



ASIIN Institutional Accreditation Report for the

International Information Technology University (IITU)

- Kazakhstan

Version: 27.06.2025

Status: Final Report

Table of Content

A About the Institutional Accreditation Process.....	3
B Characteristics of the International Information Technology University	8
C Analysis and Findings of Experts.....	9
I. Definition of quality	9
Criterion I.1: Objectives.....	9
Criterion I.2: (Quality-) Management System/Governance	13
II. (Quality) Management Systems / Governance	19
Criterion II.1: Creation and development of programmes / courses / trainings.....	19
Criterion II.2: Implementation of programmes / courses / trainings.....	22
Criterion II.3: Cooperation	26
Criterion II.4: Examination systems and organisation of exams	28
Criterion II.5: Recognition of achievements.....	31
Criterion II.6: Assistance and support	34
III. Management of resources	37
Criterion III.1: Material and human resources	37
III.2: Human resources development.....	44
Criterion III.3: Interaction with research.....	47
Criterion III.4: Interaction with administration	51
IV. Transparency and documentation	52
Criterion IV.1: Rules and regulations for programs / courses / trainings	52
Criterion IV.2: Documentation	55
D Comment of the Higher Education Institution (06.06.2024)	58
E Summary: Expert Recommendations.....	74
F Decision of the Accreditation Committee (28.06.2024).....	78
G Fulfilment of Requirements (27.06.2025)	81
Analysis of the experts (25.06.2025).....	81
Decision of the Accreditation Commission (27.06.2025).....	83
H Appendix: Schedule.....	84

Fehler! Textmarke nicht definiert.

A About the Institutional Accreditation Process

Accreditation Subject	International Information Technology University, Kazakhstan	
Experts	Prof. Dr.-Ing. Christiane Fritze, University of Applied Sciences Munich, Germany Prof. Dr. H.-Christian Brauweiler, University of Applied Sciences Zwickau, Germany Prof. Marina Skiba, Pavlodar University, Kazakhstan Dr. Konstantin Petridis, VDE e.V. (Association of Electrical Engineering, Electronics and Information Technology), Germany Ualikhan Sadyk, Student at Suleyman Demirel University, Kazakhstan	
Representative/s of ASIIN Headquarter	Dr. Iring Wasser, Managing Director ASIIN Assoc. Prof Irina Yefimova – ASIIN Coordinator for Central Asia	
Timeline	Date	Milestone
	12.12.2022	Conclusion of Accreditation Agreement with the IITU
	02.01.2024	Submission of Final Self-Evaluation Report
	28.02-2.03.2024	On-site visit of the ASIIN international expert team
	27-28-06.2024	Decision by the ASIIN Accreditation Commission
Relevant criteria and sources	Criteria for the ASIIN System Seal / Institutional Accreditation / Institutional Assessment: Requirements for Good Teaching and Successful Learning (06/07/2022) Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015)	

List of abbreviations

IITU – International Information Technology University

RK – the Republic of Kazakhstan

MSHE RK – Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan

BD – Board of Directors
AC – Academic Council
MB – Management Board
EP – Educational Program
KPI – Key Performance Indicators
IAAR – Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating
TSIS – Teacher Supervised Independent Study
QMS – Quality Management System
SMC – Science and Methodology Council
STC – Scientific and Technical Council
PDCA – Plan– Do– Check– Act
EHEA – Unified Platform of Higher Education
AC – Academic Committee
LO – Learning Outcomes
CEC – Catalog of Elective Courses
UMKD – educational and methodological complexes
QA unit - Department for the Development of Corporate Ethics and Quality
DAMA – Department of Academic and Methodological Affairs
OR – Office of the Registrar
IEP – Individual Educational Plan
NCES – National Compulsory Educational Standard
SIS – Student Independent Study
LMS – Learning Management System
DICAM – Department for International Cooperation and Academic Mobility
IPT – Teacher’s Individual Plan
NCE – National Chamber of Entrepreneurs
KAIB – Kazakhstan Association of Information Security
AGT – Agency for Humanitarian Technologies
UNT – Unified National Testing
RK MHES – Ministry of Higher Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan
HEI – Higher Education Institution
FD – Finance Department
AADCC – Academic Affairs and Disciplinary Control Committee
DMAA – Department of Methodological and Academic Affairs
AD – Academic Affairs
DTITS – Department of Technical and IT Support
DM&PR – Department of Marketing and PR
BBC – Bayzak Business Center
IS – Information Systems
CE – Computer Engineering
CC – Contract Commission
OFD – Operations and Facilities Department

IFLA – International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
SPM – Salary and Personnel Management
KPMA – Kazakhstan Project Management Association
R&DD – Research and Development Department
THE – Times Higher education
CAA&DC – Committee on Academic Affairs and Disciplinary Control

Description and depiction of ASIIN's institutional accreditation approach

ASIIN considers institutional accreditation an instrument for organisational development triggered by a two-staged process of an internal evaluation followed by an audit of external experts. In the first stage, members of the evaluated organisation will conduct an internal self-reflection process regarding the functionality and effectiveness of its internal quality assurance system. In the course of this exercise, all relevant stakeholders participate. Subsequently, a self-evaluation report (SER) is edited on the part of the reviewed institution containing a shared internal understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluated subject. After receipt of the SER, ASIIN assembles an independent team of experts representing the required different stakeholder groups (representatives of academia, professional practice and students) and disposing of suitable expertise concerning the evaluated subject. This team reviews the SER and conducts a site visit at the institution, where the SER is validated in discussions with the relevant stakeholders. The findings are compiled in an institutional accreditation report analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the internal QA from an external point of view and summarising recommendations towards its enhancement.

The structure of the SER and the accreditation report are based on the *Criteria for the ASIIN System Seal / Institutional Accreditation / Institutional Assessment*¹. This set of criteria is designed for quality development in teaching and learning. It refers to (I) the definition of quality and its management, (II) its application to the educational provisions the Higher Education Institution (HEI) is offering, (III) the management of its resources and (IV) quality-related transparency and documentation. Each aspect is considered in an *institutional*, *procedural* and *cultural* perspective or dimension. The approach is furthermore based on a system of so-called maturity levels. This makes for a comprehensive description of the development stage at which the quality management system of the institution presently is. A simplified version of the maturity levels is presented as follows:

0 = non-existent

1 = defined

2 = implemented

3 = established and controlled

4 = predictive and proactive

Further information regarding this classification can be found in the ASIIN mentioned above Criteria. The ensuing ASIIN institutional accreditation report is structured as follows:

Four chapters are presented for each of the four accreditation criteria. At the beginning of each chapter, the guiding questions are listed, followed by an analysis and findings of the experts, as well as the respective maturity level of the organisation's structures, processes and their interaction with cultural characteristics observed by the expert team regarding single

¹ Criteria for the ASIIN System Seal / Institutional Accreditation / Institutional Assessment: Requirements for Good Teaching and Successful Learning (20/06/2016). These criteria are in line with the European Standards and Guidelines 2015.

criteria. Every chapter concludes with requirements and recommendations for further quality enhancement and organisational maturity.

Special framework condition for the review of the International Information Technology University (IITU)

ASIIN has been operating in Kazakhstan since the year 2006, when its expert's conducted the first program accreditation procedures. Ever since then, there has been a strong commitment of ASIIN contributing to the further development of the Kazakh Higher Education system and improving the quality of its services. ASIIN also assisted in bringing Kazakhstan into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), which materialized in 2010, when the European Ministers of Higher Education at its meeting in Vienna decided to accept the country as 47th member of the EHEA.

The IITU was in 2017 the first Kazakh University to undergo institutional accreditation by ASIIN according to its so-called "Maturity Model". The Accreditation Commission of ASIIN awarded the ASIIN Institutional Accreditation Seal with requirements initially for one year until 28 February 2018. After the requirements were fully met, the accreditation period was extended until September 28, 2023 and this reaccreditation procedure was launched.

The IITU in the past has demonstrated its commitment to international accreditation. Currently, out of 61 educational programs at the IITU, almost half of them (37 programs) have been successfully submitted for an ASIIN program accreditation. The process of accreditation of new and re-accreditation of educational programs is under way. The University considers accreditation with ASIIN a tool for enhancing its reputation in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, as well as a necessary tool for implementing strategic priorities and improving quality of its educational provisions.

The following report summarizes the findings of the ASIIN expert group.

B Characteristics of the International Information Technology University

The International Information Technology University (IITU) has been established on 2 April 2009, at the initiative of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (by Decree № 881 of the Government of the RK). It was registered with the department of Justice in 2009 as a semi-state – semi-private organization (Certificate of the State registry of legal entities of 02.04.2009, registration number 97129-1910-AO, BIN 090 440 001 325). The IITU continues to operate under the National License for educational activities AB series No. 0064060, issued on May 29th, 2009, by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Shortly after its establishment, the IITU in May 2009 signed a Memorandum of Understanding and a License Agreement with the iCarnegie subdivision of the renowned Carnegie Mellon University (Pittsburgh, the USA). In the framework of the arrangements contained therein, the IITU students study in English specialized informatics programs. Upon graduation, students are awarded Kazakh national standard diplomas as well as Carnegie Mellon certificates.

Initially, the IITU structure comprised three academic departments, namely the “Management and Social Sciences”, the “Information Technology” and finally the “Languages” department. In pursuit of its strategic objective to train personnel for the innovative industrial development of the country, the IITU opened up in 2010 four initial Bachelor programs in E-Journalism, Radio Technology, Electronics and Telecommunication, Mathematical and Computer Modelling as well as Finance in IT with a starting enrolment of around 400 students. In the academic year 2010-2011, the University also established new master degree programs in Information Systems and Computer Science and Software Engineering. Currently, the IITU offers altogether 33 bachelor, 23 master and 5 PhD programs. In the 2023–2024 academic year, the IITU has an overall enrolment of meanwhile more than 5,600 undergraduate, around 240 masters as well as 30 doctoral students.

Although the IITU since its initiation had a strong focus on information technology as indicated in its name, it today also offers educational programs in the fields of cyber security, management and finance, journalism and reporting, communications and communication technologies. Starting initially with only three departments, it is currently organized in eight academic departments and two faculties: the “Faculty of Business, Media and Management” and the “Faculty of Computer Technology and Cyber Security”.

In the course of the past 15 years of its development, the IITU has advanced in national and international rankings, making it one of the most highly ranked technical universities in Kazakhstan with a reputation especially in the field of information technology. It disposes of a network of international universities in Germany, the USA, France, Switzerland, Korea, Russia, Malaysia, China, etc. The existing academic mobility schemes open the door for an international educational experience.

The University is a legal entity under the RK legislation and operates in accordance with the RK Civil Code, the RK laws “On Joint Stock Companies” and “On Education”, the Order of the RK-MES (dated October 30th, 2018 No. 595 “On approval of the Model Rules for the activities of organizations of higher and postgraduate education”).

C Analysis and Findings of Experts

I. Definition of quality

Criterion I.1: Objectives

Questions

Institutional dimension: Which quality objectives of the institution have an influence on the quality of teaching and learning? Which of these quality objectives have a high priority, and which have a lower priority? Which of the quality objectives reflect the existing strengths of the institution? Which of the quality objectives are oriented towards institutional development and are future-oriented? What are the biggest challenges to maintaining the achievement of the quality objectives?

Procedural dimension: Which of the objectives related to the quality of teaching and learning have last been *amended*? What were the reasons for the amendment? What are the processes to define, implement, and review these objectives on a regular basis?

Cultural dimension: Which values and behavioural patterns have the biggest influence on the quality objectives of the institution? Which objectives are of particular importance for the internal stakeholders? Which groups within the institution particularly relate to which of the objectives? Which objectives are rejected by some stakeholders within the institution? Which possibilities exist to discuss among the internal stakeholders' different opinions about the quality objectives of the institution?

Analysis and findings of experts

Concerning its overarching quality aspirations, the IITU presents ambitious “**Vision and Mission**” statements. Implementing the recommendations of experts of the previous ASIIN institutional accreditation, the IITU has further clarified and specified these statements. The IITU accordingly aspires in its **Vision** to become “the leading educational, scientific and innovative centre of the Central Asian region in the field of ICT technologies”. In its **Mission Statement**, it emphasizes the formation of professional competencies in the field of digital economy and society.

The implementation of its Mission and Vision is based on the following **Values** defined by the IITU: academic honesty, leadership and excellence, innovation and focus on results, sustainable development, sound financial performance as well as a focus on cooperation.

The IITU has also moved forward in translating its Mission and Vision into succeeding **Strategic Plans**. The main strategic goal of the IITU is to train highly qualified specialists for the digital economy, who are also competitive in the international labour market.

The mission and vision, values and strategic developmental goals of the IITU are publicly available and published on the website <https://iitu.edu.kz/en/articles/ob-universitete-en/missia-i-strategia-en/>).

At the moment, the primary concern of the IITU is the implementation of its current Strategic Plan, covering the period 2022-2025 and adopted by the IITU Board of Directors (hereinafter – the BD) on March 25th, 2022. The previous Strategic Plan for 2011-2020 had been revised pursuant to the requirements of the preceding ASIIN institutional accreditation by introducing measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPI) as major instruments for assessing the achievement of goals. According to the information provided during the interviews, it has been developed taking into account the input of the shareholders, employees, teaching staff as well as student representatives. In its subchapters, it defines a number of sub-strategies – for studies, research, internationalization, personnel development, marketing, corporate relations, and financing.

The IITU delineates the following four overarching strategic directions for a successful future:

1. "Digital transformation of the University, ensuring the perfection of all business processes,"
2. "Development of scientific and innovative activities in ICT and related sectors of the digital economy,"
3. "Improving educational content for the formation of professional, digital and social competencies and increasing the level of human capital," and
4. Fine-tuning the „Financial and economic model of sustainable development of the University“,

all of them in one way or another contributing to academic excellence, good teaching and learning quality. These directions are further detailed into goals, which are then broken down into specific objectives, making them measurable and manageable. The experts note the progress made since the first institutional accreditation five years ago. The strategic directions are effectively segmented into more specific components and the IITU has defined KPI largely conforming to the "SMART" criteria (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound), enabling regular assessment of goal attainment. The university regularly reviews strategic dimensions and objectives with various stakeholders, including students, staff, business partners, and alumni.

The experts find that the university's vision is effectively communicated within the university community, and the strategic directions are integrated into a comprehensive set of specific and tangible goals spanning all aspects of the organization. Following the explanations

provided during the audit, the experts conclude that the IITU's vision, mission, and strategic development goals are both realistic and achievable.

The experts note, that the IITU's is about to launch its next Strategic Plan, describing its aspirations until 2029. It has adopted a bold, forward-looking perspective, as evidenced by the management's plans heavily investing in its infrastructure (in new facilities in the heart of Almaty), which is a dire necessity regarding the rapid growth in student and staff numbers in recent years. As will be elaborated further in subsequent parts of this report, all stakeholders during the interviews expressed the need for more co-working and learning space and adequate teaching facilities. The University management in the discussions present their plans to revise strategic directions and underlying structures accommodating future developments and stimulating institutional growth. The experts welcome this announcement, but want to see evidence that this long announced goal is finally about to materialize. As regards the next Strategic Plan, the expert group advises linking it to mid-term financial planning and a risk-register.

Considering the mission and strategy of the IITU, the experts discuss how the goals and objectives correspond to the status of the university. They observe that the IITU already in its denomination positions itself as an International University. While there are some positive developments in that regards (e.g. the establishment of a bigger number of exchange program and the recruitment of a small number of international guest professors), the experts find that overall there is currently too little potential especially for attracting international students and faculty as well as for fostering outgoing mobility. Currently, only 57 international students, most of them from neighbouring countries, are studying at the IITU, which constitutes less than 1% of the total number of students.

The same finding applies to international staff. During the discussions with the IITU Central Administration, data on the number international professors working at the university are presented, which are in the range of a one-digit number of academic teachers for some 50 study programmes and some 5.000 students, which hardly can be considered an «international» environment. Staff mobility is annually planned and executed according to academic department plans, but the IITU is falling behind in realizing its strategic goals for international mobility due to unclear reasons.

The experts welcome initiatives to foster international projects and encourage further development in resource identification, especially third party funding by industry (research and mobility projects). The experts also point out that the relevance of the degree programs in the field of IT, the English language of instruction and the attractive location of the IITU should be used as incentives to build up a larger international students' body and attracting foreign professors. This in their opinion is a prerequisite to avoid "academic inbreeding" and for the IITU to achieve its ambitious goal of growing and becoming a truly international university. Creating a more international and intercultural academic environment will allow the IITU to open up thinking and receive an influx of fresh ideas and initiatives.

The experts note that IITU has already passed a regulation on financing academic mobility of students and teaching staff at the expense of the university and has introduced the position of Vice-Rector for Global Partnership, which is aimed at furthering the internationalization of the university in all areas. IITU remarks that since 2021, the number of double-degree programmes has increase four times, large international vendors are actively involved in the university's activities in opening laboratories, developing programs, participating in Master's classes and overall providing best international practices. IITU further explains that while academic mobility programs of international cooperation have always been of interest to students, the main barrier and obstacle remains funding as not all students can afford to live for a semester in another develop country. Considering this, the department has worked on expanding the geographical scope of their cooperation and providing opportunities to study in more affordable countries. As an example, students have been nominated to study in Turkey,, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

The experts positively note that the IITU promotes a culture of reflective discussion among staff, students, and external stakeholders such as business partners, graduates, and alumni. Relevant stakeholders have commended the management and lecturers for their openness to consider recommendations. However, hierarchical patterns still seem predominant within departments, prompting experts to urge management to continue pressing for the implementation of an inclusive culture of open communication at all levels.

Final assessment of the experts/levels of maturity observed

After discussing and studying the material provided, the ASIIN experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional Level of Maturity Observed: 3

The experts acknowledge the existence of a Vision and Mission Statement describing the identity of the IITU. The experts find that the university's mission and vision are effectively communicated within the university community, and that the strategic directions are well integrated into a comprehensive set of specific and tangible goals spanning all aspects of the organization. Key Performance Indicators provided guidance regarding the attainment of Strategic Goals. The next Strategic Plan of the IITU, governing the period until 2029, is ready to be launched.

Procedural Level of Maturity Observed: 2

The expert team notes that two aspects of the positioning of the IITU deserve further attention. One aspect addresses the lack of a clear internationalization strategy of the IITU, which is critical, as already in its denomination the IITU promises to excel in this respect. While the experts can see that internationalization is of great importance to IITU and that measures have already implemented to further this, such as the role of Vice-Rector for Global Partnership. In order to live up to the expectations of being a truly international educational provider however, the university needs to do more in creating an international and intercultural academic environment to be successful in its quest of attracting truly

international staff and students. Rethinking approaches to internationalization and creating appropriate conditions require further work. The university needs to develop a comprehensive Internationalization Strategy, including strengthening the international content of educational programs and providing good study conditions for its foreign student population.

As regards the aspect of research, it should also be further strengthened and substantiated in the core documents of the IITU. As regards the finalization of the Strategic Plan until 2029, it should be linked to a midterm financial budget plan and a risk register.

Cultural Level of Maturity Observed : 3

The experts acknowledge that the IITU actively fosters a culture of participation across all organizational levels in defining its core documents. Both staff members and students as well as other stakeholders participate in their development and in strategic decision-making discussions and are encouraged to voice potential areas for improvement. These suggestions are treated seriously and may result in changes. In case that requests cannot be met, management ensures that plausible reasons are provided to the respective stakeholders.

Criterion I.2: (Quality-) Management System/Governance

Questions

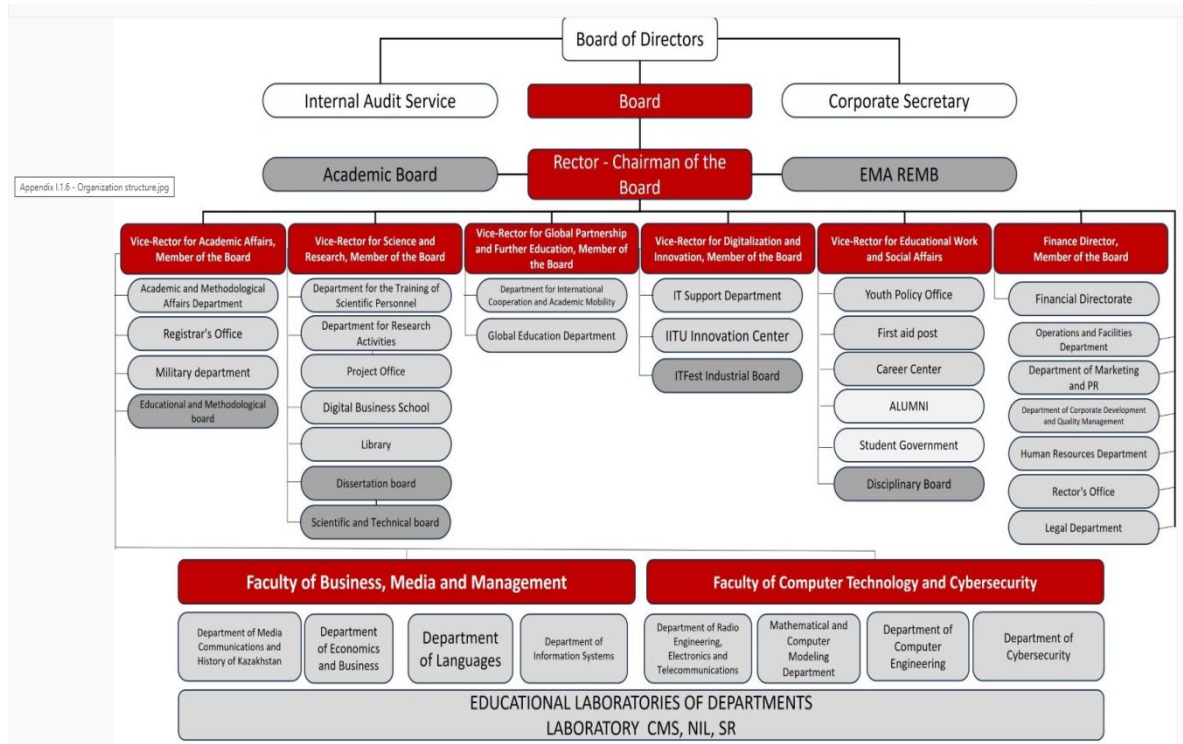
Institutional dimension: What works well with regard to the organizational settings (responsibilities), structures, and physical and human resources of the quality management of the institution? Who is involved, who is responsible, and who is informed? Which changes are planned for the near future with regard to the set-up, structure, and resources for quality management – and why? How is the collaboration between the different organizational units (teaching, research, administration) assessed by the different departments, faculties, etc., and by the central management? Which facets of the collaboration are considered useful, and which are considered obstructive?

