Follow-up of the 2007/2008 EUA/IEP Evaluation

SELF-EVALUATION REPORT
2011.2012

August 2012

UNIVERSITY OF BEIRA INTERIOR
Covilhã | Portugal

List of abbreviations and acronyms used

A3ES – Agência de Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior | *Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education*

AAUBI – Associação Académica da UBI | *UBI Students' Union*

AIFF – Associação para a Competitividade da Indústria da Fileira Florestal | *Competitiveness and Technology Center for Forest Industries*

CEBT – Curso de Empreendedorismo de Base Tecnológica | *Technology-based Entrepreneurship Course*

CEFAGE - Centro de Estudos e Formação Avançada em Gestão e Economia | *Center for Advanced Studies in Management and Economics*

CIDESD – Centro de Investigação em Desporto, Saúde e Desenvolvimento Humano | *Research Center in Sports Sciences, Health and Human Development*

CIES-UBI – Centro de Investigação e Estudos de Sociologia | *Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology at UBI*

COST – *European Cooperation in Science and Technology*

DGES – Direção-Geral do Ensino Superior | *Directorate-General for Higher Education*

ECTS – *European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*

ENAEE – *European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education*

ERC – *European Research Council*

ERDF – *European Regional Development Fund*

ETF - *European Training Foundation*

EUA – *European University Association*

EUR-ACE® - *European Accreditation of Engineering Programmes*

FCT – Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia | *Foundation for Science and Technology*

FP7 – *Seventh Framework Programme*

GAPPI - Gabinete de Apoio a Projetos e Promoção da Investigação da UBI | *Project Support and Research Promotion Office*

GCI – Gabinete de Comunicação e Imagem | *Communication and Image Office*

GDAE – Gabinete de Desenvolvimento e Apoio Educativo | *Educational Development and Support Office*

GDUBI – Sistema de Gestão Documental da UBI | *UBI's Document Management System*

GGPP - Gabinete de Gestão de Programas e Projetos | *Project Support and Research Promotion Office*

GPRI – Gabinete de Programas e Relações Internacionais | *International Relations and Programmes Office*

GQ – Gabinete da Qualidade | *Quality Assurance Office*

GSP – Gabinete de Saídas Profissionais | *Career Office*

HCP – Pólo de Competitividade da Saúde | *Health Cluster Portugal*

HEI – *Higher Education Institution*

ICI – Instituto Coordenador da Investigação | *Research Coordination Institute*

INESPO – *Innovation Network Spain - Portugal*

InovCluster – Associação do Cluster Agro-industrial do Centro | *Agro-industrial Cluster Association of the Centro Region*

INTERREG IVA – *European Co-operation objective, strand A: Cross-Border Co-operation*

INTERREG IVB – *European Co-operation objective, strand B: Trans-national Co-operation*

ISI – *Thomson Reuters Web of Knowledge^{SM}*

Mais Centro – Programa Operacional Regional do Centro | *Centro Regional Operational Programme*

MEC – Ministério da Educação e Ciência | *Ministry of Education and Science*

NP EN ISO 9001:2008 – *Portuguese version of the international standard for the Certification of Quality Management Systems*

R&D – *Research and Development*

SA 8000® - *Social Accountability Standard*

SASUBI - Serviços de Ação Social da UBI | *Social Action Services at UBI*

SIVF – Sistema Integrado de Vigilância Financeira | *Integrated Financial Supervision System*

Scopus – *SciVerse Scopus*

QREN – Quadro de Referência Estratégica Nacional | *National Strategic Reference Framework*

TICE.PT – Pólo de Competitividade das Tecnologias de Informação, Comunicação e Electrónica | *Center for Competitiveness and Technology, Center for Information, Communication and Electronics Technologies*

UBI – Universidade da Beira Interior | *University of Beira Interior*

UBISCIENTIA – Workshop de Ciência, Tecnologia e Inovação | *Science, Technology and Innovation Workshop*

WINUBI – Concurso de Ideias de Negócio | *Business Idea Competition*

Structure of the report

Introduction

At the initiative of the Rector, on 1 July 2011, UBI registered with the Institutional Evaluation Programme of the EUA for a follow-up evaluation of that held in 2008[1].

This registration was accepted by the EUA for the academic year 2011-2012.

In preparation of the follow-up evaluation, UBI was represented at the EUA's Workshop for Universities, on 11 October 2011.

The follow-up evaluation was looked favourably upon by the General Council, on 5 December 2011.

Although the three-year interval between both evaluations proves insufficient both to implement the recommendations from the 2008 evaluation ([3](#)) and to accommodate the subsequent and recent developments undergone by UBI ([1](#)), the follow-up evaluation was seen as yet another opportunity to reflect upon the recent achievements, current standpoint, and development prospects of the University.

Moreover, the reflexivity implied by the processes of self-evaluation and external evaluation causes UBI to always consider the fundamental issue of quality, by asking "How do we know that we are doing what we intend". In the answer lies the key to identifying not only the existing constraints for a better performance but also the levers for future changes which in turn lead to institutional development while affording transparency and accountability, values that rank highly in UBI's stance.

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[1] Both UBI's Self-evaluation Report and EUA's Evaluation Report are available on the institutional website at: https://www.ubi.pt/Pagina.aspx?P=GabQ_Avaliacao_Institucional_EUA.

The Self-evaluation Steering Committee

Following consultation with the Senate[2], both the composition and duties of the Self-evaluation Steering Committee were decided by the Rector[3].

The Pro-rector for Quality Assurance, Amélia AUGUSTO, coordinated the Self-evaluation Steering Committee.

The composition of the Steering Committee was as follows:

- Representative of the rectoral team:

  Isabel NETO, Pro-rector for Educational Development and Support

- Representatives of the teaching staff:

  Luísa AMARAL (Faculty of Sciences)

  João LANZINHA (Faculty of Engineering)

  Francisco ANTUNES (Faculty of Social and Human Sciences)

  Paulo OSÓRIO (Faculty of Arts and Letters)

  Sílvia SOCORRO (Faculty of Health Sciences)

- Representatives of the non-teaching staff:

  António CABRAL (General Secretary of the Faculty of Health Sciences)

  Pedro MARQUES (Head of the Administrative Services Division of the SASUBI)

- Representatives of the students:

  Pedro BERNARDO (President of the AAUBI)

  Marc ROBALO (Vice-president of the AAUBI)

- Representative of the GQ:

  Pedro ESTEVES

The administrative secretary was Filipe SANTARÉM.

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[2] On 15 February 2012.
[3] Rector's Order no. 6/2012, of 15 February.

Drafting of the report

The Self-evaluation Steering Committee met once a week, for at least 2 hours, between 7 March and 26 July 2012. A collaboration platform[4] was created to support the Steering Committee.

The meetings were mainly devoted to reflecting upon and discussing the themes addressed in this report. In order to favour wide information flows and a continuous exchange of opinions, it was decided that there would be neither task division nor thematic sub-committees.

Following introductory discussions within the Self-evaluation Steering Committee, relevant University members were invited to deliver further insights in relation to specific issues. In this context, the Steering Committee was able to elaborate upon the contributions made by the Rector, João QUEIROZ; the Vice-rector for Research and Innovation, Ana Paula DUARTE; the Vice-rector for Teaching and Internationalisation, Paulo ALMEIDA; the Head of Administration of UBI and of the SASUBI, João LEITÃO; and the Student Ombudsman, Pedro POMBO.

During the preparation of the report, the following topics were examined and discussed:

- the 2008 evaluation report and its impact on the decisions made by the University;

- the reforms implemented since 2009;

- the implemented recommendations and the obstacles faced along the way;

- the levers for future changes;

- the key issues chosen in the framework of the follow-up evaluation:

> 1. Management and governance: new statutes and ensuing structural changes at central and Faculty levels, new regulations and strategic plan;

> 2. Research policy: creation of both the ICI and the R&D Division; their internal and external roles in fostering research activities and projects;

> 3. Bologna process: creation of the GDAE to further the implementation of the Bologna guidelines; its role in re-thinking degree programmes and enhancing pedagogical methods.

The self-evaluation report was structured according to the above mentioned elements.

Following consultation with the academic community[5], this report was approved by the Self-evaluation Steering Committee, on 26 July 2012, and made available on the institutional website[6].

