

Project No: 101129398- ERASMUS-EDU-2024-CBHE-STRAND-1

Improving University Quality Assurance Resilient Strategies Toward Excellence

QA-SURE

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Needs Analysis Report

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1. Introduction

In the continuous pursuit of academic excellence and the enhancement of quality assurance practices, partner universities such as the Western Balkans University, Albania; Luarasi University, Albania; Polis University, Albania; International Business College Mitrovica, Kosovo; University Isa Boletini Mitrovica, Kosovo; South East European University, North Macedonia; and International School for Social and Business Studies, Slovenia, embarked on an insightful journey through the implementation of the QA-SURE project. An integral component of this project involved gathering the perceptions, experiences, and feedback of our diverse university community through structured surveys. This document, the "Survey Analysis Report," presents a comprehensive analysis of the responses collected from these surveys, shedding light on the current state of quality assurance practices within our institution.

The surveys, accurately designed to align with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) standards and the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), aimed to capture a holistic view of the stakeholders' perspectives. With three separate surveys administered to faculty and administrative staff, students, and the industry, our objective was to uncover actionable insights that could guide the strategic enhancement of our quality assurance mechanisms. The analysis contained within these pages goes beyond mere statistical interpretation; it explores into the heart of our collective aspirations, challenges, and commitments towards quality education. By examining the data through various lenses—comparing responses across different demographics, departments, and stakeholder groups—we uncover patterns and nuances that form the bedrock of our findings.

This report is structured to provide a clear and accessible overview of the methodology employed in the analysis, followed by a detailed presentation of the findings, segmented according to key themes and areas of inquiry. Through charts, tables, and narrative explanations, we endeavour to convey the significance of the data in a manner that is both informative and engaging.

As we present the outcomes of this analysis, we also lay the groundwork for future actions. The insights gleaned from this report are poised to inform the development of targeted strategies aimed at bolstering the quality of education and research at Luarasi University. It is a testament to our unwavering commitment to not only meeting but exceeding the standards of excellence expected by our students, faculty, and the broader academic community.

We invite you to explore the findings detailed in this report, as we are taking a critical step forward in our journey towards continuous improvement and excellence in quality assurance.

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2. Student's Survey Structure

The first survey that has been filled out by the students at the partner universities has been based on the questions as follows.

1. **Which university do you study at?** The university the respondent attends.
2. **Level of Study. Select the program of study you are currently in.:** Indicates whether the respondent is in a Bachelor's or Master's program.
3. **Field of studies. Please specify your field of study.:** The specific field of study of the respondent.
4. **Quality of Teaching. Rate the quality of teaching you receive.:** A rating for the quality of teaching.
5. **Awareness and achievement of learning outcomes. How well do you feel your programs are preparing you to meet these outcomes?** A rating on the awareness and achievement of learning outcomes.
6. **Feedback Opportunities. Are you provided with any opportunities to give feedback on courses and teaching?** Information on whether respondents are provided with opportunities to give feedback.
7. **By what means do you provide your feedback on courses and teaching?** The means through which feedback is provided.
8. **Does the university ensure that your feedback is taken into account?** Information on whether the university takes student feedback into account.

This framework aims to capture a comprehensive view of students' academic experiences, teaching quality, and the effectiveness of feedback mechanisms.

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3. University Overview

The distribution of survey responses per university is as follows:

- Luarasi University: 393 responses
- Western Balkans University: 249 responses
- University Isa Boletini Mitrovica: 203 responses
- South East European University: 135 responses
- Polis University: 98 responses
- International Business College Mitrovica: 38 responses
- International School for Social and Business Studies: 33 responses

This distribution indicates a varied level of participation among the universities, with Luarasi University having the highest number of responses and the International School for Social and Business Studies having the fewest. This variance highlights differing engagement levels, pinpointing areas for potential outreach to ensure broader representation in future assessments.

4. Program Level Distribution

The breakdown of responses by the level of study is:

- Bachelor: 990 responses
- Master: 159 responses

The majority of survey participants are Bachelor's level students, suggesting that the findings may be more reflective of the undergraduate experience.

5. Field of Study Distribution

The fields of study represented in the survey, after standardization, show the following distribution:

- Other: 563 responses
- Economics: 202 responses
- Law: 94 responses
- Education: 81 responses
- Medicine & Health Sciences: 41 responses
- Engineering: 37 responses
- Architecture: 33 responses
- Nursing: 30 responses
- Art & Design: 18 responses

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- Business Administration: 17 responses
- Computer Science: 17 responses
- Marketing: 9 responses
- Environmental Studies: 4 responses
- Psychology: 2 responses
- International Relations: 1 response

This overview reveals a broad range of academic disciplines, with a significant number of responses categorized under "Other", indicating a diversity in fields of study that extends beyond the main categories identified.

With this foundational understanding of the demographic and academic background of the participants, we will now advance to analyzing the quality of teaching, access to learning resources, feedback mechanisms, and responsiveness across the universities. This step will help identify gaps, strengths, and areas for improvement in current quality assurance practices.

6. Analysis of Quality of Teaching and Support Services

The average ratings for the quality of teaching and support services across the universities are as follows:

Quality of Teaching Average Ratings

- International School for Social and Business Studies: 4.48
- Polis University: 4.34
- South East European University: 4.33
- Western Balkans University: 4.28
- Luarasi University: 4.15
- International Business College Mitrovica: 4.13
- University Isa Boletini Mitrovica: 4.06

Support Services Average Ratings

- International School for Social and Business Studies: 4.42
- South East European University: 4.14
- Western Balkans University: 4.11
- Polis University: 3.91
- Luarasi University: 3.78
- University Isa Boletini Mitrovica: 3.71
- International Business College Mitrovica: 3.68

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These ratings provide insights into the perceived quality of teaching and the effectiveness of support services across the surveyed universities. The International School for Social and Business Studies stands out with high ratings in both categories, indicating a strong perception of quality in teaching and support services. Conversely, the International Business College Mitrovica has the lowest average rating for support services, which might indicate areas for improvement.

With these insights, we can further delve into the feedback mechanisms, evaluating opportunities provided to students for giving feedback and how effectively this feedback is considered by the universities.

The variances in ratings between universities suggest differences in the implementation and effectiveness of quality assurance practices, particularly in teaching quality and the provision of support services.

Universities with higher ratings in both categories may have more robust and effective quality assurance practices, including strong teaching methodologies and comprehensive support services that enhance the educational experience.

This comparative analysis underscores the importance of both quality teaching and accessible learning resources in achieving high standards of education. Universities can leverage these insights to identify areas for improvement and adopt best practices from institutions with higher ratings.

7. Feedback Opportunities Analysis

The analysis of feedback opportunities provided to students across universities shows varied responses on whether students are provided with opportunities to give feedback on courses and teaching. This information is critical in understanding the openness and responsiveness of universities to student input, which is a key component of quality assurance practices.

The detailed analysis of feedback opportunities across each university reveals the percentages of responses regarding whether students are provided with opportunities to give feedback on courses and teaching. Here's a summary of the key findings:

- **International Business College Mitrovica:** A majority (78.95%) of respondents indicated they are provided with feedback opportunities, with a smaller percentage noting conditional opportunities ("Somehow") or a lack of opportunities.

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- **International School for Social and Business Studies:** Similarly, 78.79% of respondents reported having feedback opportunities, with 18.18% noting conditional opportunities.
- **Luarasi University:** 57.25% of respondents indicated having feedback opportunities, but a significant portion (23.41%) reported conditional opportunities, and 13.99% reported no opportunities.
- **Polis University, South-East European University, University Isa Boletini Mitrovica, and Western Balkans University** also show varied responses, with the majority indicating the presence of feedback opportunities, but with notable percentages reporting conditional opportunities or a lack of them.
- South-East European University and University Isa Boletini Mitrovica show a notable percentage of "I don't know" responses, indicating uncertainty about how feedback is utilized.

