

# 3.

Developing an excellent research-driven and student-centered education





Research-driven and Student-centered education is increasingly the focus of attention of Higher Education Institutions (HEI). Students should have a voice, but also have choices that provide learning experiences that focus on students' value and preferences, and programmes that offer a response to societal challenges. To develop an attractive offer for students, UNITA considers crucial to develop faster recognition tracks, to create Hubs of Success (digital spaces offering lists of contact persons and physical ones offering individual monitoring and counselling), as well as creating a network of innovative teaching and learning centres. Quality is fundamental in this process and must be ensured. For this reason, UNITA will assess the quality of teaching and learning through internal and external quality assurance approaches.

### 3.1 Supporting the personalization and recognition of study paths

The development of the internationalization of the study programmes within UNITA's educational offers is based on the identification of new study paths, proposed to students attracted by international experiences. These study paths will be flexible and tailored with respect to the student's personal project. In order to promote students to this experience, dedicated advisors will support them using specific tools.

These advisors, currently belonging to UNITA Hubs of Success (HoS) are identified among the administrative and academic staff members within each institution.

- These HoS will promote UNITA's activities related to any kind of mobility: short, long, virtual, blended, or physical, regular or in a new form of mobility.

- They will also support the students in the identification and the recognition of transversal skills associated to an international experience.

- Finally, HoS will support the student in the identification of tailored and flexible study paths, thanks to a digital tool facilitating the recognition of relevant study paths.

Hereafter, some elements related to the current state of implementation of the HoS and their specific tools are given.

#### 3.1.1 Hub of Success

Each University is constituting its group of members within the Hub of Success (HoS):

- As advisors on internationalization of study path, a part of the HoS will be composed by international relation officers.

- The UNITA offices will also be part of the HoS counselling.

- In order to be able to propose relevant tailored study programs, HoS will have to integrate teachers.

- A pedagogical supervisor will accompany the recognition of transversal competences associated to an international experience. Within UNITA, each HoS will communicate with the local UNITA offices. At the current stage, all the members composing the HoS in each University is not yet completed. Also, the virtual place, that should be located in the UNITA virtual campus, is not yet achieved. The main contacts of the Hub of Success at UNITA member are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Hubs of Success's contacts

University	Hub of Success
UBI - Internationalization Office	internacional@ubi.pt
UNIZAR - Sección de Relaciones Internacionales	relint@unizar.es
UPPA - International Welcome Desk	unita@univ-pau.fr
USMB - International Office	mobilité-unita.dri@univ-smb.fr
UNITO - Administrative Education Office	unita.students@unito.it
UVT - Department of International Relations (DRI)	international@e-uvt.ro

### 3.1.2 Online Matrix

The main tool devoted to the identification of international tailored study path is based on a data set of training offers. This set is composed by the list of:

- on one hand, all the study programs, of both Bachelor level and Master level, related to one of the 3 strategic areas: Cultural Heritage, Renewable Energies and Circular Economy,

- on the other hand, all the subjects considered as related to these 3 strategic areas. The data set, put into matrices, gather at its current stage more than 530 study programs and almost 3000 subjects.

Table 3.2: Number of entries in the matrix, from the related report D2.1.1

	UBI	UNIZAR	UPPA	USMB	UNITO	UVT	Total
Bachelor study programmes	28	61	12	10	45	68	218
Master study programmes	42	63	15	20	68	88	314
Bachelor level - subjects	106	833	96	466	269	119	1802
Master level - subjects	71	129	240	600	244	70	1125

## 3.2 Quality ecosystems

In order to be able to identify the study path from this dataset, an ergonomic, easy to use and well designed tool is built. This digital tool, also called **cartography**, will be hosted on the virtual campus tool before April 2022. In order not to implement a sophisticated digital tool twice, the current version of the matrix has not been put online.