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[4] Running on Microsoft® SharePoint® 2010 software.
[5] A preliminary version of the report was made available, from 16 to 24 July 2012, through the Intranet of UBI and an email account was set up to gather input from the internal stakeholders.
[6] At: https://www.ubi.pt/Pagina.aspx?P=GabQ_Avaliacao_Institucional_EUA.

1. Developments at local, regional and national level

1.1 Recent developments

The publication of the new legal framework for HEIs[7], the revision of the Statute of the University Teaching Career[8], and the entry into operation of the A3ES[9] had major consequences for the national higher education system. At UBI, these developments were mostly felt in the areas of management and governance, and quality assurance.

1.1.1 Management and governance

Recent developments in management and governance relate to UBI's new organisational structure and regulations, work methods, and funding.

1.1.1.1 New organisational structure

An issue often raised in the EUA evaluation report was the matrix structure of the University. To references of what it was (self-evaluation report) the EUA team responded with what it could or should be (evaluation report).

Before the current Statutes entered into force[10], the matrix model was based on programmes – of either teaching, research or provision of services – in accordance with the aims of the University. The different programmes were developed through interaction between organisational units (scientific and pedagogical units[11] and centres) and services.

The permanent units of the University were the departments that carried out their activity by managing their human and material resources, and by creating and imparting knowledge in consolidated scientific fields, within a discipline or group of disciplines. The scientific and pedagogical units were composed of departments of cognate scientific areas. The different programmes were implemented by the organisational units simultaneously involved in them. The centres and specialised services were intended to provide the appropriate tools for teaching, research and provision of services. The remaining services - administrative, technical and support structures - ensured the functioning of the University.

In accordance with the current Statutes, UBI is structured into organisational units (comprising Faculties[12] and Research Institutes[13] – with the ICI being the current Research Institute) and sub-units (encompassing Departments[14] and Research Units[15]),

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[7] Law no. 62/2007, published in the Official Gazette, 1st series, No. 174, of 10 September.
[8] Decree-law no. 205/2009, published in the Official Gazette, 1st series, No. 168, of 31 August.
[9] Created by Decree-law no. 369/2007, published in the Official Gazette, 1st series, No. 212, of 51 November.
[10] Through the Legislative order no. 45/2008, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, No. 168, of 1 September. An English version is Appendix XII to this report.
[11] Which correspond to the current organisational units "Faculties".
[12] Organisational units that may engage in teaching, research, and provision of services and are organised into departments (Paragraph 2 a) of Article 5).
[13] Organisational units created within one or more faculties, granted that the research dimensions in them have the adequate dimension and quality (Paragraph 2 b) of Article 5).
[14] Organisational subunits oriented towards teaching, which may comprise research and service activities in relevant scientific fields, and are integrated in a Faculty (Paragraph 2 c) of Article 5).
[15] Research structures in the relevant scientific fields which are formed by members pertaining to one or more faculties (Paragraph 2 d) of Article 5).

centres[16], and services[17] [18]. UBI also integrates the SASUBI[19] which are endowed with administrative and financial autonomy in accordance with the applicable Regulation mentioned below.

The current matrix structure is based on the following assumptions[20]:

- That faculties and research institutes share human and material resources;

- That centres provide services to the faculties, the research institutes, UBI in general and external entities;

- That services - regardless of staff indispensable to the faculties, research institutes and centres - secure administrative, financial, and technical tasks for all of UBI's structures.

When the EUA evaluation was completed, UBI was still "caught in a swift-running current of change"[21]. Many of the new organisational structures envisaged in the new Statutes had not yet been implemented which, in addition to having the EUA team conjecturing on their future role, was the subject of many of its recommendations (3). Moreover, elections for the post of Rector were under way[22].

The General Council was one of the new implemented bodies to which elections were held on 6 November 2008, after the second visit of the EUA team. Its President[23] was elected on 10 January 2009.

A new Rector was elected by the General Council on 6 April 2009 and came into office on 19 June 2009, along with the other members of the rectoral team, consisting of three Vice-rectors and three Pro-rectors[24]. Heavily inspired by the recommendations of the EUA evaluation report, the Rector's Action Plan for 2009-2013[25] was structured into five priority areas: Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning, Research, Internationalisation, and Management and Governance.

After having been nominated by the General Council, where all University stakeholders, other than the Rector, are represented, the first Student Ombudsman – another new body – took office on 15 September 2009[26].

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[16] Structures organised towards the support of activities of the University and services to the community in the context of its undertakings (Paragraph 2 e) of Article 5).

[17] Permanent structures of support to the technical, administrative, and financial management carried out by governing bodies, faculties, research institutes, departments, research units, and centres (Paragraph 2 e) of Article 5).

[18] Appendix II contains the current organisational charts of UBI.

[19] Paragraph 3 of Article 5 of the Statutes of UBI.

[20] Paragraph 4 of Article 5 of the Statutes of UBI.

[21] Universidade da Beira Interior [UBI], *IEP Evaluation Report*, February 2009, paragraph 2.6, p. 5.

[22] An international competition was open between 31 January and 3 March 2009.

[23] The current President is Professor Carlos SALEMA, who is a member of the Board of Directors of "Instituto de Telecomunicações". His professional profile is available on the institutional website at: https://www.ubi.pt/Pagina.aspx?p=Orgaos_da_Universidade

[24] The composition of the rectoral team is available on the institutional website at: https://www.en.ubi.pt/Equipa_Reitoral.aspx.

[25] "Universidade da Beira Interior - Plano de Acção 2009-2013". It was approved by the General Council in November 2009 and is available on the institutional website at: https://www.ubi.pt/Pagina.aspx?p=Orgaos_da_Universidade.

[26] Rector's Order no. 35/2009, of 15 September.

A new Head of Administration who became responsible for the management and coordination of the administrative services of both UBI and the SASUBI – previously under separate administrations - was appointed[27].

The Vice-rector for Research and Innovation was appointed as President of the ICI – a new organisational unit foreseen in the Statutes[28].

With regard to the Faculties, following the approval of the relevant Regulation[29], elections were held to determine the Faculty Councils, Scientific Councils, Heads of Department, Scientific Coordinators of Research Units, Presidents of Faculty, and Pedagogical Councils.

Non-teaching staff and student representatives were also elected to take part in University bodies, namely the General Council and Senate, as well as in Faculty Councils and Pedagogical Councils (half of whose elected members are students).

In relation to services and administrative units, there were also important changes, mainly at central level, with a view to enhancing their professionalization.

With the publication of the Regulation of the Social Action Services[30], the SASUBI underwent a renovation that created two major divisions: Administrative Services and Social Support Services.

In accordance with the Rector's Action Plan, two central offices were created: the GQ[31] and the GDAE[32] both coordinated by Pro-rectors.

Under the ICI, the R&D Division that comprises two offices - the GAPPI and the GGPP (which replaced the Planning Division) - was created[33].

The GPRI was expanded, the GSP replaced the Traineeship Office and Employment Observatory[34], and the Public Relations Office gave way to the GCI[35].

1.1.1.2 New regulations

1.1.1.2.1 Regulations on management and governance procedures

In addition to the aforementioned Regulation of the Faculties and Regulation of the SASUBI, new regulations had to be implemented as a consequence both of new legislation and of the new organisational structure of the University.

The Regulation of the Senate[36] is particularly important in the context of the new organisational structure. In the wake of the scientific, pedagogical, and administrative autonomy awarded to the Faculties by the new Statutes, the Senate - although lacking the executive powers of the former one - is intended to ensure the

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[27] Rector's Order no. 40/2009, of 29 September.
[28] Rector's Order no. 59/2009, of 23 November, retroactive to 25 September 2009. Additional information on the ICI is available on the institutional website at: https://www.en.ubi.pt/Entidade.aspx?id=ICI.
[29] Rector's Order no. 36/2009, of 25 September.
[30] Regulation no. 721/2010, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, No. 171, of 2 September.
[31] Rector's Order no. 55/R/2010, of 2 November.
[32] Rector's Order no. 57/R/2010, of 2 November.
[33] Rector's Order no. 50/R/2010, of 9 September.
[34] Rector's Order no. 56/R/2010, of 2 November.
[35] Rector's Order no. 1/R/2011, of 10 January. Additional information on the GCI is available on the institutional website at: https://www.en.ubi.pt/Entidade.aspx?id=GCI.
[36] Rector's Order no. 6/R/2010, of 28 January.

cohesion and the integrative participation of the Faculties in the management of the University.