Across most universities, there is a mix of positive responses, uncertainty ("I don't know"), and some indications of feedback not being effectively implemented ("No" or "Somehow").

These findings indicate that while most universities seem to provide feedback opportunities to some extent, there's variability in how accessible or effective these opportunities are perceived by the students. Conditional opportunities ("Somehow") and outright absence of opportunities are reported to varying extents across the institutions, pointing towards areas that could benefit from improvement in ensuring student feedback is actively sought and valued as part of quality assurance practices.

This analysis highlights the importance of not only providing feedback opportunities but also ensuring these opportunities are clear, accessible, and effectively communicated to all students.

The ANOVA test¹ results suggest that universities differ significantly in how they deliver quality teaching and provide support services, underscoring the importance of individual institutions evaluating and improving their specific practices.

The strong positive correlation between the quality of teaching and support services emphasizes the interconnectedness of these aspects in contributing to the overall educational experience. Improvements in one area may likely lead to improvements in the other, highlighting the value of a holistic approach to enhancing quality assurance practices.

¹ The ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test is a statistical method used to compare the means of three or more samples to determine if at least one of the sample means is significantly different from the others. It's a way to test general rather than specific differences among means. The basic principle behind ANOVA is to analyze the variance among the groups and within the groups to assess the overall variance in a dataset.

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8. Areas with Consistently Low Ratings Across Multiple Universities

Based on the statistical analysis previously conducted, we can infer that:

- **Support Services (Proxy for Access to Learning Resources)** had lower average ratings compared to the **Quality of Teaching** in some universities. Specifically, the **International Business College Mitrovica** and **University Isa Boletini Mitrovica** had lower ratings in support services, indicating potential gaps in the effectiveness of academic advising, career services, and overall support services that enhance the educational experience.

Recommendations for Addressing Identified Needs and Gaps:

- **Enhancing Support Services:** Focus shall be put on improving the availability and quality of academic advising, career services, and other support mechanisms to ensure students have the resources they need to succeed.
- **Feedback Mechanism Improvement:** Strengthening the feedback loop to ensure that student feedback is not only collected but also acted upon, with clear communication back to students on changes made based on their input.

9. Recommendations coming from the Students Survey

Based on the analysis of the student survey data and the identified gaps or areas of need, here are actionable recommendations tailored to address these challenges and opportunities. These recommendations consider both the specific needs of each university and common themes across institutions:

1. Enhancing Support Services

- **To implement a Comprehensive Support System:** To develop a more comprehensive support system that includes academic advising, career services, mental health counselling, and financial aid advising. This should be accessible to all students and well-advertised to ensure awareness.
- **Feedback Loop for Support Services:** To establish a continuous feedback mechanism specifically for support services to identify areas for improvement and adjust services accordingly. This could involve regular surveys or focus groups with students.

2. Improving Quality of Teaching

- **Professional Development for Faculty:** To invest in ongoing professional development programs for faculty that focus on pedagogical strategies, incorporating technology in teaching, and student engagement techniques.

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- **Peer Review and Mentoring:** To encourage peer review and mentoring among faculty to share best practices and challenges, fostering a collaborative environment for teaching excellence.

3. Strengthening Feedback Mechanisms

- **Transparent Feedback Process:** To create a more transparent and structured process for collecting, analyzing, and acting on student feedback. This should include timelines for when feedback will be reviewed and how decisions will be communicated back to students.
- **Enhance Accessibility of Feedback Channels:** To ensure multiple and accessible channels for students to provide feedback, including digital platforms, suggestion boxes, and town hall meetings.

4. Addressing Specific Needs of Each University

- **International Business College Mitrovica and University Isa Boletini Mitrovica:** To focus on improving the effectiveness of support services by enhancing resources available to students, such as tutoring services, career counselling, and academic advising.
- **Polis University and South East European University:** To build on the strong quality of teaching by incorporating innovative teaching methods and technology, ensuring that the curriculum remains dynamic and relevant to current industry standards.

5. Leveraging Common Themes Across Institutions

- **Collaboration on Best Practices:** To encourage collaboration between universities to share best practices in quality assurance, teaching methodologies, and student support services. This could be facilitated through joint workshops, conferences, and research projects.
- **Central Resource Repository:** To develop a central resource repository accessible to all institutions, containing materials on effective teaching strategies, support service models, and case studies of successful feedback implementation.

These recommendations are designed to be actionable and measurable, allowing universities to implement changes that can be evaluated over time. By addressing these identified gaps and areas of need, universities can enhance the quality of education provided, improve student satisfaction, and ultimately achieve higher standards of quality assurance in higher education.

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10. Faculty and Staff Survey Structure

The second survey filled out by the Faculty and Staff Feedback contains several columns with information related to the quality assurance processes from the perspective of university staff. Such a survey aimed at understanding quality assurance processes from the staff perspective. Here's an overview of the columns based on the initial rows:

1. **At which university are you employed?** The university where the respondent is employed. (Note: The first few rows are missing this information.)
2. **Specify your academic title and current position at the university.:** The academic title and position of the respondent.
3. **Years of Service in the Higher Education Sector:** Indicates the number of years the respondent has been working in higher education.
4. **What is the most important indicator for quality in teaching in your opinion?** Respondent's opinion on the most important indicator for quality in teaching.
5. **Involvement in QA Processes:** Describes how the respondent is involved in quality assurance processes at the university.
6. **Rate the Quality of Teaching:** Rating given by the respondent to the quality of teaching at their university.
7. **Rate the Access to Learning Resources:** Rating for the accessibility of learning resources.
8. **Rate the Effectiveness of Support Services:** Rating the effectiveness of support services (e.g., academic advising, career services).
9. **Rate the Administrative Processes related to quality assurance:** Rating for the administrative processes related to quality assurance.
10. **Administrative Processes. What challenges do you face in implementing or adhering to quality assurance standards?** Challenges faced in implementing or adhering to quality assurance standards.
11. **Did you participate in the design of the program where you teach?** Indicates whether the respondent participated in the design of their teaching program.

This concise overview captures essential survey components, focusing on staff roles in quality assurance and their perceptions of teaching quality and support services.

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11. University Overview: Responses Per University

The summary of responses per university from the faculty and staff feedback survey is as follows:

- **University Isa Boletini Mitrovica:** 43 responses
- **South East European University:** 26 responses
- **Western Balkans University:** 22 responses
- **Luarasi University:** 18 responses
- **Polis University:** 14 responses
- **International Business College Mitrovica:** 10 responses

This overview indicates varied levels of participation among the universities, with the University Isa Boletini Mitrovica having the highest number of responses and the International Business College Mitrovica having the fewest. Such variations in response rates may influence the analysis and should be considered when interpreting results, as they may introduce potential biases towards certain institutions.

12. Recommendations Based on Staff Responses

- **Support Services to be Enhanced:** If support services are consistently rated low, universities should consider investing in training for support staff, expanding the availability of services, and improving the accessibility of resources for students and faculty.
- **Improved Quality of Teaching:** For areas related to the quality of teaching, professional development opportunities for faculty, incorporating innovative teaching methods, and enhancing student engagement strategies could be beneficial.
- **Administrative Process Efficiency to be Addressed:** If administrative processes related to quality assurance are identified as a gap, streamlining procedures, improving communication, and increasing transparency can help address these challenges.
- **Acting on Feedback Mechanisms:** Feedback mechanisms to be strengthened to ensure that the concerns and suggestions of faculty, staff, and students are heard, acknowledged, and acted upon promptly.

