



Building HE Institutional QA system and QA offices: the QA-SURE Project in Kosovo and Albania

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Purpose: This study examines the development and institutionalisation of internal quality assurance (QA) systems and QA offices within higher education institutions (HEIs) in Albania and Kosovo, as facilitated by the Erasmus+ QA-SURE project. It emphasises that focused interventions at the institutional level, as opposed to comprehensive reforms, can cultivate quality cultures in accordance with the 2015 requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

Design/methodology/approach: A qualitative case study methodology was employed, drawing on institutional documentation, project reports, stakeholder comments, and benchmarking data from five higher education institutions (three in Albania and two in Kosovo). The analysis concentrated on requirements assessment, the construction or rearrangement of QA offices, capacity-building training, and stakeholder engagement initiatives.

Findings: The study reveals that the systematic establishment of QA offices—incorporated within governance frameworks and provided with resources, training, and stakeholder engagement—significantly enhances the efficacy of institutional QA. Results include enhanced QA documentation, improved stakeholder engagement, increased student empowerment, and a digital infrastructure for oversight and reporting. The QA-SURE project enabled a transition from fragmented QA initiatives to integrated, context-aware, and sustainable solutions.

Originality/value: This study offers novel insights into how internally orientated, office-based quality assurance transformation—bolstered by international collaboration—can enhance national quality assurance frameworks. It improves the comprehension of institutional quality culture development in post-transition and resource-constrained environments.

Keywords: Internal Quality Assurance, Quality Culture, ESG 2015, QA Offices, Erasmus+ QA-SURE Project

Introduction

The establishment of efficient internal quality assurance (QA) systems at the institutional level has become increasingly important in recent decades for the quality of higher education. Higher education institutions (HEIs) are where significant, ongoing improvements are implemented and maintained, even when national QA frameworks establish broad expectations (ENQA, 2020). The establishment of dedicated QA offices is one of the fundamental forces behind this institutional evolution. According to Harvey and Williams (2010) and Loukkola and Zhang (2010), these organisations play a key role in operationalising internal quality assurance systems, supporting evidence-based management, guaranteeing adherence to European Standards and Guidelines (ESG 2015), and improving overall academic and administrative performance.

Through various initiatives, including requirements analysis, strategic planning, employee training, policy development, and the creation and deployment of digital tools, the QA-SURE project supported institutional strategies.

The project's guiding philosophy recognised the necessity of participatory and data-informed quality cultures. Stakeholder involvement, digitisation, external visibility, and internal QA processes can all be improved over time with deliberate investment in QA offices, as the experience of the five partner institutions has shown.

The creation and growth of QA offices at five HEIs in Albania and Kosovo, as part of the Erasmus+ project QA-SURE, is the main topic of this study. This study focuses only on the institutional layer, where policy is implemented on a daily basis, as opposed to research that examines systemic transformation at the national level.

Building robust institutional QA systems: frameworks, mechanisms, and good practices

Robust institutional frameworks are the cornerstone of a long-lasting quality assurance (QA) system in higher education. These are created through iterative monitoring, evaluation, and improvement procedures, as well as interaction with internal and external stakeholders, and adherence to international standards. The primary reference framework for establishing quality policies and practices at the institutional level is still the ESG 2015 (ESG, 2015).

While maintaining comparability and adherence to regional norms, higher education institutions (HEIs) must adapt QA methodologies to local, disciplinary, and institutional settings (Harvey & Williams, 2010). A comprehensive needs analysis and stakeholder involvement are the first steps in designing successful QA systems, as they ensure that the opinions of academics, administrative personnel, and students influence the objectives and establish success measures (Liu et al., 2015; Trunk Širca, 2018).

A strategic QA process comprises several essential elements. First, it necessitates well-defined institutional goals that align with research productivity, graduate employability, and learning outcomes. Second, to promote continuous improvement, the QA system should be evidence-based, cyclical, and based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) logic. Third, organisations should use a Quality Management System (QMS) to integrate QA across academic and administrative domains, including faculty development, curriculum design, support services, and teaching and learning evaluations (Lonneke et al., 2020).