Concerning the provision of services by the UBI, the applicable Regulation[37] framed the scope of services to the community (contracted services), and services within R&D contracts, while establishing the conditions for their provision.

In accordance with the revision of the Statute of the University Teaching Career, which awarded HEIs the task of drawing up the rules for managing their teaching staff, new regulations were also implemented.

The first of these regulations is the widely debated Regulation on Teaching Staff Performance Assessment[38] which is intended to ensure transparency, objectivity, and procedural justice, within the regular and mandatory performance assessment for all teachers.

It was followed by the Regulation of the Conditions of Service for Teaching Staff[39] which defines teachers' service, accumulation of functions, duties, mobility, release from service, and honorary titles.

Equally important is the Regulation of Competitions and Admission to the Teaching Career[40], which governs procedures, such as the scrutiny of applications, deadlines, document submission control, evaluation benchmarks, selection methods and criteria, system of evaluation and final ranking.

1.1.1.2.2 Regulations on teaching and learning activities

The Regulation of Course Committees[41] defines them as consultative departmental structures intended to take on a major role in the development and furthering of the Bologna Process with the assistance of the GDAE.

Other regulations concerned the Awarding of the Title of European Doctorate[42], initially proposed by the EUA's predecessor Confederation of EU Rectors' Conference, and the Curricular Traineeships, whose Regulation[43] defines, among other issues, the scope, type, competences to be acquired, and recognition procedures.

The recent Regulations for the Pedagogical Merit Awards[44] refer to sponsored[45] distinctions, annually awarded by each Faculty, in order to reward the interest and dedication of teachers - individually or in groups – who have excelled in pedagogical merit and innovation.

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[37] Rector's Order no. 16/R/2010, of 23 April.
[38] Order no. 17013/2010, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, No. 218, of 10 November.
[39] Order no. 8234/2011, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, No. 113, of 14 June.
[40] Order no. 8235/2011, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, No. 113, of 14 June.
[41] Rector's Order no. 9/2010, of 19 February.
[42] Rector's Order no. 2/2011, of 31 January.
[43] Rector's Order no. 60/2011, of 19 February. This type of traineeships was not considered under Decree-law no. 66/2011, published in the Official Gazette, 1st series, No. 106, of 1 June, which addressed professional traineeships only.
[44] Rector's Orders no. 9/2012 (Faculty of Sciences), no. 10/2012 (Faculty of Engineering); no. 11/2012 (Faculty of Social and Human Sciences); no. 12/2012 (Faculty of Arts and Letters); no. 13/2012 (Faculty of Health Sciences), of 12 March.
[45] By the "Caixa Geral de Depósitos" bank.

1.1.1.2.3 Regulations on R&D

The Regulation of the ICI[46] is intended to promote scientific research, seeking to implement and enhance the guidelines of the University on research, as well as to meet the scientific demands presented by its bodies.

The Regulations for the Scientific Merit Awards[47] refer to sponsored[48] annually awarded prizes, one by Faculty, to reward the interest and dedication of teachers who excel in scientific merit by incorporating teaching and research into their activity.

Also noteworthy are two regulations consistent with UBI's openness to society and protection and enhancement of R&D outcomes in the scope of a mutually beneficial knowledge and technology transfer: the Regulation on Intellectual Property[49] and the Regulation on Spin-off Start-ups[50].

The most recent Regulation[51] concerns the rights and obligations of post-doctoral students at UBI including the issue of a certificate stating the activities they have effectively been engaged in.

1.1.1.3 Improved work methods and tools

Although computerisation is not new to UBI, innovative solutions have been implemented since 2009 at central level, namely regarding quality assurance, administrative and academic services.

In what concerns quality assurance, the creation of collaboration platforms[52] by which relevant indicators - such as student admission, critical course units, failure and drop-out rates – are made available to Faculty Quality Assurance Committees (3.5) allows faster communication and constant access to up-to-date data which can inform and justify many decisions both at University and Faculty level.

In the scope of the Administrative Services, important improvements have been made.

The first was the implementation across the University of an in-house software for document management and workflow – GDUBI – which eliminated the cost of a former licensed software with the added benefits of being completely customised and constantly updated, allowing faster and more transparent information flows, reducing the cost of consumables (paper and cartridges), and creating a digital archive.

Also important in this regard is the creation of an interoperability platform - a one-stop shop - which works in conjunction with the SIVF and the GDUBI to promote interoperability, administrative simplification and dematerialisation of processes, making use of the multi-operative functionality of the Portuguese Citizen's Card.

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[46] Rector's Order no. 7/2010, of 12 February.
[47] Rector's Orders no. 18/2010 (Faculty of Sciences), no. 18/2010 (Faculty of Engineering); no. 18/2010 (Faculty of Social and Human Sciences); no. 18/2010 (Faculty of Arts and Letters); no. 18/2010 (Faculty of Health Sciences), of 30 April.
[48] By the "Santander Totta" bank.
[49] Order no. 6663/2011, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, No. 81, of 27 April.
[50] Order no. 6664/2011, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, No. 81, of 27 April.
[51] Rector's Order no. 52/2012, of 2 July.
[52] Running on Microsoft® SharePoint® 2010 software.

Another aspect worth mentioning is the development of a Business Intelligence System incorporating Balanced Scorecard dimensions, which aims to provide UBI with automated instruments of management and evaluation of organisational performance.

As for the Academic Services, significant advances were introduced in its functioning through the on-line platform "Balcão Virtual" (e-Desk), which made bureaucratic tasks simpler, faster and clearer, at the same time easing the interaction between the services, teaching staff and students.

Especially relevant are: the computerisation of the "academic procedure", which covers all aspects related to the functioning of a course unit including students' evaluation; the creation of a master's dissertations module for the appointment of juries and production of standardised minutes; the on-line application, selection and ranking of master's and doctoral students[53], as well as of outgoing mobility students; and the on-line submission of academic requests by students. An automated monitoring feature was also introduced to alert teaching staff, Heads of Department and Presidents of Faculty to the need of introducing missing academic information.

In addition, the on-line content platform "e-Conteúdos" changed from licensed[54] to freeware[55] software, with the implementation of many new tools to support the teaching and learning activities.

A new open-source integrated library management system[56], which will replace the existing licensed software[57], is currently being customised to meet the needs of the libraries of UBI, as well as to allow the development and implementation of a digital archive module seamlessly integrated into the GDUBI.

1.1.1.4 Funding

Within the period 2008-2011[58] there was a major cutback in state funding which is consistent with a decrease on the budget of the MEC caused by the current financial crisis. Conversely, UBI's alternative funding sources have increased from around a third of the total budget, in 2008, to slightly more than half in 2011.

Self-financing[59] has increased during the same period. Although student tuition fees – which have remained almost unchanged - still account for most of the self-financing, fundraising revenues have significantly increased in 2010 and 2011.

The economic and financial situation that made the Portuguese government's request for international financial assistance inevitable implied taking measures to cut down the spiralling public debt, such as the Law of Financial Commitments[60].

For public universities like UBI, it had two major implications. It compelled them to seek authorization from the Ministry of Finance to undertake any financial

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[53] To be extended to undergraduate students as from September 2012.
[54] Blackboard Academic Suite™.
[55] Moodle.
[56] Running on the web-based LibLime Koha™.
[57] Millennium Integrated Library System.
[58] Appendix VII to this report.
[59] Appendix VII to this report.
[60] Law no. 8/2012, published in the Official Gazette, 1st series, no. 37, of 21 February. It regulates the undertaking of commitments and arrears of public entities.

commitments (contradicting the principle of financial autonomy of universities) and to demonstrate that they had funds available equivalent to those commitments. However, it prevented them from using the balances from their own revenues.

Following the concerns raised by public universities[61], with the publication of the Ministerial Order no. 3364/2012[62] they were allowed to use the carry-over from the previous year, including revenues, to hire services and undertake future financial commitments, provided they were not in debt.

1.1.2 Quality assurance

In line with the Rector's Action Plan objective of implementing a quality culture and global certification, several measures in specific yet complementary areas have been taken.