These recommendations are based on common survey findings and analysis approaches. For a more detailed and specific set of recommendations, direct access to the survey data, including ratings and textual responses, would be necessary.

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Based on the exploration and analysis of the Faculty and Staff Feedback Survey data, the main needs and areas for improvement that can be inferred generally include:

1. Professional Development for Faculty and Staff

The emphasis on teaching methods and quality indicators suggests a need for ongoing professional development opportunities. This includes training in innovative teaching strategies, assessment techniques, and student engagement to enhance the overall quality of education.

2. Support Services Enhancement

Feedback mechanisms and comments on administrative processes hint at the need for more effective and accessible support services. This encompasses academic advising, career services, mental health support, and technological resources to support both teaching and learning.

3. Streamlining Administrative Processes

Challenges related to administrative processes indicate a need for streamlining and simplifying quality assurance and administrative procedures. Reducing bureaucratic hurdles and improving efficiency can help faculty and staff focus more on their core educational and research activities.

4. Effective Feedback Mechanisms

The survey points to the importance of establishing robust feedback loops that allow for the collection, analysis, and action of feedback from faculty and staff. This is crucial for identifying areas of need, making informed decisions, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

5. Collaboration and Communication

There is an implied need for better collaboration and communication within the university community regarding quality assurance practices, decisions, and outcomes. Enhancing transparency and fostering a collaborative environment can lead to more effective implementation of quality assurance measures.

6. Inclusion in Decision-Making Processes

Responses indicate a desire for more inclusive decision-making processes, where faculty and staff have a meaningful role in shaping the programs and policies that affect their work and the overall educational experience.

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7. Technology and Resource Access

The need for improved access to learning resources, including technology, libraries, and research facilities, is likely highlighted as a key factor in supporting high-quality teaching and learning environments.

Addressing these needs requires a coordinated approach that involves strategic planning, resource allocation, and ongoing evaluation to ensure that initiatives are effective and aligned with the overall goals of quality assurance in education.

13. Integrated analysis of both Student and Staff responses

Integrating the analyses of both the Student Feedback Survey and the Faculty and Staff Feedback Survey provides a comprehensive view of the quality assurance practices within the universities. This integrated analysis aims to identify overlapping areas of concern, unique insights from each group, and actionable recommendations that address the needs of both students and staff. Here's a synthesis based on the general insights from both surveys:

Common Themes and Insights

Quality of Teaching and Learning

- **Both Surveys** highlighted the quality of teaching as a critical factor. While students focused on the outcome of teaching practices, faculty and staff emphasized the importance of professional development and innovative teaching methods.
- **Actionable Recommendation:** To implement ongoing professional development programs for faculty that focus on pedagogical innovations, digital literacy, and student engagement strategies.

Support Services and Resources

- **Students** pointed to the need for better access to learning resources and effective support services.
- **Faculty and Staff** also expressed concerns over support services, suggesting a parallel in the need for enhancements in academic advising, career services, and mental health support.
- **Actionable Recommendation:** To expand and diversify the support services, ensuring they are adequately resourced, accessible, and tailored to meet the diverse needs of the university community.

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Administrative Processes

- **Staff Concerns** about administrative processes and their efficiency mirror potential frustrations experienced by students, albeit not directly mentioned, affecting the overall educational experience.
- **Actionable Recommendation:** To streamline the administrative processes related to quality assurance, course registration, and feedback collection to make them more efficient and less burdensome for all parties.

Feedback Mechanisms

- **Both Groups** underscored the significance of effective feedback mechanisms. While students focused on the importance of their feedback being acknowledged and acted upon, faculty and staff highlighted the need for robust feedback loops for quality assurance processes.
- **Actionable Recommendation:** To strengthen the feedback mechanisms by establishing clear, transparent processes for collecting, analyzing, and acting on feedback from both students and faculty/staff. Ensure communication back to the contributors about the actions taken in response to their feedback.

14. Unique Insights

Faculty and Staff Involvement in QA Processes

- **Faculty and Staff** provided insights into their involvement in quality assurance processes, highlighting a need for more inclusive decision-making and clearer communication about QA outcomes.
- **Actionable Recommendation:** To enhance faculty and staff participation in QA processes through structured committees and working groups. Improve communication about QA initiatives, outcomes, and their impact on teaching and learning.

Student-Centric Concerns

- **Students** may have unique concerns related to student life, access to extracurricular activities, and the social aspects of the university experience, which were not directly captured in the faculty and staff feedback.
- **Actionable Recommendation:** To address student-centric concerns by fostering a vibrant campus life, supporting student organizations, and providing ample opportunities for extracurricular engagement.

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15. Integrated Recommendations

- **Foster a Collaborative Culture:** Encourage collaboration between faculty, staff, and students in the development and review of quality assurance practices. This could include joint committees or forums where all groups can share their perspectives and contribute to decision-making.
- **Holistic Approach to Quality Assurance:** Adopt a holistic approach to quality assurance that considers academic, administrative, and support dimensions, ensuring that initiatives are aligned with the needs and expectations of both students and faculty/staff.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Establish a culture of continuous improvement, leveraging insights from both surveys to inform strategic planning, policy development, and operational decisions aimed at enhancing the quality of education and the overall university experience.

This integrated analysis underscores the interconnectedness of experiences and perceptions across the university community. Addressing the identified needs and gaps through a collaborative, strategic approach can lead to meaningful improvements in quality assurance practices, benefiting both students and faculty/staff alike.

16. Industry Feedback Survey on University Collaboration and Graduate Preparedness

The survey data contains information from various businesses on their collaboration with universities and the preparedness of graduates. Here are the columns in the dataset:

1. **Country of business registration:** The country where the organization is incorporated.
2. **Industry Sector:** The sector that best describes the organization.
3. **Nature of Collaboration with the University:** The type of collaboration with the university.
4. **Relevance of University Programs to Industry Needs:** Rating of how well university programs align with industry needs.
5. **Importance of Theoretical Knowledge vs. Practical Experience:** Rating of the importance of theoretical knowledge versus practical experience.
6. **Contribution of University Graduates to the Industry:** Rating of the contribution of university graduates to the industry.
7. **Satisfaction with the Current Level of Collaboration:** Rating of satisfaction with the current level of collaboration.

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8. **Interest in Increasing Collaboration:** Rating of interest in increasing collaboration.
9. **Interest in Research Collaboration:** Rating of interest in engaging in research collaborations.
10. **Additional Comments:** Any additional comments or suggestions regarding university-industry collaboration and graduate preparedness.

For a need analysis focusing on improving Quality Assurance (QA) practices at universities in Albania and Kosovo, we have leveraged the survey data to understand the current state of university-industry collaboration, the relevance of university programs to industry needs, and areas that may require enhancement in QA practices.

17. Data Summary for Albania and Kosovo

This summary provides an overview of the responses from organizations in Albania and Kosovo, highlighting the main sectors involved in the survey, the nature of their collaboration with universities, and the overall perception of the relevance of university programs to industry needs.

Industry Sectors

- **Healthcare:** 5 responses
- **Technology and Software:** 3 responses
- **Agriculture:** 2 responses
- **Finance and Banking:** 2 responses
- **Transport and Logistics:** 2 responses
- **Retail:** 2 responses
- **Manufacturing:** 1 response
- **Education:** 1 response

Nature of Collaboration

- **Research projects:** 3 instances
- **Internships:** 3 instances
- **Other:** 1 instance
- **Graduate employment:** 4 instance

Average Relevance Rating

- The average relevance of university programs to industry needs is **4.38** (on a scale of 1 to 5), indicating a generally positive perception of how well university programs align with the current needs of the industry.