At the moment, the two main related uses are:

- it facilitates the work of the Hub of Success to develop faster recognition tracks;
- it offers students two key information:
  - > similar courses that could be taken in mobility in other universities of the alliance;
  - > complementary courses offered in other universities of the alliance that are considered key for the student in the design of his/her study path.

In designing these paths to success, quality is never forgotten. Quality assurance involves not only the evaluation and accreditation of the courses by the accreditation Agencies of each partner, but also the student's satisfaction. To address this issue, a subgroup of people focusing on quality was created.

A Workshop was held on "Benchmarking Internal and External Quality Assurance Approaches" where each University had the opportunity to explain not only how it is done and what are the steps of assessment and accreditation of their study cycles, but also how each University collects information about student's satisfaction on the curricular units and teacher's performance (Surveys), and how

Figure 3.1: Meeting Schedule for Quality Benchmarking

### Task 2.3.1 BENCHMARKING INTERNAL & EXTERNAL ASSURANCE APPROACHES MEETING

Three appointments to share the different approaches to the QA in the universities of the Alliance

**16 march 2021 14.30 - 16.00**

#### University of Zaragoza

Kermit Macpherson  
Isabel Luengo (Chief Quality Officer - Jefa de la Inspección General de Servicios)  
Ana Belén Pina (General Quality Agent - specialized in academic issues)

#### University of Beira Interior

Raquel Craveiro Costa (Gabinete da Qualidade)  
Carla Baldaia (Quality Office)

**23 march 2021 16.45**

#### University of Pau and Pays de l'Adour

Danièle Laplace-Treuture  
Anna chrostowska (Vice Présidente pilotage)  
Agnes Binet (Directrice de l'observatoire de l'établissement)

**30 march 2021 14.30 - 16.00**

#### West University of Timisoara

Madalin Bunoiu  
Vlad Chereches

#### University of Savoy Mont Blanc

Marx Chhay  
Maryline De Moor (Céllule Amélioration Continue)

All WP2 members are welcome!

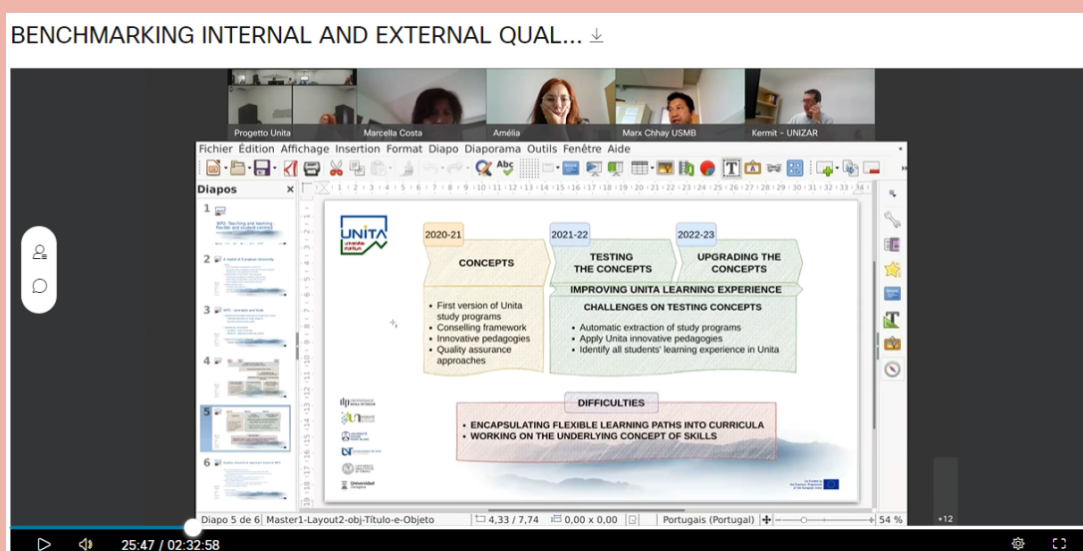
All documents are published in the UniTA Project Datacloud (WP2 folder ; 2.3.1 MEETING subfolder)