The GQ was tasked with liaising with the A3ES, which entered into operation by focusing on the accreditation of all degree programmes. Most were preliminarily accredited[63], while others were immediately subject to an assessment process. Only a few were discontinued. The degree programmes which were preliminarily accredited will be subject to an assessment by the A3ES. The creation of degree programmes also requires accreditation by the A3ES although adjustments to the degree programmes in operation are decided by the DGES[64].

At the same time, a global certification policy was implemented which resulted in extending the compliance with the NP EN ISO 9001/2008 standard - Quality Management System[65] - to all of the services and centres of the University[66].

Regarding the teaching and learning activities, the Diploma Supplement Label was achieved for the second time[67], while some engineering degree programmes have been awarded the EUR-ACE® label by the ENAEE[68].

1.2. Foreseeable developments

Without prejudice to additional legislative changes, foreseeable developments are set to take place also in management and governance and in quality assurance.

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[61] Voiced by the Council of Rectors of the Portuguese Universities.

[62] Published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, no. 48, of 7 March.

[63] A one-time only stage scheduled to take place between 9 November 2009 and 31 March 2010, according to Deliberation no. 3349/2009, published in the Official Gazette, 2nd series, no. 244, of 18 December. It was later extended to 14 April 2010.

[64] Provided the changes do not compromise the objectives of the degree programme in compliance with Articles 75 to 80 of Decree-law no. 74/2006, of 24 March, amended by Decree-law no. 107/2008, of 25 June, and Decree-law no. 230/2009, of 14 September. Changing the objectives implies a new degree programme which accordingly has to be accredited by the A3ES.

[65] It acknowledges the effort made by an organisation in order to ensure the conformity of its products and/or services, the satisfaction of its customers and its continuous improvement.

[66] On 14 July 2008, the certified structures were: the Academic Services; the Documentation Services; the GAPPI [sic]; the Document Management and Staff Services Division; the Accounting and Assets Management Division; the Legal Advice Division; the Centre for Qualification and Interaction between UBI and Companies; the Computer Centre; and the Technical Services. On 26 January 2012, the certification was extended to the R&D Division; the Student Ombudsman; the Wool Museum; and the Social Action Services. The current certification is valid until 25 January 2015.

[67] First awarded for the period 2005-2008, it was achieved again for the period 2010-2013.

[68] Master's degree in Civil Engineering (2012-2015) and Master's degree in Electromechanical Engineering (2012-2018).

1.2.1 Management and governance

The most relevant factors in this context are: the approval of the Strategic Development Plan for the University; the need to reduce dependency on state funding by increasing fundraising and research funding; and the reorganisation of the national higher education network.

1.2.1.1 Strategic Plan

Envisaged in the Statutes[69], the Strategic Development Plan for the University - referred to as "Plano 2020" - provides a roadmap for 2012-2020. It was widely discussed across the University during meetings held in all Faculties as well as in different University bodies with relevant contributions from both teaching and non-teaching staff and students having been made. As a consequence, it was unanimously approved by the General Council[70].

In addition to realising UBI's mission, vision and values, "Plano 2020" identifies four strategic priorities: to provide global and coherent services in science and education; to achieve international recognition; to take a leading role in the society; and to achieve efficiency and focus on quality. For each strategic priority, specific objectives and corresponding lines of action were identified[71].

"Plano 2020" affords a long-term vision which sets the course of action for the University and all of its bodies.

1.2.1.2 Funding

The Portuguese economic and financial difficulties put an immediate strain on the budget of the University. Firstly, it is very likely that state funding will continue to decrease - whether slowly or steadily remains to be seen. Secondly, self-financing sources - either from tuition fees or fundraising - are also at risk. With salaries falling and unemployment rising, many families are likely to cut down on education expenses. This is a fact that smaller funds for state scholarships and tighter rules for accessing them may well amplify. As for fundraising, despite significant progress has been made (1.1.1.4), the fact that the contributing companies are mostly banking institutions raises a fair amount of concern as to whether they will keep up their current contributions. Finally, companies are also expected to cut down on the high-end services provided by the University due to their own difficulties.

In this context, the answer may well lie on raising the induction of international students, on diversifying the type of potential sponsors, and on deriving more funding for research, namely from the FP7, ETF and ERC, as the EUA team recommended and UBI is already working on (3, 4).

1.2.1.3 Reorganisation of the national higher education network

Although the need to reorganise the Portuguese higher education network is not new, it has regained a special focus due to the national plan of reforms, in and of themselves drawing from the international financial assistance to the country. As a

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[69] In paragraph 1 a)i) of Article 24.
[70] On 30 March 2012.
[71] An executive summary of "Plano 2020" is Appendix I to this report.

result, a study has been commissioned to the A3ES in order to characterise the current situation.

UBI is available to discuss possible solutions provided they ensure its leading role in the regional context and its focus on the quality of teaching and research.

1.2.2 Quality assurance

Having the Internal Quality Assurance System audited by the A3ES and the acknowledgement resulting of achieving the ECTS Label are seen as largely beneficial to the University.

1.2.2.1 Auditing of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Not only is the A3ES responsible for the assessment and accreditation of degree programmes, it also audits Internal Quality Assurance Systems, a voluntary process which is in an early stage of implementation. Once achieved, it grants institutions a higher degree of autonomy from the A3ES.

The objective of consolidating its quality culture while working on meeting the criteria to request the auditing of its Internal Quality Assurance System implies a balanced relationship with the Quality Management System already in place (1.1.2). To this end, the Rector has appointed a coordination team[72].

1.2.2.2 ECTS Label

In line with the policy of global certification (1.1.2) and in particular with the need to demonstrate excellence in the implementation of ECTS, an application to the ECTS Label has recently been made[73].

This process has contributed to updating or completing existing information, namely with regard to degree programmes and individual course units - to which specific forms were created and made available for being completed on-line (3.2, 3.5, 4.3). This was done according to the ECTS User's Guide[74] and incorporating information also required by the A3ES (3.2). Finally, by providing the required information in English[75], a very important contribution has been made to the internationalisation policy of the University (3.4), especially in relation to the induction of international students.

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[72] Rector's Order no. 44/2011, of 20 June.
[73] In accordance with the new approach to the ECTS Label selection process, a preliminary application was sent to the Portuguese National Agency on 30 May 2012. Following a favourable review by the National Agency, the final application is to be sent until 1 October 2012.
[74] Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/ects_en.htm.
[75] The ECTS Information Package of UBI is available on the institutional website at: https://www.en.ubi.pt/Pagina.aspx?p=GPRI_ECTS_Information_Package_Course_Catalogue.

2. Reactions to the outcomes of the 2008 evaluation

2.1 Internal reactions

At the time, most of the conclusions and recommendations of the EUA evaluation report inspired many of the proposals presented by the candidates to the post of Rector, in particular those of the current Rector (1.1.1.1). This fact granted wide acceptance and recognition of the interest of the evaluation process.

2.2 External reactions

The final evaluation report was made public on the institutional website[76] and newsletter[77]. The on-line newspaper managed by UBI - URBI@ORBI[78] – also featured an article on the subject[79].

Neither local nor national newspapers made any reference to the institutional evaluation undergone by the University.

In the absence of further data, it is not possible to ascertain additional external reactions or effects other than that of abiding by the principles of accountability and transparency.

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[76] At: https://www.ubi.pt/Pagina.aspx?P=GabQ_Avaliacao_Institucional_EUA. According to Google Analytics, between January 2010 and June 2012 the relevant page was viewed 5,558 times, mainly by Internet users from Portugal (4,590); Brazil (225); Poland (75); Spain (45); Germany, United Kingdom, Turkey (30 views each); Greece, Malta, Mozambique, Venezuela and "not set" (15 views each).

[77] "Relatório Final de Avaliação pela *European University Association*" (*Final Evaluation Report of UBI by the European University Association*), Ubinforma no. 159, 21-27 February 2009.

[78] Additional information on URBI@ORBI is available on the institutional website at: https://www.en.ubi.pt/Entidade.aspx?id=URBI

[79] "O papel de destaque da UBI" (*UBI's leading role*), URBI@ORBI no. 475, of 24 February 2009. Available at: http://www.urbi.ubi.pt/arquivo/2009/475-2009-02-24/5668/.

3. Analysis of which recommendations have been implemented and which have not

3.1 Students

Ensure the full participation of students in all quality assurance procedures and in line with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area [ESG].