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18. Relevance of University Programs to Industry Needs

The average ratings for the relevance of university programs to industry needs, by sector, are as follows:

- **Education:** 5.0
- **Technology and Software:** 5.0
- **Finance and Banking:** 4.5
- **Healthcare:** 4.6
- **Retail:** 3.0
- **Transportation and Logistics:** 2.0

Strengths

- The **Education** and **Technology and Software** sectors rated the relevance of university programs as the highest, indicating strong alignment with current industry needs.
- **Finance and Banking** and **Healthcare** sectors also showed high satisfaction, with ratings above 4.5.

Gaps

- The **Retail** and **Transportation and Logistics** sectors exhibited lower satisfaction (3.0 and 2.0 respectively), suggesting that university programs may not be fully aligned with the needs of these industries.

Analysis

- The higher ratings in sectors like Education, Technology, Finance, and Healthcare indicate that universities in Albania and Kosovo may be effectively tailoring their programs to these industries' needs.
- The lower ratings in Retail and Transportation suggest a need for universities to reassess and possibly update their curricula to better meet the specific demands of these sectors, enhancing their relevance and applicability to current market demands.

19. Nature of Collaboration between Universities and Industries

The survey data reveals the following types of collaborations between universities and industries:

- **Graduate employment:** 4 instances
- **Research projects:** 3 instances
- **Internships:** 3 instances
- **Other:** 1 instance

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Analysis

- The data shows a balanced distribution between hiring graduates, engaging in research projects, and providing internships. Each of these collaboration types has occurred three times, indicating that these are common avenues of collaboration.
- The presence of **research projects** as a key collaboration type suggests that there is active engagement in knowledge exchange and development between universities and industries, which is crucial for maintaining the relevance and rigour of academic programs.
- The significant role of **internships** points to the importance of practical experience in education, allowing students to gain industry-relevant skills and knowledge, which can be a critical area for Quality Assurance (QA) improvement. Ensuring that internships provide valuable, hands-on experience can help align academic programs more closely with industry needs.
- The category of **other** suggests that there are additional, less common forms of collaboration, which might include consultancy, joint ventures, or continuous education programs for working professionals.

Implications for QA Improvement

- Enhancing QA practices could involve developing more structured and beneficial internship programs, fostering closer ties with industry for research and development, and ensuring that graduate skills match industry requirements.
- Universities should consider expanding and diversifying their collaboration types, possibly exploring more innovative partnerships that can offer new learning opportunities and better prepare students for the workforce.

Based on the analysis of the survey data, including the relevance of university programs to industry needs, the nature of collaboration, and the limited industry feedback available, we can identify several specific aspects of Quality Assurance (QA) practices that could be improved.

- The curricula should be aligned more closely with the needs of lower-rated sectors like Retail and Transportation Logistics to ensure that academic offerings are relevant and beneficial across all industries.
- The course content should be regularly updated to reflect the latest industry trends, technologies, and practices, especially in rapidly evolving sectors like Technology and Software.
- Experiential learning opportunities should be incorporated, such as case studies, project-based learning, and simulations, to enhance practical understanding and application of theoretical knowledge.
- Active learning should be promoted and critical thinking in the classroom to prepare students for complex problem-solving and decision-making in the workplace.

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- Internship programs should be strengthened by establishing stronger partnerships with industry players to provide students with meaningful and relevant work experience.
- A feedback loop should be implemented with industry partners to continuously assess and improve the quality and relevance of internship experiences.
- To increase collaboration with industry through joint research projects, workshops, guest lectures, and mentorship programs to foster a strong connection between academic learning and industry practice.
- To create advisory boards consisting of industry professionals to regularly review and advise on program development, ensuring alignment with current and future industry needs.
- Systematic processes should be established for collecting and analyzing feedback from both students and industry partners to inform ongoing QA efforts.
- Data-driven approaches should be used to monitor the effectiveness of QA initiatives and adjustments should be made as necessary to meet the evolving requirements of the industry and educational standards.

20. Recommendations from the Industry Survey

Based on the survey findings and the identified needs within the industry, here are some tailored recommendations for universities in Albania and Kosovo to enhance their Quality Assurance (QA) practices:

1. Curriculum Enhancement

- To regularly review and update the curriculum to ensure it aligns with current industry trends and demands, especially in sectors where the relevance ratings were lower.
- To involve industry professionals in the curriculum development process to integrate practical insights and real-world applications.

2. Industry Collaboration

- To expand partnerships with a broader range of industries to diversify collaboration opportunities, including joint research, consultancy projects, and industry-sponsored programs.
- To establish long-term strategic partnerships with key industry stakeholders to facilitate continuous exchange of knowledge and resources.

3. Experiential Learning

- To increase opportunities for practical training through internships, apprenticeships, and work-placement programs, ensuring they are meaningful and aligned with academic learning.

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- To develop skills-based learning initiatives that focus on critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability to prepare students for a dynamic work environment.
4. **Quality of Teaching**
- To be invested in professional development for faculty to adopt innovative teaching methods and technologies that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.
 - To implement peer review and feedback mechanisms for teaching practices to foster a culture of continuous improvement and excellence in education.
 -
5. **Feedback Systems**
- To develop robust feedback mechanisms to gather input from students, alumni, and industry partners on the quality and relevance of the education provided.
 - This feedback should be used to make informed decisions about program improvements, faculty development, and resource allocation.
6. **QA Infrastructure**
- To strengthen the internal QA infrastructure with clear policies, processes, and criteria for evaluating and enhancing the quality of education and training programs.
 - To ensure that QA practices are transparent, inclusive, and aligned with international standards to facilitate continuous improvement and accountability.
7. **Monitoring and Evaluation**
- To implement regular monitoring and evaluation of QA initiatives to assess their effectiveness and impact on teaching and learning outcomes.
 - To utilise data analytics and performance metrics to guide strategic planning and decision-making processes in QA.

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Conclusion

This comprehensive survey analysis underscores a pivotal moment in our collaborative journey toward enhancing quality assurance within our partner universities. The rich insights garnered from both students and faculty/staff across varied academic and administrative landscapes reveal a shared commitment to academic excellence and continuous improvement. By harnessing these perspectives, we've identified actionable strategies aimed at bolstering teaching quality, support services, and feedback mechanisms—foundational elements of a robust quality assurance framework.

Reflecting on our findings, it's clear that the path forward requires a unified approach, leveraging the strengths and addressing the challenges unique to each institution. The commitment shown by participants underscores the collective aspiration for an educational experience that not only meets but exceeds current standards, driving us towards a future where excellence in education is not just an aim but a realized outcome.

As we move forward, this report will serve as both a beacon and a roadmap, guiding our strategic enhancements and fostering a culture of quality that resonates through every facet of our academic endeavours. Together, we stand on the threshold of transformative change, poised to elevate the quality of education and research across our institutions, ensuring they remain competitive, innovative, and, above all, responsive to the needs of our students and the broader academic community.

The integrated analysis of student, faculty/staff, and industry feedback surveys offers valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of current quality assurance practices within universities. By addressing the identified needs and gaps through a collaborative, strategic approach, institutions can enhance the quality of education, improve the overall university experience, and foster an environment of excellence and innovation. This endeavour requires commitment, resources, and a culture that values and acts upon the collective input of the university community, ensuring that quality assurance is a shared responsibility and a continuous pursuit.