Procedural dimension: Which procedures (processes) for the implementation of the quality-related policy work well? Which processes for the implementation of quality policies need to be improved by the responsible actors? Are further changes in the processes planned? If yes, why?

Cultural dimension: Which typical values and behavioural patterns of the internal stakeholders have a positive effect on the quality management for teaching and learning? Which stakeholder groups particularly support quality management for teaching and learning? Which groups are less involved? What are the reasons for higher or lower levels of involvement? What are typical situations leading to changes in the structures and procedures of the quality management system? Who is involved in such changes?

Analysis and findings of experts

The organizational structure of the IITU and the institutional model of its management system is graphically depicted in the chart below:



The highest governing authority of the IITU is the **General Meeting of Shareholders**, followed in the hierarchy by the **Board of Directors**. The **Board of Directors** is responsible for approving strategic decisions, monitoring the IITU **Management Board** (hereinafter – the MB) and subordinate structural divisions.

The **Management Board** constitutes the executive body that manages the daily activities of the IITU was formed by decision of the BD in July 2020. The **Management Board** implements the resolutions of the General Meeting of Shareholders and the Board of Directors. It is headed by the **MB Chairman**, who also serves as **Rector**. Next to the Rector, there are five Vice-Rectors member of the MB, among them the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, the VR for Global Partnerships and Further Education, the VR for Digitalization and Innovation, the VR for Research Activities, the VR for Educational Affairs and Social Work and last but not least the Financial Director.

The Management Board according to the Statutes has the right to make decisions on any issues of the Company's activities not referred by legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Company's Charter to the competence of other bodies and officials. It ensures the timely submission of information about the Company's activities, including those of a confidential nature, no later than ten working days from the date of receipt of a written request to the members of the Board of Directors of the Company.

The functions, rights and duties of the Chairman and the other members of the Management Board are determined by legislation, the Charter of the Company, as well as the employment contract concluded by each of them with the Company. Members of the Management Board carry out activities in accordance with the norms of the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Company's Charter and internal documents of the Company, decisions of the General Meeting of Shareholders, the Board of Directors of the Company. Members of the Management Board supervise structural divisions, as well as resolve issues within the supervised areas of the Company's activities

The **Internal Audit Service** reports to the Board of Directors and monitors the implementation of the strategy and budget. The **Corporate Secretary** interacts with the BD and MB and is accountable to the former. The University also disposes of other collegial bodies such as the **Academic Council (AC)**, the **Science and Methodology Council (SMC)** and the **Scientific and Technical Council (STC)**. These bodies operate under the principle of collegial management.

The main structural units of the University are departments, administration, faculties, laboratories, research and educational centres. Deans, who perform administrative functions within the scope of their official duties, head faculties.

At the department level, major decisions are made at the department meetings. The University departments are structured and provided with material and human resources. All divisions have their own set of tasks and functions, as well as rights and responsibilities described in the Regulations on structural units.

Based on the organizational management scheme provided by the IITU, the experts see that the IITU has a structured organizational framework with clearly defined responsibilities and communication channels. Thanks to a culture of participation and open communication, issues are often addressed directly to management. Students during the discussions state that they can escalate perceived problems even to the rector himself, if the issue at hand is not solved at the departmental level. Each department, along with its head, bears responsibility for quality assurance at its level, with quality assurance integrated into daily activities. Quality Assurance instruments in place encompass student interviews and surveys, teacher evaluations, performance assessments, periodic program reviews, and examination of graduates' activities.

Departmental analyses are conducted internally and reported back to management. The rector reports to shareholders, staff, and students, with shareholder meetings typically held every month. Administrative meetings occur weekly, with decisions made collectively to ensure transparency. Although not explicitly shown in the organizational chart, the IITU has a student governing body, with students electing their president, ensuring student representation and advocacy. The IITU's **Law Department** regularly monitors state legislation to identify affected departments, disseminating relevant information to department heads for necessary adjustments.

The experts also learn that as recently as November 2023 the **Department of Corporate Development and Quality Management** has been created within the IITU, which is responsible for quality assurance processes at the University. The tasks of this central QM unit are the organization and implementation of the process approach and monitoring mechanisms, measurement and analysis of personnel performance; the coordination of activities to support and develop the QMS; the elaboration of supporting documents, providing electronic access as well as information and methodological support for QMS documentation at all stages.

The experts critically analyze the HR capacities of this recently established central QA unit, which employs only 3 staff members, not all in full-time positions. Despite the establishment of the separate QA unit, Quality Management issues are in parallel also dealt with decentralized in various departments. Frequent changes of personnel and QMS coordinators have occurred in recent year. The experts conclude that the IITU is still only in the process of creating a strong QSM core, the coordination system and mechanisms for interaction of the QA unit with other departments are either under development or have not yet materialized. The experts point out that the IITU needs to introduce more effective ways of organizing a QMS, as well as access to decision makers with the identification of a person from the Central Administration responsible for the effective operation of the QMS.

The QMS also includes a certified quality management system based on a process approach and on the adoption, control and implementation of management decisions, and their analysis. In December 29, 2023, the IITU was successfully audited for its quality management system compliance with the requirements of ST RK ISO 9001-2016. A team of national auditors conducted the audit confirming compliance with National Agency for Accreditation of Management Systems EUROASIA -MS LLP, conducted the audit. Thus, the IITU has now more than one decade an according to the National Standard ISO 9001-2009 compliant and certified (and re-certified) system in effect.

The IITU quality management system is reflected in the “QM-01 Quality Manual”, created by a working group, agreed upon with the Management Board and Heads of Departments. The experts however note that the latest version of the Quality Manual has been approved already back in December 2020. It consequently does not reflect numerous changes in the organizational structure and procedures carried out between 2021-2023 and has not been updated. It is probably for this reason that not all University processes fall within the clear logic of the QMS. The experts furthermore recommend using the experience gathered by the IITU in its data analysis related study programs to apply them to the interpretation of their own QM results in making appropriate decisions.

Representatives of the IITU during the discussion on-site emphasize the consistent application of the PDCA Cycle (Plan, Do, Check, Act) in all its quality assurance exercises. The IITU e.g. assesses its performance based on the employment rate of its graduates, who overwhelmingly find a suitable occupation shortly after graduation. In the years 2019-2022, between 78.55%, 74.34%, 79.11% and 86.78% respectively, found work directly after graduating. According to

the agency enbek.kz, IITU also ranks high in terms of its graduates' employment and salary, which confirms the IITU's leading position in Kazakhstan. Questionnaires are also sent to business partners and alumni, coupled with direct communication, provide valuable feedback for program quality evaluation. Feedback from these sources informs management decisions, such as introducing new courses or establishing consecutive Master's and PhD programs for successful Bachelor programs.

Business representatives in the interviews confirm effective communication with the IITU and the institution's ability promptly addressing issues. This currently is done primarily on a "one-by-one basis", rather than in a more structured, regularly institutionalized format. A conference of the group of industry representatives with the full university team (rectorate and department heads) might be a good idea to broaden the scope of the discussions beyond single enterprises and lift them from the individual to the university level, e.g. in the form of a formal "Industrial Advisory Committee".

The experts are happy to note that following the findings of the ASIIN Accreditation Commission in 2017, the University has made changes to its organizational structure, including the enlargement of the rectorate to currently 5 vice-rectors and the creation of a separate Quality Assurance unit (QA unit). They at the same time are of the opinion that denomination of the respective fields of responsibility of the Vice-rectors seem to be cross-cutting and ambiguous. In the discussions, the VC's themselves point to clear definitions of borders of jurisdiction and responsibilities and to well-coordinated discussion and processes regarding various topics at the intersection of two offices. The experts understood that the past and intended growth condoned the size of the rectorate. IITU states that the duties and responsibilities of vice-rectors are set out in detail in job descriptions and expressed in an employment contract and that each of them reports to the meeting of the Academic Council at the end of each academic year, confirming the fulfilment of their KPIs. However, the structure and competencies of the leadership should not only be evaluated on a one-on-one basis but take a more structural approach. This could be done during the board meeting, as the board should be responsible for the tasks and structure of the rectorate on a strategic basis.

Final assessment of the experts/levels of maturity observed

After discussion, the ASIIN experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional Level of Maturity Observed: 2

The experts commend the IITU for the organizational changes, which were advised at the time of the previous accreditation. The managerial responsibilities are now put on more shoulders, spread between the rector and 5 Vice-Rectors. Given the rapid growth of the institutions and some perceived overlaps between the areas of responsibility, it is advised to regularly evaluate the portfolio of responsibilities within the leadership and assign a person in charge of the Quality Assurance System of the IITU.

The Quality Assurance System is aligned with the institution's objectives of promoting good teaching and facilitating successful learning, ensuring a clear understanding of whether objectives have been achieved. The experts observe that a considerable number of QA issues are dealt with at the decentralized department level with altogether 15 representatives in an inter-departmental „quality committee“. To increase effectiveness and homogeneity of the IQA system, a central coordinating QA unit has been established only at the end of last year comprising three co-workers full and part-time. While the IITU justifies this structure, the experts express concerns about its effectiveness in maintaining quality assurance procedures amid future development. The experts strongly recommend enhancing the human resources within the central QA unit and better coordinating QA procedures centrally.

Procedural Level of Maturity Observed: 2

The experts concur that the IITU has implemented a comprehensive and reasonable set of quality assurance procedures. They recognized the widespread establishment of the PDCA cycle and the incorporation of feedback loops, facilitating systematic enhancements to degree programs.

The experts agree that the tools, methods, and procedures of Quality Assurance are defined, and quality reviews are executed in a coordinated manner. Analysis of data collected through Quality Assurance procedures takes place and results are reported to all relevant stakeholders within the institution, including students. The experts nevertheless recommend using the expertise within the University in its data analysis related educational offerings and apply them to the data generated by its own QMS system to create a more substantial basis for corrective actions/the further development of the university.

The experts also request that the IITU's QA manual is updated to reflect the numerous changes in the organizational structure and procedures in the past three years.

Cultural Level of Maturity Observed: 3

The experts note that IITU values are well implemented in its quality management system and observe positive trends in the development of a “quality culture” within the institution. The experts acknowledge that the IITU actively promotes the engagement of both students and teaching staff. Management encourages students to establish student bodies and freely express any concerns or queries they may have. Additionally, the experts are convinced that the institution operates on principles of openness and transparency, ensuring that staff members face no personal risk or disadvantage when offering constructive criticism. The IITU consistently analyzes barriers and challenges related to stakeholder participation and feedback provision.

II. (Quality) Management Systems / Governance

Criterion II.1: Creation and development of programmes / courses / trainings

Questions

Institutional dimension: Which aspects in terms of organisational settings (responsibilities), structures, physical and human resources have an impact on the effectiveness of creation or further developing programmes? Who normally initiates the further development of programmes? What challenges exist with regard to the further development of the full portfolio of programmes? Which educational offers are considered fit for the future and why?

Procedural dimension: Are the processes to create and further develop educational offers considered effective and efficient? What works well and what should be improved? Where does the incorporation of external requirements (legal, social, professional) work well; where could it be improved? What are the reasons? Which processes exist in order to systematically collect stimuli for the further development of programmes?

Cultural dimension: What is expected from the stakeholder groups involved in the design and further development of educational offers? Who is expected to participate? Does the involvement take place as expected? What happens if conflicts between involved stakeholders occur? To which extent are the relevant stakeholders willing to participate, and what is their level of information?

Analysis and Findings of experts

The IITU currently provides training in 33 Bachelor, 21 Master and 5 PhD educational programs, of which 45 educational programs have only come into existence during the past 5 years and have the status of "new programs" in the National Register of educational offerings. Back in the 2018-2019 academic year, the university in comparison was only running 9 Bachelor programs as well as 5 Master's and 2 PhD programs. The sharp increase in the number of educational programs can to a considerable degree be explained by new political provisions and a changed study program methodology applied by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of RK. It induced the University to fan out its traditionally broadly based Bachelor and Master study programs encompassing many focus studies into new standalone programs covering now only narrow specialties.

The process of developing educational programs at the IITU is regulated by an internal regulatory document, its "Academic Policy", approved by the decision of the Board of Directors dated September 23, 2023, which sets out the procedures for implementing the educational process,

The initiators for the development of educational programs are typically individual academic staff of the University or the University leadership. The country's leadership however also initiates some of the new programs. Recent examples in case are political initiatives and pressures for introducing study programs on the national level in the area of block chain technology and artificial intelligence.

The creation of new educational programs is influenced by the Universities strategic objectives and involves feedback from pertinent stakeholder groups as well as labor market requirements. The possibility/necessity of developing an educational program is a standard procedure discussed at a meeting of collegial bodies, e.g. the respective Academic Committee and the Academic Council. After the principal decision in favor of introducing a new educational program has been reached, a working group is formed, whose members further analyze the market potential of the educational offering, and whether it fits the need of the region/country. In addition, there is a check on the availability of sufficient internal resources and a compliance check against the qualification requirements for licensing by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

After discussion at the Academic Council of the University, the draft educational program is subsequently forwarded to the Kazakh National Register of Educational Programs. The procedure for entering into the Register presupposes a mandatory review by two external experts using the double-blind review method and among other criteria checks the use of Professional Standards of the Republic of Kazakhstan as the basis for the design and revision of educational programs. All educational programs of the university are subsequently included in the National Register of Educational Programs (https://epvo.kz/#/register/education_program).

The experts are impressed by the thorough internal and external quality loops surrounding the introduction of new educational offerings. They at the same time critically note that many educational programs have similar learning outcomes and content and are not treated as individual distinguishable educational offerings. During interviews with academics and heads of educational programs, this finding is confirmed. The experts in this context are also concerned that the IITU lacks a holistic approach to designing learning outcomes and recommend harmonizing the procedure formulating them). The model of a university graduate, regardless of the educational program, should contain general soft learning outcomes. These learning outcomes generally correlate with the University's Strategy and Values. The university, taking into account the corporate culture, can also identify the basic soft skills that give an advantage to students and graduates. A general approach to the design of educational programs will make it possible to revise existing programs and eliminate duplication and unprofitable programs.

The experts also find that not all educational programs are sustainable due to low enrolment numbers; this is particularly prevalent on the level of the Master and Ph.D. programs. The experts recommend that the IITU leadership conduct an analysis of the sustainability of educational programs in order to concentrate limited resources and review its graduate model. The declared international status of the University should also involve targeting not only the Kazakh educational area of educational programs, but also access at least the regions of Central and South Asia.

As regards the further development of existing programs, the University regularly conducts a variety of quality assurance procedures assessing student's satisfaction with the organization

of the educational process, the quality of lectures, the provision of educational literature, organization of practical training and of extracurricular activities etc. The results of such surveys are regularly reported to the Academic Council and brought to the attention of all Faculty staff. Regarding each EP, the IITU has thus put in place a considerable number of specific quality control procedures for assessing and improving the EP quality, such as: Course evaluation process – twice a year; Curriculum evaluation process once every year, Evaluation survey among students at the end of each semester; External certification and accreditation – every 5 years.

Final assessment of the experts/levels of maturity observed

After discussion, the ASIIN experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional Level of Maturity Observed: 3

The experts confirm that the rules and regulations governing the design of educational programs have been properly defined, and employees are well aware of these rules and adhere to them.

Procedural Level of Maturity Observed: 2

The experts receive confirmation that the developers of educational programs regularly use the extensive system of checks and balances with the involvement of stakeholders in line with the University's regulations. The new educational programs are based on professional standards and the current national qualifications framework and are in addition checked by two independent evaluators before being integrated in the Kazakh register of educational programs. An important factor for improvement is the regular assessment of educational programs, taking into account the results of manifold quality assurance instruments and the regular feedback of stakeholders.

The experts recommend developing a uniform approach to the design of learning outcomes as well as critically analyzing the extensive list/number of educational programs, taking into account the demand for each educational offering and contrast this demand against limited resources, financial stability and duplication of content.

Cultural level of Maturity Observed: 3

The experts highly appreciate the involvement of stakeholders in the development of educational programs. Representatives of the labor market, students and teachers confirm their involvement in the development of educational programs and discussion of learning outcomes, the list of academic subjects and their content.

Upon reviewing the program and course materials provided by the IITU, the experts note that learning outcomes are defined at both the program and course levels. However, they observe that neither staff nor students appear to be fully aware of these learning outcomes or utilize them as guiding principles for program implementation. The experts emphasize the need for greater transparency and visibility of learning outcomes to all stakeholders within the

organization, stressing that they should serve as guiding principles across all programs offered by the institution.

Criterion II.2: Implementation of programmes / courses / trainings

Questions

Institutional dimension: What are the strengths with regard to structures as well as to physical and human resources in the *implementation* of educational offers? What are the weaknesses with regard to the structures (e.g., organisational set-up, decision-making paths) and to the resources in the day-to-day work?

Procedural dimension: Which procedures in the implementation of programmes (i.e., the delivery of programmes, i.e., the teaching processes) work well? Which can be considered good practice? Which processes need the particular attention of those responsible? What are the reasons? Where do stimuli for changes or for improvement come from? How can they be fed into the system, and what are the processes to deal with such stimuli?

Cultural dimension: How does the collaboration between the different units work in the day-to-day implementation of teaching? Do typical areas of conflict exist, and how are they dealt with? Do all stakeholder groups involved in the implementation of teaching provide the expected input? What are the reasons if expectations are not met?

Analysis and Findings of experts

Regarding the implementation of educational programs, the IITU has defined the core responsibilities in this process. The Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs assumes the overarching coordination. The respective heads of departments carry out the management of educational programs. Other academic and administrative units, which are involved, comprise the Dean's offices, the Department of Academic and Methodological Affairs (DAMA), the Office of the Registrar (OR), the Research Personnel Training Department and nine departments, seven of which specialize in training in such areas as ICT, Radio engineering and Telecommunications, Business and Management, Journalism.

The implementation of educational programs aims at achieving the intended Learning Outcomes, namely the training of professional, high quality, competent and competitive specialists in accordance with the labour market requirements. To implement educational programs, the IITU has developed internal regulatory documents such as: The Academic Policy, approved by the decision of the BD dated September 23, 2023, which sets out the procedures for implementing the educational process, the Academic Calendar, a Catalogue of Elective Courses (CEC), curricula and syllabi. All documentation is available at <https://platonus.iitu.edu.kz/v7/curriculum/curriculum-all>.

Currently, the number of student totals more than 5400 individuals. The language of instruction is, in line with Kazakh legislation, English, Kazakh and Russian. In accordance with the University Charter, 23 out of 33 main ICT programs at bachelor's, masters and doctoral levels are taught in English. Programs in Radio Engineering, Telecommunications and

Journalism are taught in both Russian and Kazakh. The University has restructured its educational trajectory and changed the EP design. This has also brought about the emergence of a number of new innovative interdisciplinary specialties such as IT genetics, IT biology, and IT medicine.

The duration of the Bachelor's programs amounts to 8 semesters, for Master's programs 2 or 4 semesters and PhD programs have a duration of 6 semesters. The IITU is operating on a semester scheme, with two semester of 15-weeks' duration per year. All students at the IITU go through a compulsory «industrial internship».

Compilation of the syllabus is the individual responsibility of each course lecturer, agreed upon with the relevant department and monitored by DAMA. The OR draws up a schedule according to the staff-teaching load, and keeps record of the students' number, their educational achievements and monitors conduct of classes according to the schedule. Students' internships are coordinated by the Career Centre, which finds internship locations and interacts with the students.

In accordance with the recommendations of ASIIN experts in the previous institutional accreditation, the IITU is striving to implement competency-oriented educational programs, following the requirements of applicable professional standards, employers' orders for the specialists' skills in-demand and the students' academic interests. The key criterion for a competency-oriented approach to the educational programs implementation is the achievement of the intended Learning Outcomes indicated in the syllabi of each course and brought to the attention of students. The IITU teaching staff uses a combination of various methods and technologies, which makes the study of technical (STEM) and social-humanitarian courses at the University more effective, interesting, and accessible to students.