In addition to being formally represented at several University and Faculty bodies (1.1.1.1), students are strongly encouraged to participate in quality assurance procedures whether related to teaching and learning (in line with the ESG), or administrative services (according to the NP EN ISO 9001:2008 standard) (1.1.2, 3.5).

The GQ was responsible for the design and implementation of new student satisfaction questionnaires, which were approved by the Pedagogical Councils, to evaluate the organisation and functioning of course units, as well as teaching staff performance[80]. Unlike the previous questionnaires and following the EUA team recommendation, participation is optional.

The "Balcão Virtual" (1.1.1.3) – as opposed to the former "Lince" dedicated platform - is the on-line interface for answering questionnaires and making results available to both teachers and students. The former have access to the results relative to the course units they are either in charge of or deliver, whereas the latter visualise data of the course units they attend. The data concerning teacher performance may have an impact on teachers' evaluation, in accordance with the Regulation on Teaching Staff Performance Assessment (1.1.1.2.).

In addition, the GQ provides information derived from the questionnaires to the applicable Faculty Quality Assurance Committees (3.5), Pedagogical Councils, Heads of Departments and Course Directors. The results are then analysed by each Course Committee to identify potential problems and define corrective measures, in conjunction with the teachers in charge.

Although the AAUBI and UBI have joined efforts to raise student participation, which ultimately led to its improvement, the students in the Steering Committee agree that there is room for more involvement and feel that the lack thereof mirrors the national context. There is broad consensus that, to a significant extent, this is still a work in progress.

Students suggest that the allocation of ECTS credits to the participation in University-related activities and in particular the recognition of social skills could boost student involvement. There is a commitment to formally implement such recognition in the next academic year.

Develop object-based learning and supportive tutoring as distinctive features of its student-centred pedagogy.

The Rector's Action Plan is clearly committed to developing a student-centred pedagogy and the GDAE has been created (1.1.1.1) to define and coordinate policies associated with this goal.

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[80] Appendix XI to this report.

In recent years, efforts have been made to shift from a teacher- to a student-centred paradigm.

Several training courses were offered to teaching staff who wanted to improve their knowledge about this pedagogy and the skills to implement it in the teaching and learning process (3.2, 4.3).

At the same time, two 1st cycle degrees were selected in each Faculty to be pilot programmes for applying the pedagogical model adopted at the Faculty of Health Sciences (3.2, 4.3). In this context, guidance was provided to decrease the amount of theoretical classes and gradually implement a tutorial teaching by reducing the number of students per class, in particular focusing on the use of information and communication technologies.

Ensure that the remit of the "Provedor do Estudante" is agreed by all stakeholders.

The Student Ombudsman ("Provedor do Estudante") (1.1.1.1) works mainly in close collaboration with the Pedagogical Councils, the AAUBI and the SASUBI. Although, due to his independent role, he cannot call for meetings of the Pedagogical Councils, the members of the Pedagogical Council are entitled to do so and have him invited.

According to the current Student Ombudsman, his action is based on three fundamental principles – confidentiality, right of reply and informality. He considers that he has real agency, although mostly in an informal way, due to his good articulation with both the rectoral team and the administrative services, which contributes to a faster resolution of most problems.

Students have, according to the President of the AAUBI, a positive view of the Student Ombudsman's work and consider that he really is an independent entity in promoting students' rights, by bridging the gap between services and students.

Consolidate the operation of the Academic Services and ensure their optimal interface with students.

Considerable changes were introduced in the Academic Services to overcome the uneasy interaction reported by the EUA team[81].

The staff was reorganised in order to improve front-office services[82] as students complained about long queues resulting from understaffing. Due to restrictions in hiring, it was not possible to recruit staff. However, a number of face-to-face procedures can now be accomplished on-line, which makes them easier for students and frees staff to perform other functions (1.1.1.3).

It was agreed that problems also arose from ignorance of University's norms and regulations. To mitigate this, all regulations are made available to students using the existing Intranet, contributing to their dissemination and transparency (4.1), while making decisions more expectable and comprehensible. When exceptions are decided, they apply to all students in the same situation.

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[81] Universidade da Beira Interior [UBI], *IEP Evaluation Report*, February 2009, paragraph 3.1.6, p. 7.
[82] Through internal mobility, three additional staff members were allocated to the Academic Services: two for the front-office and one for telephone assistance.

Both the Student Ombudsman and the President of the AAUBI agree that progress has been achieved but there is still room for improvement.

3.2 Learning and teaching

Benchmark learning outcomes against good practice in selected European institutions.

The benchmarking of good practices is more consolidated than before. The priority awarded to the enhancement of the Bologna Process (3.1, 4.3) called for re-thinking its principles, namely in what concerns generic and specific competences, learning-teaching and evaluation methods.

The pilot 1st cycle degrees and teacher training programmes (3.1, 4.3) were clearly based on the Tuning Project, while the descriptions of degree programmes and individual course units were benchmarked against the ECTS (4.3) and A3ES requirements (1.2.2.2).

Consolidate the staff development programme at university level.

An in-service staff development programme was promoted at University level centrally managed by the GDAE (3.1, 4.3). The attendance of such programmes is also credited under the Regulation on Teaching Staff Performance Assessment (1.1.1.2.1).

Further improve the induction of new first cycle students.

Although important steps have been taken since 2009 to implement new teaching and learning methods, it is too early for them to become a distinctive feature and a competitive stance of UBI, as suggested by the EUA team. Therefore this recommendation has not been fully implemented yet.

Remove all barriers to internal mobility.

UBI's organisation (1.1.1.1), distance between Faculties, restrictions in hiring new teaching staff and administrative constraints still prevent a more flexible implementation of the ECTS.

3.3 Research

Compete systematically for EU-funded and international research grants; and that it do so in the framework of a comprehensive research strategy, which builds on identified synergies and international collaborations.

The ICI is in charge of UBI's overall research strategy and policies, namely in what concerns internationally funded projects. It was created (1.1.1.1) to address the need of a comprehensive strategic plan regarding research, including prioritisations, an implementation programme and the monitoring of outputs.

Before 2009, internationally funded projects were almost non-existent. By the end of 2011, they represented an amount of about 1 million euro, in particular in engineering. The current FP7 funded projects ascend to 1.5 million euro. In addition, other partnerships with universities from Spanish and French trans-border regions have translated into Interreg IVA and Interreg IVB projects.

In order to stimulate and support research applications to EU funded projects, the ICI organises, through the R&D Division, thematic awareness-raising events across the University. The ICI also seeks to promote protocols with foreign universities which are intended to create or develop networks to support future projects. Most of the on-going projects originated from such contacts.

Revise the criteria for PhD supervision and increase the number of doctoral students, locating them in a graduate school, which will include international joint programmes in its portfolio.

Doctoral students have increased from 266 in 2008 to 434 in 2011, partly as a result of support measures such as allowing supervisors to request half of the doctoral students' tuition fees to fund their research activities[83].

Merit grants for doctoral students have also increased since 2009, although the FCT has decreased their financing. This was minimised by negotiating a sponsorship[84] which, in addition to funding the Scientific Merit Awards (1.1.1.2.3), since 2010 is also used by the Rector to allocate 20,000 euro to each Faculty to foster research. Part of this money is used to finance doctoral grants, whose awarding criteria match those of the FCT.

The development of an autonomous doctoral school was not yet considered, because neither the required critical dimension nor the critical mass in specific areas has been achieved. Instead, the Steering Committee believes that a centralised structure dedicated to doctoral degree programmes, focusing on student recruitment as well as on addressing the specific needs – especially administrative - of doctoral students could have a positive impact.

Use internationally accepted performance indicators and metrics.

Internationally accepted performance indicators and metrics are already in use at UBI, as a result not only of its research strategy (4.2), but also of the requisites of both the Regulation on Teaching Staff Performance Assessment (1.1.1.2.1) and of the A3ES. Accordingly, indicators such as presenting research projects and ISI/SCOPUS publications by both Faculty and scientific areas are used in the ICI's reports as well as at the annual R&D dissemination event UBISCIENTIA (4.2)[85].

Moreover, since 2010, UBI developed a full-cost accounting system (3.6, 4.1) that allows estimating the direct and indirect costs of research by organisational units and sub-units (e.g. Departments).

Reinforce links with Parkurbis, with specific regard to intellectual property and knowledge transfer and, at the same time, extend the number of partnerships with economic and social actors in the region.