In embracing these recommendations, we reaffirm our dedication to a continuous cycle of evaluation, feedback, and improvement—a testament to our unwavering pursuit of excellence. Let us proceed with confidence, knowing that the collective wisdom and commitment of our university community will drive us towards achieving the highest standards of quality assurance in higher education.

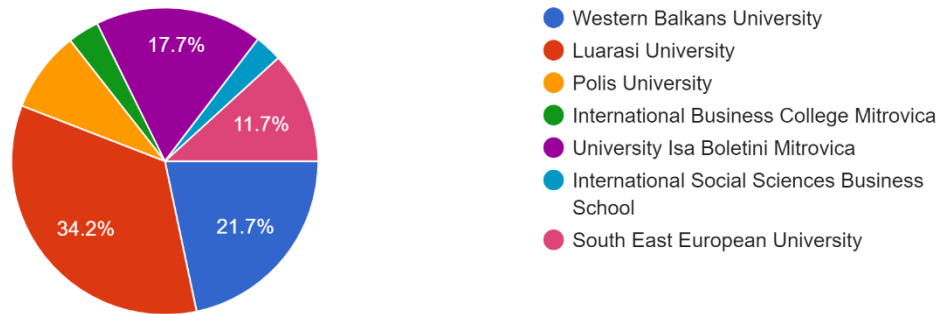
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Appendix 1. Summary of Student Responses

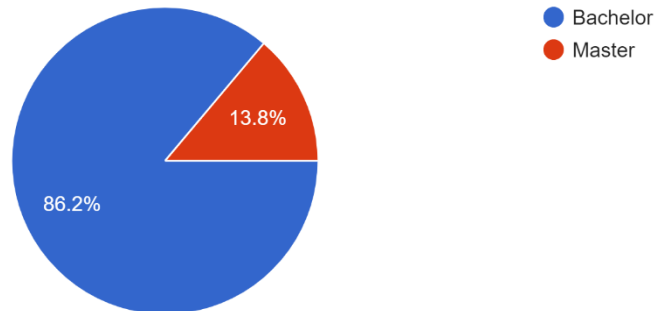
1. Which university do you study at? (Në cilin universitet studioni?) (На кој универзитет студирате?)

1,149 responses



2. Level of Study Select the program of study you are currently in? (Zgjidhni programin e studimit ku jeni aktualisht?) (Изберете го програмата на студии на која сте моментално?)

1,149 responses

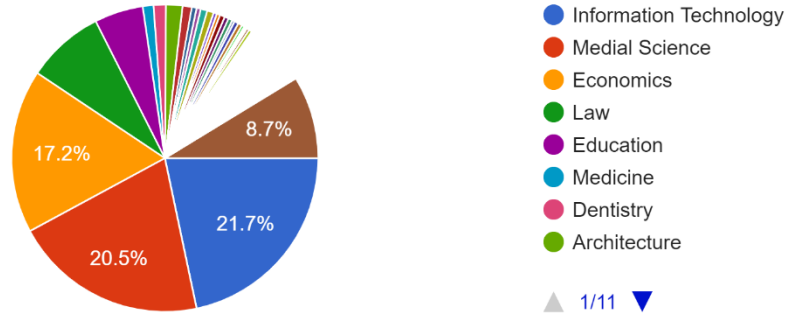


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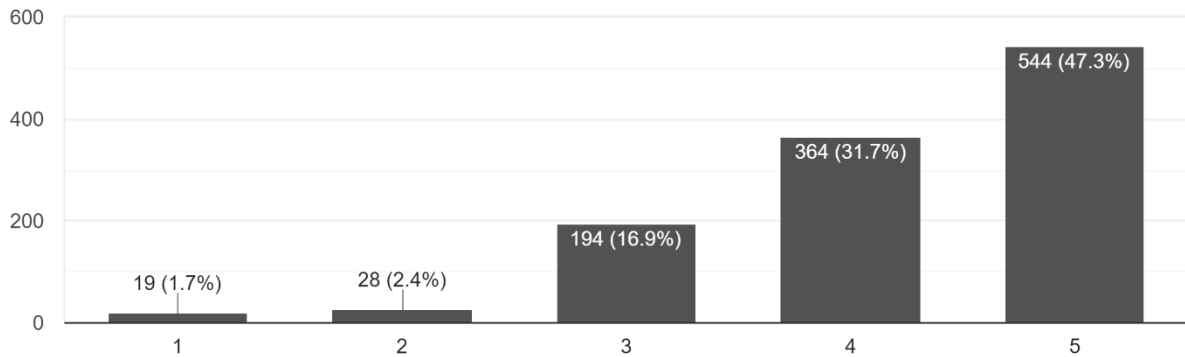
3. Field of studies Please specify your field of studies (Ju lutemi specifikoni fushën tuaj të studimit:) (Ве молиме специфицирајте ја вашата област на студии:)

1,149 responses



4. Quality of Teaching Rate the quality of teaching you receive? (Vlerësoni cilësinë e mësimdhënies që ju ofrohet?) (Оценете го квалитетот на наставата што ја добивате?)

1,149 responses

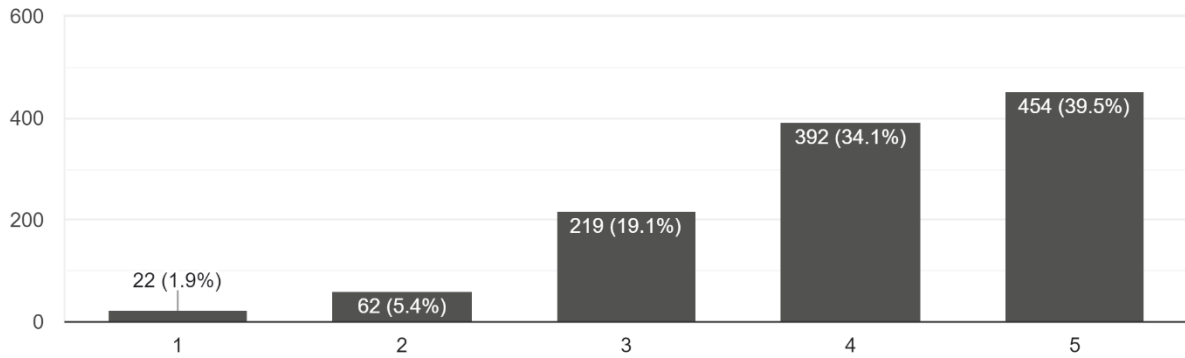


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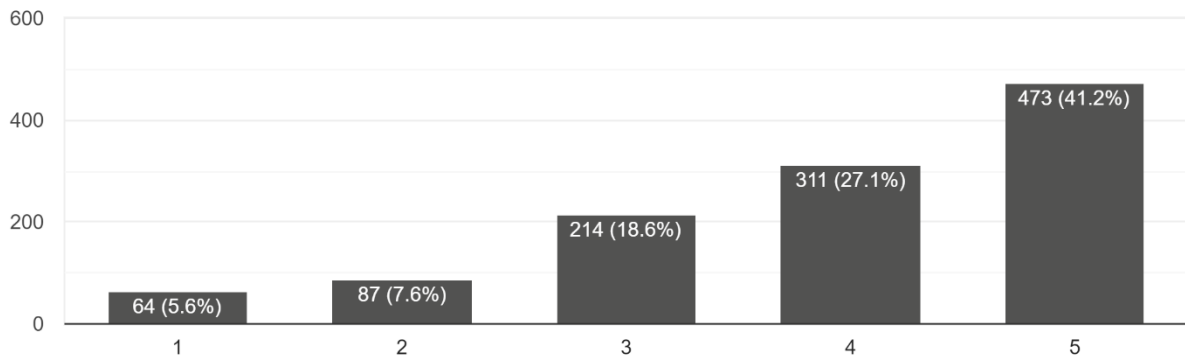
5. Awareness and achievement of learning outcomes How well do you feel your programs are preparing you to meet these outcomes? (Sa mi...e подготвуваат да ги исполните овие резултати?)