Teaching staff develops syllabi in accordance with the description of the educational program. The Heads of the Departments and the Department of Academic and Methodological Issues control the content of syllabi. In the discussions, students raise concerns that some lecturers continue to offer the same elective courses repeatedly. The experts recommend introducing incentive schemes to motivate staff to regularly update or introduce new elective courses reflecting technological advancements.

The IITU implements a range of different teaching methods including Interactive lectures, group projects and case studies, guest lectures and master classes, use of online resources, platforms and multimedia materials, social networks and blogs, interactive games and simulations, learning based data as well as seminars, research projects, external excursions and practical classes feedback as well as modelling of political events. During the on-site visit, the experts see a continued need to train and implement critical thinking skills in study programs and on all levels of the organization.

The experts recommend institutionalizing a University-wide teaching philosophy, putting a renewed focus on student-centred learning methods and instilling critical thinking capabilities wherever possible. Acknowledging the progress of the IITU in adopting modern teaching methods and online platforms, the experts note that developing a unified philosophy of

learning and teaching could improve the learning process and achieve the set LOs, keeping in mind the special student population of the IITU.

The experts are interested to learn, that the IITU has become the first university in Kazakhstan and Central Asia entering into an extensive cooperation agreement with Coursera introducing a special product for universities named “Coursera for Campus”. Incorporating Coursera's campus courses into the curriculum resulted in 5,000 licenses for all students and staff members. This product allows integrating the platform content into the university ecosystem; all lecturers and staff have thereby access to a big range of professional development courses.

Some departments in addition use the resources of several International Academies, such as the CISCO Academy, RedHat, EC Council and Juniper e.g.. Faculty members obtain certificates of instructors of these Academies and can teach courses such as Network Security, Operating System Security, DevNet, Fundamentals of Computer Networks, Fundamentals of routing, switching and wireless networks, Security and automation of corporate networks, Technologies for protecting computer information, Fundamentals of Linux operating system, Modelling information security processes, Information theory, etc. Students upon completion of the courses, complete final tests under the supervision of proctors.

During the 2019/2020 academic year (COVID 19), it has become necessary introducing a radical change in the way of delivering classes, moving from a face-to-face to an online format. The experts acknowledge that both teachers and students made great efforts in adapting the teaching methodology and the learning process. To this end teachers adopted online tools (video conferencing, digital whiteboards, online tests, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.), and new teaching methodologies (gamification, group work through online repositories, etc.). The University actively conducted seminars for the teaching staff on a more effective use of online teaching methods. During the pandemic, the entire educational process was based on the use of all the functionalities of Microsoft Teams.

The key platform for the implementation of blended learning. However, most teachers still prefer to combine the work in Platonus with MSTeams and the transition to the Platonus platform is still in progress.

Concerning academic exchange programs, the IITU organizes international exchange in the form of outbound academic mobility within the framework of the delivered academic programs. Academic mobility is annually planned and executed according to academic department plans, but the IITU is falling behind in realizing its strategic goals for international mobility due to unclear reasons. Impeding factors might be recognition procedures for students, another limited funds. The University is invited to take into account the position of the experts on academic recognition described in section II.5.

Every year, the university sends about 40 students on academic mobility for 1 semester of study abroad, but due to the pandemic, this number was reduced to 21. Thus, the number of students participating in mobility does not reach 1% of the student population. As for staff mobility, it is realized within international projects, embassy programs (Fulbright, FLEX, Japan Foundation, Korean Cultural Center, British Council, etc.), the Bolashak program, and

international organizations (DAAD, UNESCO, etc.) 113 IITU teachers were trained under the Erasmus + program projects in 2021-2023.

Final assessment of the experts/levels of maturity observed

After discussion, the experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional level of Maturity Observed: 2

The IITU presents a complete set of developed internal regulatory documents, including Academic Policy, academic calendar, Catalog of Elective Courses, curricula and program assignments, which guide the further development of educational programs. All documentation is available in the LMS. The IITU has as of now not defined and formalized a student-centered philosophy of teaching and learning at the institutional level. The experts recommend have a renewed focus on instilling critical thinking skills in students and all levels of the organization.

Procedural level of Maturity Observed: 2

During the meetings, students and academics confirm the attention of the university's management to the implementation of educational programs and support for initiatives aimed at improving educational programs. From the perspective of improving educational programs, the experts recommend introducing incentive schemes to motivate staff to regularly update or introduce new elective courses reflecting technological advancements.

The experts confirm commitment to the principles of student orientation, including the electability of the educational trajectory, mutual respect between teachers and students, student involvement in the decision-making process, and equal responsibility of students for the results of the educational process.

Of note is the successful interaction of the University with the Coursera. The University integrates the disciplines of Coursera and other educational platforms into educational programs through recognition of the results of their development.

In terms of providing an international student environment and fostering incoming and outgoing mobility of students and staff, more needs to be done for the university to live up to its expectations.

Cultural level of Maturity Observed: 2

The experts note that the IITU supports the active involvement of students in the educational process, initiatives offered by students. At the same time, students are not sufficiently aware of the actions taken by the university management.

The IITU has not defined and formalized the philosophy of teaching and learning at the institutional level. A clear definition of values, principles, approaches, ways to ensure accessibility, etc. will help teachers and students effectively organize training and achieve success in mastering learning outcomes.

Criterion II.3: Cooperation

Questions:

Institutional dimension: How is the cooperation with other institutions and between different internal units organized with regard to the implementation of programs (structures and regulations)? What works well in the case of internal or external collaborations, what could be improved? How do such collaborations for programs usually come into being within the institution?

Procedural dimension: Which factors are critical for the smooth organization and implementation of collaborations? Where do stimuli for changes or for improvement come from? How can they be fed into the system, and what are the processes to deal with such stimuli?

Cultural dimension: What principles does the institution have in place for internal and external cooperation for educational offers? Are the existing rules and standards accepted by those affected by them? How are conflicts dealt with? What are the challenges with regard to collaborations?

Analysis and Findings of experts

The IITU has built up three academic cooperation schemes. The first one plays at the inner-institutional level, in the framework of which the IITU departments with the support of the methodological department work together in implementing inter-disciplinary programs especially in the IT related EPs. New programs such as Bio-informatics or Health informatics programs have emerged from this new form of inner-university cooperation.

A second pillar has been built up at the national level in close cooperation with Ministries (e.g. Higher Education, Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace), national agencies (e.g. IAQAE, IAAR) and other technical and ICT universities in Kazakhstan. The IITU also maintains cooperation with important national companies (e.g. Halyk Bank of Kazakhstan, Kaztelecom, Kcell, Kazateleradio, LG, Kaspersky) and leading international companies such as CISCO Academy, RedHat, EC Council, Juniper, Huawei, COURSERA. The initiatives consist of joint initiatives in research (Institute of Ionosphere), courses (Kaspersky), employment (Almaty Askhamy), etc.

The expert team acknowledges that cooperation between the IITU and local IT companies and banks has been established and is working successfully. Representatives of some 20 companies, who participated in the interviews, highly appreciate the quality of graduate training and joint research.

Opportunities to pool resources and experience with other Kazakh universities have thus far been underutilized. There is significant potential to combine efforts and resources with other Kazakh universities to boost visible academic and scientific achievements. The creation of a

network/an alliance of such universities or the Alliance could strengthen the potential for training IT specialists for Kazakhstan and reach the level of Central Asia.

The IITU website provides information on existing **international agreement** with 70 foreign universities and provides information on 17 partner universities (Korea, Malaysia, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Spain, Italy, Turkey, etc.). The self-assessment report notes that over the past 5 years, 61 international agreements with foreign universities were concluded.

As noted, the expert's team finds little evidence for incoming and outgoing mobility at the IITU by students and staff. To increase the number of international students, the IITU offers four full scholarships for citizens of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and Tajikistan. This initiative has not achieved tangible results, only one student was admitted to the IITU from Kyrgyzstan. The IITU has taken action to foster internationalization by engaging in joint International Projects and exchange programs and also investing in the creation of joint Degree Programs.

Among the Joint International Projects figure a number of important initiatives. Examples in case are the Erasmus+ program (KUTEL - "Kazakh universities to foster quality assurance processes in Technology Enhanced Learning", ELBA "Establishment of training and research centers and development of courses on Intelligent BigData Analysis in CA", ALLVET - "HE and VET alliance establishment according to Bologna Principles implementation via VET teachers' capacity building").

It is worth mentioning, that in 2021 the University won three UNICEF grants implement different social projects. Noteworthy are the grants labelled "Development of a platform for teachers and parents on ensuring online child safety", "Centralized technical support of improving Russian language skills among vulnerable groups of children for their social integration and raising academic performance at the primary and secondary schools of Kazakhstan". These two projects are currently underway and will be completed in 2025.

Regarding joint programs, the IITU has implemented three programs according to the 3+1 model. Among them the Bachelors in «Computer Science and Software Engineering», «Information Systems and Cybersecurity» (partner - Hof University of Applied Sciences, Germany) and finally «Financial Engineering» (partner -University Tenaga National (UNITEN), Malaysia).

The experts recognize that the IITU has established rules for cooperation with both the industrial and academic environment at the national and international level. The structures responsible for international cooperation are established and operate in close cooperation with other departments.

However, the experts identify significant opportunities to improve cooperation with IT companies, through the creation of networking and conditions for IITU to become a place for industry attraction and interaction. The university should promote its important strategic plans to the industry and try to obtain resources from companies and businesses.

To establish networking with the industry, the experts recommend creating a permanent Industrial Advisory Council and to appoint a responsible person from the Central Administration to coordinate interaction with industry partners.

Final assessment of the experts/ Levels of maturity observed

After discussion, the experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional level of maturity observed: 2

The experts recognize that the IITU has established rules for cooperation with both the industrial and academic environment at the national and international level. In order to boost the IITU's goal of becoming a central place for industry attraction and interaction, the experts recommend developing of networking and appointing a responsible person from the Central Administration.

Procedural level of maturity observed: 2

The experts see significant opportunities to improve cooperation with IT companies, through the creation of networking and conditions for IITU to become a place for industry attraction and interaction. The establishment of some sort of an "Industrial Advisory Group", convening regularly, is advised.

The expert team identifies moreover significant additional potential in combining efforts and resources with other Kazakh universities. The creation of a network/alliance of such universities could strengthen the potential for training IT specialists for Kazakhstan and reach the level of Central Asia.

The IITU's activity in implementing Erasmus+ projects deserves high praise. Institutional arrangements to foster further research collaboration however is needed, if the University wants to proceed on its path to become an internationally recognized research university.

Cultural level of maturity observed: 3

From a cultural point of view, the experts witness an atmosphere of collaboration and good will of all parties involved. Personal relations as well as formal communication channels are in place to foster collaboration between the university and its partner from the sphere of industry and academia.

The IITU actively supports interaction with representatives of the labour market, with employers and graduates. At the same time, there are no regular meetings of the University's management with representatives of the labour market, and interaction in the professional community has not been fully formalized though this could create even more synergies.

Criterion II.4: Examination systems and organisation of exams
--

Questions:

Institutional dimension: Which rules and structural provisions have an effect on the design of exams in the programs? What works well, and what should be improved?

Procedural dimension: Which procedures for the exam methodology and exam organization (including assessment criteria) work well? Which procedures do those responsible have to take particular care of? Where do stimuli for changes or improvement come from? How can they be fed into the system, and what are the processes to deal with such stimuli?

Cultural dimension: Which principles do those responsible have to take into account when designing and organizing exams? Are these principles accepted by all involved stakeholders? What role does the institutional tradition have in the design of exams? Are new assessment methodologies taken into account? Which values and behavioural patterns have the strongest influence on the exam system and organization? How do these influence the achievement of the objectives for exams? Do typical conflicts exist among those involved with regard to exam methodology and exam organization? How are such conflicts dealt with?

Analysis and Findings of experts

The IITU is using a broad range of examination modes to check students' performance. It has introduced and administers the "Procedures for formative, mid-term/end-of-term, and final assessment of students' academic performance," outlining clear examination rules. The examination period is indicated in the IITU Academic Calendar and the schedule of all exams is drawn up and approved 2 weeks before the start of the examination session.

According to information obtained by interviews with students, examination types, timing, and locations are announced well in advance. The process entails that each lecturer individually develops exams for his/her exams, which are then reviewed and approved by the respective Department before being used for testing purposes. The experts learn that exams are to be graded within formerly 5, now within 8 days. The lecturers in the interviews report that the prolongation from 5 to 8 days has taken some pressure from the correctors of the exams, while still allowing grading in a very timely manner.

The assessment criteria are described in detail in the Credit Technology Rules and State Compulsory Educational Standard. Examination requirements are discussed at the department and approved by the SMC. The exam forms are indicated in the description of the courses. For admission to the exams, the student's current work throughout the semester and the grades are considered, the threshold constituting 60% of the final grade for the course/module. The remaining 40% must be scored in the course/module tests and exams. In the IITU, the final attestation constitutes at least 12 ECTS in the total volume of the EP and is carried out in the form of writing and defending a thesis or diploma project according to MM-04 "Guidelines for completing the thesis" of the State Compulsory Educational Standard.

To assess the student's level of knowledge during the semester, two ongoing formative appraisal periods (7th and 15th week) are administered in all courses; a student is granted admission to the exam based on the results of such appraisal periods. All data is recorded on the automated information system <https://platonus.iitu.edu.kz/>.

Possibilities to re-sit exams in case of a failure are in place. Students typically undergo three examinations per course and generally perceive the examination process as fair and understandable. Students can make up for some formative assessment assignments (a specific week is indicated) not fulfilled for a valid reason based on the students' application accompanied by a document/certificate. In this case, the dean of the faculty issues an order based on supporting documents and transfers it to the respective department and the OR.

The IITU sets special forms of exams, various types of control for different educational training programs, for example related to IT, Journalism and Economics. The variety of exams in their opinion nevertheless in the expert's opinion could be enhanced, too many are coming in the form of written, fact-based exams. Presentation and project skills should be fostered. While examination rules and regulations are well defined, examination formats in the expert's opinion should focus to a greater degree on student competencies and align more with module learning outcomes.

Assessment methods and results usually do not arouse conflicts of interest, since they are not carried out spontaneously, but according to the Syllabi of the courses, they are permanent and are communicated to students in advance (in the rating system).

The evaluation system is judged to be objective, as it is determined by the criteria set out in the relevant document. Students know their grades and every student can view their grades at any time in their personal account <https://platonus.iitu.edu.kz/>. The students' individual achievements are transparently recorded in the Learning Management System "Platonus" throughout the period of study in their transcripts <https://platonus.iitu.edu.kz/v7/#/student/transcript/main/16106>.

Examination commissions consisting of at least three people are created and approved by the respective department. The exams are taken by examiners qualified for the course. The course teacher, who does not conduct tests and written examinations, are available during the examination to help resolve conflicts if any. There are procedures to help successfully resolve the most common problems (for example, if a student is sick, he must prove it, and then he is allowed to re-register for the exam).

Overall, the organization of examinations is deemed satisfactory by all interviewed stakeholder. Students can openly address examination-related concerns with their lecturers.

Final assessment of the experts/levels of maturity observed

The experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional level of maturity observed: 3

The experts verified that the rules and regulations governing examinations are well-defined, and staff members are knowledgeable about and adhere to these regulations. They note that the planning, implementation, and post-processing of examinations are well-coordinated, a

sentiment echoed by both students and staff members. Overall, the organization of examinations is deemed fair and satisfactory by all interviewed stakeholder

Procedural level of maturity observed: 3

The experts applaud the IITU's internal checks and balances system, such as departmental feedback loops, which ensure the soundness, adequacy and appropriateness of examinations. Methods, forms of assessment, and performance expectations are clearly defined and transparently communicated to students in a timely manner, allowing for ample preparation time. Results are promptly available and do not hinder student progression. Chances for re-taking a failed exam are quickly available, enhancing student progress as well.

The variety of exams in their opinion in the expert's opinion could be enhanced. Presentation and project skills should be fostered. While examination rules and regulations are well defined, examination formats in the expert's opinion should focus to a greater degree on student competencies and fully align more with module learning outcomes.

Cultural level of maturity observed: 3

The experts conclude that students are evaluated based on transparent criteria that undergo internal checks, with rules and procedures consistently applied. Most conflicts are quickly and successfully resolved.

Criterion II.5: Recognition of achievements
--

Questions:

Institutional dimension: Do the rules, structures and responsibilities for the recognition of achievements obtained from other institutions or in a non-academic setting work as expected?

Procedural dimension: Do the procedures for the recognition of achievements obtained from other institutions or in a non-academic setting work as expected? Are there typical difficulties which regularly occur in the procedures? Which changes are planned for which reasons?

Cultural dimension: What are the guiding principles for the recognition of external achievements? Have the relevant members of the institution and interested students and teaching staff been informed of them, and do they accept them? How are conflicts dealt with?

Analysis and Findings of experts

At the IITU, the responsibilities for dealing with recognition decisions for academic and non-academic achievements are divided between two administrative units within the university. The «Department of Methodological and Academic Affairs» handles recognition for Bachelor degree programs, while other units manage recognition for Master degree programs. In processing cases for recognition, these departments adhere to the «Terms of transfer and restoration of students by types of educational organization» as approved by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. This document is only available in Russian on the website of the Kazakh Ministry of Higher Education. The IITU also provides the «Regulations on the

system of credit transfer of ECTS type» outlining the procedure and required documentation for obtaining recognition.

If a university however is not in the European Higher Education Area, each course in the academic transcript is individually assessed by the respective department, in which the student is enrolled, comparing the content of courses or modules to those at the IITU. The experts understand that students establish «Learning Agreements» with their supervisor at the IITU to gain a clear understanding of potential recognition prior to studying abroad.

Transparent selection criteria and procedures exist for international mobility candidates and the platform used allows for the interested students to easily track their application status. The IITU adheres to recognition rules established by the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan, with students required to sign an "Agreement on Academic Mobility" before engaging in international mobility measures. The expert team suggests analyzing recognition procedures to identify potential delays and recommend considering learning outcomes and non-academic achievements in the recognition process.

Under the current procedure, students may struggle to find international universities offering exact matches to the IITU modules, making it difficult to complete a fully recognized semester abroad. This contradicts the concept of academic mobility in the Bologna process and might be one reason for the low number of academic mobility. Furthermore, it is unclear to the experts whether the university has been obligated to provide evidence for non-recognition, as required by the Lisbon declaration.

Non-academic achievements, such as work experiences, can be recognized and may substitute compulsory internships in degree programs, as the experts are informed. The representatives of industry informed about several «internship-programs» going on between IITU and industry.

Diploma Supplement

In terms of certifying the achievements of students at the IITU, the ASIIN requirements demand that «Diploma Supplement» as stipulated in the Bologna regulations is issued. Currently, the university however provides students only the national diploma and certificates. A «Diploma Supplement» is however only delivered on individual demand by students. Furthermore, the DS is only issued in one of three languages; the student is requested to choose between a Kazakh, Russian and English version. The experts express concern that alumni who need a document about their achievements after some years (e.g. for continuing on a career path with a second bachelor or a master degree at a later stage) will not have all required documentation readily at hand and need to go into the process to obtain those documents from their *alma mater*. This might be for both, the alumni and IITU time consuming (e.g. going into the archives, making an outdated software-databases readable again after some years etc.), costly and a nuisance. The experts expect the IITU to install a regular process of handing out a «Diploma Supplement» in three languages (Kaz, Ru, Eng) to each and every student upon graduation. The IITU has enacted this procedure in their «Academic Policy» upon an approved decision as of 23. September 2022 (available on IITU's

webpage for download). As department heads and other relevant staff did not hint to this document and stated the procedure otherwise, it might not have been communicated and put forward fully.

In addition, an analysis of the content of the Diploma Supplement presented in the SAR indicates the need to bring it into strict compliance with the EU template, in particular in part of indicating the current Learning Outcomes of the corresponding educational program.

The IITU practices recognition of non-academic achievements by issuing document confirming such participation in additional advanced training - a participant certificate, an advanced diploma qualification, or another type of certificate gained in educational or public organizations, various clubs and circles, sections, when studying with a teacher or trainer individually, in a variety of participated trainings, courses, seminars, round tables.

As noted in the self-assessment report, in procedures for recognizing non-academic achievements, there are sometimes problems with insufficient information, outdated deadlines for achievements, and the impossibility to recognize achievements due to late submission. Information about the recognition of non-academic achievements is distributed through all communication channels (internal portal of educational institutions, Student Government, group curators, teachers). The IITU lecturers believe that recognition of non-academic achievements will motivate students to participate in various competitions, conferences, exhibitions, make their own inventions and other endeavors.

Conflicts related to non-recognition of certain achievements obtained as part of academic mobility, non-formal education, or when transferring from other universities are strictly regulated by the internal regulatory documents of IITU and the normative legal acts of the RK MHES and are resolved in accordance with the relevant rules without exceptions.

