of Department in collaboration with CIQA exchange data on this aspect.
 - 5.12.9 Implementing the plan of research work in department and faculty.
 - 5.12.10 Planning and organizing the working meetings at departments and faculty level.
- 5.13 Quality Assurance Action Plan
- 5.13.1 Activities of the IQAC are based on the QA Action Plan;
 - 5.13.2 The QA Action Plan is prepared by the Head of IQAC and approved by the Rector;
 - 5.13.3 The QA Action Plan is revised on annual bases, reflecting current developments and state of affairs.
 - 5.13.4 The QA Action Plan has been revised and improved yearly, reflecting:
 - 5.13.4.1 New national legal framework for higher education;
 - 5.13.4.2 New challenges and new solutions;
 - 5.13.4.3 The aim and objectives of EUT regarding the institutional reorganization; opening of the new faculties and new study programs.
 - 5.13.4.4 Internationalisation, academic and administrative staff exchange and students exchange and also the new joint degrees with national, regional and international partners.
 - 5.13.4.5 The valuable feedback from Erasmus + project QAINAL.

APPROVED BY

Prof. Dr. Tonin GJURAJ

Head of Academic Senate



ANNEX A – EUT Internal Quality Assurance Action Plan 2016-2018*
European University of Tirana

European University of Tirana Quality Assurance Action Plan, 2017 - 2018			
Domain	Activity	Responsible/ Instrument	Implementation Period
I. Curriculum	1.1. Evaluation of study programs	1. Departments	June - July 2018
		2. IQAC*	June - July 2018
		3. Curriculum Development Office	June - July 2018
	1.2. New study programs	4. Labour Market Board/ ALUMNI	March - May 2018
		5. External Expert	March - May 2018
II. Teaching, Learning and Assessment	2.1. Realization of the educational process	1. Online Questionnaires	End of each semester
	2.2. Monitoring of the students opinion on the educational process	2. Focus Groups	End of each semester
	2.3. E-management system (LMS)	3. Monitoring Visits by Head of Department/ Dean	During academic year
	2.4. Department Development Days	4. IQAC monitoring activities	During academic year
		5. Trainings	May - June 2018
III. Research	3.1. HRS4R Strategy	Ad hoc group	October 20178 - Accreditation
	3.2. Research groups	Departments	Annual basis
	3.3. Individual research of academic staff	Follow up process	End of academic year
IV. Students and Their Support	4.1. Organization and management of student support	Student Care Office	During academic year
	4.2. Monitoring of the incoming/outgoing students	Student Care Office/ Departments	During academic year

	IQAC/ Career Office	During academic year
4.3. Monitoring of the employed graduates and employers' opinion on the graduates' education	Project and Partnership Office	During academic year
4.4. Establishment of partnerships with national and international partners	Academic Senate/ Rectorate/ IQAC	After approval of by laws
5.1. Review of EUT Regulation and Study Programs Regulation	Academic Senate/ Rectorate/ IQAC	End of academic year
5.2. SWOT Analysis		July - September 2018
5.3. Evaluation of human resources and learning environment capacity		After finalization of each component
5.4. Monitoring of secretary office for registering the grades		End of each semester
5.5. The progress of conducting mid-term/ final exams and quality of their evaluation	IQAC	September 2017 (I Semester) February 2018 (II Semester)
5.6. Monitoring Syllabuses preparation		December 2017 (I Semester)
5.7. Monitoring Drafting and announcement of course assignments		May 2018 (II Semester)
5.8. Training for accreditation standards and quality assurance for periodic evaluation of SP		September - October 2017