To promote institutional reflection, self-evaluation is crucial. Through structured internal reviews, HEIs identify operational gaps and prioritise enhancement measures. Data-driven changes are informed by self-assessment tools, including performance dashboards, internal audits, and stakeholder surveys (Rodman, 2010; Middlehurst, 2001). To offer sectoral

alignment and objective validation, this procedure should be supplemented with external review and benchmarking (Adina et al., 2014).

Systematic data gathering, curriculum reviews, alumni and student feedback systems, and strategic employer relationships are examples of important institutional activities. In addition to bolstering internal quality loops, these components address the growing calls for accountability and openness in higher education (Kayyali, 2023).

Effective QA is also supported by administrative infrastructure. QA offices are responsible for organising policy compliance, accreditation preparation, and internal evaluations. Employees must receive ongoing professional development in the use of assessment tools, documentation, and ESG implementation. Strategic planning, stakeholder collaboration, and converting audit findings into implementable changes are all part of the QA officers' job description (ENQA, 2020).

HEIs build robust frameworks for ongoing improvement by integrating QA into governance frameworks, coordinating it with ESG principles, and investing in employee capabilities. These procedures guarantee that quality is an integral part of institutional culture and decision-making (EUA, 2006; Council of the European Union, 2025)

Fostering a culture of quality of HE institutions: values, stakeholders, and organisational dynamics

Establishing a QA office alone is insufficient; it must be integrated into the broader institutional quality culture. The term "quality culture" describes common beliefs, customs, and dedications that support progress beyond legal requirements. By encouraging responsiveness, inclusivity, and transparency, QA offices play a crucial role in fostering this culture. Quality culture, according to the European University Association, is the fusion of psychological and structural components, where involvement, trust, and intrinsic motivation are integrated into institutional frameworks (EUA, 2018).

Leadership that prioritises excellence, promotes transparency, and invests in people is the first step towards creating a culture of quality. University administrators need to invest resources strategically, empower QA personnel and committees to lead transformation, and actively model and build a quality vision (Schein, 2010; Trunk Širca, 2018).

Involving stakeholders is essential to this process. Students, faculty, administrative personnel, alumni, and employers contribute unique perspectives on educational quality. These perspectives are acknowledged and incorporated into effective QA cultures. For example, employers prioritise graduate readiness and curriculum relevance; administrators seek compliance and efficiency; faculty value academic freedom, research support, and pedagogical innovation; and students demand relevance, support, and fairness in assessment (Beerkens & Udam, 2017; Koester et al., 2006).

Mechanisms for engagement include student representation in QA committees, alumni surveys, industry advisory boards, and consultation workshops. These procedures strengthen legitimacy and foster confidence among university community members when they are institutionalised and made transparent. (Bollaert et al. 2020.)

Communication is equally crucial. Decisions and assessments related to quality must be publicly shared through easily accessible reports, websites, and public dashboards. Accountability is strengthened and internal efforts are matched with external expectations when there is clear messaging (Adina, 2014; EUA, 2018).

Professional development is crucial for promoting ongoing learning. QA practice certifications, mentorship, and training equip professors and staff with the knowledge and attitudes necessary

for long-term progress (Rehman et al., 2024). To promote a positive feedback loop of motivation and quality, institutions should also reward and recognise good practice (Thornton, 2014).

When all actors view themselves as contributors and stakeholders, a quality culture thrives. Higher education institutions in Kosovo and Albania can shift the focus of quality assurance from compliance to a shared goal by investing in human resources, promoting institutional transparency, and adopting cooperative procedures.

Case study of quality assurance progress and improvements - Erasmus + project Qa-sure

Design/methodology/approach:

This work employs a qualitative case study methodology, drawing on participant input gathered throughout the QA-SURE project, project deliverables, and institutional documentation. Three HEIs from Albania and two from Kosovo took part. ESG criteria were used to evaluate institutional-level solutions, paying particular emphasis to capacity building, stakeholder participation, and innovation in QA systems.

About the project

The Erasmus+ project "Improving University Quality Assurance Resilient Strategies Towards Excellence" (QA-SURE 2023) is being implemented from December 2023 to November 2025.

The project aims to support higher education institutions (HEIs) in Albania and Kosovo in aligning with the European QA frameworks (notably ESG 2015), strengthening internal quality systems, and fostering sustainable institutional excellence. Three Albanian institutions—Western Balkans University, Luarasi University, and POLIS University—two from Kosovo—University 'Isa Boletini' Mitrovica and International Business College Mitrovica—and two program country partners—South East European University, North Macedonia, and ISSBS, Slovenia—are part of the consortium.

