

Summary

Information dossier Leiden University

Institutional audit



**Universiteit
Leiden**
The Netherlands

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Introduction

Leiden University is one of the top international research universities in Europe. Our teaching and research are closely integrated. The University aims to train students to become academic professionals and engaged citizens who will possess international and intercultural skills and be able to help resolve the challenges facing society.

The University will undergo an institutional audit early in 2019. We believe it is logical that we are periodically assessed to see if we are achieving the goals that we have set ourselves. This enables us to show the world that we are a high-quality university, and provides us with valuable recommendations on the continued development of our organisation. It is important to take part in the institutional audit so that future programme assessments can follow the abbreviated and less time-consuming protocol.

In preparation for the institutional audit, we have written a self-evaluation report for the accreditation panel. Here we describe our vision on quality assurance and quality culture, and provide an overview of the developments relating to our teaching and quality assurance. We also describe the areas of improvement that we ourselves have identified. The self-evaluation report was written in collaboration with the vice-deans of Education and was approved by the University Council. Students and staff also provided input.

This summary of the self-evaluation report outlines the results that we have achieved and the areas of improvement that we have identified.

Institutional audit

The institutional audit is a periodic, external and independent assessment of the internal quality assurance of an institution. Internal quality assurance includes both the quality culture and the internal quality assurance system at an institution. This assessment determines whether, in conjunction with the quality culture, an institution's internal quality assurance system guarantees that its vision on education is being achieved. The institutional audit gives accreditation for a period of six years.