Final assessment of the experts/levels of maturity observed

After discussion, the experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional level of maturity observed: 2

The experts acknowledge that rules, structures, and responsibilities regarding the recognition of achievements from other institutions are outlined and readily accessible to interested stakeholders. Given the IITU's aspiration to be an "international" university, the mechanisms of recognition play a vital role in facilitating international mobility without significant obstacles or study time extensions. Whether these institutional arrangements are fit for purpose at this stage, it hard to judge, as the extent of incoming and outgoing mobility at the moment is exceedingly small.

Currently, the rules stipulate that courses or modules must be more or less identical to be recognized, overlooking competencies that may be attained through different methodological approaches than those offered at the IITU.

Procedural level of maturity observed: 2

The experts affirm that the procedures for recognizing achievements from other institutions, along with the associated responsibilities and information channels, have been defined. However, they noted that the recognition process and notification timelines are often lengthy, which can deter foreign applicants and might be one reason for the low number (below 1 %) in international students. Given IITU's aspiration to be an «International» university and attract foreign students, the experts stress the need for more efficient organization of these processes.

Cultural level of maturity observed: 2

The experts acknowledge that the principles guiding IITU's rules and procedures for recognizing external achievements have been published on the website, making them accessible to interested stakeholders who speak Russian. However, to promote the enrollment of inbound students, the recognition rules should also be available in English. Similarly, the experts are uncertain if students have the right to appeal if they believe their recognition procedure has been considered unfair. While the experts observe an open communication culture that facilitates the amicable resolution of such issues, they emphasized the importance of defining and establishing clear conflict resolution procedures, especially considering the IITU's anticipated development.

Criterion II.6: Assistance and support

Questions:

Institutional dimension: Which elements of the assistance and support services offered for students are successful? Which changes are required? What are typical challenges to be overcome? Are the physical and human resources adequate and sufficient to implement the expected assistance and support services? How is this verified?

Procedural dimension: How do the processes to provide assistance and support work? Which processes are considered to work well, which need to be improved? Do the members of the institution who are involved in the assistance and support have sufficient information and resources? Are the target groups for assistance and support reached as intended? How is this verified? Where do stimuli for changes or for improvement come from? How can they be fed into the system and what are the processes to deal with such stimuli?

Cultural dimension: Are the offers of assistance and support available used by the intended target groups? If not, why not? How satisfied are the individual target groups with the assistance and support on offer?

Analysis and Findings of experts

Regarding the assistance and support services offered for students, the IITU has established a broad range of support units and support services for its students. On the institutional level, a special unit, the Student Help Centre, coordinates student support. Student support is provided on academic and non-academic issues, as specified subsequently.

Academic support is provided through systems of academic advisors and tutors. There is a university-wide system of academic advisors in place supporting the students during their studies at the IITU. The academic advisors are teaching staff in each Department appointed for a number of students and responsible for providing counsel on course offerings and selection as well as monitoring their study progress.

The IITU information support system via website, chatbots and social networks allows students quickly finding the necessary pieces of information and resources for their studies and informs them of all important events. Since 2019, cloud services have been actively introduced to enable remote work of students based on Microsoft 365 technologies (MS Office, Teams, Outlook, AzureLab), LMS Moodle and Campus. Since 2022, the Moodle (dl.iitu.kz), campus and scheduling systems, was replaced by a new unified basic educational process management system - Platonus 6.0 (<https://platonus.iitu.edu.kz>). Students are informed and have access to documents regulating academic activities, such as the Regulation and Rules, which contains basic information about the structure and internal regulations of the University, the rules of credit education technology and the Student Guide.

The provision of **financial support** to students is covered by the Regulations on Payment and Discounts on Tuition. It is available to students from low-income and large families, disabled students, people with disabilities, orphans, students with special academic achievements in studies, sports and social life of the University as well as winners of various subject Olympiads. Students who pay their own tuition have the opportunity to defer or pay in instalments. According to information from the self-assessment report, only a small number of around 120 students (around 2,5 % of the total student intake) received financial support in the last academic year.

To organize **extracurricular activities of students**, a special **Youth Affairs Department** has been institutionalized. Students also organize themselves, e.g. in the Student Government and the Student Senate.

The expert team particularly appreciates the focus on employment opportunities through the "Career Fair" and strong support for entrepreneurship to foster innovative business ideas. However, the experience that can be brought in by industry representatives should included on a broader level.

The experts emphasize that while the university does a commendable job supporting both students and staff, there are specific areas that warrant closer attention. Chief among these concerns is the state of the university's infrastructure, which is further elaborated under the next criterion. As the student population continues to grow annually, it becomes imperative for the Central Administration proactively addressing the evolving needs of its community.

There is a pressing need for the expansion and enhancement of key facilities: computer labs to accommodate the burgeoning demand for digital resources and educational technology. IITU recognizes the increased need for more computers and digital resources and has begun to expand the university's computer classrooms and laboratories, modernizing the infrastructure

in accordance with the Ministry of Higher Education and Science. Statistics show that the annual financial costs for equipment has been increasing steadily.

Additionally, the upgrading of sports facilities is crucial not only for promoting physical well-being but also for fostering a sense of community and camaraderie among students. The experts are glad to hear that in March 2024, IITU signed a cooperation agreement with a large network of fitness clubs in Almaty to expand opportunities for improving students' physical activities. Furthermore, investing in the development of the library is essential to ensure that students have access to a diverse range of academic resources and materials, although students currently already have access to EBSCO.

Moreover, the provision of additional co-working spaces for students is vital. These spaces serve as hubs for collaboration, innovation, and academic discourse, thereby enriching the overall learning experience for students.

During in-person discussions, the experts discover that there is a significant gap in the provision of mental health support services. With just one psychologist currently serving a student body of 5800 students, it is clear that more resources need to be allocated addressing this pressing need. Increasing the number of qualified mental health professionals on staff will improve access to counselling services and contribute to a healthier and more resilient student community.

The experts note that student clubs continue to thrive within the university. These clubs play a pivotal role in fostering social connections, personal development, and extracurricular engagement among students. It is mutually beneficial for the university to continue supporting and nurturing these vibrant student-led initiatives.

The experts find that while the university has made strides in providing support for its constituents, there remains significant room for improvement, particularly in the areas of infrastructure development and mental health support services.

The IITU conducts **student surveys** about student satisfaction and their needs. The results of **student surveys** confirm that radical changes are needed, including the creation of an environment for self-development and organization of leisure time at the university. This environment may include a co-working centre that will help them develop, combining study and creativity, and also support them in dealing with psychological and educational issues, adapting to the learning environment, reducing anxiety and bullying. Students also point to the need to build a dormitory, improve travel conditions within the university and upgrade computers in some classrooms.

Final assessment of the experts/levels of maturity observed

After discussion, the experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional level of maturity observed: 3

The experts confirm that the IITU offers a wide range of assistance and support services covering the entire student life cycle. The experts commend the university on its focus of student support on the future professional development of students. Colleagues especially appreciated the focus on employment opportunities through the Job Fair organized by the IITU and the strong support for entrepreneurship to generate new and innovative business ideas.

The experts also noticed differentiated counselling concepts for different groups of students at different stages of student life.

Procedural level of maturity observed: 2

The peers confirmed that communication and assistance and support procedures are developed and effective. Internal information channels and feedback loops have been created to further develop the concept of help and advice.

The experts particularly emphasize the need to ensure greater availability of advisors and create an effective system of psychological assistance. Investments in recreational facilities, dormitories, and student working places are needed.

Cultural level of maturity observed: 3

The experts understand that the IITU has a concept of assistance and advisory measures in place that ensures that information, assistance and advice services are known and accessible. If additional support measures for specific groups are required, the IITU seeks pragmatic and effective solutions to assist the respective stakeholders. There is a culture to be observed that the needs of the individual shall be met as far as possible; this includes additional tutoring if required and that students are actively involved in the university management process.

III. Management of resources

Criterion III.1: Material and human resources

Questions:

Institutional dimension: Which elements particularly support the achievement of the quality objectives in this area as defined by the institution? What are typical difficulties, and how are they dealt with?

Procedural dimension: Do the processes for the allocation and administration of physical and personnel resources, specifically for teaching and learning, within the institution work according to the expectations of the different groups and units? How does the institution integrate external (legal and economic) requirements? Where do stimuli for changes or for improvement come from? How can they be fed into the system, and what are the processes to deal with such stimuli? Which changes are planned or will become necessary based on such stimuli?

Cultural dimension: How can the members of the institution, e.g. teaching staff and students, participate in managing physical and human resources for teaching and learning? Do all

members of the institution feel adequately informed about the management of physical and financial resources? Which values and methods are supported or expected of the people involved in terms of the use of resources? What are the guiding principles at the institution to avoid misuse or waste of resources? Are the set rules and guidelines accepted by those affected by them? How are conflicts dealt with?

Analysis and Findings of experts

To ensure the quality of academic activities, the university states in its Self-Assessment Report, that it provides appropriate human, material and financial resources.

Human resources

Concerning the availability of HR resources, the IITU currently employs 428 teachers, 272 of whom are full-time teachers, 156 - internal and external part-time teachers. The share of University employees with academic degrees and titles (47.4%) exceeds the 40% threshold established under the Order of the RK MES dated June 17, 2015, No. 391 "On approval of the qualification requirements for the educational activities of organizations providing higher and (or) postgraduate education, and the list of documents, confirming their compliance" (<https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/V1500011716>).

The IITU teaching staff members are holding the following academic degrees: 24 Doctors of Science (including 8 professors, 3 associate professors); 65 Candidates of Science (including 16 associate professors), 47 Doctors of Philosophy (including 1 professor and 2 associate professors); 200 masters in the positions of senior lecturers and lecturers.

The number of IITU teaching staff has considerably increased over the course of the past few years, which allowed organizing new academic departments (Cyber Security and Military). Given the number of enrolled students, the average student-staff ratio amounts to 1:14.5.

One of the pressing issues of the IITU is the high rate of staff turnover. Based on the information in the SAR, the turnover of the teaching staff for 2022-2023 amounted to a high 20% compared to 12% in 2018, which according to the interviewees themselves constitutes a considerable challenge in as far as staff retention and continuity in teaching and learning is concerned. The IITU explains the considerable turnover in staff by high competition with industry and IT enterprises, which are well developed not only in the city of Almaty, but also in the republic as a whole and which can offer better financial conditions. The experts in their interviews receive information from lecturers, who have been working at the IITU for more than 10 years without an increase in the salary level and without taking into account the level of inflation in the country. The experts nevertheless receive encouraging evidence from faculty members demonstrating commitment to the IITU academic community. In addition, numbers presented by IITU shows a steady incline of the staff members' salary.

The IITU continues having a low proportion of foreign teachers (a very small number of international guest lecturers are currently working at the IITU), which harms its status as an international institution.

All HR procedures (recruitment, promotion and dismissal) are said to be carried out in accordance with the legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan and internal regulations of the IITU. Recruitment of personnel is done on a competitive basis. The rules and procedures for personnel recruitment and qualification requirements have been approved and are available to all interested parties. Hiring new teaching staff is carried out using various methods, including through the university website, recruitment sites (www.hh.kz), headhunting, monitoring the employment of graduates, using personal contacts, etc. The experts also learn that the search for qualified teaching staff is in the responsibility of heads of departments. (The IITU recognizes that the overall recruitment process for staff and faculty is too complex and imperfect; yet as the approach is determined by the ministry, there is little they can do to change this.)

The personnel management policy at IITU is coordinated by the Human Resources Department, which provides information on labor issues, personnel certification, and conflict resolution.

In their appreciation of the HR conditions at the IITU, the experts understand that the University is operating under difficult framework conditions. Over the past decade, wages in the HE sector have practically remained stagnant, which has led to the departure of qualified teachers. They also understand that the IT industry in Kazakhstan constitutes a great competition for human resources, offering high wages. It is before this background that the experts see an increased need for a systematic HR policy, preventing the outflow of qualified teachers, hiring IT specialists from companies on part-time basis and nurturing its own teachers.

The IITU has standard procedures for filling vacancies and reassigning academic positions. The experts note that in some cases there are problems filling these vacancies. In this regard, the university is recommended reconsidering its hiring policy, possibly partially covering teaching vacancies with doctoral students.

The organization employs a significant number of part-time lecturers, many of whom are professionals from various industries. In the expert's opinion, these part-time professors bring real-world industry experience to their teaching roles, contributing to a diverse and practical educational environment. Overall, the presence of part-time lecturers benefits both students and the organization as a whole.

The experts positively note the existence of procedures to resolve internal conflicts in personnel management. They commend the University for establishing a so-called reconciliation commission, the members of which are teachers and representatives of the administration. Most importantly, the experts find evidence of "esprit de corps" among the institution's staff. However, without financial incentives and support, it will be difficult to maintain this in the long term. The relationship between academic and administrative staff also has potential for improvement.

As noted, there is a serious shortage of foreign professors. The experts do not find confirmation of a well-developed mechanism for inviting foreign professors and a model for financing this process.

The experts note that the sharp increase in the number of educational programs (check the comments on has led to an increase in the workload of heads of the department. The experts note that the transfer of some functions for managing the educational process to the Head of the educational program will allow Heads of departments to focus on strengthening the potential of research and internationalization.

Material resources

The IITU is located in its own building with a total area of more than 10,000 sq.m., also featuring a sports complex building of 736.6 sq.m.. The university also rents additional educational and administrative space (5,915 sq.m.) in the Bayzak Business Center including 14 lecture rooms, 28 practical classes, 47 computer classes and 2 conference rooms spread over 10 floors. A library, a Mensa as well as a medical center are rendering services to university students, lecturers and administrators.

The main responsibility of providing the technical support of the entire educational process (purchases and maintenance of computers, network and server equipment, software provision, etc.) is under the Department of Technical and IT Support (DTITS). Some facilities (5 departments) are outsourced to the rented premises of Bayzak Business Center (BBC), located within a short walking distance to the main building. The Operations and Technical Department (OTD) controls the condition of the material and technical base.

The experts conduct a guided campus tour with a special focus on the status of the laboratories, the sport complex and the library and can see the use of physical infrastructure is stretched and in some areas overstretched. They do notice some examples of modern infrastructure benefitting from external funding sources in recent past. Over the past couple of years e.g., three new laboratories have been additionally equipped with new high-performance computers and multimedia equipment: an Economics lab, financed by the Halykbank, a Data Science financed by Erasmus + projects, as well as a new Research laboratory. There are also a limited number of modern Conference Rooms (a large one with 200 seats, big monitor out of order, Room 905 with 60 seats, fully equipped and well-functioning). All the above premises have technical data sheets, instructions and safety logs for initial training. These are however isolated positive examples.

As regards the number of available classrooms and laboratories, the number of working places in the libraries as well as the size of the (exceedingly small) sports complex, they are judged not keeping pace with the rapidly growing number of students enrolled. The expert team underlines that for the IITU to become a leading university in Central Asia further investments in its infrastructure are critically needed.

This finding is confirmed during the discussions with faculty staff, who unequivocally ask for more learning and working space to be provided. Students during the discussions point to a

lack of places for co-working but also to a critical lack of some technical professional equipment. One example in case are students in a journalism degree program, who do not have the tools to make films. Modern equipment is also missing e.g. in the laboratories for microelectronics and circuit design. Most experiments are carried out in a virtual environment using simulators, which in many cases is not an adequate substitute for real life experimental set ups in the laboratories. IITU remarks that along with the total cost of ICT equipment, certain financial resources are allocated for the purchase of specific equipment, e.g. for the department of Radioengineering or the department of Information Security Systems. IITU further plans to pay more attention to the purchase of purely professional equipment for certain specialities.

Renting additional classroom space in the expert's opinion at this stage does not adequately solve the problem of insufficient material resources for the successful implementation of the IITU's educational programs. The expert groups are shown rented premises in the Bayzak Business Center, where classrooms and support premises in many instances only inadequately meet the requirements and are insufficiently equipped with technological tools. The overall lack of working spaces for student and group work is evident. The extension of the facilities by buying the BBC building could nevertheless provide some remedy.

The experts note that limited resources are available for buildings and major repairs. There is a self-identified critical need for the construction of student dormitories.

Regarding the sports facilities, they are not adequate, as there is only one small gym available. During the visit, experts witnessed a student crowd during a volleyball game, with most of them sidelined to a simple lack of space available. The experts point out that further opportunities need to be created for students to engage in a variety of physical exercises.

The University Leadership minutes that a bank loan is currently been negotiated to support the expansion of its physical infrastructure. The experts are happy to learn, that Central Administration plans to invest in the purchase of new premises. However, they at this state do not see evidence for this planned expansion of physical and material capacities, taking also into account that announcements made in previous accreditations did not materialize. This finding again is all the more critical in view of the rapidly increasing student intake.

The expert team also notes that the IITU does not dispose of a proper campus and that there are no proper dormitories available for students to live in, also limited space where students can gather. All stakeholder groups during the interviews appreciate the idea to create a proper campus structure for the university, which would also be conducive to establish some sort of a university ethos, a sense of belonging to ones Alma Mater. The interviewees also see the existence of a university campus as key to the further development of the internationalization strategy of the university.

Financial resources

The IITU disposes of a unique financing structure. A shareholder group consisting of two individuals and a representative of the First President's Fund governs the IITU. This group is

ultimately responsible for making key investment decisions and deciding on the use of the income generated.

As regards the income sources, the IITU is financed mainly by state budget allocations (ca. 80% of the total budget), the remaining 20% are generated by the University itself. Third party funding by industry is almost non-existing. The IITU's income in 2023 amounted to 5,055 million Tenge (EUR 15,5 million) and has increased 2 times over the past 5 years. At the same time, a significant part (average 94,6%) of the income is generated through the provision of core activities (educational services). Despite the growth of other income (grants for equipment, for projects, income from research activities, etc.), revenues are unstable and sustainable dynamics cannot be observed.

Regarding the expenditure side, ca. 10% share of financial resources was spent in 2023 on improving the material base of the University, e.g. laboratory facilities, building, library, computer equipment, etc. (including Coursera license expenses). In general, the University demonstrates a positive trend towards annual growth and demonstrates high dependence on the state budget.

The compliance of the financial expenses of the IITU with the intended use of resources is monitored in the following stages - data collection, determination of performance criteria, assessment of financial performance and analysis of monitoring results and methods - vertical, horizontal and ratio analysis. Each department has its own budget, which is drawn up based on their requests and agreed with the university management. The IITU confirms that there are cases of expenses not included in the budget.

The experts note a high dependency of the IITU on government funding and see a need for the diversification of the universities income structure. As the RK MSHE is currently preparing a new reform on grant financing, there is even a bigger need for the IITU to develop new financial and marketing strategies that to become financially more independent and to further invest in the strategic development of the university.

The necessary equipment is provided through various sources of funding - government and corporate grants, own income, sponsorship donations, equipment purchases within the framework of various projects.

The experts did not receive clarity on funding models and did not receive a self-explanatory budget. The experts note that there is a great need for investment and appropriate decisions should be considered and made at the level of the university founders. The experts express their concern about the risk of distributing surplus profits to shareholders instead of investing in the further development of the university. The acquisition of infrastructure facilities is a critical need for the quality of education.

Information resources

Within the IITU, it is the Department of Technical and IT Support (DTITS) providing support for the entire educational process (purchases and maintenance of computers, network and server equipment, software provision, etc.). The IITU uses licensed software such as Kaspersky

Antivirus, Adobe CC, Microsoft 365, and Office 365 (A3 and A5), MS MSDN and others, updated annually as part of various agreements.

As mentioned, over the last years 3 new laboratories have been additionally equipped with high-performance computers and multimedia equipment. Moreover, Coursera has been introduced as a new educational management platform) and Moodle was replaced by Platonus as a new unified basic educational process management system. Due to the fact, that 5.000 Coursera licenses for students/teachers have been acquired, an improvement in the efficiency of administration, the teaching process and the examination system is to be expected.

According to the SAR, outdated equipment in computer classrooms and laboratories is annually updated and/or replaced. Almost 40 new access points have been equipped with new WiFi controllers in 2023.

The server and network infrastructure at the University consists of 20 physical servers, 5 data storage systems, 39 managed L2 and L3 switches, 62 WiFi access points. The servers have hypervisors installed to work with the virtual environment – Citrix XenServer and Vmware. IP telephony service FreePBX covers 40 external lines and 120 internal numbers. Internet capacity is 1 Gbps. In 2023 thirty-nine new access points were equipped with WiFi 6 - new WiFi controllers (software controllers and licenses for a hardware controller) to support new secure communication standards and better wireless coverage of networks.

The IITU has the library's collection includes 111,955 items: in Kazakh - 10,722 copies, in Russian - 15,697 copies, in English - 30,193 copies, electronic resources and CDs - 36,103 copies. The collection of electronic publications of the library currently amounts to 3718 documents (36084 copies). Users also have access to full-text WOS, Scopus, Science Direct, Wiley databases through a national subscription; test access to Nauka.kz database is provided.

The volume of paid subscriptions to republican and foreign electronic resources increases annually: Republican database - RMEB, since 2020 - EBSCO database. An additional resource is electronic courses created by the IITU teachers (on the Coursera platform) and MOOCs. The University library consists of a reading room, an electronic room, a subscription, book storage and a new reading room for researchers.