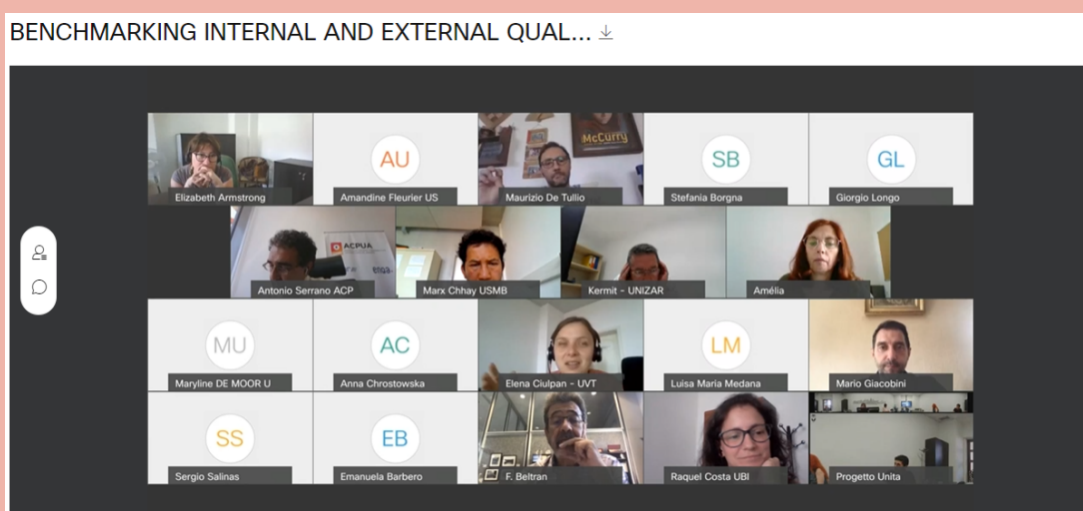
they disseminate the results and implement possible remedial actions. At the end, a Benchmarking Report was created with the collection of all the information. This Benchmarking of Quality Assurance

approaches to Teaching and Learning was developed along three lines: Principles, Processes and Actors. This approach frames the foundations, articulation and implementation of Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning in UNITA.

Picture 3.1: Quality Benchmarking Meetings (1)



Picture 3.2: Quality Benchmarking Meetings (2)



### 3.3 T&L Centers

Quality teaching is demanding, complex and challenging and requires exquisite preparation of teachers and professors. It is not enough to know the content; other skills are required, for instance the ability to highlight the essential and make the connection between theory and practice, to provide constructive feedback, to stimulate the student's reflexive process, as well as class management skills. Apart from scientific knowledge, things also evolve for the taught and in the way of teaching. Thus, on one hand, it is crucial to provide lecturers and teachers with the tools and training to strengthen the student-centered approach. On the other hand, traditional teaching methods still exist, university teachers and professors

also want to be at the forefront of teaching innovation. Moreover, non-teaching staff must be able to keep up with the innovation in order to provide help to students and teachers and also support in meeting their needs. In this regard, a working sub-group has been set up to provide rapid training on current topics as well as proportionate skills development for students, lecturers and teachers and non-teaching staff. This group also works on identifying best practices through the exchange of information, methods, and techniques between different Universities in order to promote knowledge, growth and personal and professional development.

Figure 3.2: Workshop on "Exchanging best practices on Student Centered Pedagogies)



At this point, in September a workshop on "Exchanging best practices on Student Centered Pedagogies" was held. It lasted for three days and had an important number of participants (253 certificates of participation were given). During these days, professors were able to share their projects, discuss topics and issues regarding online teaching in Higher Education, and exchange good practices regarding various topics, such as student engagement online, motivation, assessment, use of Moodle and interactive tools for teaching. A workshop oriented to digital learning is being prepared under the title: "Sharing best practices on Digital Learning".