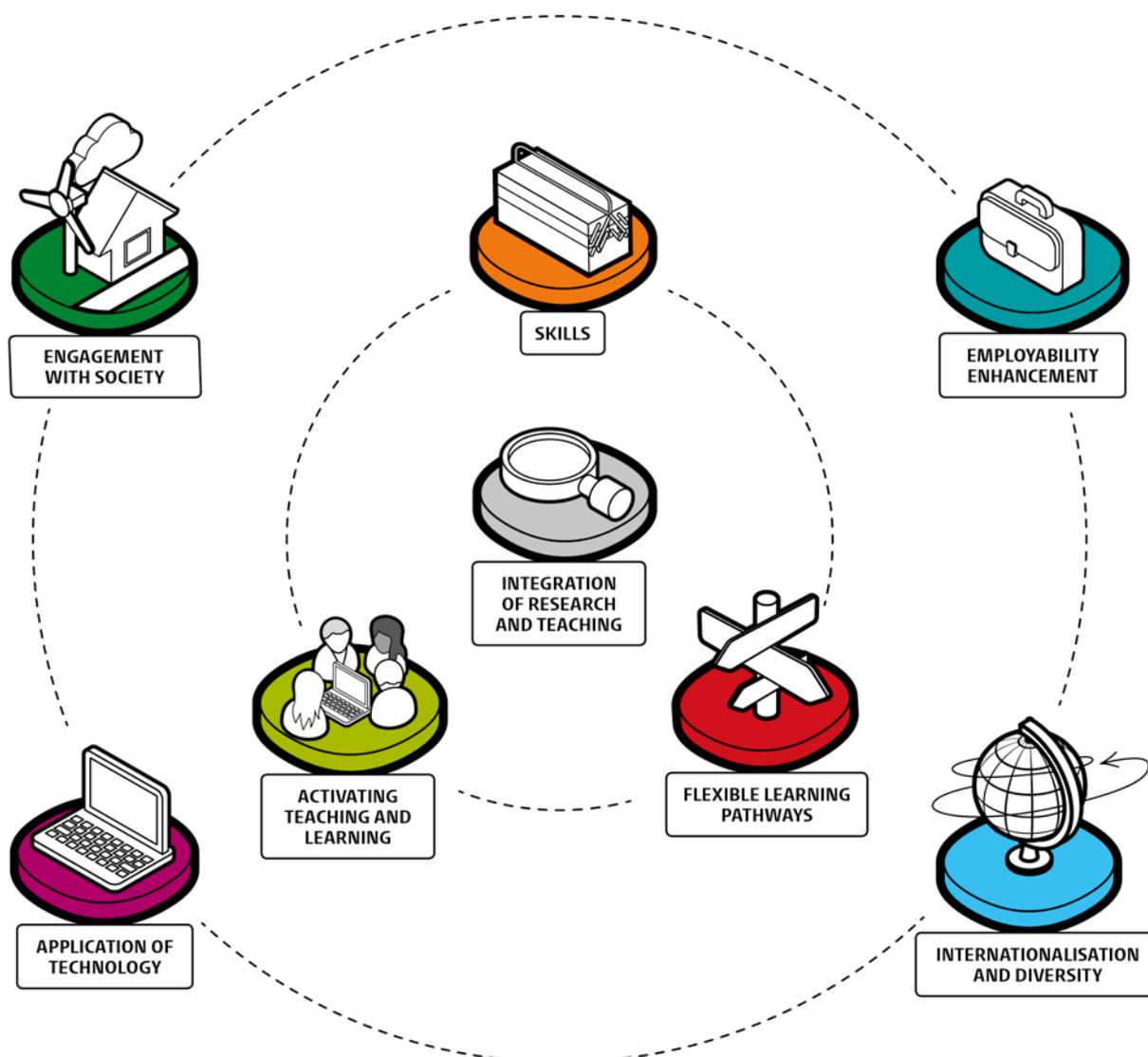
Basis of the institutional audit

Four coherent questions form the basis of the institutional audit. These have been translated into four standards for the audit:

1. Vision and policy: *the institution has a broadly supported educational philosophy and pursues a corresponding policy focused on the internal quality assurance of its education.* Are the institution's vision and policy on the quality of its education widely supported and sufficiently coordinated, both externally and internally?
2. Implementation: *the institution realises its educational philosophy in an effective manner, which is demonstrated by appropriate policy actions and processes, particularly relating to staff, student assessment, services and facilities, and students with a functional impairment.* The educational policy has been appropriately translated into concrete policy actions and processes.
3. Evaluation and monitoring: *the institution systematically evaluates whether the intended policy objectives relating to educational quality are achieved. Relevant stakeholders are involved in this process.* The institution organises effective feedback that helps it realise its policy. To that end, it initiates appropriate evaluation and measurement activities that are firmly embedded in the institution. These tools provide insightful information that can be used to determine the desired quality development. One aspect of this is a transparent method for identifying and reporting risks and, where needed, taking action to make improvements.
4. Development: *the institution has a focus on development and works systematically on the improvement of its education.* Feedback and reflection on output form the basis of measures targeted at reinforcing, improving or adjusting policy or its implementation. The development policy pursued by the institution encourages all parties concerned to contribute to innovation and quality improvement.

Standard 1: Vision and policy

The institution has a broadly supported educational philosophy and pursues a corresponding policy focused on the internal quality assurance of its education.



Vision on teaching and learning

Leiden University presented its educational philosophy in 2012. This was in its self-assessment report for the institutional audit. This vision has since then been further developed, and was adopted in 2017 under the name of the Learning@LeidenUniversity vision on teaching and learning.

Learning@LeidenUniversity was developed by a University think tank with a broad membership base that worked in consultation with lecturers, students and administrators. The vision was determined in

part by environmental factors such as globalisation, internationalisation, technological developments and diversity. It has been translated into eight ambitions that will give direction to teaching innovation and will guide the University's educational policy until at least 2025.

Appealing range of programmes

Our education consists of an appealing range of programmes in a large number of disciplines. Students have the opportunity to make their own choices within the programmes, and can develop their talents

by choosing specialisations, minors or honours programmes or by spending time studying abroad.

Active and engaged students

Alongside the right qualifications and a broad general knowledge, we expect our students to have the right attitude and motivation to make their studies a success. This means that they will want to devote time and energy to their studies, they will be motivated to finish the programme in a reasonable period of time and they will want to delve deeper than the compulsory material alone. They should also show a broad interest and be prepared to pursue other activities alongside their studies, for example in student or study associations.