Activities of QA-SURE project

To improve quality assurance, several initiatives were implemented at partner institutions in Kosovo and Macedonia. These included conducting research on needs analyses, establishing or reorganising quality assurance offices, conducting study visits in Slovenia and North Macedonia to share best practices, and providing training in both Kosovo and North Macedonia.

Three activities will be thoroughly explained in this chapter: a.) needs analyses completed in early 2024, b.) the creation or restructuring of quality assurance offices, and c.) trainings for academic staff, administrative staff, and students, and roundtables for external stakeholders delivered in summer & autumn of 2024.

a) Results of the Needs Analysis of HE Institutions in Kosovo and Albania

As a key preparatory phase of the QA-SURE project, the needs analysis aimed to identify existing capacities and challenges in implementing quality assurance (QA) systems within partner institutions in Albania and Kosovo. The study was conducted between January and March 2024, using a combination of stakeholder surveys, benchmarking exercises, and institutional self-assessment, to assess the alignment of current practices with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015). This multi-layered diagnostic phase was essential to ensure that later project activities, such as training and policy formulation, were firmly grounded in actual institutional needs.

The needs analysis was derived from two complementary sources (QaSure 2024 a; QaSure 2024 b): the Needs Analysis Report, which includes analyses of stakeholder surveys (Work Package 2.1), and the Introduction to the Benchmarking System (WP 2.2). The methodology combined extensive surveys of students, academic and administrative personnel, and external stakeholders (WP 2.1) with systematic institutional self-evaluations informed by ESG-aligned standards (WP 2.2).

Although all partner institutions had formal QA policies in place and made them publicly available, the level of execution and operational integration varied, according to the findings of the benchmarking exercises. Program design and approval processes generally followed formal protocols, but in some cases, periodic review and updating mechanisms were underdeveloped. Student assessment practices were largely in place; however more work was required to guarantee that student input was methodically gathered, examined, and taken into consideration.

Further on, we will present in detail the results of stakeholder surveys, i.e surveys from students, academic and administrative staff, and external stakeholders.

In the students' survey, students from all seven partner higher education institutions participated, guaranteeing comprehensive representation within the consortium. A total of 1149 students completed the survey, comprising 990 undergraduate and 159 graduate students. Students at all institutions rated the quality of instruction positively, with average satisfaction rates exceeding 4.0 on a 5-point scale. This affirms that, in general, the quality of teaching is regarded as robust and uniform among the partner universities. Nonetheless, the outcomes are more fragmented regarding support services. Specifically, universities in Kosovo (International Business College Mitrovica and University Isa Boletini Mitrovica) had the lowest ratings for services, including career counselling, academic guidance, and mental health support (means below 3.8), signifying substantial deficiencies. In contrast, the International School for Social and Business Studies in Slovenia achieved significantly higher ratings in both teaching and support services (exceeding 4.4), underscoring the inconsistent application of quality assurance techniques among schools.

The disparities indicate that, whereas effective teaching methodologies are mainly established, the overarching support systems that facilitate student success are inconsistent. Students' comments regarding chances for expressing ideas further substantiate this point. Although the majority of students' respondents recognised the existence of feedback channels, many expressed doubts about whether their input is acted upon, indicating a deficiency in transparency within evaluation processes.

Collectively, these findings emphasise the necessity for institutions, especially in Kosovo, to enhance their student support services and to establish more transparent and accessible feedback mechanisms. Improvements in these areas could help bring student satisfaction with support services in line with the already high levels reported for teaching quality.

Table 1: Mean Student Ratings of Teaching Quality, Learning Outcomes, and Support Services by University (5-point scale)

University	Quality Teaching	of Learning Outcomes	Support Services
International Business College Mitrovica	4.13	3.92	3.68
International School for Social & Business Studies	4.48	4.24	4.42
Luarasi University	4.15	3.94	3.78
Polis University	4.34	4.14	3.91
South East European University	4.33	4.07	4.14
University Isa Boletini Mitrovica	4.06	3.90	3.71
Western Balkans University	4.28	4.12	4.11
Overall Mean (all institutions)	4.21	4.04	3.91

The survey, conducted among academic and administrative personnel, was completed by six of the seven partner higher education institutions and involved 133 respondents. It emphasised the need for professional development and enhanced transparency in quality assurance systems. Numerous individuals emphasised the absence of structured training in quality assurance processes and the limited opportunities to make substantial contributions to institutional decision-making and program design. Administrative personnel also expressed similar concerns, particularly regarding the complexity of documentation processes and the need for improved communication between academic departments and quality assurance units.