While links with Parkurbis have been reinforced, partnerships with regional, national and international economic and social actors were extended[86] (e.g. Galp Energia, Portugal Telecom, Delta and Siemens Healthcare), some of which were essential in the creation of UBIMEDICAL (4.2).

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[83] Rector's Order no. 32/2009, of 1 September.
[84] With the "Santander Totta" bank.
[85] Relevant indicators are Appendix VI to this report.
[86] Appendix X to this report.

Since 2009, knowledge and technology transfer has increased, as well as the number of submitted patents and spin-offs (4.2). To support these activities there are new Regulations on Intellectual Property and Spin-off Start-ups (1.1.1.2.3) and the GAPPI provides training in this domain.

Entrepreneurship activities are very important to our R&D strategy, which led to integrating course units on entrepreneurship in many degree programmes in all Faculties. In addition, there is the CEBT open course[87], and the WINUBI, which has an external jury composed of business executives likely to welcome and finance those ideas. Nevertheless, the Steering Committee believes that additional funding is required to support and develop this area.

Derive new first and second cycle programmes from its research expertise, rather than the reverse.

In the current context of Portuguese higher education, the A3ES ensures that this recommendation will be addressed as it assesses whether all degree programmes comply with requirements that include having a qualified teaching staff, an associated research unit and research outputs in the scientific area of the degree programme, in particular at the postgraduate level.

In order to either create or develop critical mass in some scientific areas associated with existing degree programmes, the ICI promotes the creation of branches of research units from other Universities rated by the FCT as "Very Good" or "Excellent" (4.2).

3.4 Internationalisation

Elaborate a strategy benchmarked against good practice elsewhere in Europe.

Several international initiatives were benchmarked against European good practices (1.2.2.2, 3.2, 3.5, 4.3).

There have been contacts with foreign HEIs, in order to expand our cooperation network and take advantage of rising opportunities in some scientific areas.

In addition, new partnerships were established, namely with Brazilian institutions, which is currently a strong focus of UBI's internationalisation policy, under the sponsored[88] Luso-Brazilian Grants[89] and "Science without Borders" (4.2) programmes.

Develop a system of appraisal of its international activities and expand the International Office.

There is a system of monitoring internationalisation indicators (mostly related to student as well as teaching and non-teaching staff mobility) which are periodically disseminated to the academic community[90].

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[87] Delivered in association with the University of Coimbra; University of Aveiro; "CEC/CCIC Conselho Empresarial do Centro/Câmara de Comércio e Indústria do Centro" (*Business Council / Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Centro Region*); and, since 2011, with the Spanish HEIs: University of Salamanca; Pontifical University of Salamanca; Foundation University of Valladolid; University of León.
[88] By the "Santander Totta" bank.
[89] Additional information on the scope of international partners and programmes UBI is involved with and participates in is available on the institutional website at: https://www.en.ubi.pt/Entidade.aspx?id=GPRI.

One additional staff member was allocated to the GPRI[91], which also relies on the work of trainees paid with Erasmus funding. Current restrictions in hiring (3.1) prevent a more significant expansion. A good interaction with Erasmus Coordinators and the recent implementation of the Erasmus Student Network, aimed to support incoming Erasmus students through volunteer and organised work of other students, both contribute to minimise this difficulty.

Recently, a new platform eased the teachers' work and made the whole Erasmus student application and selection procedure much more objective and transparent, thus ensuring the merit of the students who are placed (1.1.1.3.).

Use internationalisation as a means of acquiring expertise through staff mobility, joint curriculum development and knowledge transfer.

The first ever applications for Erasmus Mundus master's degrees in Energy and in Biomedical Sciences were recently submitted. In addition, some protocols were established with foreign universities towards the development of double degrees[92]. UBI holds the Diploma Supplement Label and has recently applied to the ECTS Label (1.1.2, 1.2.2, 3.5). Since 2011, UBI also awards the European Doctorate (1.1.1.2.2).

In order to foster internationalisation, the institutional website, the International Student Guide[93], and the ECTS Information Package were produced in several languages, namely English[94], Spanish, Portuguese, and Polish.

In what concerns research activities, new steps were taken towards internationalisation, which led to an increase in internationally funded research projects and international networks (3.3, 4.2).

3.5 Quality assurance

Establish quality assurance procedures in line with ESG, to be managed at university level, and also develop internal quality assurance mechanisms for research, management and administrative services.

The importance of promoting and fostering a quality culture across the University is acknowledged as fundamental (1.1.1.1). The GQ, a central office responsible for defining principles and procedures for quality assurance consistent with the ESG for the entire University, was created (1.1.1.1) to achieve this objective.

The GQ has established Faculty Quality Assurance Committees[95] which became responsible for implementing the University's quality policy and for producing

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[90] Through the publication of "UBI em Números" (*UBI in Figures*) and of the Annual and Financial Reports, both available at the institutional website.
[91] In order to support free-movers, the mobility to and from Ibero-American countries (especially Brazil), as well as the establishment of agreements with foreign HEIs.
[92] Polish Universities: Integrated master's degree in Architecture with the Gdansk University of Technology, 1st and 2nd cycle degree programmes with the Technical University of Bialystok. Spanish Universities: 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle degree programmes with the University of Extremadura and with the University of Salamanca.
[93] The English version is Appendix IX to this report. The Spanish, English, Polish and Portuguese versions are available on the institutional website at: https://www.en.ubi.pt/Pagina.aspx?p=GPRI_Guia_Internacional.
[94] The English version of the institutional website was especially important for the ECTS Label application.
[95] These Committees comprise the President of the Faculty, one teacher from the Scientific Council, one teacher from the Pedagogical Council, the Secretary of the Faculty and one student.

specific reports. These Committees were provided with collaboration platforms coordinated by the GQ, where relevant data is displayed either by degree programme or course unit (1.1.1.3).

In what concerns research, quality assurance procedures have already been addressed (3.3).

Since the EUA evaluation report, along with the implementation of new quality assurance principles and procedures for learning-teaching and research activities, the former Quality Management System was extended (1.1.2). Currently, all Centres and Services, including the SASUBI, comply with the requisites of the NP EN ISO 9001:2008 standard. A significant number of services and centres directly deal with students who are asked to participate in this certification system by filling the applicable satisfaction questionnaires.

In the near future, UBI also intends to achieve an additional level of certification focused on social responsibility according to the SA 8000® standard[96].

Disseminate outcomes of quality assurance to all stakeholders, including students.

In order to earn the stakeholders' involvement and confidence, they are asked to participate not only in the implementation of quality assurance procedures, but also in their previous discussion and definition. As an example, the current student satisfaction questionnaires were improved as a result of suggestions originated from the Pedagogical Councils (3.1).

The results of student satisfaction questionnaires are provided to and worked upon by Course Committees (3.1). Research outcomes are disseminated using internationally accepted performance indicators and metrics (3.3). Faculty Quality Assurance Committees analyse relevant indicators (1.1.1.3, 3.1) and work along the lines referred to in the answer to the previous recommendation.

Review the implementation of Bologna courses, with particular regard to the allocation of ECTS and the division of pre-Bologna courses into two cycles.

Since 2009, three reports on the implementation of the Bologna Process have been issued[97], covering all issues related to the implementation of degree programmes according to the Bologna guidelines.

Course Committees, as well as teachers, can introduce changes to the syllabus or teaching and evaluation methods of course units, but changes to the structure of a degree programme must be approved by the Scientific Councils, and then follow the applicable procedure (1.1.2).

The recently implemented degree programme and individual course unit descriptions (4.3) provided Course Committees with an additional opportunity to discuss the need to introduce changes and define the competences associated with undergraduate (1st cycle) and postgraduate (2nd and 3rd cycles) degrees.

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[96] Social accountability standard based on international human rights norms and national labour laws that will protect and empower all personnel within a company's scope of control and influence, who produce products or provide services for that company, including personnel employed by the company itself, as well as by its suppliers/subcontractors, sub-suppliers, and home workers.
[97] Available at: https://www.ubi.pt/Pagina.aspx?p=Relatorios.

Through satisfaction questionnaires, students are also regularly asked to express their views on the allocation of ECTS (3.1).

Conduct thorough analysis of drop-out and failure rates, and monitor accordingly.