For our part, we make every effort to facilitate students in achieving their ambitions through the Leiden Study System, our study support system, and by involving them at all levels of our policy development.

Inspiring and professional lecturers

Corresponding with our core value of *integration of research and teaching*, the combined role of lecturer and researcher forms the basis of our careers policy. Lecturers are true experts in their fields, and demonstrate commitment to disseminating their knowledge of the discipline. Our staff have knowledge and experience of different teaching and examination methods, and are aware of the possibilities that technology presents. We expect our lecturers to take regular advantage of professional development opportunities, to be able to work in a team with colleagues and students, and to demonstrate a commitment to the organisation.

Quality assurance

Quality assurance is the combination of a quality culture that is embedded in the organisation and properly functioning systems and processes. Sharing expertise – learning from each other – has become an increasingly important element of the University's approach to quality assurance. A positive approach is paramount: what can lecturers, students, degree programmes and faculties do to make the teaching better and how can the Executive Board support this?

The following principles form the basis of the quality assurance of the University's teaching:

- Lecturers and students take the lead ('ownership').
- Improvement takes priority over accountability.
- Administrative tasks should be reduced.

Conclusion and reflection

Strengths

- Teaching and research are strongly integrated in all the University's degree programmes.
- The University has chosen a wide range of programmes in the fields of the arts, social and behavioural sciences, exact sciences and medicine, alongside unique degree programmes or specialisations that reflect its research expertise. All of these give students the opportunity to develop and make their own choices.
- Internationalisation is a priority of the University. This is based on the vision that it is the diversity of staff and students that contributes to the quality of the University's teaching and research. The University is an active participant in international, inter-university networks.

Now that the Learning@LeidenUniversity vision on teaching and learning has been developed, the attention in the coming years will turn to its implementation. The vision corresponds with the shift in focus from the theme of student success (quantitative) to the theme of teaching innovation (qualitative). Furthermore, the University will focus on optimising its quality assurance system. The vision on teaching and learning has been translated into eight ambitions that are formulated in such a way that the faculties have room for their own interpretation and priorities.

Standard 2: Implementation

The institution realises its educational philosophy in an effective manner, which is demonstrated by appropriate policy actions and processes, particularly relating to staff, student assessment, services and facilities, and students with a functional impairment.

During the 2013-2018 period, a lot of attention was paid to the programmes that support the performance agreements (student success, University Teaching Qualification and the honours programme), to our assessment policy and to the performance of the boards of examiners and programme committees. The ICT & Education and Leiden University Teacher's Academy programmes have been instrumental in advancing innovation in our teaching.

Overview of results

In recent years, we have translated our vision on teaching and learning into concrete improvement measures, and have continued existing initiatives. We have achieved results in many areas.

Teaching

- The Learning@LeidenUniversity vision on teaching and learning has been developed and adopted.
- The Teaching and Learning Guide has been published. This web-based guide provides lecturers and students with tips and best practices that will help give concrete shape to the ambitions from the vision on teaching and learning.
- Within the ICT & Education innovation programme, 23 MOOCs and 13 SPOCs have been developed, blended learning has been introduced in a number of programmes and experiments with virtual exchange and virtual reality have begun.
- The Employability Enhancement project has started a pilot in 19 programmes.
- Career Services and LU Career Zone have been developed as part of the Employability Enhancement project.
- The honours programme has been expanded.
- Internationalisation: the social and academic integration of international students has been improved (International Student Experience).
- Internationalisation: the international classroom contributes to the intercultural competences of our students.

Range of programmes

- The following new programmes have started: International Studies, Security Studies, Urban studies, Master's in Pharmacy.
- The following English-taught international tracks have started: Psychology, Philosophy, Archaeology, Linguistics.
- The Advanced Master's in Law programmes have been expanded (programmes do not receive government funding).

Students

- Student success has improved and the drop-out rate has decreased.
- The study facilities in The Hague have been expanded.
- The study guidance options for international students have improved.
- Student engagement has improved: the Leiden University Student Platform (LUS) has been set up, programme committees now receive training and the response rate in the National Student Survey (NSE) has increased.