The survey findings reinforce these perceptions. Staff members assessed the efficacy of administrative processes regarding QA with an overall average rating of 3.98 on a 5-point scale, whereas their perceptions of QA's influence on research activities averaged 3.87. Disparities among universities are evident: Polis University and International Business College Mitrovica attained relatively high mean scores (exceeding 4.2), but Luarasi University and South East European University received lower ratings, approximately 3.6.

These disparities highlight that transparent and effective quality assurance procedures are not uniformly integrated across institutions. Moreover, with personnel having an average of 9 years of experience in higher education, the problems articulated signify enduring, entrenched challenges rather than mere transient perceptions.

Table 2: Mean Faculty and Staff Ratings of Quality Assurance in Research and Administrative Processes by University (5-point scale)

University	QA in Research	Administrative Processes (QA)
International Business College Mitrovica	4.60	4.20
Luarasi University	3.61	3.67
Polis University	4.43	4.43
South East European University	3.65	3.92
University Isa Boletini Mitrovica	3.84	3.81
Western Balkans University	3.82	4.00

External stakeholders, including employers and alumni, provided valuable insights on graduate readiness and university–industry collaboration. Although there were notable instances of collaboration, including the implementation of advisory boards and well-organised internship programs, the majority of stakeholders observed that cooperation remains fragmented and predominantly informal. The survey results reinforce this perception: sectors such as Education, Finance and Banking, and Technology rated the relevance of university programs and graduate preparedness highly (means exceeding 4.5 on a 5-point scale), whereas others—particularly Agriculture, Energy, and Hospitality—exhibited lower satisfaction, with graduate preparedness scores approximating 2.0–3.0. This difference underscores that collaborations are not universally effective across different sectors.

Stakeholders also emphasised the importance of creating more systematic channels for participation in curriculum creation, program design, and graduate tracking. Structured engagement was deemed essential for aligning academic results with the swiftly changing demands of industry and for addressing the skills deficits identified in domains such as digital transformation, practical experience, and flexibility. The significant interest in research collaboration from industries such as Healthcare, Finance, and Technology indicates an unexploited potential that universities might harness through enhanced transparency and organised engagement strategies.

Table 3: Mean Stakeholder Ratings of University–Industry Cooperation and Graduate Preparedness by Sector (5-point scale)

Sector	Relevance of Programs	Internship Effectiveness	Graduate Preparedness	Research Collaboration
Agriculture	3.0	2.0	2.0	3.0
Education	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.0
Energy and Utilities	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0
Finance and Banking	4.5	5.0	5.0	5.0
Healthcare	4.6	5.0	3.8	4.6
Hospitality and Tourism	3.0	4.0	2.0	5.0
Retail	2.5	3.5	3.5	4.5
Technology and Software	5.0	5.0	4.7	5.0
Transportation & Logistics	2.0	3.5	3.0	3.0

Across all institutions, the needs analysis identified five recurring priorities. First, student support services need to be improved, particularly those related to career development and academic counselling. Second, professors and staff require organised professional development opportunities, particularly in the areas of digital literacy, pedagogy, and the implementation of quality assurance. Third, organisations need to improve their feedback systems to ensure that staff and student opinions result in swift and noticeable changes. Fourth, it is essential to establish and incorporate external collaborations into QA procedures formally. Lastly, to increase effectiveness and institutional clarity, QA documentation and procedures should be standardised and simplified.