1,149 responses



6. Support Services Evaluate the effectiveness of support services in enhancing the quality of the educational experience. - How do support servic...) придонесуваат во вашето искуство во учењето?

1,149 responses

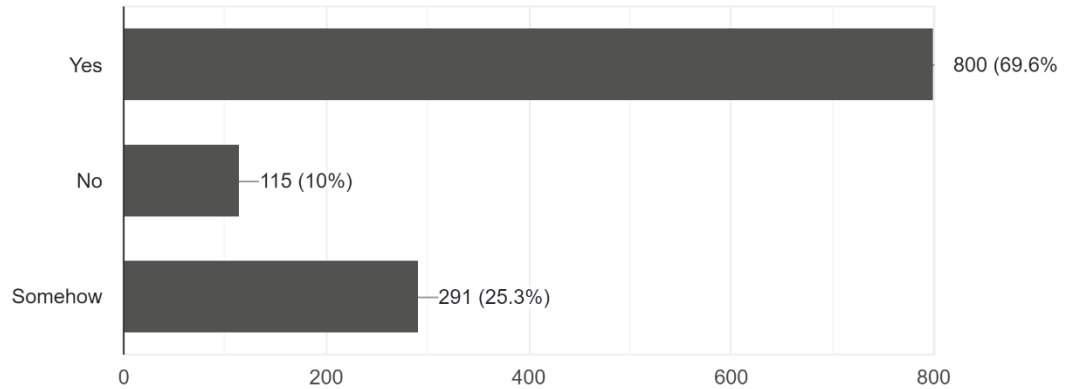


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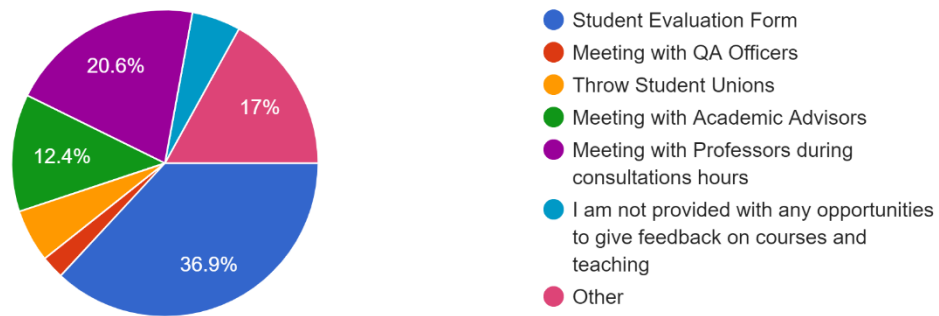
7. Feedback Opportunities Are you provided with opportunities to give feedback on courses and teaching? (A ju ofrohen mundësi për të dhën... повратни информации за курсевите и наставата?)

1,149 responses



8. By what means do you provide your feedback on courses and teaching? (Me çfarë metodash i jepni komentet tuaja për kurset dhe mësimdhëni... вратни информации за курсевите и наставата??)

1,149 responses

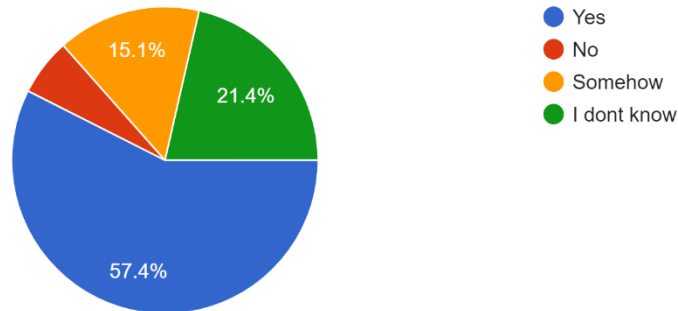


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9. Does the university ensure that your feedback is taken into account? (A sigurohet universiteti që komentet tuaja të merren parasysh?) (Дали уни...ува дека вашите коментари се земаат предвид?)

1,149 responses



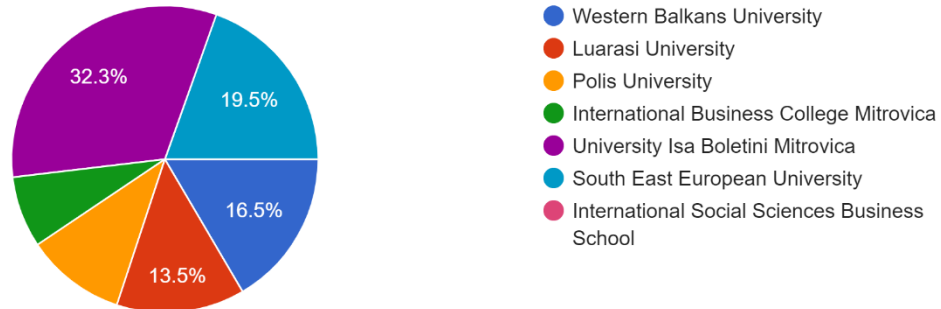
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Appendix 2. Summary of Faculty and Staff Responses

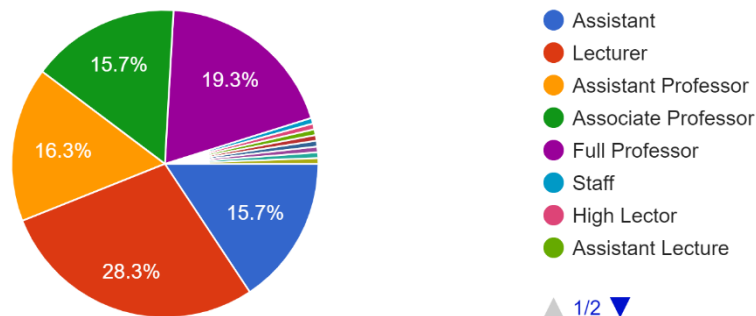
0. University At which university are you employed? (Në cilin universitet jeni i punësuar?) (На кој универзитет си вработен?)

133 responses



1. Position Specify your academic title and current position at the university. (Specifikoni titullin tuaj akademik dhe pozicionin aktual në universi...вање и моменталната позиција на универзитетот)