The experts identify positive changes in the library, but at the same time there remains a lack of possibilities for digitizing literature and registering purchased literature, a lack of space for storing books, the low quality of book depositories and reading rooms as well as outdated technical equipment. One of the main issues of the interviewed students was the consistency of software and hardware equipment in the classrooms. The experts see, however, that IITU is working on these issues. In 2023, for example, technical equipment of the library was updated, including fifteen modern workplaces for students (electronic reading rooms) and six computers for library staff. The library in 2023 also purchased an Automatic CopiBook scanner to work on the digitization of literature while at the same time purchasing electronic books.

Final assessment of the experts/levels of maturity observed

After discussion, the experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional level of maturity observed: 1

The experts are of the opinion, that the availability of HR, the high turnover rate and limited financial resources are the key challenges faced by the IITU given its rapid growth in recent year and the expansion strategy. The developing IT industry faces great competition for human resources, offering high wages. The experts note that the university needs a systematic personnel policy aimed at preventing the outflow of qualified teachers, hiring IT specialists from companies on part-time basis and nurturing its own teachers.

Regarding the availability of infrastructure, the long announced investment loan needs to be taken up, so that a much-needed upgrade and extension of premises and further investments in the laboratories materialize. The experts recommend implementing a systematic risk analysis to be able to identify potential risks and be able to develop measures to overcome them.

Procedural level of maturity observed: 3

The IITU has standard procedures for filling vacancies and reassigning academic positions. The experts note that in some cases there are problems filling vacancies. In this regard, the university is recommended to reconsider its hiring policy, possibly partially covering teaching vacancies with doctoral students.

Cultural level of maturity observed: 2

The experts note that to resolve internal conflicts in personnel management, there is a conciliation commission, the members of which are teachers and representatives of the administration. The experts find evidence of "esprit de corps" among the institution's staff. However, without financial incentives and support, it will be difficult to maintain this in the long term. The relationship between academic and administrative staff also has potential for improvement.

III.2: Human resources development

Questions:

Institutional dimension: Which challenges have to be mastered with regard to staff development? Do the existing concepts take these challenges adequately into account?

Procedural dimension: How does the implementation of the staff development concept work? What are typical difficulties? How are they dealt with? Where do stimuli for changes or for improvement come from? How can they be fed into the system and what are the processes to deal with such stimuli?

Cultural dimension: Which of the concepts and offers for staff development – specifically those with a focus on subject-relevant and didactic development – are particularly well received by teaching staff? Which are not? Why?

Analysis and Findings of experts

According to the SAR, the university makes significant efforts to develop staff professionally. The HR department is responsible for coordinating this work. In addition, the heads of departments plan to improve the qualifications of faculties by allocating the budget.

Professional development in Kazakhstan and at the IITU is mandatory for all lecturers and is reflected in their KPIs. In 2022-2023, the following number of staff members completed professional training: international - 186, national- 93, university - 196 and individual - 168 levels.

Professional development is carried out in different forms: advanced training and internship of staff members in leading domestic and foreign universities (paid from the budget and self-paid), advanced training events at the University; encouraging teachers to study via MOOCs and take other various online courses. Teaching staff participates in certified trainings from Cisco, Microsoft, APCICT, Huawei and other IT companies, as well as Project Management Technologies LLP, Kazakhstan Project Management Association (KPMA), KASE JSC. In 2022-2023, 65 teachers have been taking courses on the Coursera platform. Every year, the IITU organizes winter and summer training schools for lecturers.

The experts commend the IITU for establishing a very thorough system of access to teaching staff to Coursera and access to Cisco and Amazon courses (and other) through licenses purchased by the university. Staff members in the interviews also highly appreciate and note this as the strength of the IITU.

In terms of areas for improvement, the experts note that the university has done a good job in implementing clear Key Performance Indicators. On the down side, there are very little resources/ minor additional payments for achieved performance indicators. For this reason, some teaching staff do not decide to participate in the KPI system. Based on this information, the experts conclude that the use of KPI is ineffective since this incentive system is not supported by a sufficient amount of money. The experts recommend allocating more funding to financial incentives for teaching staff could have a greater impact on quality.

The experts also propose that the Central Administration moves forward on a more structured and personalized system for the professional development of staff, which currently does not exist. It is important to ensure a joint discussion of what each employee's professional goal is for the next two to three years. In the long term, this will demonstrate management's support and concern for employees and will allow for personal resource planning. The experts believe that such a system will strengthen the team and make the IITU a more attractive place for teaching staff and will also improve interaction.

The experts equally insist that in relation to human resources, it is necessary to back up the incentive system with more financial resources, introduce a structured approach to professional development through conversations between department heads and professors, as well as from vice-rectors and administrative units, so that staff feel involved.

Accommodating new teaching staff through mentoring programs and special programs on teaching methodology and didactics deserves special attention.

The SAR noted that conflicts arise, when assessing the annual performance of staff, since the criteria are determined by administrative units and do not always cover all aspects of the activities of teachers. Dissatisfaction with the amount of additional payments in accordance with the KPI was also expressed. To resolve internal conflicts, there is a Conciliation Commission, the members of which are teachers and representatives of the administration.

The experts discover that teaching staff frequently pay for participation in external trainings themselves. Information about such events at the university level is poorly organized, as is the invitation of foreign specialists to conduct seminars. The University recognizes that the process requires a systematic approach, as it is currently largely based on the personal initiative of each team member.

Final assessment of the experts/ Levels of maturity observed

After discussion, the experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional level of maturity observed: 2

The experts note that the IITU lacks a structured Professional Development Plan for staff. They recommend implementing a structured approach to staff professional development through conversations between Head of the department and Teaching Staff, as well as vice rectors and administrative staff, to ensure that personal feels included and respected. Developing a Professional Development Plan for each staff could significantly increase motivation and engagement.

The staff evaluation system, based on a KPI, has been operational for several years but requires further improvement according to staff qualifications. The experts recommend continuously improving the system by incorporating the latest developments. This includes encouraging staff to engage in more research and attracting younger teaching staff.

Procedural level of maturity observed: 2

The university provides extensive access to courses on Coursera and other platforms. Lecturers and students alike appreciate this. They are satisfied with the range of personal continuous development course apart from the fact that they would appreciate a broader offer of management courses. The access to management courses occurs generally every five years or sporadically.

Concerning the system of financial motivation of the staff Human Resources (HR) is tasked with setting points for professors, while deans handle the evaluation of teachers and professors, assigning them points. The staff acknowledges that while the system generally works well, it may lead to discrepancies across different departments. These discrepancies arise due to varying teaching philosophies and departmental policies. This variation can impact the consistency and uniformity of the system's application and outcomes within the organization.

Cultural level of maturity observed: 2

Lecturers generally perceive the KPI's of the personal evaluation system as fair, although there is inconsistency in payment. Despite the low base salary, the point system allows for a potential increase of up to 200%, with an average additional salary ranging from 30% to 40%. However, points are not directly proportional to monetary value. In times of financial strain, salaries have been reduced. Therefore teachers undertake additional work beyond their regular workload to boost their earnings. Due to this relatively low monetary impact of the KPI-system it is not fully accepted. Experts recommend improving the system as mentioned above to also enhance staff engagement. By integrating the latest developments, such as encouraging more research and attracting young teaching staff, the system can become more effective and widely accepted. This approach aims to increase the system's relevance and motivational impact, thereby fostering greater staff involvement and support.

Criterion III.3: Interaction with research**Questions:**

Institutional dimension: Are there any challenges at the points of interaction between teaching and research? Do the existing concepts take these challenges adequately into account? What are the strengths of the existing concepts and arrangements?

Procedural dimension: How are the processes to link teaching and research designed? Who is involved, who is responsible, and who is informed? Where do stimuli for changes or for improvement come from? How can they be fed into the system and what are the processes to deal with such stimuli?

Cultural dimension: Which values and modes of behaviour are expected from the members of the institution when it comes to combining teaching and research? How is the expected mode of behaviour supported? To what extent do the different institution members share and accept the expected values and behaviour?

Analysis and Findings of experts

Boosting research activities are defined as one of the strategic priorities of the IITU. "Publish or perish" – every lecturer at the IITU has the obligation to publish at least one article per year, supported with 200/500 hours of work capacity per year depending on the quality of the journal, in which the article is published. Apart from publications, scientific research is carried out in various forms, through participation in national or international projects, joint research with partner universities or third party funded individual research with industry.

On the institutional level, there are two vice-rectors responsible for the management of research and innovation activities, on the one hand the Vice-Rector for Science and Research and on the other the Vice-Rector for Digitalization and Innovation. A new "Department for Research Activities" has been established as of 2019 to support the advancement of the IITU in this critical area.

In terms of funding, one of the most important sources to boost research activities at the IITU has been and continues to be the European Erasmus+ program. Between 2018 to 2023, researcher at the IITU successfully applied for three different projects, the so-called ELBA, ALLVET and the KUTEL projects with a total funding sum of almost 250 thousand Euros. These projects contributed to improving the quality of teaching potential, strengthening institutional structures and developing international cooperation in the field of education at the IITU. They also contributed to improving the quality of teaching in the field of Data Science, introducing a competency-based approach to teaching and improving the quality of teaching education using ICT. For the practical application of research results, two laboratories could be financed out of this source- the Data Science Laboratory and the KUTEL Multimedia Laboratory.

Another donor recently has been the UNICEF. A project targeting “Methodological support at the central level for improving language skills and increasing the academic performance of children in migration processes and children in need of replenishment of knowledge” has been secured. As to the “Fulbright FLTA Project for Rural Teachers”, financed by the US Embassy in the Republic of Kazakhstan, it aimed at the “Implementation of a trans-lingual approach in a trilingual environment (Kazakhstan)” and has been executed jointly with the University of Glasgow.

Since 2019, the IITU puts to the minutes, is has implemented overall 19 grant projects. Currently, the university is running 8 projects, among them 2 in support of young scientists. In addition, research is carried out by individual projects, which, however, are not financed from the university budget. By 2023, 7 of these type of projects of the university have been registered.

Numbers show an increase in projects and funding through the Ministry of Science and Higher Education over the last five years. Yet, the percentage ratio of the amount generated by research activities to the total budget remained unchanged. The share of research in the total university budget amounts to only around 4%. Statistics show that the share of income generated from grants is 23.65%, whereas share of income from individual research activities is 76.35%

The IITU in its own SWOT analysis indicates that it faces difficulties in attracting scientists of appropriate qualifications, in forming project teams, and that there is a lack of motivation among teachers and researchers when conducting research and preparing projects. In order to stimulate more research initiatives and to increase the amount generated by research activities, the University has implemented a range of different measures and incentives:

The University in pursuit of this goal has on the one hand designed and implemented Key Performance Indicators for Research offering an additional bonus for successful research activities. It also has implemented a one-time reward for publishing an article in high-ranking journals.

One of the major obstacles for improving the IITU’s research record is the considerable academic workload, which does not leave time for research on the part of teaching staff. The SAR notes that according to Kazakhstan regulations, the academic workload includes 680

hours of academic activity and teaching. In practice, this translates into 15-20 contact hours per week during the academic year. Moreover, academic leaves/sabbaticals have as of now not been provided for lecturers at the IITU.

The IITU has therefore as a third measure introduced new staff categories, that of a “research professor” and a “research assistant professor”, positions which are designed for those staff, which excel in research and are therefore exempt from teaching obligations. In practical terms, however, a lot still needs to be achieved in as much, as out of the merely 4 new research positions, which have been created by the IITU, only 1 research professor has recently been hired. The expert team acknowledges that there are considerable challenges in attracting qualified researchers, since salaries and conditions in the IT sector are more attractive than in higher education, but insist that the university needs to add significant momentum to these initiatives.

The expert team is of the opinion that the university has the potential to develop its research potential to a new level, but see a corresponding need to invest into professional administrative support. Writing successful research proposals requires professional staff specialized in studying tenders, registering on tender websites, reviewing the proposals and putting the finishing touch to be competitive. Assistance with and expertise in the financial management of projects will support researchers to focus on their core business. Further investing into research support under the umbrella of the new “Department of Research and Development” (R&D) approach will allow the IITU to become more successful in obtaining research funding. This finding is confirmed during the on-site interviews: staff members unanimously expressed the need for management to play a more proactive role in identifying and assisting with grant applications to ensure the enhancement of research initiatives within the organization. The same applies to the administrative and financial management of projects once they have been secured.

It helps that writing research proposals has become easier with the advancement of Artificial Intelligence. The experts also point to the existence of companies, offering to compile the research proposal in close cooperating with a researcher/a university, frequently only asking for an overhead/a share of the funding in case of a successful application.

Currently, the IITU is mainly focused on applying for research grants tendered by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. There are however many more platforms on which research projects are advertised, such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the more lucrative Erasmus Horizon projects etc. The experts recommend looking into this untapped possibilities in order to diversify the sources of research funding.

Final assessment of the experts/ Levels of maturity observed

After discussion, the experts come to the following conclusions and levels of maturity:

Institutional level of maturity observed: 2

The experts acknowledge that on the institutional level, research has been formally placed as a priority, e.g in the Strategic Plans of the IITU. There are two Vice-Rectors in charge to assist the perceived shortage in the number of research projects within the organization. The experts commend the IITU on the establishment of a new Department for Research and Development but see a strong need to further boost its manpower and professional support capabilities. This has been one of the central messages obtained by staff during the interviews.

There is an assessment system in place monitoring and evaluating research activities by staff. Currently, the research performance of the scientific staff is measured primarily through the number/impact factor of publications and the number of supervised doctoral students. Successful tendering for research tenders should get a higher recognition.

Procedural level of maturity observed: 2

Given the absence of internal seed funding for research, external sources are the sole means of financial support for research projects. To boost research activities, there is a recognized need for more and more successful grant applications. The expert team recommends investing into the manpower and the professional expertise of the Department for Research and Development rendering assistance in all phases of a projects life time.

The expert team commends the IITU on the recent introduction of two new research staff categories. Unfortunately, only four positions for research professors has been initiated, of which only 1 actually has been filled. An essential criterion for these positions is a Hirsch-Index of at least 20, indicating a measure of the impact and productivity of an individual's scholarly work.

The experts recommend diversifying the research portfolio of the IITU, not only focusing primarily on tenders by the Kazakh government and the Erasmus Plus Scheme, but also focusing on obtaining third party funding by industry. In the discussions with the industry representatives, it became clear that there is a considerable potential in this area. There is positive reception towards collaborative initiatives such as Joint Laboratories and Joint Research Programs. However, there is a shared desire within the industry representatives for the establishment of a dedicated department to facilitate enhanced collaboration. The expressed need is for a more systematic approach to foster ongoing and structured contact between the university and industry partners.

The experts note that the university has the potential to generate enough income to pay people in the long term. It is required to consider issues of diversification and organize constant and systematic monitoring of competitions and tenders.

Cultural level of maturity observed: 2

The current situation and the further improvement of research activities is seen positively by the staff. Despite considerable challenges, there is a prevailing culture that promotes the ongoing development of young scientists within the organization.

Criterion III.4: Interaction with administration

Questions:

Institutional dimension: What are the guiding principles and rules for the role and function of the administration linked to teaching and learning? Which elements of support for teaching and learning by the administrative units of the institution work well? What areas can be improved? What are typical challenges for the administration in order to effectively support the quality objectives for teaching and learning? How are these challenges dealt with?

Procedural dimension: How are the administrative units involved into the design, (further) development and implementation of educational offers and their quality assurance work? Where do stimuli for changes or for improvement come from? How can they be fed into the system and what are the processes to deal with such stimuli?

Cultural dimension: Which values and methodologies are characteristic for the role of the administration in the processes of introducing, (further) developing and implementing educational offers as well as in their quality assurance? Which attitudes and behaviour are expected? How are they promoted? Are the set rules and guidelines accepted by those affected by them? How are conflicts dealt with?

Analysis and Findings of experts

The IITU has a hierarchical organizational structure with a clear understanding of competences and powers from the upper to the lower levels of management; the participation of all entities in implementation of the University Strategy is of high priority and actively pursued. The Administration has three levels in the educational process management. At the top there are the Rector and Vice-Rector, the mid-level administration consists of Deans, Vice Deans as well as Head of Departments) and finally the lower-level administration, constituted by the heads of academic departments.

The interaction of participants in the academic process is said to be based on the following principles: voluntariness, cooperation, respect for each other's interests, compliance with the Code of Corporate Ethics, "Code of Academic Integrity".

The strategic plan is the guideline for the activities of all departments. All departments annually developed an operational plan to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Plan. Reports on the implementation of plans are prepared twice a year.

The activities of structural units are assessed by monitoring the achievement of the KPI, which serves as a tool for material incentives for personnel. Emerging problems and misunderstandings are openly discussed and resolved by collegial management bodies. The experts discovered there is a perceived need within the administration to increase their visibility and be more actively heard to enhance overall communication. Some members express a desire for even more direct communication between the staff and the Rector

although the experts also see that the Rector, for example, holds a reception schedule for all management members where anyone can make an appointment.

The policy for resolving conflicts of interest and relationships is coordinated by a lawyer and the chairman of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Disciplinary Control, in accordance with the Internal Labor Regulations and the Code of Academic Integrity.

Final assessment of the experts/ Levels of maturity observed

Institutional level of maturity observed: 3

The overall functioning of the organization is reported to be satisfactory. Staff members express a positive working culture, highlighting effective collaboration.

Examples of dialogues are provided to illustrate positive communication, and there is a generally favourable level of interaction among the staff.

Procedural level of maturity observed: 2

There is a lack of communication between the administration and students and between management and lecturers. In some cases, problems cannot be resolved directly when communication is carried out by one person and is not direct.

Despite this, there is a positive observation that there is no significant gap between vice-chancellors and staff, which contributes to the creation of a relatively open communication environment. This situation determines the need to improve the system of interaction between the administration, staff and students.

Cultural level of maturity observed: 3

The organization maintains a strong culture of discussion and communication and regular dialogue throughout. However, there is a perceived need within the administration to increase their visibility and be more actively heard to enhance overall communication. Some members express a desire for even more direct communication between the staff and the Rector. The experts therefore recommend maintaining the culture of collaboration and consistently working on fostering communication within the organization.

IV. Transparency and documentation

Criterion IV.1: Rules and regulations for programs / courses / trainings

Questions:

Institutional dimension: Which rules and regulations for educational offers have been defined? Whom do they address? Which units of the organisational setting are responsible? What works well?

Procedural dimension: How are the documents that define the rules for studying at the institution developed? How are they published and updated? How does the institution integrate external (e.g. legal) requirements into the processes? What are typical challenges

with regard to the draft, update and dissemination of rules? How are they dealt with? Where do stimuli for changes or for improvement come from? How can they be fed into the system and what are the processes to deal with such stimuli?

Cultural dimension: Do the members of the institution – specifically students and teaching staff – feel adequately informed about the rules and regulations for programmes that affect them? Are the rules accepted by the respective members of the institution affected by them? Are the rules transparent and understandable for all stakeholders?

Analysis and Findings of peers

The IITU develops and approves internal regulatory documentation that are published on the University website. As regards the development and implementation of its Bachelor, Master and PhD programs, they are subject to compliance exigencies with a broad range of external regulations – most of them emanating from the RK MHES. Considering the numerous, and frequently very detailed state requirements as well as internal regulation acts, study program related documentation has to be continuously updated in a timely manner.

The procedure for developing and approving documents (incl. the development of educational programs) as well as the responsibilities of the academic and administrative units in charge is well documented in the institution's SAR. The university representatives during the on-site visit report that regular training events and clear communication channels have been established to address changes in law and react to regular policy updates. It is important to note that every Department within the IITU has the responsibility regarding the management of its own study programs and the documentation and implementation of necessary changes and improvements that occur by means of changes in law, feedback from students or teachers, changes in educational methodology, etc., to be documented in internal regulations.

Impulses for these amendments will usually emanate not only via changes in law but also by the input/feedback from various QA instruments as well as changes in educational methodology. The IITU confirms that when developing, updating and distributing documentation, problems arise due to different interpretations of legal norms and insufficient awareness of students and teachers of the applicable norms. The University strives to monitor this by constantly updating and improving internal regulations and regulations in response to changing academic and legal conditions.

A challenge remains the switch in technology underlying the related processes and data sources used. As mentioned in prior parts of this accreditation report, the IITU has recently switched to the "Platonus" platform, which provides all employees with access to necessary information regarding various aspects related to the conduct of its educational programs. Since Platonus is a new system, replacing Moodle, a number of the interviewed teachers – are citing problems of switching to the new system and making use of the information contained therein, claiming that it was introduced without considering the opinion of the teachers.

The experts in their summative assessment confirm that EP-related rules and regulations have been published on the University website and find no evidence that confidentiality and security requirements have not been observed. Information related mobility opportunities for students should however be updated.

The dissemination of EP related information within the institution remains a challenge. This finding is substantiated by the interviews with faculty, who are not always aware of the availability of central regulations on the University website. In some instances, EP related information is not sufficiently accessible or understandable for all interested parties.

One example in case it the fact that the IITU website does not contain program related rules and regulations in English, which makes it difficult for foreign teachers and students to have access to vital information. The exigency is, in other words, to maintain the content of the website at the same level for all three languages in use, so that the websites in Kazakh, Russian and English contain comparable information.

The expert team recommends that the University take appropriate steps securing transparency and dissemination of this information. Among the target groups figure prominently new students and faculty. Among possible measures could be the creation of online platforms with FAQs and clarifications about the rules and regulations.