The needs analysis stage gave a thorough and fact-based grasp of the partner universities' institutional QA capabilities. Although basic structures are in place, it was discovered that

additional alignment with ESG 2015 is required, particularly in the areas of operational procedures, stakeholder involvement, and the strategic use of feedback. The creation of customised training, institutional development, and cross-border cooperation initiatives under the QA-SURE project's later phases was based on these findings.

b) Establishment or reorganisation of quality assurance offices

The QA-SURE project prioritised the restructuring and enhancement of institutional Quality Assurance Offices (QAOs) as a foundational step in developing resilient internal QA systems. This activity was tailored to the unique needs and circumstances of the partner institutions rather than being implemented in a one-size-fits-all manner. The (re)structuring of QAOs was intended to deeply integrate quality assurance into institutional planning, monitoring, and improvement processes. It was positioned within a larger strategic development framework that aligned with the ESG 2015 requirements. Three sources serve as the foundation for the overview of the creation or restructuring of quality assurance offices (QaSure 2024 c; QaSure 2024 d; QaSure 2024 e): Establishment/Enhancement of Internal Quality Assurance Offices/Units (WP 3.1), Action and Sustainability Plan (WP 3.2), Report on quality assurance mechanisms (WP 3.3).

The project enabled the five HEIs to take a similar set of steps: first, QA offices were more thoroughly integrated into the institutions' main management and governance frameworks, allowing them to serve as focal points for coordinating efforts to improve academic and administrative quality. Second, new procedural manuals and job descriptions that detailed duties, including internal reviews, Key Performance Indicators (KPI) tracking, and stakeholder discussions, helped to clarify the tasks and scope of these offices.

Capacity-building initiatives, such as focused training and mentoring for university administrators and QA personnel, were implemented to facilitate operationalisation. Additionally, computerised tools for gathering feedback, recording assessments, and producing reports were installed in the QA offices. By guaranteeing the participation of students, outside stakeholders, and non-academic staff in QA activities, universities simultaneously aimed to promote inclusivity.

One of the key achievements was the institutionalisation of medium- and long-term sustainability plans for QAOs. These plans comprised personnel development and resource allocation methods, regular review procedures, and organised performance monitoring. The QA-SURE project ultimately promoted a transition from dispersed quality initiatives to integrated QA frameworks supported by strategically located, professionally staffed QA offices.

c) Trainings & roundtables in Kosovo and in Albania

Training sessions were implemented in August 2024 and in October 2024 in Kosovo and Albania by experts from North Macedonia and Slovenia. Trainings were conducted in Albania and Kosovo each term, and at least one training was held at each HE institution. Students, faculty, and administrative staff were the focus of the training. Roundtables were held for external stakeholders in the autumn during the same time as training. In both countries, about 180 students, 50 academic personnel, and 50 administrative staff profited from the training. Twenty external stakeholders attended roundtables (QASure 2025 f).

Strengthening higher education institutions' (HEIs') internal quality assurance (QA) systems in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) and fostering a long-lasting quality culture among the student, administrative, and academic communities were the primary

goals of the program. The trainings were organised around the University Quality Assurance Strategies e-learning course, which was created by project partners to give a theoretical basis on curriculum development, research quality, teaching and learning evaluation, and quality frameworks. Based on the results of requirements evaluations and needs analyses (WP2), training and materials were developed (WP4).

1. Administrative Staff: Administrative staff members' comprehension of internal QA frameworks and the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) was greatly enhanced by the training sessions. Sessions focused on their operational role in supporting institutional QA cycles, which includes handling student feedback data, keeping teaching and learning records, and organising accreditation documentation.

Administrative staff learned how to better assist academic departments in collecting and utilising performance indicators. They also discussed challenges in communicating with outside authorities and maintaining consistency in documents. Many participants perceived the training as directly enhancing institutional compliance with national and European standards, and many reported feeling more confident while performing QA-related documentation and coordination responsibilities.

2. Academic Staff: Academic staff were the primary beneficiaries of several in-depth workshops focused on ESG implementation, curriculum development, and improving teaching and research quality. The training introduced European QA models, peer review processes, and student-centred teaching strategies. Participants reflected positively on sessions matching the curriculum to labour market demands and effectively utilising student evaluations.

Additionally, they learnt more about plagiarism detection software, KPIs for monitoring academic achievement, and publishing to raise awareness of research. Notably, the training stressed the dual roles of academic staff members: their active participation in institutional growth and their contribution to quality in teaching and research. Another important lesson for long-term progress was the adoption of structures for continual professional development.

3. Students: Students were trained to better understand their roles in QA structures, especially in terms of feedback mechanisms and representation in institutional QA bodies. They engaged in conversations about how ESG criteria, such as fair assessment, resource accessibility, and instructional quality, directly affect their academic experience.