Drop-out and failure rates are now available to both Faculty Quality Assurance and Course Committees (1.1.1.3, 3.1).

Failure rates are a key factor to determine critical course units whose criteria were discussed at the Pedagogical Councils and include compliance with the provision of basic information, as well as critical thresholds[98]. They are monitored as stated in 4.3.

Use quality assurance to build a quality culture and to support the promotion of the university.

Decisive steps have been taken to build a quality culture and seek the participation of all stakeholders in this endeavour, as mentioned in this section.

As a result we now know more on how to maximise our strengths and act upon the causes of our weaknesses in order to reverse or at least minimise them.

We believe that our stance of transparency (4.1) in conjunction with a focus on external accreditation and assessment – by the A3ES, FCT and EUA – as well as on certification – the Diploma Supplement, ECTS and EUR-ACE® labels, and the NP EN ISO 9001:2008 standard – (1.1.2, 1.2.2) will surely contribute to raise the international and competitive profile of UBI.

3.6 Governance and management

Develop a long-term shared vision of institutional goals.

The declared mission and objectives of the University are stated in its Statutes[99].

Also according to the Statutes, it is up to the Rector to produce the following strategic documents: annual activity plans[100]; an action plan[101] - which currently is the Rector's Action Plan (covering 4 years, i.e., a term in office), and a strategic plan[102] (medium-term), all of which are approved by the General Council.

Before the approval of "Plano 2020", the Rector's Action Plan provided all University units, sub-units, centres and services with the guidelines to implement the institutional goals, by elaborating upon both the Statutes and the EUA Evaluation Report (1.1.1.1).

"Plano 2020" translates UBI's mission into a vision and concrete objectives. It delivers a long-term vision of shared goals both consensual and wide enough to provide all organisational structures a common ground to build upon (1.2.1.1).

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[98] Basic information – which the current individual course unit description made redundant - includes: the syllabus, objectives, competences, recommended bibliography, teaching and learning methods, and assessment criteria. The critical thresholds are: a percentage of successful students out of all of those who are assessed equal to or lower than 65%, and a 15% to 20% decrease in success rates in consecutive years.
[99] In Article 2.
[100] Paragraph 1 a)iii) of Article 24.
[101] Paragraph 1 a)i) of Article 24.
[102] Paragraph 1 a)i) of Article 24.

The General Council has proved very important in the discussion and definition of short- to long-term goals for the University. The integrative participation of external stakeholders from both companies and community affords a wider perspective to its decisions. In order to bring the General Council and the Faculties closer together, the meetings of the General Council have been held at each Faculty.

The Senate, whose members include the Presidents of the Faculties, has also had a key role in promoting coordination with central guidelines and policies (1.1.1.2.1).

On a basis of wide consultation and discussion elaborate a new strategic plan, characterised by simplicity, prioritisations, identifiable means to ends, timeframe, follow-up and corrective measures.

The drafting of "Plano 2020" was already addressed (1.2.1.1). An abridged English version is Appendix I to this report.

Develop a system of full-cost accounting, in order to ensure cost-efficiency.

In the period between November 2009 and December 2010, a full-cost accounting system was developed, by the Administrative Services and the Computer Centre, in order to determine the average cost of teaching and research activities, and support services. It is based on criteria and economic allocation of costs which take into account the area occupied by the Faculties and the organisational sub-units, as well as the annual distribution of teaching hours.

This system was tested for a period of about 18 months. After that, successive reports on the cost of the activities of teaching and learning, R&D, and support services were submitted for approval to the Management Council of the University.

For the first time, through the Annual and Financial Report of 2011[103], some costs have been reported based on full-cost accounting, namely: the student cost per Faculty, the student cost per 1st cycle degree programme, and the research cost per Faculty.

Full-cost accounting allows an analysis of the more relevant direct and indirect costs and has become an increasingly important – although not exclusive – tool for management decisions.

In addition, for many European projects and funding institutions this is the only way to submit applications and report average costs per activity.

Boost technical support for researchers (GAAPI [sic]), to assist project management and grant applications.

To foster research is one of the priorities of both the Rector's Action Plan (1.1.1.1) and "Plano 2020" (1.2.1.1). Accordingly, its support structures underwent significant changes (1.1.1.1, 1.1.1.2.3).

The new R&D structures (1.1.1.1) have carried out many initiatives designed to promote research activities, support researchers, and award scientific merit prizes (4.2).

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[103] Available on the institutional website at: https://www.ubi.pt/Pagina.aspx?p=Gestao_Patrimonial

Strengthen the integrative function of its central bodies and re-examine its belief that Faculty autonomy is the appropriate way forward – with a view to implementing a structure enabling the best utilisation of mission, strategy and the Recommendations contained in the evaluation report.

The Steering Committee believes that the integrative function of its central bodies - which has effectively been strengthened in core areas such as teaching and learning, research, and quality assurance (1.1.1.1) - is compatible with the administrative, scientific and pedagogical autonomy, which Faculties have been awarded (1.1.1.2.1). However, this autonomy is exercised within the limits set by the strategic documents and guidelines of the University, as mentioned above.

The creation of Scientific and Pedagogical Councils at the Faculties is acknowledged to allow an in-depth analysis of Faculty-specific issues. Inter-Faculty collaboration exists both in research (4.2) and teaching and learning activities[104].

Whenever the established bodies (e.g. the Senate) have proved insufficient to ensure a much needed coordination with the strategy and policies set by UBI, the Rector has implemented informal mechanisms (e.g. monthly meetings with the Presidents of the Faculties) to overcome this difficulty and improve the internal communication schemes.

3.7 Special focus

Engage in significant further development of the matrix system.

The matrix organisational model (1.1.1.1) is in accordance with how the University is structured.

While acknowledging the virtues of the matrix system suggested by the EUA team, the constraints expressed in 3.2 are difficult to overcome, at least for the time being.

Conduct a full review of the internal organisation of the university.

To a great extent, the current organisational structure derives from a thorough review of the previous organisational structure, which has significantly changed since the EUA evaluation report (1.1.1.1).

Whereas Faculties have gained autonomy, teachers have seen their representation decrease at departmental level. Although this does not hold true for all Departments or even Faculties, it is a matter of concern for the University.

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[104] As an example, there are degree programmes which imply a high level of cooperation between Faculties, such as the 1st cycle degree programmes in Optometry, and in Political Science and International Relations; and the 1st and 2nd cycle Design-related degree programmes.

4. Institutional priorities for the 2011/2012 evaluation: levers for future changes

4.1 Management and governance

Management and governance-related issues have already been extensively addressed both as recent (1.1.1) and foreseeable (1.2.1) developments, as well as in relation to the analysis of which recommendations have been implemented (3). Therefore, this section takes up issues which are likely to induce or constrict change.

The need for UBI to develop a strategic vision and plan was a consistent thread running through the EUA team's observations and recommendations[105]. Before the strategic plan came into play (1.2.1.1), the Rector's Action Plan (1.1.1.1) has sought to fill this gap and provided a benchmark for the annual action plans of the University as well as of its organisational units and sub-units, namely Faculties, Departments, and Research Units.

The fact that "Plano 2020" frames the current and future development of UBI emphasised the need to reach the highest possible consensus around it. The unanimous endorsement of the General Council (1.2.1.1) gives a clear indication as to the success of this endeavour.

Remarkable progress has been made in implementing a system of full-cost accounting (3.6). Other than reinforcing the potential of UBI to derive more international funding, namely regarding R&D activities, this system can now be increasingly used both as a decision-making tool and a basis for a more efficient management of human and material resources.

Either intended for or encompassing HEIs, legislation requires public Universities to comply with new benchmarks which sometimes fail to take into account their distinctiveness, as is the case with the Law of Financial Commitments (1.1.1.4).

Finally, it should be noted that, in accordance with the Rector's Action Plan objective of creating a culture of information and transparency in which everyone knows their individual rights and duties, all of the regulations (some of which were mentioned in 1.1.1.2) Rector's orders, decisions of the Management Council and information notes can be accessed by teaching and non-teaching staff and students using their credentials to log on to the existing Intranet.

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[105] Universidade da Beira Interior [UBI], *IEP Evaluation Report*, February 2009, paragraph 3.6.1, p. 14.