166 responses

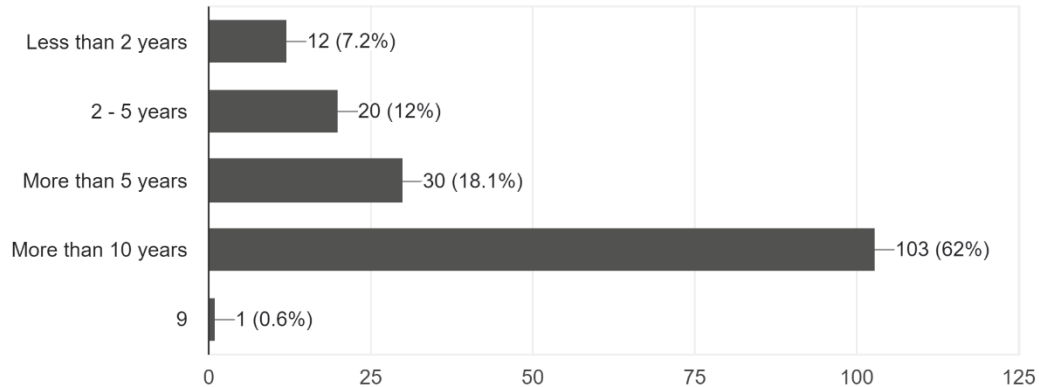


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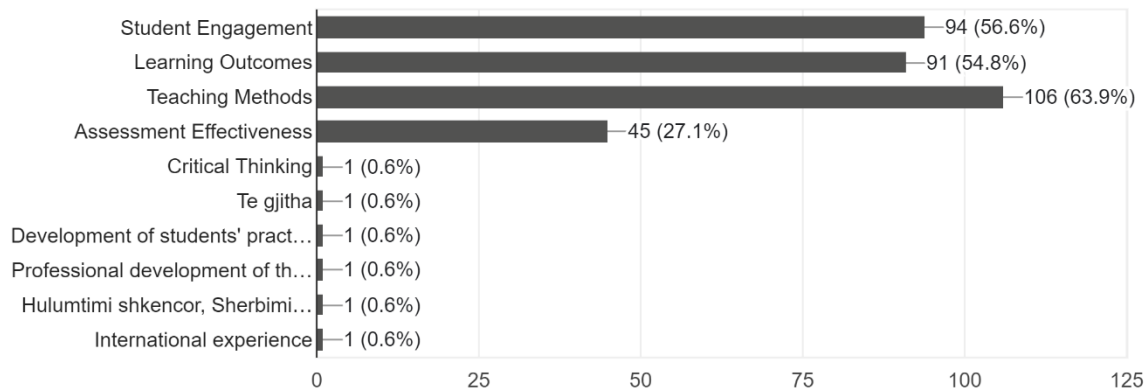
2. Years of Service in the Higher Education Sector Indicate the number of years you have been working in the HE area. (Cilësoni numrin e vit... сте работеле во областа на високото образование)

166 responses



3. What is the most important indicator for quality in teaching in your opinion? (Cili është treguesi më i rëndësishëm për cilësinë në mësimdhënie si...азател за квалитетот во наставата според вас?)

166 responses

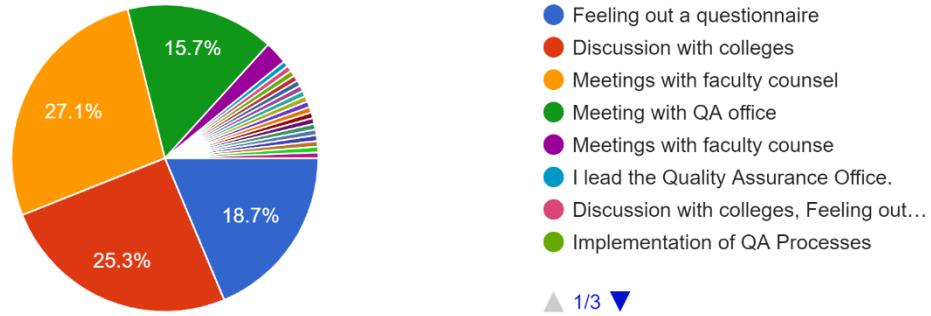


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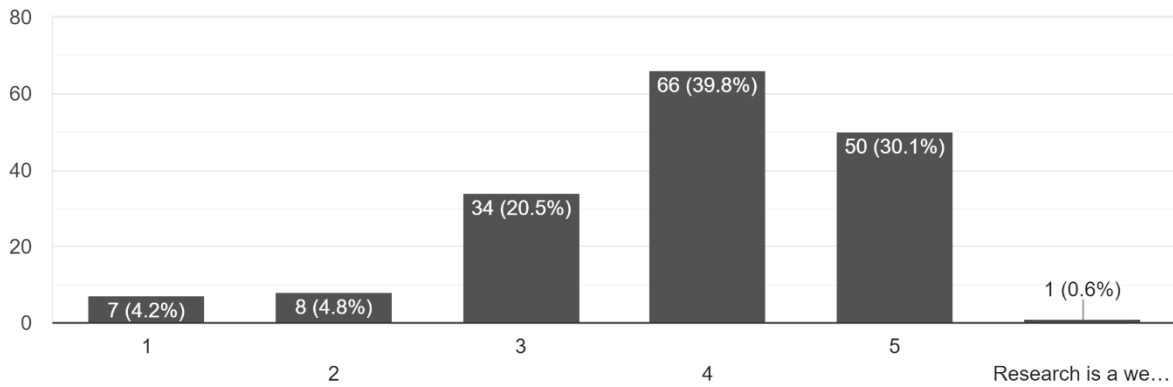
4. Involvement in QA Processes Describe how you are involved in quality assurance processes at the university. (Përshkruani se si jeni përfsh... на обезбедување на квалитетот на универзитетот.)

166 responses



9. Quality Assurance in Research How does QA system effect reseach activities at your instistution? (Si ndikon sistemi i Sigurimit të...стражувачките активности во вашата институција?)

166 responses

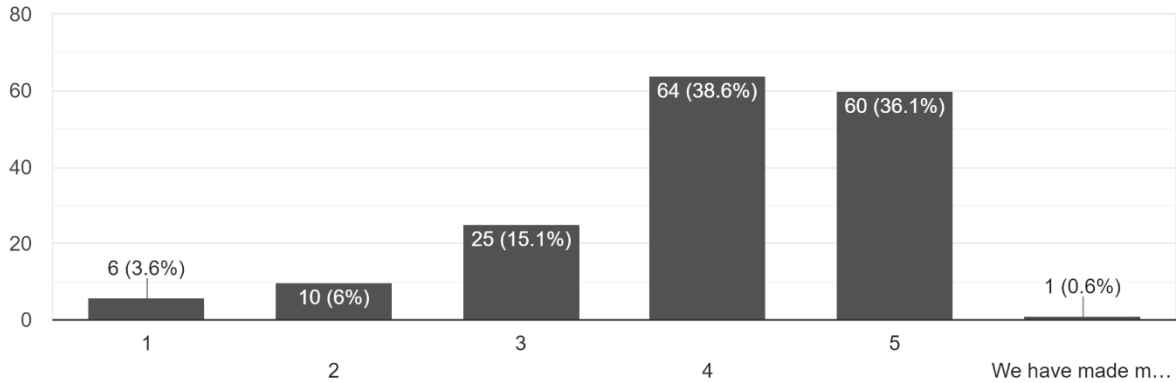


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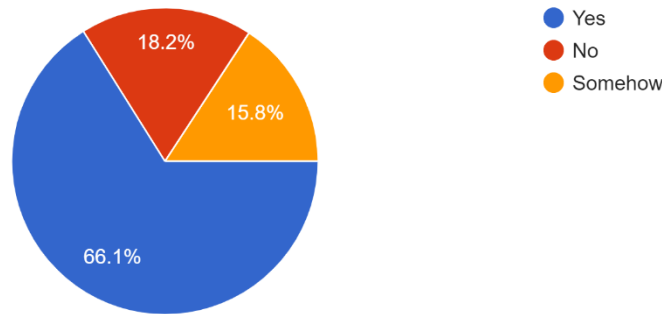
10. Administrative Processes Rate the Administrative Processes related to quality assurance? (Vlerësoni Proceset Administrativ...роцеси поврзани со обезбедувањето квалитетот?)

166 responses



12. Did you participate in the design of the program where you teach? (A keni marrë pjesë në hartimin e programit ku jepni mësim?) (Дали уч...јанирањето на програмата каде што предавате?)