The training encouraged students to participate actively in QA procedures rather than being passive recipients. Participants were encouraged to collaborate with staff in QA committees, provide constructive feedback, and engage in discussions about curriculum reform. Numerous students expressed feeling more empowered and understanding how their contributions could lead to changes within the university.

4. External Stakeholders: Employers, alumni, and representatives of civil society participated in roundtables that emphasised the significance of their role in coordinating academic programs with the demands of the labour market and society. Stakeholders learnt how QA procedures may integrate outside perspectives into community involvement, graduate employability tracking, and program design.

Enhancing university reporting transparency (e.g., QA reports) and maintaining continuing collaborations between HEIs and outside parties were the main topics of discussion. Stronger mutual acknowledgement of shared duties in forming pertinent and superior educational outcomes resulted from the events.

By connecting academic endeavours with practical demands and promoting sustainable growth through improved higher education practices, the roundtables provided universities with a forum to interact meaningfully with their communities.

Project QA sure and its impact

Numerous quality assurance advancements have been observed at HE institutions in Kosovo and Albania, partly due to the achievements of the QA-SURE project.

Luarasi University in Albania refined its program design and approval processes and established a new QA Policy Manual in line with ESG 2015. Along with improved student and alumni participation in QA procedures, transparent learning outcomes, student lifecycle management, and KPIs were implemented. Workshops for international QA capacity-building also improved accreditation preparedness.

By incorporating new processes (PMP, AMRP) and upgrading its QA guides, POLIS University in Albania focused on enhancing its procedural architecture. Both a Financial Sustainability Plan and a Quality Action Plan were established. Furthermore, RASH-U:CRIS software and new equipment were purchased to fortify the digital infrastructure for QA monitoring.

The Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) at Western Balkans University in Albania underwent a restructuring that involved foreign specialists, student representatives, and academic personnel. The institution introduced direct student participation in decision-making, enhanced QA transparency, and developed new tools in line with the ESG 2015 framework. Education, research, human resources, finance, and public relations are now all regularly evaluated.

International Business College Mitrovica (IBCM), Kosovo, finished institutional and program accreditation with Evalag and finalised its new QA procedures. New employees and technology, such as laptops and smart screens, were added to the QA Office. Important procedures were updated, including international feedback loops, stakeholder evaluation forms, and QA guides. Additionally, QA was included in administrative functions, including IT and library services.

QA-SURE was utilised as a catalyst by University ‘Isa Boletini’ in Kosovo to enhance standards for syllabuses and increase institutional QA capability. Training, updating documentation, developing the Financial Sustainability Plan and a Quality Action Plan, and creating feedback systems were the main priorities.

These improvements show a dedication to capacity growth, quality culture, and cross-border sustainable QA frameworks. They demonstrate how international cooperation can support accreditation objectives, encourage stakeholder involvement, and operationalise ESG principles—all of which contribute to ensuring the region's higher education is resilient in the long run.

Findings, Conclusions, and Future Directions

The study demonstrates that the establishment or improvement of QA offices greatly aids a quality culture in HEIs. Improvements were documented in stakeholder participation, process formalisation, and QA documentation systems. Each institution tailored its QA framework to local contexts while aligning with European standards (IAU, 2019). In addition to aiding in strategic planning and inter-institutional learning, the initiative showed that, with the right resources and integration into institutional governance frameworks, QA offices may function as centres for sustainable development.

The QA-SURE project highlights the importance of institution-level QA offices as catalysts for systemic change. Institutional QA offices offer operational continuity and immediate influence, in contrast to national QA policy reform, which frequently faces implementation gaps. Transparency, inclusivity, and evidence-based decision-making were improved by newly created or reorganised QA units at each of the five partner HEIs in Albania and Kosovo.

Going forward, the viability of these offices hinges on ongoing investments in employee capacity, digital infrastructure, and stakeholder cooperation. Agile, well-integrated QA methods are necessary to address emerging challenges such as AI in education, hybrid learning models, and changes in the labour market. HEIs can guarantee relevance, accountability, and conformity to European quality standards by integrating QA into the core of their institutional strategy.

The QA-SURE project provides a replicable model of internal QA transformation, grounded in regional cooperation, participatory development, and ESG alignment. Comparative institutional case studies and the long-term development of QA offices in resource-constrained environments should be the focus of future research.

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