The expert team also identifies problems regarding the lack of mechanisms or opportunities for feedback on the rules, which can also hinder the process of compliance. To ensure that the rules are as transparent as possible for all stakeholders, the University should organize information sessions for new students and faculty, create online platforms with FAQs and clarifications about the rules and regulations, and arrange for regular dissemination of information about any changes or updates to the rules.

Final assessment of the experts/ Levels of maturity observed

Institutional level of maturity observed: 3

The experts find that the rules and regulations for educational offerings are adequately defined and posted on the university's website. The academic and administrative responsibilities for timely updating all associated information are clearly defined and are managed in a decentralized manner under the responsibility of the individual departments. Further improvement requires efforts to ensure rapid response to changes in government laws by transforming internal processes. For example, IITU should organize information sessions for new students and faculty, create online platforms with FAQs and clarifications about the rules and regulations, and arrange for regular dissemination of information about any changes or updates to the rules.

Procedural level of maturity observed: 2

Systematized procedures in relation to program design, delivery and evaluation are in place at the IITU. Information related mobility opportunities for students should however be updated.

The content of the website should be maintained at the same level for all three languages in use, so that the websites in Kazakh, Russian and English contain comparable information.

In order to ensure that the rules and regulations for study programs are transparent and fully understood within the IITU, it is recommended organizing information sessions for all stakeholder groups but especially for new students and faculty members. It might be considered to establish an FAQ online platforms with clarifications about the rules and regulations.

Cultural level of maturity observed: 3

The IITU involves stakeholder groups in the design and implementation of educational programs and organizes regular feedback on the understanding of regulatory documents, taking into account their legal interpretation and availability in the languages of instruction (Kazakh, Russian, English). The experts recommend introducing institutional changes aimed at improving the information of teachers and students regarding changes in government legal acts and internal regulations and to ensure confidence in awareness.

Criterion IV.2: Documentation

Questions:

Institutional dimension: How does the system for the documentation, document management and filing of information work? What are typical difficulties and how are they dealt with?

Procedural dimension: Do the processes with regard to the documentation and filing of information about teaching and learning / about programmes work as expected? What are typical challenges and how are they dealt with? How are the external requirements for transparency and documentation which are relevant to the institution (e.g. disclosure obligations and voluntary publication) embedded into internal processes? Where do stimuli for changes or for improvement come from? How can they be fed into the system and what are the processes to deal with such stimuli?

Cultural dimension: Do the members of the institution – specifically students and teaching staff – feel adequately informed about the educational offers and their general conditions? Which attitudes and behaviour are expected from the members of the institution with regard to internal and external information policies, also in terms of achieved quality objectives and need for improvement? Are these expectations accepted by the different stakeholder groups within the institution?

Analysis and Findings of experts

According to the SAR, there are currently more than 270 internal regulatory documents and almost 80 accounting forms in place, which have been developed and implemented at the IITU. The procedure for the development, approval, distribution, maintenance and storage of

internal and external documentation at IITU is established and adequately described in the SAR.

Documents are updated by the developers, reviewed and republished annually. Annual internal audits of the QMS identify the need to revise certain procedures, rules, regulations and instructions. All issued documents, their codes and editions are registered with the Personnel and Documentation Management Department. Senior management includes information on the management of internal IITU documents in the annual QMS analysis.

In academic departments, responsibility for documentation rests with the department heads and administrators. Due to the frequent change of administrators, there may sometimes be problems with proper filing, maintaining and storing the documentation. The responsibility of PDMD is to work with administrators, develop new forms of documents systematization, control and verify the document flow in the IITU departments.

Due to its certified QMS according to ISO 9001, all issues and requirements according to documented information can be considered as fulfilled. Additional monitoring is carried out by the EUROASIA-MS Conformity Certification Agency LLC, which assesses the documents' legal compliance with norms and rules and proposes measures to improve their effectiveness during the re-accreditation procedure.

Through discussions with academic department heads, the expert team realizes that a potential shortcoming is the failure to provide information to other departments in a timely manner, providing inaccurate information, or delaying the delivery of documents. Another problem is the frequent change of department administrators responsible for the design, maintenance and storage of documentation.

The IITU sees a solution to these problems in creating teams with limited access for the purpose of exchange, collaboration on a common document, for a certain period. However, this activity requires coordination and technical support, which is under development.

By implementing the requirements of previous institutional accreditation ASIIN, the IITU provides the opportunity for graduates to receive a Diploma Supplement (DS). The question remains of providing this document only at the request of graduates. The IITU confirms that all students are informed about the possibility of receiving a DS in one of the languages: Kazakh, Russian or English. The experts request that the DS is provided automatically to all students and should not be restricted to the choice of one language only.

Final assessment of the experts/ Levels of maturity observed

Institutional level of maturity observed: 3

The experts confirm that the IITU has developed and maintains a documentation system that manages all internal documents and supports the planning and implementation processes of degree programs. Documentation and data storage systems operate in accordance with relevant legal and functional requirements.

Procedural level of maturity observed: 2

The experts confirm that relevant stakeholders such as administration, faculty and students have access to relevant documents. However, sometimes there are significant delays in providing specific data to other departments. The move to electronic documentation can allow digital systems to be used more efficiently and document duplication to be avoided.

The experts request that the DS is provided automatically to all students and should not be restricted to the choice of one language only.

Cultural level of maturity observed: 3

The experts note that both Teaching staff and students confirmed that the information and communication channels are working satisfactorily. The experts support plans to create teams with limited access for the purpose of exchange, collaboration on a common document, for a certain period of time.

D Comment of the Higher Education Institution (06.06.2024)

IITU provides an extensive comment on the accreditation report; the individual statements have been taken into consideration when finalising the report.

I Definition of quality

Criterion I.1: Objectives

In this section we would like to comment on the following issues:

p.11 - "As will be elaborated further in subsequent parts of this report, all stakeholders during the interviews expressed the need for more co-working and learning space and adequate teaching facilities. The University management in the discussions present their plans to revise strategic directions and underlying structures accommodating future developments and stimulating institutional growth. The experts welcome this announcement, but want *to see evidence that this long announced goal is finally about to materialize*. As regards the next Strategic Plan, the expert group advises linking it to mid-term financial planning and a risk-register".

Comments: The University **agrees** with experts' opinion on the need to increase the area and link financial plans to them. The growing contingent of students and staff undoubtedly forces the University to set an urgent task to improve the material and technical base. That is why the Strategy 2022-2025 reasonably included such items as:

5.3 Formation of the University campus as an attractive environment for the implementation of educational, research, innovation activities, accommodation, leisure and sports activities of

students and university staff 5.3.1 Construction of a dormitory. 5.3.2 Updating the infrastructure of educational buildings.

In 2022, a project was prepared for a campus with a dormitory on a plot of land that was in the city plan for the allocation of MUIT, and a financial plan was made. However, the land was not allocated to the university, so the strategic plans were postponed for the next few years.

In summer 2024, it is planned to purchase the Baizak business center with a total area of more than 25 thousand square meters, in order to provide educational areas, laboratories, coworking areas, classrooms, reading rooms and leisure areas. Investments in this area involve more than 7.5 billion tenge.

P.11 – "The experts furthermore recommend placing a stronger emphasis on research activities, as it has not been a clear focal point in the strategic goals thus far".

Comments: We **disagree** with this remark since the Development Strategy of IITU for 2021-2025, adopted in 2021, specifically identified research activities as one of the strategic vectors for the university's development under the direction of "Development of scientific and innovative activities in ICT and related sectors of the digital economy." IITU is trying to fulfill this point of strategic development, although much remains to be done in accordance with the development of science and innovation.

Additionally, since 2021, a regulation has been developed to stimulate the publication activity of teaching staff and administrative staff, with separate clauses on motivational payments to teaching staff for participation in scientific projects. A grading regulation has been developed and approved, where there are also requirements for participation in university scientific activities and management of projects. Over the past 5 years, the volume of funded projects has increased 3 times.

P.11 – «Considering the mission and strategy of the IITU, the experts discuss how the goals and objectives correspond to the status of the university.the experts find that overall there is currently too little potential especially for attracting international students and faculty as well as for fostering outgoing mobility».

Comments: The University **partially agrees**, as the regulation on financing academic mobility of students and teaching staff at the expense of the university has already been developed and approved. In order to strengthen this area, the position of Vice-Rector for Global Partnership has been introduced, the functionality of which is fully aimed at the internationalization of the university. Since 2021, the number of double-degree programs has increased 4 times. From the 2022-2023 academic year, after the Covid period, previously concluded agreements began to work and the university intensified its work in the international direction. The shareholders have defined an International university as a university that works with international companies (in our case, these are vendors), international programs (Carnegie in the beginning, Coursera now and we are developing further in this direction), large international vendors are actively involved in the university's activities in opening laboratories, developing educational programs, participating in master classes, providing best international practices. The choice of ASIIN agency and institutional accreditation by ASIIN according to all international standards and practices also gives the status of internationality.

P.11 - «Currently, only 38 international students, most of them from neighbouring countries, are studying at the IITU, which constitutes less than 1% of the total number of students.»

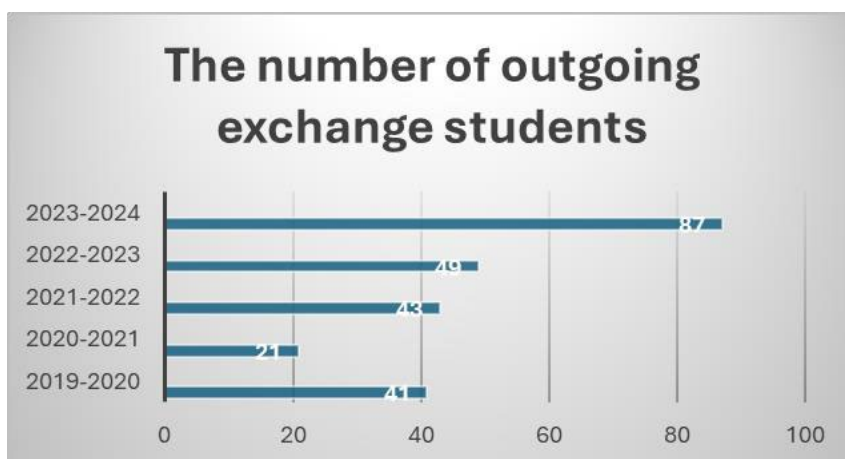
Comments: Corrections - the number of international students at IITU is 57, which is 1% of the overall student population.

“Creating a more international and intercultural academic environment will allow the IITU to open up thinking and receive an influx of fresh ideas and initiatives”.

Comments: We **agree partially**. Recognizing the vital importance of cultivating a more international and intercultural academic environment, IITU has clearly articulated this goal in its 2021-2025 Strategy and will be working on achieving the tasks indicated in the plan.

P.11 - «Staff mobility is annually planned and executed according to academic department plans, but the IITU is falling behind in realizing its strategic goals for international mobility due to unclear reasons».

Comments: We agree with this remark but **partially**. Academic mobility programs of international cooperation have always been relevant among students. However, it is worth noting that while the student body is growing, there has been no significant increase in outgoing mobility. The main barrier and obstacle to academic mobility is funding. Not all students can afford to live for a semester in another developed country. Considering this, the department has worked on expanding the geographical scope and providing opportunities to study in more affordable countries regarding living, transportation, and other personal expenses. For example, in the last year, students have been nominated to study in Turkey, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.



P.11 – “Creating a more international and intercultural academic environment will allow the IITU to open up thinking and receive an influx of fresh ideas and initiatives”.

Comments: We can accept this experts’ conclusion **only in part**. Recognizing the vital importance of cultivating a more international and intercultural academic environment, IITU has clearly articulated this goal in its 2021-2025 Strategy and is trying to implement the tasks indicated in the plan.

P.12 “However, hierarchical patterns still seem predominant within departments, prompting experts to urge management to continue pressing for the implementation of an inclusive culture of open communication at all levels”.

Comments: The university **partially agrees** with this statement IITU has historically always had open and free communication at all levels. However, due to the sharp increase in the number of employees and teaching staff, there is no possibility of personal meetings with everyone. It is worth noting that there is a schedule for admission of both employees, students and their parents, teaching staff by the university management. The schedule of departments’ meetings, the Academic Council, the Educational and Methodological Council, the Scientific and Technical Council, meetings of teachers and students has been approved. In order to strengthen the coordination of management's interaction with students, a separate position of Vice-Rector for Educational and Social Work has been allocated since 2023.

Criterion I.2: (Quality-) Management System/Governance

p.15 – “The experts critically analyze the HR capacities of this recently established central QA unit, which employs only 3 staff members, not all in full-time positions. Despite the establishment of the separate QA unit, Quality Management issues are in parallel also dealt with decentralized in various departments.The experts conclude that the IITU is still only in the process of creating a strong QSM core, the coordination system and mechanisms for interaction of the QA unit with other departments are either under development or have not yet materialized. The experts point out that the IITU needs to introduce more effective ways of organizing a QMS, as well as access to decision makers with the identification of a person from the Central Administration responsible for the effective operation of the QMS”.

Comments: The University **agrees** with the experts' statement about the weak performance of the newly created Quality Department. At the moment, the Regulations on the Department are being reviewed, the issues of giving it more important and effective powers. The process of selecting a new head of this department has been launched.

p.15 – “Frequent changes of personnel and QMS coordinators have occurred in recent year, which is one of the reason for the irregularity of Internal Audits”.

Comments: The University **does not agree** with the statement about the irregularity of the QMS audit. Despite the frequent change of the employee responsible for the QMS, the audit is carried out regularly once a year. Evidence – orders from the rector to conduct an audit.

- 1) Order No. 95/6-P dated August 20, 2019 On the creation of a commission on QMS
- 2) Order No. 132/1-P dated November 2, 2019 On the creation of a commission on QMS
- 3) Order No. 22/2-P dated March 26, 2020 On the creation of a commission on QMS
- 4) Order No. 62/3-P dated 01.09.2020 On the creation of a commission on QMS
- 5) Order No. 8-P dated 02/09/2021 On changing the composition of the QMS commission
- 6) Order No. 16-P dated 02/11/2022 On approval of the working group to conduct an internal audit of the library collection
- 7) Order No. 17-P dated 02/11/2022 On approval of the action plan and ensuring access to documents during the internal audit
- 8) Order No. 18-P dated February 14, 2022 On the appointment of internal auditors and conducting an internal audit of the QMS
- 9) Order No. 100-P dated September 20, 2022 On the appointment of internal auditors for the QMS and conducting internal audits
- 10) Order No. 21-P dated 02/24/23 On the appointment of internal auditors for the QMS and conducting internal audits
- 11) Order No. 162-P dated December 19, 2023 On conducting an internal audit.

p. 15 – “The experts however note that the latest version of the Quality Manual has been approved already back in December 2020. It consequently does not reflect numerous changes in the organizational structure and procedures carried out between 2021-2023 and has not been updated. It is probably for this reason that not all University processes fall within the clear logic of the QMS. The experts furthermore recommend using the experience gathered by the IITU in its data analysis related study programs to apply them to the interpretation of their own QM results in making appropriate decisions”

Comments: The university **partially agrees** with this remark and is making efforts in this direction. Nowadays we have already adopted and drawn up a plan for updating the university internal regulatory documents for 2024–2025, approved by the Chairman of the Board - Rector on May 20, 2024.”

p.16 – “This currently is done primarily on a “one-by-one basis”, rather than in a more structured, regularly institutionalized format. A conference of the group of industry representatives with the full university team (rectorate and department heads) might be a good idea to broaden the scope of the discussions beyond single enterprises and lift them from the individual to the university level, e.g. in the form of a formal “Industrial Advisory Committee”.

Comments: We **fully accept** the experts' recommendation to create “Industrial Advisory Committee” and are grateful for the idea.

P.16 – “The experts understood that the past and intended growth condoned the size of the rectorate. However, the structure and competencies should be fully monitored on a yearly basis. This could be done during the board meeting, as the board should be responsible for the tasks and structure of the rectorate on a strategic basis”.

Comments: We **disagree** with this conclusion of the experts. In addition to the fact that the duties and responsibilities of vice-rectors are set out in detail in Job Descriptions and expressed in an Employment Contract, each of them reports to the meeting of the Academic Council at the end of each academic year on the work done during the year, confirming the fulfillment of their KPIs. The university's organizational structure and staffing are reviewed annually in order to achieve strategic indicators and implement best management practices and respond more flexibly and quickly to the demands and needs of society and the labor market.

II. Educational Programmes / Courses / Trainings

Criterion II.1: Creation and development of programmes / courses / trainings

p.18 – “They at the same time critically note that many educational programs have similar learning outcomes and content and are not treated as individual distinguishable educational offerings.”.

Comments: We can accept this experts' conclusion **only in part**. Learning outcomes are formed according to the direction of educational programs. IITU has 5 directions at the undergraduate

level: 061 Information and Communication Technologies, 063 Information Security, 062 Telecommunications, 042 Journalism, 041 Business and Management. In these directions, educational programs have been developed in 6 groups of educational programs: 057 Information technology, 058 Information security, 059 Communication, 042 Journalism, 044 Management, 046 Finance and Banking. Educational programs, being in the same group of educational programs, can have 2-3 similar Learning Outcomes. However, we agree that each educational program, as well as each course, should have more specific learning outcomes. In general, the learning outcomes of educational programs are determined by the profile of the programs.

P.18 – “The experts in this context are also concerned that the IITU lacks a holistic approach to designing learning outcomes and recommend harmonizing the procedure formulating them”.

Comments: We **mostly accept** the comments of experts and do our best to improve the understanding of the phenomenon of Learning outcomes by the teaching staff of the university. Before the start of the academic year, a seminar is usually held on the preparation of internal documentation, on the formulation of the Learning Outcomes of each course and its relevance to the assessment of their achievement. However, this work still needs to be improved and sustained, as every year the teaching staff is replenished with new teachers, sometimes without teaching experience.

P.18 – “The experts also find that not all educational programs are sustainable due to low enrolment numbers; this is particularly prevalent on the level of the Master and Ph.D. programs. The experts recommend that the IITU leadership conduct an analysis of the sustainability of educational programs in order to concentrate limited resources and review its graduate model. The declared international status of the University should also involve targeting not only the Kazakh educational area of educational programs, but also access at least the regions of Central and South Asia”.

Comments: The university **partially agrees** with this remark and is making efforts in this direction. We try to analyze educational programs by profitability, for example, at the meetings of the US dated 03/27/2024, it was decided to exclude 4-OP from the Register: 1) 7M06109 Business Analysis (1), 2)

7M06107 Data Science (1), 3) 7M04110 Project Management (1), 4) 8D06104 Computing equipment and software. For several years, there was no enrollment for these one-year professional master's degree programs, so it was decided to close them. Programs with the same name are offered within the framework of the scientific and pedagogical two-year master's degree.

P.20 – “Teaching staff develops syllabi in accordance with the description of the educational program. The Heads of the Departments and the Department of Academic and Methodological Issues control the content of syllabi. In the discussions, students raise concerns that some lecturers continue to offer the same elective courses repeatedly. The experts recommend introducing incentive schemes to motivate staff to regularly update or introduce new elective courses reflecting technological advancements”

Comments: The University **accepts** experts’ comment, although every year all teachers are recommended to update Elective courses based on employer proposals, as well as on the relevance of new directions.

P. 20 – “During the on-site visit, the experts see a continued need to train and implement critical thinking skills in study programs and on all levels of the organization”.

Comments: IITU **generally agrees** with the experts. Critical thinking is a rather complex phenomenon, nevertheless, almost each teacher defines it as his goal. The introduction of interactive forms of teaching and learning, other various methods and forms of teaching will make the learning process more effective in terms of developing critical thinking. This is a common task for the entire young generation, we consider, including students of IITU.

P. 20 – “The experts recommend institutionalizing a University-wide teaching philosophy, putting a renewed focus on student-centred learning methods and instilling critical thinking capabilities wherever possible”.

Comments: We thank the experts for their recommendations and **fully accept** this remark.

P.21 – “The key platform for the implementation of blended learning. However, most teachers still prefer to combine the work in Platonus with MSTEams and the transition to the Platonus platform is still in progress”.

Comments: We can accept this experts’ conclusion **only in part**. During the COVID 2019 pandemic, teaching staff began using Microsoft Teams as an online teaching tool. The Platonus AIS has been implemented since September 2022. The preference for Teams is still just a force of habit. Over the past academic year, most of the teachers have posted syllabi, lectures and other educational materials in their courses in Platonus. The Platonus developer company has introduced a new module "Platonus Academy", where teaching staff can use it as a Moodle or Teams. The University plans to widely implement this tool to improve work efficiency and hopes that teachers will gradually switch to the new platform.

P.23 – “There is significant potential to combine efforts and resources with other Kazakh universities to boost visible academic and scientific achievements”.

Comments: We **partially agree** with this statement since 2021, IITU has been an active member of the University Alliance of Science and Technology. In collaboration with this esteemed alliance, IITU has successfully co-organized two international scientific conferences—EUSPN 2023 and SIST 2024—and one innovative event, IT Fest 2023. Additionally, starting in the Spring of 2024, IITU has commenced an

exchange program with Astana IT University, further strengthening its commitment to academic collaboration and excellence.