Lecturers

- Almost 90% of the staff have the University Teaching Qualification (BKO).
- The Leiden University Teachers Academy has been set up: 29 fellows are carrying out innovative projects.
- A training and exchange programme for Boards of Examiners has begun.
- The pilot for the Senior Teaching Qualification has ended. A peer review of the University Teaching Qualification has been carried out.

Conclusion and reflection

Strengths

- The range of multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary programmes has increased in recent years, partly as an effect of inter-faculty collaboration.

- The University has close links with the cities in which it is based: the city campus in Leiden makes a strong contribution to students' study experience, and in collaboration with the municipality of The Hague, Campus The Hague has become a significant university campus.
- With an ambitious Student Success programme in place, our results have undergone permanent improvement. Fewer students are dropping out and more students are completing their bachelor's degree within four years and getting the maximum out of their studies.
- About 90% of our lecturers have the University Teaching Qualification.
- We are an active and innovative University that gives lecturers, students and degree programmes plenty of opportunity for new initiatives. In recent years, interesting new degree programmes and specialisations have been developed and internationalisation has taken off. Our Campus The Hague has continued to develop and has increased in size to almost 5,000 students.

Despite their workload, our lecturers are very keen to improve the University's teaching, and we can see concrete results being achieved. In the last few years, a great deal of attention has been paid to increasing student success, developing honours programmes and ensuring lecturers earn the University Teaching Qualification. Topics that require further attention are the importance and appreciation of excellent teaching performances, the quality of our assessment and examination, facilities in The Hague and facilities for international students. The University-wide Employability project, the ICT & Education innovation programme and the Internationalisation working plan will continue in the light of the ambitions of Learning@LeidenUniversity.

Areas for improvement

- Staff development after gaining the University Teaching Qualification requires further attention, as does the possibility of promoting excellent lecturers to the position of Associate Professor on the basis of excellent teaching.
- We have intensified the attention we pay to the quality of our assessment and examinations; this is a topic to which we will continuously draw the attention of lecturers and Boards of Examiners. We also need to continue the training activities for these two groups.