165 responses

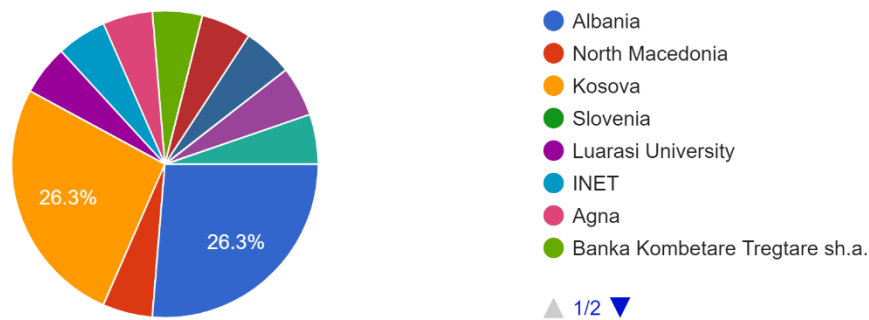


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Appendix 3. Summary of Industry Feedback Survey on University Collaboration and Graduate Preparedness

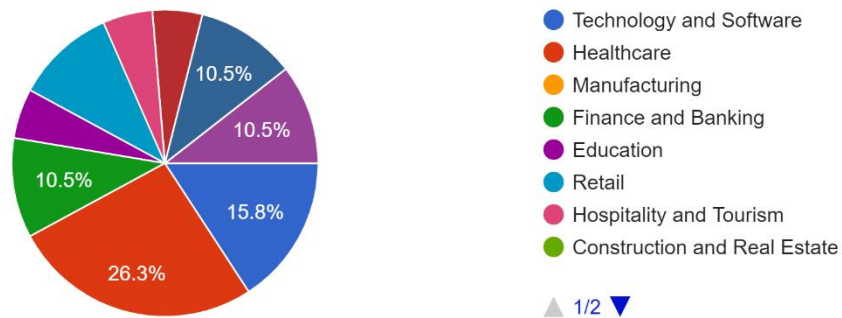
1. Country of business registration: Please select the country where your organization has been incorporated.

19 responses



2. Industry Sector: Select the industry sector that best describes your organization.

19 responses

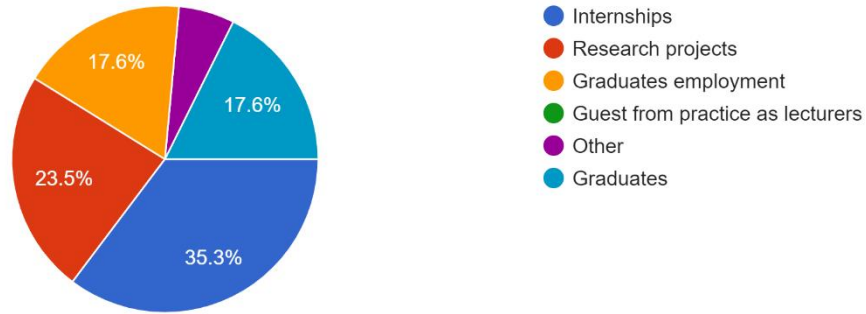


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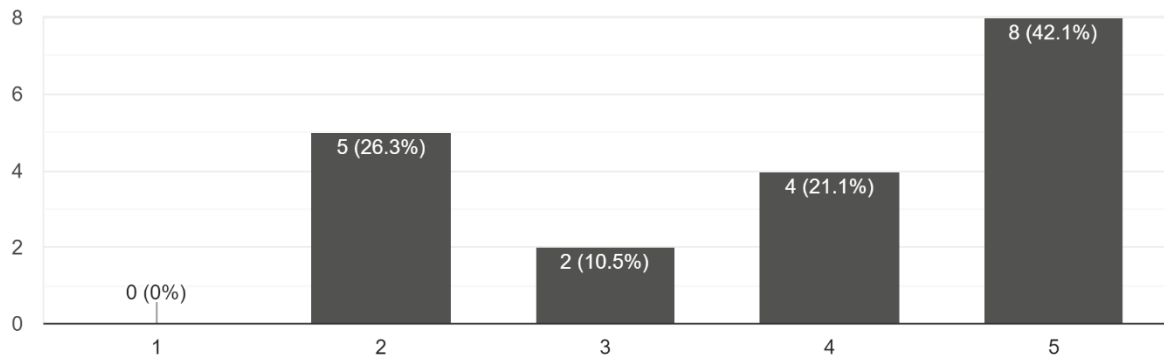
3. Nature of Collaboration with the University (if any): Select the nature of your collaboration.

17 responses



4. Relevance of University Programs to your Industry Needs: Rate how well the university's academic programs align with the current needs of your industry.

19 responses

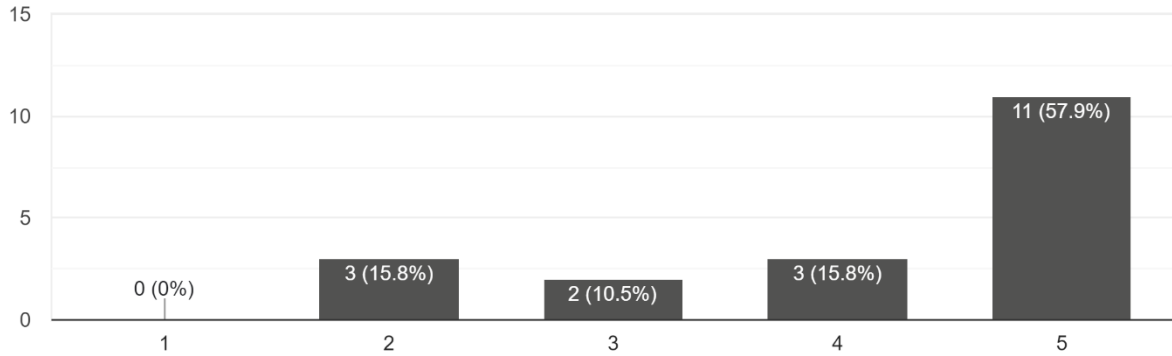


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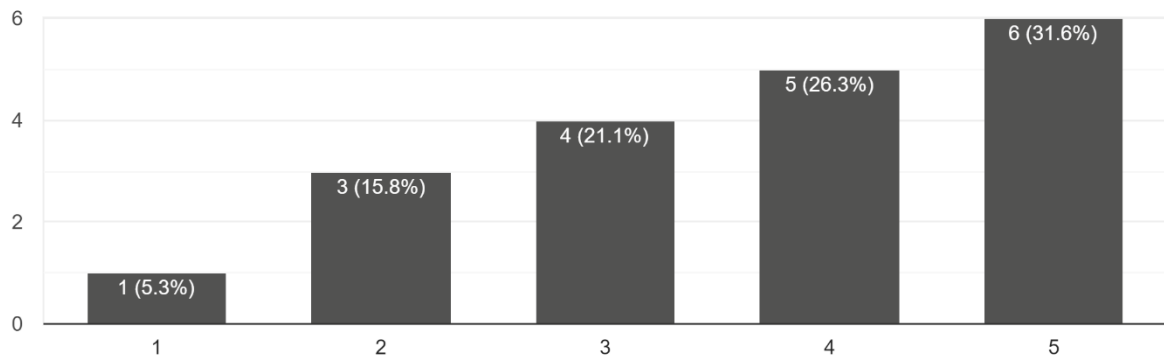
5. Evaluation of Internship Programs: Based on your experience, how effective are the university's internship programs in providing students with relevant industry skills?

19 responses



6. Graduate Preparedness: Rate the preparedness of graduates for the workforce in terms of industry-relevant skills and knowledge.

19 responses



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