P.24 - “According to information obtained by interviews with students, examination types, timing, and locations are announced well in advance. The process entails that each lecturer individually develops exams for his/her exams, which are then reviewed and approved by the respective Department before being used for testing purposes. The experts learn that exams are to be graded within formerly 5, now within 8 days. The lecturers in the interviews report that the prolongation from 5 to 8 days has taken some pressure from the correctors of the exams, while still allowing grading in a very timely manner”

Comments: We thank the experts for their valuable remark and invite you to accept the explanation of the situation. Some educational departments, such as MCM, RET, Economics and Business, believe that the format of the written exam is more objective and gives an

understanding of the degree of assimilation of the course. (Mathematical analysis, theory of electrical circuits, physics, algebra and geometry, etc.). This is also due to the fact that the university is a member of the League of Academic Integrity, where the format of written control is welcomed.

The deadline for checking written works was previously 5 working days, but with an increase in the number of students and the number of students taking exams, it was decided to extend the deadline for checking written works to 8 working days (decision of the Academic Council of the University). Further extension of the deadlines is fraught with problems for students. Students apply for an appeal, for retaking the exam (FX), for transfer to another university, for a competition for the distribution of vacant grants, etc. Each of the listed procedures, according to the Regulatory Legal Acts of the Ministry of HE, has its own deadlines.

P.25 – “While examination rules and regulations are well defined, examination formats in the expert’s opinion should focus to a greater degree on student competencies and align more with module learning outcomes.”

Comments: We **fully side** with the experts’ position in this respect.

Criterion II.5: Recognition of achievements

p.26 – “Transparent selection criteria and procedures exist for international mobility candidates, but the experts see value in communicating more clearly the reasons for rejections of application”.

Comments: We **completely disagree** with these comments since we have been using the platform <https://mobility.iitu.edu.kz/> for several years for the selection of candidates for the academic mobility program. Students can easily track their application status. According to the regulations on the academic mobility program, there is a procedure and mechanism for the selection of candidates, which displays the criteria for candidates.

P.26–27– “Under the current procedure, students may struggle to find international universities offering exact matches to the IITU modules, making it difficult to complete a fully recognized semester abroad. This contradicts the concept of academic mobility in the Bologna process and might be one reason for the low number of academic mobility. Furthermore, it is unclear to the experts whether the university has been obligated to provide evidence for non-recognition, as required by the Lisbon declaration”

Comments: We **fully side** with the experts’ position in this respect. Our primary aim is to increase the number of exchange students, so we strive to approve all students who meet the selection criteria

outlined in the Regulations. However, each partner university has a limited capacity to accept students from IITU. add: Also, each department contributes to considering learning outcomes from MOOC Coursera courses to match courses that are not presented at international universities. It means that IITU tries to fill the gaps in the recognition process to facilitate the mobility process.

P.27 – “The experts expect the IITU to install a regular process of handing out a «Diploma Supplement» in three languages (Kaz, Ru, Eng) to each and every student upon graduation”.

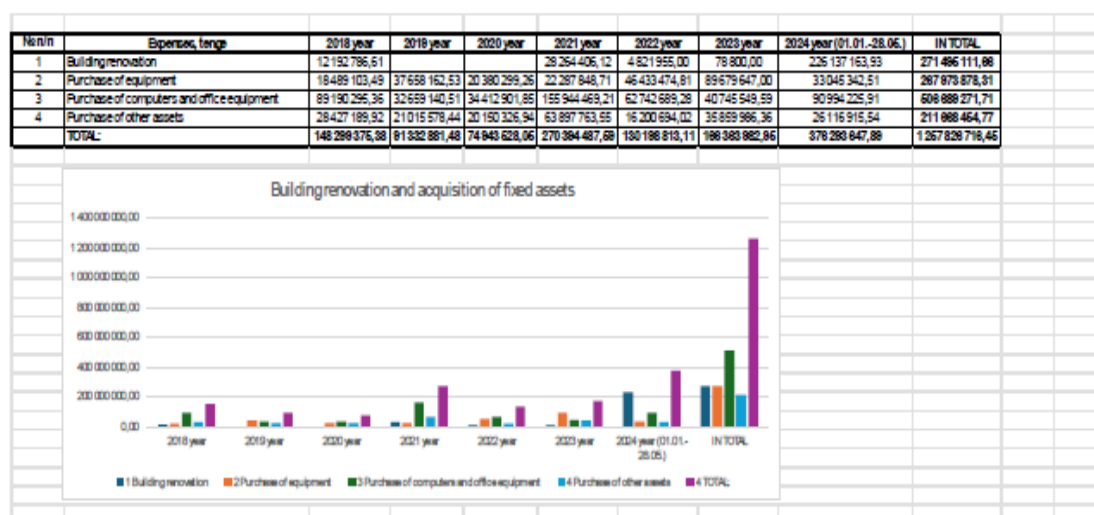
Comments: The University **disagrees** with this statement, as it acts exclusively in accordance with the documents of the Ministry. According to paragraph 36 of the State General Education Standard of Higher Education, approved by Order No. 2 of the RK MSHE dated July 20, 2022, "Persons who have completed their studies in the educational program of HE, ..., issue a document of their own sample with Supplement (a kind of transcript) and (or) a European Diploma Supplement for free. Accordingly, the IITU provides graduates with a diploma supplement (transcript) according to the Kazakh standard in 3 languages, and a European Diploma Supplement at the request of graduates.

Criterion II.6: Assistance and support

P.29 – “There is a pressing need for the expansion and enhancement of key facilities: computer labs to accommodate the burgeoning demand for digital resources and educational technology.

Comments: We can accept this experts’ conclusion **only in part**. Recognizing the need to increase the number of modern computers and constantly update existing ones, the university nevertheless annually updates and expands the university's computer classrooms and laboratories, modernizes the infrastructure in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of HE and Science. In the self-assessment report, we gave a detailed report on the purchase of equipment, the number of upgraded ones and the finances spent for these purposes. The following table shows the annual financial costs of the equipment.

Table 1.



P.29 – “Additionally, the upgrading of sports facilities is crucial not only for promoting physical well-being but also for fostering a sense of community and camaraderie among students”.

Comments: The University **accepts** the fair comment and would like the experts to take this additional information into account. In March 2024, IITU signed a cooperation agreement with S89 Fitness, a large network of fitness clubs in Almaty, to expand opportunities for improving students' physical activities.

The partnership involves promoting a healthy lifestyle and providing students, teachers and staff, as well as members of the IITU Alumni Association with a special corporate discount for classes at fitness clubs.

P.29 – “Furthermore, investing in the development of the library is essential to ensure that students have access to a diverse range of academic resources and materials.”

Comments: We **partially accept** this criticism from experts, the library has paid subscriptions to foreign IEEE electronic databases (Agreement No. 1-138/23 dated 10/16/2023), EBSCO (Agreement No. 1-62(23) dated 04/24/2023). QR codes for access to the library's electronic resources are placed in the library halls, on the information stand, as well as on all tables.

P.29 – “Moreover, the provision of additional co-working spaces for students is vital. These spaces serve as hubs for collaboration, innovation, and academic discourse, thereby enriching the overall learning experience for students.”

Comments: We **agree** with this remark and have set to remedying the situation . However, due to the fact that during the onsite visit the experts did not see all the rooms for coworking in the rented Baizak business center, we inform that rooms have been allocated for the Youth Center, recording studios, vocals and dances; a rehearsal area for creative teams; a costume room; a room for chess and the national game togyzkumalak; offices for psychologists; a concert hall on 300 seats. Currently, the renovation work in the premises has been completed. By the beginning of the academic year, it is planned to purchase furniture, sound equipment, musical instruments, computer equipment and special software.

P.29 – “During in-person discussions, the experts discover that there is a significant gap in the provision of mental health support services. With just one psychologist currently serving a student body of 5800 students, it is clear that more resources need to be allocated addressing this pressing need.”

Comments: We **fully agree** with this remark and have set to remedying the situation. Taking into account the recommendations and in order to form a psychological service in the new academic year, it is planned to additionally recruit 1 unit of a psychologist, as well as 1 unit of a social worker, allocate premises for them and provide everything necessary for work. This issue will be considered when forming the budget for the 2024-2025 academic year.

P.30 – “Students also point to the need to build a dormitory, improve travel conditions within the university...”

Comments: IITU considers this remark **to be fair**, and requests that additional information be taken into account. Currently, an agreement has been reached to allocate 150 places for IITU students in a new comfortable dormitory (built in 2023) of the partner university - the Kazakh-British Technical University. Work is underway to coordinate the terms of the lease and the procedure for settling students. It should be noted that a new sports complex has been built next to the hostel, which will also be available to IITU students.

P. 30 – “....as well as improve Internet access on campus and upgrade computers in some classrooms.”

Comments: We **do not agree** with this comment of experts, since the university tries to meet the needs of students and all staff with sufficient Internet for educational purposes. Currently, 100% of the university's areas are covered by free Internet access. The WiFi wireless network is designed to connect personal laptops and smartphones of teachers and students and serves as an auxiliary means of communication, connected by a separate segment (vLAN) with a lower priority and connection speed.

There is always a stable Internet connection in computer classes and laboratories. The University also spends significant funds and constantly modernizes and expands this Wi-Fi network by installing new access points and replacing outdated ones. Computer and laboratory equipment is updated and expanded annually.

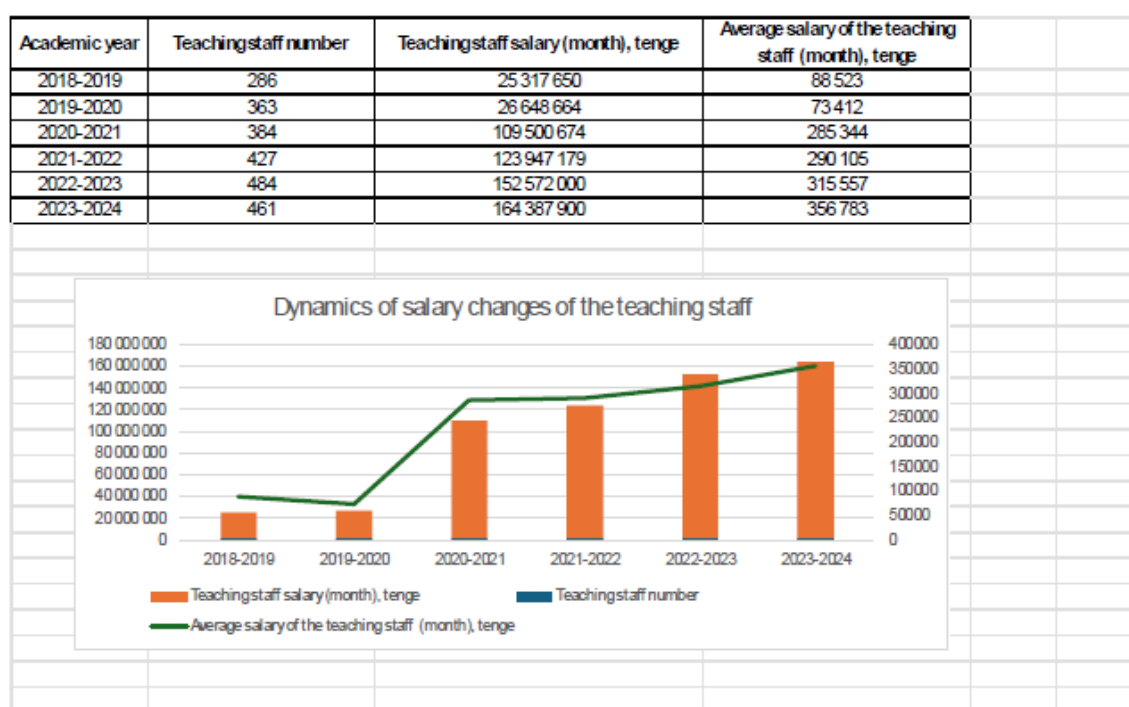
III. Management of resources

Criterion III.1: Material and human resources

P.31 – “The experts in their interviews receive information from lecturers, who have been working at the IITU for more than 10 years without an increase in the salary level and without taking into account the level of inflation in the country”.

Comments: The University **does not agree** with this comment of experts, because despite the teachers' statement that salaries have not increased over the past 5 years, financial statistics show an annual increase in wages. As can be seen from the following table, the average salary of teaching staff increases from year to year in accordance with the Order of RK Ministry of HE and Science on increasing the minimum wage for teaching staff. Motivational salary supplements are different in relation to each teacher, depending on the activity of his scientific, educational, international and other activities. For some teachers, the motivation payment is twice the normal salary.

Table 2



P.32 – “In this regard, the university is recommended reconsidering its hiring policy, possibly partially covering teaching vacancies with doctoral students.”

Comments: We **agree** with the experts' recommendations. The University engages doctoral students in teaching activities on a regular basis.

P.32 – “Most importantly, the experts find evidence of "esprit de corps" among the institution's staff. However, without financial incentives and support, it will be difficult to maintain this in the long term. The relationship between academic and administrative staff also has potential for improvement”.

Comments: We **fully accept** this experts' criticism and have planned to take some measures towards elimination of this drawback.

P.33 – “As regards the number of available classrooms and laboratories, the number of working places in the libraries as well as the size of the (exceedingly small) sports complex, they are judged not keeping pace with the rapidly growing number of students enrolled. The expert team underlines that for the IITU to become a leading university in Central Asia further investments in its infrastructure are critically needed”.

Comments: We **partially disagree** with this statement as there is indeed a restriction on public areas, but it is worth noting quite significant investments in repairs and improvements to conditions for students, as well as in the renovation of laboratory and educational equipment, the opening of new laboratories. (see Table 1).

P.33 – “Students during the discussions point to a lack of places for co-working but also to a critical lack of some technical professional equipment. One example in case are students in a journalism degree program, who do not have the tools to make films. Modern equipment is also missing e.g. in the laboratories for microelectronics and circuit design. Most experiments are carried out in a virtual environment using simulators, which in many cases is not an adequate substitute for real life experimental set ups in the laboratories.”

Comments: We **can hardly accept** this remark fully since along with the total cost of ICT equipment, certain financial resources are allocated for the purchase of specific equipment. For example, for the laboratories for Radioengineering specialty, for the Department of Information Security Systems. However, in the future, it is planned to pay more attention to the purchase of purely professional equipment for certain specialties.

P.34 – “Despite the growth of other income (grants for equipment, for projects, income from research activities, etc.), revenues are unstable and sustainable dynamics cannot be observed.”

Comments: We **partially agree**, the amount of funding has been growing in recent years as it could be seen in the Table 3.

Table 3.

Name of the Income Item	2018-2019 y.u.r.q.d.	2019-2020 a.y.	2020-2021 a.y.	2021-2022 a.y.	2022-2023 a.y.	2023-2024 a.y. (01.01.-28.05.)	TOTAL:
Income from science and projects, tenge	234 360 276	131 502 526	142 900 533	152 964 232	251 965 457	379 582 252	1 293 265 285

P.35 – “The experts express their concern about the risk of distributing surplus profits to shareholders instead of investing in the further development of the university”.

Comments: We **partially agree** with this statement of the experts. The table below (Table 4) reflects the profitability analysis, a significant amount of income has been left for the development of the university, it is planned to purchase an additional building for the organization of study areas, coworking areas, laboratories, leisure facilities for students.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	TOTAL:
Income	194 203 000	331 973 000	464 496 420	993 151 629	1 435 088 000	1 437 724 000	4 856 636 049
Distributed to shareholders		331 973 000	464 496 420	700 000 000			1 496 469 420
Allocated for development	194 203 000			293 151 629	1 435 088 000	1 437 724 000	3 360 166 629

P.36 – “The experts identify positive changes in the library, but at the same time there remains a lack of possibilities for digitizing literature and registering purchased literature, a lack of space for storing books (failure to comply with fire safety regulations), the low quality of book depositories and reading rooms as well as outdated technical equipment.”

Comments: We completely **do not accept** the criticism from experts about fire safety regulations, as these issues are strictly respected by library employees. Every year, employees take courses on "Fire safety and labor protection" with passing an exam and obtaining an appropriate certificate, there are instructions on fire safety measures in the library and instructions on labor protection and safety for library employees. The head of the library conducts a safety and fire safety briefing once a year (before the start of the school year), which is recorded in the register of instruction at the workplace. The library has several fire extinguishers and a separate stand with regulatory documents, an evacuation plan and rules of conduct in case of fire or earthquake.

In 2023, all technical equipment in the library was updated – 15 modern workplaces for students (electronic reading room) and 6 computers for library staff were installed (equipment supply agreement No. 1-172/23 dated 11/20/2023).

In 2023, the library purchased an Automatic CopiBook OS EC A2+ planetary scanner with a camera resolution of 71MP, a supply agreement of 311-001 KD/1-160/1/23 Since 11/19/2023, the library staff has been successfully working on the digitization of literature. Electronic book collections are being purchased (Contract No. 1-260/24 dated 05/20/2024).

The library has paid subscriptions to foreign IEEE electronic databases (Agreement No. 1- 138/23 dated 10/16/2023), EBSCO (Agreement No. 1-62(23) dated 04/24/2023). QR codes for access to the library's electronic resources are placed in the library halls, on the information stand, as well as on all tables.

We **fully agree** with the comments on the lack of space in the reading rooms and the book depository.

P.37 – “Based on this information, the experts conclude that the use of KPI is ineffective since this incentive system is not supported by a sufficient amount of money”.

Comments: We **partially agree** with the opinion of the experts. For 2 years, the university had a KPA system, but it did not show the effectiveness that was expected. In this regard, the approach was revised and a grading system was introduced (Minutes of the Board meeting No. 13/24 dated 04/12/2024).

P.37 – “The SAR noted that conflicts arise, when assessing the annual performance of staff, since the criteria are determined by administrative units and do not always cover all aspects of

the activities of teachers. Dissatisfaction with the amount of additional payments in accordance with the KPI was also expressed. To resolve internal conflicts, there is a Conciliation Commission, the members of which are teachers and representatives of the administration”.

Comments: The university **partially agrees** with this remark and is making efforts in this direction. Every year, taking into account comments and suggestions of the process of assessing the annual performance of staff, the evaluation criteria are revised by a working group, which includes not only administrative personnel, but representatives of teaching staff and heads of departments. The University has a Conciliation Commission on a permanent basis, which can consider any labor dispute that has arisen.

P.38 – “The experts discover that teaching staff frequently pay for participation in external trainings themselves. Information about such events at the university level is poorly organized, as is the invitation of foreign specialists to conduct seminars. The University recognizes that the process requires a systematic approach, as it is currently largely based on the personal initiative of each team member”

Comments: We **partially** accept the comments of experts and do our best to further improve the work on professional development of teaching and administrative staff. The University recognizes that this process requires a systematic approach, as it is currently largely based on the personal initiative of each team member. When applying to IITU, the person should present up-to-date certificates of advanced training in the profile of the courses taught. In addition to the fact that teachers improve their qualifications independently, the university also allocates funds for participation in trainings and seminars. Since 2021, the university has been systematically working with the Coursera platform, in accordance with the signed agreement each employee has a license on this platform with free access to more than 12,000 courses. For example, in the 2023 calendar year, 121 teachers took courses on Coursera. It is also worth noting the constant work and involvement of foreign teachers both for lectures and seminars, round tables, master classes. Information about the events is regularly posted on the University's Internet resources.

Criterion III.3: Interaction with research

P. 38. “A new “Department of Research and Development” (R&D) has been established as of 2019 to support the advancement of the IITU in this critical area”.

Comments: There is an inaccuracy in this sentence. The department that coordinates scientific activities at the university is called the "Department for Research Activities," as reflected in the IITU organisational structure.

P. 39. “Despite of the IITU’s budget showing positive dynamics, the amount generated by research activities has remained virtually unchanged over the past 5 years”.

Comments: We **partially disagree** with this statement. Considering the absolute figures, the increase in projects and their funding through the Ministry of Science and Higher Education over 5 years is evident. And it is the percentage ratio of the amount generated by research activities to the total budget that remains unchanged, due to the also positive dynamics of the overall university budget. In other words, both indicators grow, but their percentage ratio does not change. (see Table 3)

P. 39. “One of the major obstacles for improving the IITU’s research record is the considerable academic workload, ...”

Comments: We **mostly agree** with experts’ remarks. The annual working time balance is about 2,000 hours. Teaching workload is set at 680 hours, which, when divided by 30 weeks, equates to

approximately 22-23 hours per week. The remaining 1320 hours are about enough for scientific and other activities. However, this workload includes contact hours and such activities as supervising. For staff with a PhD degree, this may involve supervising master's and PhD students as they write their theses. For staff without a PhD, it includes supervising undergraduate students during their internships and diploma projects. Consequently, the actual number of contact hours is less than 23, but it remains substantial.

P. 40. "Writing successful research proposals requires professional staff specialised in studying tenders, ...".

Comments: We **partially disagree** with the statement as there is no specially allocated person at the university solely responsible for assisting academic staff with writing research proposals. Nevertheless,

1) The university regularly organizes seminars with invited professionals, focusing on writing successful proposals for Science Committee funding. For instance, last year such seminars were held twice, the first in June and the second in October (<https://iitu.edu.kz/en/news/убедительная-заявка-на-научный-грант-от-идеи-до-оформления-en/>), right after the call for proposals 2024-2026 was announced.