Standard 3: Evaluation and monitoring

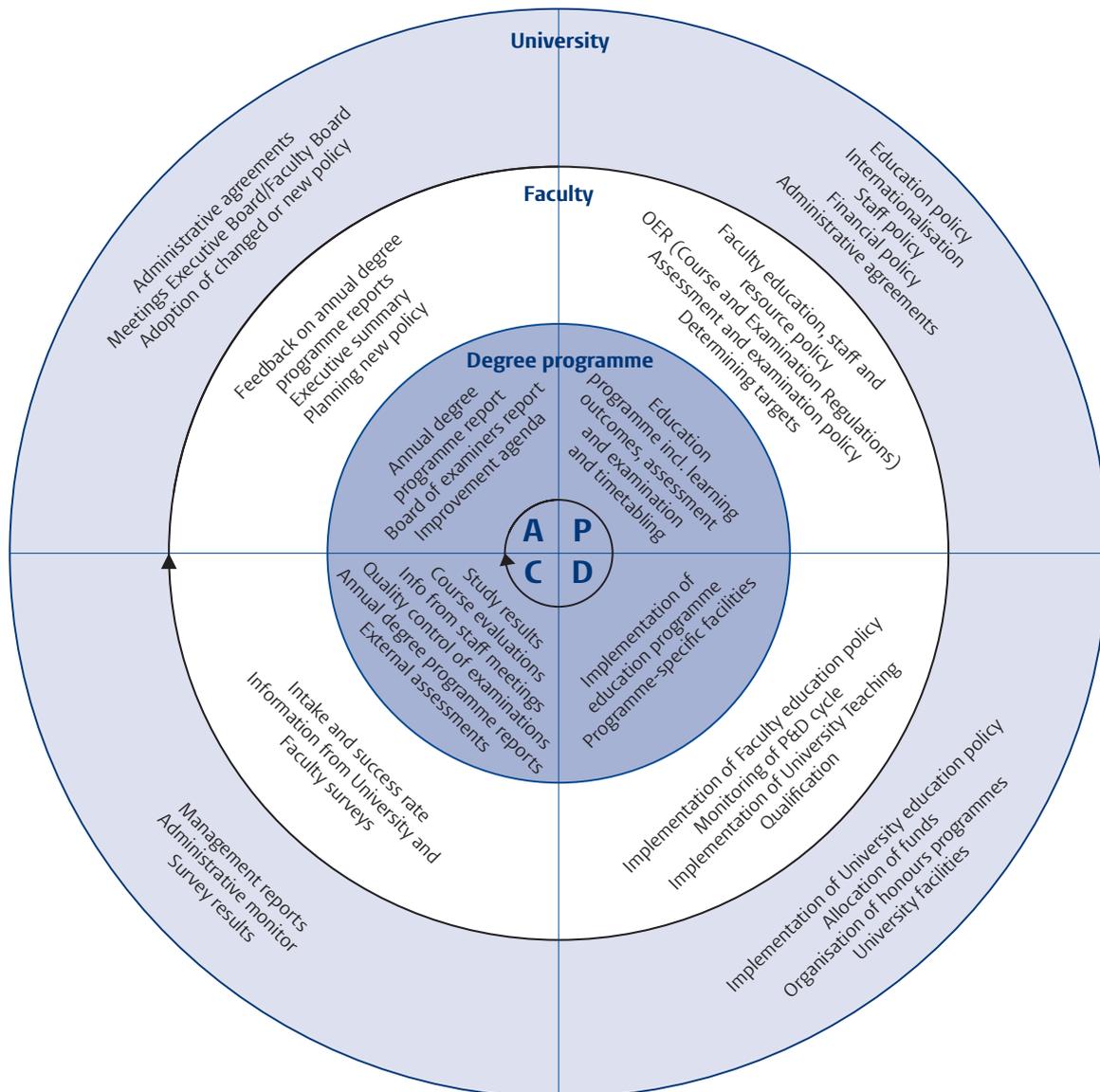
The institution systematically evaluates whether the intended policy objectives relating to educational quality are achieved. Relevant stakeholders are involved in this process.

The University's improvement policy follows the plan-do-check-act cycle, and consists of three quality assurance circles. The degree programmes form the core of the quality assurance. The faculty represents the second circle: it monitors the quality of the degree programmes, allocates human and financial resources, develops its own policy and translates University policy into its degree programmes. The outermost circle is the University: it is responsible for developing University vision and policy, for developing implementation and monitoring tools, for reaching administrative agreements with the faculties and for ensuring that the

institution is in a healthy financial position. Each of the three levels – degree programme, faculty, University – must be able to perform its specific tasks and duties. The consultation in the teaching column (Board of vice-deans of Education, OWB and Consultation of educational policy advisors, AOWB) forms another important link between the circles.

Monitoring tools

We use the following tools to evaluate and monitor our teaching:



- Course and curriculum evaluations.
- Data from the National Student Survey (NSE) and National Alumni Survey (NAE).
- Degree programme metrics (opleidingskaart).
- Annual degree programme reports.
- Midterm reviews of degree programmes.
- Programme assessments and action plan/ administrative implementation.
- Faculty educational agenda.
- Administrative monitor and administrative agreements.

Consultation and knowledge sharing

Our faculties are very different in nature and size. The way in which the administrative cycle is shaped is therefore very different too. In all faculties, consultation takes place between the Faculty Board and the institutes. This is accompanied by informal, bilateral consultation. Furthermore, the Executive Board meets with the Faculty Board twice a year, and consultation takes place in the Management Board and Board of vice-deans of Education. This University-wide consultation is important to ensure that there is harmonisation and a shared vision. Although, strictly speaking, sharing expertise is not a quality assurance tool, it is an important way to ensure that policy goals can be achieved.