V. Quality Assurance System

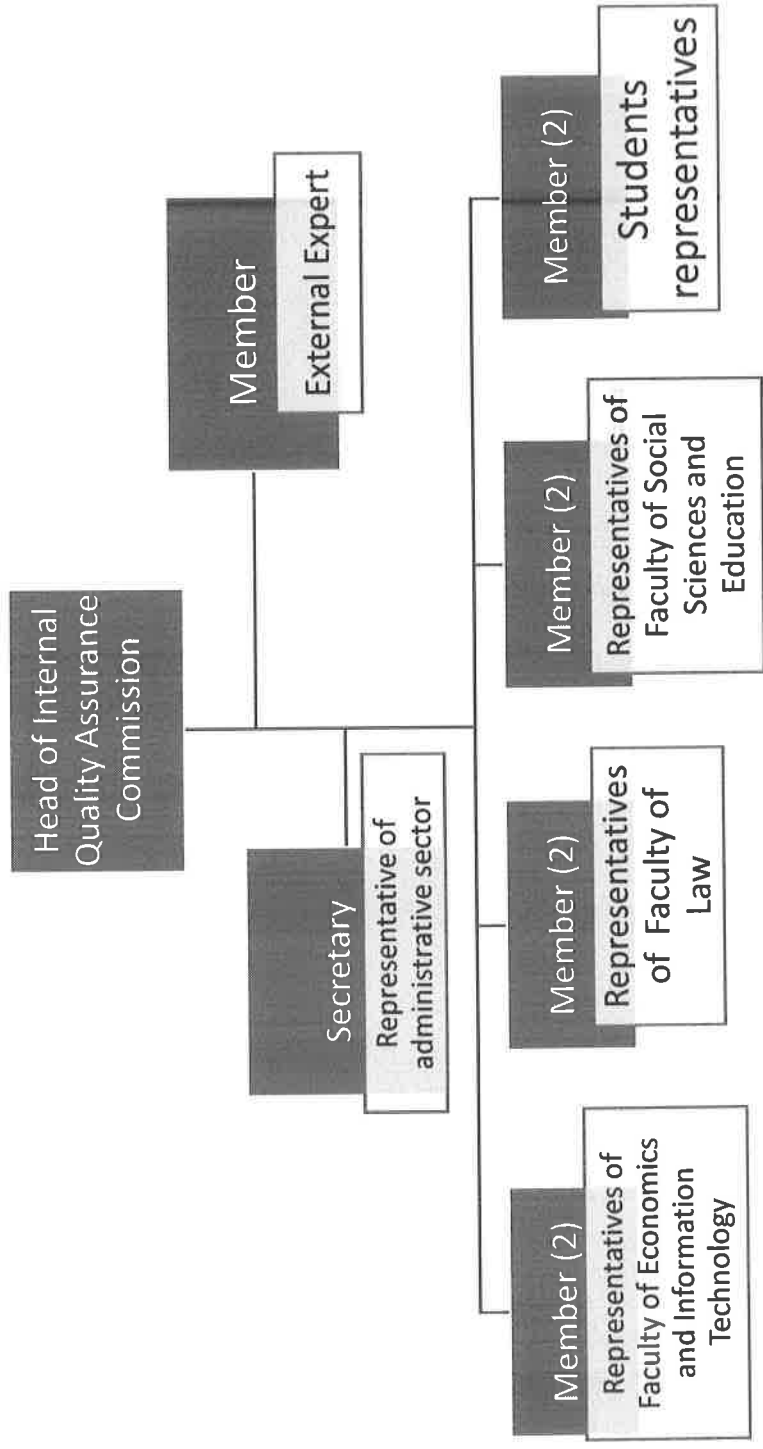
Prepared by Dr Fatri Morina, Head of Internal Quality Assurance Commission

Approved by Prof. Dr. Tonin Gjuraj, Rector



*Translated to English and adopted with relevant logos as per the QAINAL Project requirements.

ANNEX B – EUT Internal Quality Assurance Strategy
INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMISSION – ORGANIZATIONAL CHART*
European University of Tirana



*Translated to English and adopted with relevant logos as per the QAINAL Project requirements.

JOB DESCRIPTION¹

Position: Head of Internal Quality Assurance Commission

Reports to: Rector

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Head of Internal Quality Assurance Commission (IQAC) manages the activities of the unit, which is a permanent and autonomous unit within the organizational structure of the university. IQAC undertakes the coordination, support and implementation of the evaluation procedures for the academic units and the Institution's services taking under consideration the quality of the teaching and research activities, the quality of the curriculum and the quality of all the other services (administrative affairs, student care, infrastructure etc.). Based on the Higher Education Law, National Quality Standards, European Standards Guidelines and the feedback from capacity building projects and international partners, IQAC proposes to the Rector and the Academic Senate new policies, procedures and instruments for further improvements.

TASKS AND RESPONSABILITIES

- Manages the activities of the unit;
- Drafts the Annual Action Plan, which is approved by the Rector;
- Organizes and supervise the work related to institutional and programme evaluation and accreditation;
- Responsible for division of tasks and responsibilities between members of IQAC;
- Prepares the Final Reports, based upon the individual reports drafted from the unit members;
- Organizes and supervise the process of focus groups and online questionnaires with students in order to assess teaching and other activities of different units of the university;
- Acts as the Institutional Coordinator for the cooperation with Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education;
- Represent the IQAC in Rectorate meetings as well as in activities and projects related to internal and external quality assurance.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

- Master of Science or higher degree;
- Very good knowledge on Higher Education System – Legal framework, Higher Education Institutions, curricula development and labour market structure and demands.
- Quality inspection, auditing and testing experience;
- Very good knowledge of National Quality Standards and QA European Standards Guidelines;
- Very good knowledge of tools, concepts and methodologies of QA.

SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

- Integrity and confidentiality;
- Impartiality;
- Ability to collect, process and analyse data and other information;
- Analytic capability ;
- Managerial capability;
- Communication skills;
- Problem analysis and problem solving;
- Planning and organizing;
- Teamwork.

¹ ANNEX B – EUT Internal Quality Assurance Strategy – translated and adopted to English as per QAinAL project requirements

JOB DESCRIPTION

Position: Member of Internal Quality Assurance Commission

Reports to: Head of Internal Quality Assurance Unit

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The member of IQAC is responsible for monitoring, collecting data, evaluation and implementation of internal quality assurance standards and procedures according to the directives of the head of IQAC. The member of IQAC represents his/her unit in the Commission. He/she can be a representative of one of the faculties, administrative sector or students' representative. Each member of IQAC has to draft a report for each activity conducted as representative of the Commission.

TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Monitor the process of syllabus preparation;
- Evaluation of the conduct of mid-term and final exams;
- Monitor secretary activities;
- Drafts the reports for the conducted activities;
- Related activities upon request of Head of Unit.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

- Master of Science or higher degree;
- Knowledge on Higher Education System
- Knowledge of National Quality Standards and QA European Standards Guidelines;
- Very good knowledge of Statute and Regulation of European University of Tirana.

SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

- Integrity and confidentiality;
- Impartiality;
- Ability to collect and analyse data;
- Analytic capability ;
- Communication skills;
- Teamwork.