2) The Department for Research Activities staff provide ongoing support to researchers in preparing applications, including consulting on correct project planning, formal requirements, required expected results and the information system.

3) The Financial Directorate staff have developed an electronic template that meets the requirements of the requested funding. Researchers need to fill in the form with details such as the number of project participants, their monthly salaries, planned equipment purchases and planned conferences to attend, and the budget is calculated automatically.

Thus, it can be concluded that academic staff currently receive comprehensive assistance in preparing their applications.

Criterion III.4: Interaction with administration

P.41 – "The experts discovered there is a perceived need within the administration to increase their visibility and be more actively heard to enhance overall communication. Some members express a desire for even more direct communication between the staff and the Rector".

Comments: We **do not agree** with this opinion of experts, the Rector is open to interaction with students, teaching and administrative staff, there is reception schedules of all management members and anyone can make an appointment. The rector actively maintains pages on social networks, and is open to all requests, comments and suggestions.

Additionally any university employee can address any question to the direct supervisor or senior management by direct appeal or by contacting through corporate mail or electronic document management system. Any appeal, whether it is a student's or an employee's appeal, is necessarily considered by the internal investigation commission appointed by the rector's order and an appropriate conclusion is issued.

IV. Transparency and documentation

Criterion IV.1: Rules and regulations for programs / courses / trainings

P.42 – "The IITU develops and approves internal regulatory documentation that are published on the University website. As regards the development and implementation of its Bachelor, Master and PhD

programs, they are subject to compliance exigencies with a broad range of external regulations – most of them emanating from the RK MHES. Considering the numerous, and frequently very detailed state requirements as well as internal regulation acts, study program related documentation has to be continuously updated in a timely manner”.

Comments: We **mostly accept** the experts’ remarks and do everything possible to monitor the emergence of new ministerial documents and post them on the university website. However, it is often not possible to place them equally in three languages. The University will do everything possible to correct this deficiency.

P.43 – “The experts in their summative assessment confirm that EP-related rules and regulations have been published on the University website and find no evidence that confidentiality and security requirements have not been observed. Information related mobility opportunities for students should however be updated”.

Comments: IITU **partially agrees** with this statement. The updates are only available on the portal: <https://mobility.iitu.edu.kz/>

P.43 – “One example in case it the fact that the IITU website does not contain program related rules and regulations in English, which makes it difficult for foreign teachers and students to have access to vital information. The exigency is, in other words, to maintain the content of the website at the same level for all three languages in use, so that the websites in Kazakh, Russian and English contain comparable information”.

Comments: We **partially agree** with the conclusions of the experts, as we try to post all information about educational programs, however, there are often cases when information is not uploaded in three languages equally.

P.43 – “The expert team recommends that the University take appropriate steps securing transparency and dissemination of this information. Among the target groups figure prominently new students and faculty. Among possible measures could be the creation of online platforms with FAQs and clarifications about the rules and regulations.

The expert team also identifies problems regarding the lack of mechanisms or opportunities for feedback on the rules, which can also hinder the process of compliance. To ensure that the rules are as transparent as possible for all stakeholders, the University should organize information sessions for new students and faculty, create online platforms with FAQs and clarifications about the rules and regulations, and arrange for regular dissemination of information about any changes or updates to the rules”.

Comments: We **agree** with the expert team's recommendation to enhance transparency and dissemination of information for new students and faculty. Of course, we carry out certain activities with new students, informing them about all university regulations, but there is a need

to improve this work. Additionally, we will implement mechanisms for feedback to improve compliance and transparency.

P. 44 – “Through discussions with academic department heads, the expert team realizes that a potential shortcoming is the failure to provide information to other departments in a timely manner, providing inaccurate information, or delaying the delivery of documents. Another problem is the frequent change of department administrators responsible for the design, maintenance and storage of documentation”.

Comments: We **agree** with this statement. Unfortunately, the frequent change of administrators is justified by significantly low wages. Since electronic document management has been introduced, we hope the problem with document delivery will be solved in the nearest future.

The University is really grateful to ASIIN and experts' group for the opportunities that may open up as a result of accreditation by such a recognized European educational authority and wishes ASIIN and peers the success in reaching the noble goals of making this world a better place to study.

E Summary: Expert Recommendations

Areas to review		Maturity Level
I.1 Objectives	a) institutional	3
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	3
I.2 (Quality-) management systems/ governance	a) institutional	2
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	3

II.1 Creation and development of programmes / courses / training	a) institutional	3
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	3
II.2 Implementation of programmes / courses / training	a) institutional	2
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	2
II.3 Cooperation	a) institutional	2
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	3
II.4 Examination systems and organisation of exams	a) institutional	3
	b) procedural	3
	c) cultural	3

II.5 Recognition of achievements	a) institutional	2
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	2
II.6 Assistance and support	a) institutional	3
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	3

III.1 Material and human resources	a) institutional	1
	b) procedural	3
	c) cultural	2
III.2 Human resources development	a) institutional	2
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	2
III.3 Interaction with research	a) institutional	2
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	2
III.4 Interaction with administration	a) institutional	3
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	3

IV.1 Rules and regulations for programmes / courses / training	a) institutional	3
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	3
IV.2 Documentation	a) institutional	3
	b) procedural	2
	c) cultural	3

Overall comments

Based on this institutional accreditation report the experts recommend:

Awarding the institutional ASIIN System Seal to the International Information Technology University, Kazakhstan with 6 requirements and 19 recommendations for one year until 19. July 2025. The extension of the accreditation until 30. September 2031 is subject to the fulfilment of the requirements.

Requirements:

- A1. (ASIIN I.1) The IITU is required developing a comprehensive Internationalization Strategy (strengthening the international content of educational programs, increasing the share of international students and teaching staff, creating a more international and

intercultural academic environment), as part of its Strategic Positioning and justifying its Denomination.

- A2. (ASIIN I.2) The IITU is required further improving/formalizing its internal quality assurance, allocating sufficient HR resources to its central QA Unit. Its Quality Policy Manual must be updated/revised taking account of the numerous changes in its organizational structures and procedures since 2020.
- A3. (ASIIN II.2) The IITU is required institutionalizing a university-wide teaching philosophy, putting a renewed focus on student-centred learning methods and instilling critical thinking capabilities wherever possible.
- A4. (ASIIN II.5) The IITU must automatically provide a Diploma Supplement according to European requirements to its graduates and must not restrict it to one language. For international exchange purposes, one sample needs to be in English language.
- A5. (ASIIN II.6) The IITU must increase the number of qualified mental health professionals.
- A6. (ASIIN III.1) The IITU must provide evidence that the long announced investments in its infrastructure (investment in modern facilities, learning and working space, sports facilities e.g.) in line with this accreditation report has materialized.

Recommendations

The experts recommend that:

- E1. (ASIIN I.1) the IITU substantiates its focus on research in finalizing its draft Strategic Plan 2023-2029.
- E2. (ASIIN I.1) the IITU links its new Strategic Plan to its short and mid-term financial plans and a risk register.
- E3. (ASIIN I.2) the IITU regularly monitors the structure and distribution of competencies in its greatly enlarged Management Board and assigns the central responsibility for QA within this body.
- E4. (ASIIN 1.2) the IITU uses the expertise of its internal Data Management department/educational programs applying it systematically to its own IQA system courses.
- E5. (ASIIN II.1) the IITU conducts a critical analysis of the sustainability of its educational programs, reviewing its graduate model and concentrating limited resources.
- E6. (ASIIN II.1) the IITU develops a holistic model of designing Learning Outcomes, harmonizing the procedure of formulating them. This will greatly contribute in making EP more distinguishable.
- E7. (ASIIN II.2) the IITU makes sure that the elective courses on offer are regularly updated reflecting technological advances.

-
- E8. (ASIIN II.2) the IITU increases and actively promotes options for intensified in- and outgoing mobility.
- E9. (ASIIN II.3) the IITU makes renewed efforts pooling resources and interacting with the network of other Kazakh universities strengthening the potential for training IT specialists in Kazakhstan and Central Asia.
- E10. (ASIIN II.3) the IITU creates a permanent Industrial Advisory Committee.
- E11. (ASIIN II.4) the IITU reforms its examination system focusing to a greater degree on student competencies and aligning them more fittingly with the course learning outcomes. The variety of exams should be enhanced, presentation and project skills be fostered.
- E12. (ASIIN II.5) the IITU reviews its recognition procedures, focusing systematically on comparable learning outcomes in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention.
- E13. (ASIIN III.1) the IITU considers the creation of its own central University Campus.
- E14. (ASIIN III.2) the IITU invests in the further diversification of its income sources.
- E15. (ASIIN III.2) the IITU allocates more funding for staff incentive schemes.
- E16. (ASIIN III.2) the IITU moves forward in establishing a more structured and personalized system of staff development.
- E17. (ASIIN III.3) the IITU invests in the professional support under the umbrella of its new department of “Research and Development”, diversifying the range of research tenders and placing more emphasis on third party funding by industry. Successful tendering for research should get more weight in the staff assessment system.
- E18. (ASIIN III.4): the IITU boosts the recognition of administrative support units in running the university and opens better communication channels for administrative personnel.
- E19. (ASIIN IV.1) the IITU updates information for student mobility opportunities.
- E20. (ASIIN VI.2) monitors that its website, presented in three languages (Kazakh, Russian, English) is up to date and contains the same information.

F Decision of the Accreditation Committee (28.06.2024)

The Accreditation Commission discusses the procedure and generally follows the assessment of the experts. The Accreditation Commission only changes the working in requirements A5 and A6 to clarify the intention of the experts.

Based on this institutional accreditation report and the assessment of the experts, the Accreditation Commission comes to the following decision:

ASIIN Seal	Maximum duration of accreditation
With requirements for one year	30.09.2031

Requirements:

- A1. (ASIIN I.1) The IITU is required developing a comprehensive Internationalization Strategy (strengthening the international content of educational programs, increasing the share of international students and teaching staff, creating a more international and intercultural academic environment), as part of its Strategic Positioning and justifying its Denomination.
- A2. (ASIIN I.2) The IITU is required further improving/formalizing its internal quality assurance, allocating sufficient HR resources to its central QA Unit. Its Quality Policy Manual must be updated/revised taking account of the numerous changes in its organizational structures and procedures since 2020.
- A3. (ASIIN II.2) The IITU is required institutionalizing a university-wide teaching philosophy, putting a renewed focus on student-centred learning methods and instilling critical thinking capabilities wherever possible.
- A4. (ASIIN II.5) The IITU must automatically provide a Diploma Supplement according to European requirements to its graduates and must not restrict it to one language. For international exchange purposes, one sample needs to be in English language.
- A5. (ASIIN II.6) The IITU has to provide sufficient mental health services to its students.
- A6. (ASIIN III.1) The IITU must provide evidence that the long announced investments in its infrastructure (investment in modern facilities, learning and working space, e.g.) in line with this accreditation report has materialized.

Recommendations

The experts recommend that:

- E1. (ASIIN I.1) the IITU substantiates its focus on research in finalizing its draft Strategic Plan 2023-2029.

-
- E2. (ASIIN I.1) the IITU links its new Strategic Plan to its short and mid-term financial plans and a risk register.
- E3. (ASIIN I.2) the IITU regularly monitors the structure and distribution of competencies in its greatly enlarged Management Board and assigns the central responsibility for QA within this body.
- E4. (ASIIN 1.2) the IITU uses the expertise of its internal Data Management department/educational programs applying it systematically to its own IQA system courses.
- E5. (ASIIN II.1) the IITU conducts a critical analysis of the sustainability of its educational programs, reviewing its graduate model and concentrating limited resources.
- E6. (ASIIN II.1) the IITU develops a holistic model of designing Learning Outcomes, harmonizing the procedure of formulating them. This will greatly contribute in making EP more distinguishable.
- E7. (ASIIN II.2) the IITU makes sure that the elective courses on offer are regularly updated reflecting technological advances.
- E8. (ASIIN II.2) the IITU increases and actively promotes options for intensified in- and outgoing mobility.
- E9. (ASIIN II.3) the IITU makes renewed efforts pooling resources and interacting with the network of other Kazakh universities strengthening the potential for training IT specialists in Kazakhstan and Central Asia.
- E10. (ASIIN II.3) the IITU creates a permanent Industrial Advisory Committee.
- E11. (ASIIN II.4) the IITU reforms its examination system focusing to a greater degree on student competencies and aligning them more fittingly with the course learning outcomes. The variety of exams should be enhanced, presentation and project skills be fostered.
- E12. (ASIIN II.5) the IITU reviews its recognition procedures, focusing systematically on comparable learning outcomes in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention.
- E13. (ASIIN III.1) the IITU considers the creation of its own central University Campus.
- E14. (ASIIN III.2) the IITU invests in the further diversification of its income sources.
- E15. (ASIIN III.2) the IITU allocates more funding for staff incentive schemes.
- E16. (ASIIN III.2) the IITU moves forward in establishing a more structured and personalized system of staff development.
- E17. (ASIIN III.3) the IITU invests in the professional support under the umbrella of its new department of “Research and Development”, diversifying the range of research tenders and placing more emphasis on third party funding by industry. Successful tendering for research should get more weight in the staff assessment system.

-
- E18. (ASIIN III.4): the IITU boosts the recognition of administrative support units in running the university and opens better communication channels for administrative personnel.
- E19. (ASIIN IV.1) the IITU updates information for student mobility opportunities.
- E20. (ASIIN VI.2) the IITU monitors that its website, presented in three languages (Kazakh, Russian, English) is up to date and contains the same information.

G Fulfilment of Requirements (27.06.2025)

Analysis of the experts (25.06.2025)

Requirements

- A 1. (ASIIN I.1) The IITU is required developing a comprehensive Internationalization Strategy (strengthening the international content of educational programs, increasing the share of international students and teaching staff, creating a more international and intercultural academic environment), as part of its Strategic Positioning and justifying its Denomination.

Initial Treatment	
Experts	Fulfilled Vote: unanimous Justification: Numerous effective measures have already been implemented, and initial successes are beginning to emerge. The number of international contacts—both among students and faculty—has increased significantly in a short period of time. These initiatives are well-suited to further enhance the university's international profile.

- A 2. (ASIIN I.2) The IITU is required further improving/formalizing its internal quality assurance, allocating sufficient HR resources to its central QA Unit. Its Quality Policy Manual must be updated/revised taking account of the numerous changes in its organizational structures and procedures since 2020.

Initial Treatment	
Experts	Fulfilled Vote: unanimous Justification: Quality assurance has been expanded and restructured. Additional staff has been appointed centrally and the university states that the quality assurance system has been reorganized.

- A 3. (ASIIN II.2) The IITU is required institutionalizing a university-wide teaching philosophy, putting a renewed focus on student-centred learning methods and instilling critical thinking capabilities wherever possible.

Initial Treatment	
Experts	Fulfilled Vote: unanimous Justification: The university reports on measures it has implemented to establish a new teaching philosophy—Student-

	Centred Learning—across the institution. The described initiatives appear well-suited to support this goal.
--	---

- A 4. (ASIIN II.5) The IITU must automatically provide a Diploma Supplement according to European requirements to its graduates and must not restrict it to one language. For international exchange purposes, one sample needs to be in English language.

Initial Treatment	
Experts	Fulfilled Vote: unanimous Justification To meet ASIIN requirements, IITU has introduced an amendment to its internal regulatory document, Regulation on the Issuance of the Diploma Supplement on Higher Education (R-43, Revision 3), dated April 4, 2025. Under this amendment, starting from July 2025, all university graduates will receive a Diploma Supplement in English, fully aligned with European standards. A sample Diploma Supplement was provided, it meets all requirements.

- A 5. (ASIIN II.6) The IITU has to provide sufficient mental health services to its students.

Initial Treatment	
Experts	Fulfilled Vote: unanimous Justification: In order to provide more students with access to mental health support, the university has implemented several measures. These include hiring additional psychologists and launching programs designed both to monitor students' stress levels and to develop targeted mental health services for both students and staff.

- A 6. (ASIIN III.1) The IITU must provide evidence that the long announced investments in its infrastructure (investment in modern facilities, learning and working space, e.g.) in line with this accreditation report has materialized.

Initial Treatment	
Experts	Fulfilled Vote: unanimous Justification: The university reports the acquisition of a site for new construction and presents designs for the renewal of the existing infrastructure. Construction of the new building is approved and the renovation of the existing facilities will start soon..

Decision of the Accreditation Commission (27.06.2025)

University	ASIIN-label	Accreditation until max.
International Information Technology University	All requirements fulfilled	30 September 2031

H Appendix: Schedule

Time plan for the implementation of the Institutional Accreditation

Peer Group:

- Prof. Dr.-Ing. Christiane Fritze, Coburg University of Applied Sciences
- Prof. Dr. H.-Christian Brauweiler, University of Applied Sciences Zwickau
- Prof. Marina Skiba, Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University
- Dr. Konstantin Petridis, VDE e.V (Association of Electrical Engineering, Electronics and Information Technology)
- Ualikhan Sadyk, Student at Suleyman Demirel University

ASIIN:

Dr. Iring Wasser - Managing director of ASIIN

Assoc. Prof Irina Yefimova – ASIIN coordinator for CA

1. Day (28. February 2024)

Date / Time	Activity, location	Topics	Participants of the institution
27.02 (evening) 28.02 morning	Arrival of peers at the Airport, Transfer to the hotel		IITU representatives
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch (hotel restaurant)		Gulnara Zakirova
14.00 – 17.00	Internal meeting of the peers Location: hotel conference room	Introduction round, assessment of Self-Assessment Report, De-velopment of Question-naire for different inter-view rounds	
18.00 – 20.00	Dinner Location: restaurant near hotel		Vice-rector for Digitalization, Director of International department

2. Day (29. February 2024)

Date / Time	Activity, location	Topics	Participants of the institution
07.45 – 8.15	Pick up from the hotel		IITU representative
08:30 - 09:00 am	Introductory meeting Location: 10 floor, conference hall	Welcome note, short presentation of the institution by management, general questions	IITU Rector, vice-rectors, departments' directors, other members of management board.
09:00 - 10:30 am	1. Interview round Location: 10 floor, conference hall	Section I: Understanding of Quality (Definition, responsibilities)	Management, staff members from QM unit
10:30 - 10:45 am	Break		
10:45 - 12:15 pm	2. Interview round Location: 10 floor, conference hall	Section III: Management of resources (Material and human resources, Human resources development, Interaction with research, Interaction with administration)	Management
12:15 - 13:15 pm	Lunch		
13:15 - 14:15 pm	3. Interview round Location: 10 floor, conference hall	Section III: Management of resources (Material and human resources, Human resources development, Interaction with research, Interaction with administration)	Staff members of administration
14:15 - 15:00 pm	Consultation of Documents	Section I: Understanding of Quality Section III: Management of resources Section IV: Transparency and documentation	
15:00 - 15:15 pm	Break		
15:15 - 16:15 pm	4. Interview round	Section IV: Transparency and documentation (Rules and regulations for programmes /	Management

Date / Time	Activity, location	Topics	Participants of the institution
	Location: 10 floor, conference hall	courses / trainings, (Documentation)	Staff members of the legal unit
16:15 - 17:30 pm	Tour through the facilities of the institution Location: main building, Bayzak Center.	Section III: Management of resources	Heads of study units
17:30 – 18:30 pm	Internal meeting of peers Location: Room 102	Summary of information gathered during the day Section II: Educational Programmes / Courses / Trainings Section IV: Transparency and documentation Preliminary assessment of maturity levels	
19:00 pm	Dinner		IITU representatives

3. Day (01. March 2024)

Date / Time	Activity, location	Topics	Participants of the institution
08:30 - 10:00 am	5. Interview round Location: [HEI]	Section II: Educational Programmes / Courses / Trainings (Cooperations, Examination systems and organisation of exams, Recognition of achievements, Assistance and support)	Heads of study units
10:00 – 10:15 am	Break		
10:15 - 12:00 am	6. Interview round With students Location: rom 907	Section I: Understanding of Quality Section II: Educational Programmes / Courses / Trainings Section III: Management of resources Section IV: Transparency and documentation	Students

Date / Time	Activity, location	Topics	Participants of the institution
12:00 - 13:00 pm	Lunch		
13:00 - 13:30 pm	Consultation of Documents	Section II: Educational Programmes / Courses / Trainings	
13:30 - 14:30 pm	7. Interview round With cooperation / external partners Location: Innovation Center	Section II: Educational Programmes / Courses / Trainings (Cooperations)	IITU Business partners, etc
14:30 - 14:45 pm	Break		
14:45 - 16:00 pm	8. Interview round With teachers/lecturers Location: 907 room	Section I: Understanding of Quality Section II: Educational Programmes / Courses / Trainings Section III: Management of resources Section IV: Transparency and documentation	Lecturers
16:00 – 17:30 pm	Internal meeting of peers Location: room 102	Summary of information gathered during the day Section II: Educational Programmes / Courses / Trainings Section IV: Transparency and documentation Assessment of maturity levels	
17:30 – 18:30 pm	9. Interview round Final Meeting with Management Location: 10 floor, conference hall	Impressions of the peers	Management, interested stakeholders
19:00 pm	Dinner		

4. Day (02. March 2024)

Date Time	/	Activity, location	Topics	Participants of the institution
02.03 04.03	–	Departure from Almaty (according to the flights time)		IITU representatives