Results

In recent years, attention has been paid to maintaining and optimising the quality assurance system. This has led to the following results:

- The course evaluations have been improved and now comprise a number of uniform questions that make comparison possible.
- The information on and analysis of the NSE for the degree programmes has been improved.
- The annual programme report has been better tailored to the goals of the vision on teaching and learning.
- Midterm reviews are carried out as a matter of course.
- An action plan is drawn up after each programme assessment and midterm review.
- A training and support programme for the programme committee has been developed.
- The administrative agreements have been revised.
- The formation of networks has improved the sharing of expertise.
- LUS has been set up.

The foundation of our quality assurance lies more in supporting the quality culture than in rules and documents. In recent years, many policy initiatives have been developed and the administrative attention in the quality assurance cycle focused primarily on developing programme plans. We can conclude that as a result the implementation and evaluation of policy received less attention than it deserved.

Conclusion and reflection

Strengths

- The quality assurance system is clearly described and is carried out systematically.
- Students are visibly represented and have a say at all administrative levels: they have a seat on the programme and Faculty Boards; the student members of the programme committees are properly prepared for their task.
- The University is an active participant in international and inter-university networks.
- Degree programmes invite experts or stakeholders from outside Leiden to critically review the teaching quality for the midterm review.

Areas for improvement

- Despite the strong quality culture and strong student engagement, the University should invest more in providing feedback about and communicating the results of evaluations to ensure that improvements to the programmes are more visible to the wide student community.
- More attention should be paid to monitoring, evaluating and maintaining policy. Policy goals could be more SMART.

The quality assurance has focused on improving and maintaining the system (consolidation and administration). We now want to further develop the system to better anchor the monitoring of strategic projects in the regular quality assurance. It is important, for instance, to pay more attention to the implementation and evaluation of policy, and to improve the way in which students are informed of evaluation results. The basic premise will be that quality assurance will be built on trust and ownership of the programmes and is embedded in the consultation between colleagues and peers.

Standard 4: Focus on development

The institution has a focus on development and works systematically on the improvement of its education.

In this standard, we describe the University's ambitions in the field of educational quality and educational policy, and how we aim to achieve them: namely, the Leiden approach. Leiden University has a strong quality culture and devotes a lot of attention to teaching innovation. The manner in which the Executive Board shapes the direction of the University's educational policy aims to contribute to its further development.

The Leiden approach

In an organisation with a decentralised administrative model such as ours, processes of change require a fitting approach. When developing new projects and initiatives, the Executive Board chooses methods that ensure an integral approach with good links between programme, faculty and institution as well as between implementation and policy. The idea is not that the University determines the details of the programmes but that it creates a clear framework and helps achieve further synergy, harmonisation and coordination.

Sharing expertise is an important aspect of our quality culture: it inspires, creates synergy between initiatives and leads to better ideas for the development and improvement of degree programmes. Following the institutional audit of 2013, we have concentrated on expanding and creating horizontal consultation that revolves around the exchange of information, expertise and experience. This approach was explicitly used in the development of the Vision on Teaching and Learning and Harmonisation of Educational Logistics programmes, for instance.

Ambitions for the future

The Executive Board is bringing its educational policy together in two major strategic programmes: Implementation of the Vision on Teaching and Learning, and Harmonisation of Educational Logistics.

Implementation of the Vision on Teaching and Learning

The implementation programme for the Learning@LeidenUniversity vision on teaching and

learning will guide educational policy and teaching innovation at the University until 2025. The following projects are part of this programme:

- University-wide Employability Project
- Internationalisation
- ICT & Education
- Quality agreements

Harmonisation of Educational Logistics

The Harmonisation of Educational Logistics programme and the implementation of the new Learning Management System (LMS) focus on the conditions that are needed to better support students in their studies and create flexible learning pathways. The aim is to increase students' options through greater harmonisation of the teaching processes and the University organisation.

Other policy developments

Staff development

Staff development in the area of teaching remains high on the University agenda. We are working to increase the training options for lecturers to meet the academic staff's need for permanent development. This is accompanied by the implementation of the Learning@LeidenUniversity vision on teaching and learning.

Development of Campus The Hague

We are working with The Hague University of Applied Sciences to improve student facilities in The Hague in the areas of sport, culture and accommodation. At the programme level, the options are also being explored for students with a bachelor's degree from The Hague University of Applied Sciences to enrol in a relevant master's programmes at Leiden University in Leiden or The Hague. The experiences in The Hague with programmes that attract a lot of international students are of great value to the development and supervision of international students and the development of inclusive, international classrooms elsewhere in the University.

Student Services

The University will focus in the coming period on streamlining the logistics organisation for students, implementing the new LMS and improving the coordination between the different forms of student services.

Continued development of quality assurance

In the near future, we aim to make the system more efficient and to improve our monitoring (discussion and improvement function). The quality-assurance tools are being adapted to make the links to the implementation programme for the vision on teaching and learning more explicit. The next step, therefore, is to make more use of quality assurance tools such as the annual programme reports in the discussions (focusing on improvement and policy monitoring) in the faculties and between faculties and the Executive Board.

Conclusion and reflection

Strengths

- Lecturers and support staff feel more ownership of the teaching because of the decentralised structure and the focus on generating support.
- The updated vision on teaching and learning is embedded in an innovative teaching culture in which there is growing appreciation in the faculties for 'learning from each other' and sharing expertise.

Areas for improvement

- There are a lot of teaching innovation initiatives. Their effectiveness and impact could be improved with better prioritisation, clustering and scaling, along with a greater emphasis on the implementation and monitoring of projects.
- Coordination and harmonisation of policy is needed to give students enough flexibility in their learning pathways and to support initiatives that transcend the faculty. To achieve this, the priority in the coming period will lie on harmonising processes.
- If the workload is felt to be high (through increasing student numbers, pressure to apply for research grants, more complex accountability), this can create more resistance to change.

We can conclude that there are many initiatives throughout the University, but that policy creates a lot of pressure and the workload is experienced as high. The greatest challenge is for staff to find sufficient

time and energy to work structurally on education improvement and innovation alongside their regular teaching duties. To help prioritise and provide a better overview, the Executive Board has brought together a number of initiatives in two broad programmes: Implementation of Learning@LeidenUniversity and Harmonisation of Educational Logistics. Harmonisation and sharing expertise are the main principles of these initiatives.

All in all, we have achieved a lot, but there is still much to do. We are proud of the active and innovative mindset of our staff and of the embedded quality culture: an academic community in the true sense of the words.



Facts about the institutional audit

Organisation performing the institutional audit

The organisation that carries out the institutional audit is the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO). NVAO is an independent administrative body that works on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to improve the quality culture at institutions of higher education. In a cycle of six years, it visits all education institutions in the Netherlands and assesses the extent to which an institution meets the quality requirements.

Accreditation in 2013

The first time we underwent an institutional audit was 2013. We were successfully audited, and set to work on the areas for improvement. One of the most visible results is the updated vision on teaching and learning Learning@LeidenUniversity, which we adopted at the start of 2017.

The institutional audit in 2019 will make it apparent to what extent we have developed since 2013. It will also reveal the areas for improvement for the coming six years.

Dates and programme for 2019

The institutional audit comprises two parts: an exploratory visit on 22 and 23 January 2019 and an in-depth visit on 20, 21 and 22 February 2019.

During the exploratory visit on 22 and 23 January 2019 we will be asked about the four standards (see 'institutional audit' section) on the basis of the self-evaluation. We can decide for ourselves which participants from the University will attend the meetings. The group of participants will consist of administrators (deans, vice-deans, directors of studies), lecturers and students. They will be interviewed in mixed delegations. In addition, the panel will speak separately to a group of lecturers, a group of students and a group of representatives from the co-participation bodies.

The programme for the in-depth visit, what is known as 'trails', will be determined from the findings of

the exploratory visit. We will be able to shape the programme for the in-depth visit in terms of faculties, topics, participants and required documentation from 24 January 2019.

More information and contact

More information on the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) can be found on its website: www.nvao.net.

For more information on the Institutional Audit of Leiden in 2019, please contact: Marjolein Boessenkool, Policy Advisor on Quality Assurance, tel.: +31 71 527 1401, email: ITK@BB.leidenuniv.nl.