4.2. Research policy

The ICI is coordinated by the Vice-rector for research and Innovation (1.1.1.1). It is responsible for the scientific policy of the University (3.3), which aims to privilege excellence in a European and international dimension, both within each scientific domain and in a multidisciplinary manner.

As part of the research policy of the University, the following objectives were defined in order to promote quality-based research:

- To increase the quantity and quality of individual scientific production;
- To define research priorities;
- To increase critical mass within the Research Units and if not possible to foster the association of UBI's research groups with centres or associated laboratories rated "Very Good" or "Excellent" by the FCT (3.3);
- To foster research partnerships (at regional, national, and international level);
- To encourage the search for alternative research funding.

The achievement of these goals is the responsibility of the ICI whose Regulation was published in 2010 (1.1.1.2.3).

In order to increase scientific research outputs, it was necessary to draw a baseline. Current outputs are now evaluated through internationally accepted performance indicators and metrics (3.3, 3.5), in order to identify critical aspects and contribute to the overall quality of scientific activities. The statistical data is collected and worked from the ISI and Scopus databases. It is annually presented at UBISCIENTIA and in a specific publication[106].

Another objective is to provide incentives, preferably funded by private partners, for researchers to engage in quality research and publication. This has been done through a Fund of Scientific Convergence[107], which supports scientific projects with research potential and research grants. Annually, each Faculty receives 20,000 euro to act accordingly (3.3).

As a way of promoting additional dissemination of research, several events, workshops, seminars were held, such as the already mentioned UBISCIENTIA[108]; the seminars "Spin-off experiences: to enterprise or not in the current context",

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[106] All of the indicators contained in this publication are included in Appendix VI to this report, as "Bibliometric indicators".
[107] Sponsored by the "Santander Totta" bank.
[108] Held in 2010, 2011 and 2012. In addition to the presentation of research outputs, space is also devoted to the discussion of themes related to science and technology.

"Analysis of Research Ideas" and the "Research, Development and Innovation Workshop", to name but a few.

Some research lines have applied to the "Mais Centro" programme, under the QREN[109], involving researchers from several Research Units of the University, bringing together knowledge and skills in an interdisciplinary manner. These research lines are framed by strategic research domains at UBI, while meeting national and European scientific priorities such as Health, Information and Communication Technologies and Electronics and Energy (sustainability). These research lines represent a total budget of around 3.5 million euro and congregate around 140 PhD researchers of 9 Research Units of UBI. These projects result from the stated aim of promoting collaborative research between UBI's Research Units and Centres. Also in line with this aim, a promotional booklet containing information on UBI's research units[110] was produced.

Another important goal is to enhance inter-institutional collaboration which involves:

- consolidation and reinforcement of existing R&D partnerships: as is the case with project INESPO that joins 3 Portuguese and 4 Spanish universities, coordinated at UBI[111];

- **development of new strategic R&D partnerships:** new protocols with international universities[112] and the Programme "Science Without Borders", with Brazilian partners;

– **promotion of strategic partnerships with institutions of high academic and scientific prestige, in order to foster the building of networks and excellence and competitiveness clusters:** by joining the TICE.PT, the HCP, the AIFF, and INOVCLUSTER; and

– **increasing partnerships with the private or semi-private sector:** in 2010/2011 there were 4 technology transfer contracts; 9 consortia and partnership contracts and 22 protocols with several institutions[113].

The promotion of knowledge and technology transfer as well as of entrepreneurship is another pivotal area of UBI's research policy. In this domain and as a way of protecting the research outputs, the Regulation of Intellectual Property and the Regulation of Spin-off Start-ups (1.1.1.2.3) were issued. Resulting from incubation in

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[109] It incorporates financing from the ERDF.
[110] See Appendix VI to this report.
[111] More information on INESPO is available at: http://www.innotransfer.eu/
[112] Appendix X to this report.
[113] Appendix X to this report.

UBI's facilities, 6 spin-offs were already created, some of which originated from ideas presented in the framework of WINUBI (3.3). During the period 2008-2011, 7 national patents[114] were registered. In addition, 3 trademarks and 5 copyrights (both national), as well as 4 international patent applications were filed.

One of UBI's important pitfalls is the lack of critical mass[115]. As a way of overcoming this situation, it was necessary to foster the association with Research Units or Associated Laboratories with larger dimension and better quality, whenever possible involving the creation of branches at UBI (3.3). As a result of this policy, some branches of external Research Units or Associated Laboratories have been implemented: CIDESD[116] (in Sports Sciences), CIES[117]-UBI (in Sociology), CEFAGE[118] (in Management and Economics). The association with a research unit in Architecture is also under way.

In order to foster and enhance research it is important to improve the scientific equipment, which has been done using national or EU funds, whether related or not to public policies of regional development. In this context, a fundamental investment was made in the creation of a space of excellence in the health sector and technologies applied to health, including the strands of business incubation (enhancing national and international funding), and of research and knowledge transfer, with privileged connection to educational institutions. This project – UBIMEDICAL – globally amounts to 5 million euro and is funded by the QREN.

Given the current financial situation (1.1.1.4) and foreseeable reduction in both State and FCT funds (1.2.1.2), it is increasingly necessary to raise external funding sources. In order to support researchers in that endeavour, the R&D Division was created. The support to apply to the ERC and ETF international projects, as well as to the FP7 and COST Actions was also reinforced. We have been witnessing a significant increase in international projects[119] (3.3) and, for the first time, UBI coordinates a FP7 project.

Since 2009, as a result of the research policy and related implemented measures, overall research has increased and researchers are more aware of the need to engage in quality scientific research that is internationally identified and acknowledged.

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[114] Out of 54 applications.
[115] 21% of the researchers are integrated in external Research Units whereas 6% are not integrated in any internal or external Research Unit.
[116] At University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro.
[117] At University Institute of Lisbon.
[118] At University of Évora.
[119] Appendix VI to this report.

4.3. Bologna process

The GDAE was created to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning process and to further the implementation of Bologna guidelines (1.1.1.1, 3.1, 3.2). This central office, which is coordinated by a Pro-rector (1.1.1.1), seeks to encourage and support the promotion of high-standard pedagogical and evaluation methods consistent with quality teaching across the University as well as to provide orientations resulting from research, analysis and benchmarking of good practices elsewhere.

The existence of this office facilitates this process, since teachers do not need to read or analyse these recommendations. The GDAE defines the path and the way in this area, always in accordance with the specificities of each Faculty.

One of its first outputs was the Regulation of Course Committees (1.1.1.2.2), which created a common understanding between Faculties concerning their composition and attributions.

Another was the joint work with Course Committees regarding the analysis of critical course units (3.5). Once a critical course unit is identified, the Course Committee addresses the teacher in charge to ascertain its causes, and asks for corrective measures to be implemented in the following year. If needed, the GDAE provides additional support in defining new teaching and evaluation methods.

In order to develop and disseminate good practices across the University, a pilot-project was initiated (3.1, 3.2), in which two 1st cycle degree programmes were chosen in each Faculty, under the advice of the concerned President, to further develop the Bologna practices – student-based learning, certification of competences and acquisition of learning outcomes - starting from the first year. The Tuning Project was used as a benchmark (3.2) to define the learning outcomes of each degree programme and to assess how individual course units contributed to them. New evaluation and teaching methods were then discussed within the Course Committee and experimented by the teachers involved. The main purposes were to create a common language, develop the same degree of requirements, and use the same rules, as a means of avoiding discrepancies and overlapping of learning contents and evaluation activities between course units. The initiative made possible to identify common themes, across the different course units that contributed to achieve the same learning outcomes.

In some degree programmes, the course units were organised by modules, enabling the use of specific methods that promote active learning, as well as of an evaluation system which, in some cases, led to better results.

Nonetheless, there were some constraints when implementing these pilot-projects, which made this a slow and heterogeneous process, which is being assessed by on-going evaluation. Some constraints were related to a high number of students per class as a consequence of a low number of teachers. Some infrastructure was not adapted to the suggested methods, namely to work with small groups and within a self-learning context. External funding sources[120] were used by the Rector to allocate 20,000 euro to each Faculty to furthering the Bologna process. It allowed addressing this kind of problems and as a result, in some Faculties three self-learning classrooms were created whereas others were upgraded, where students can access relevant resources.

One additional and important measure in this context was the assessment of the bibliographic needs concerning 1st cycle degrees and the ensuing acquisition of the books required to meet them, seeking to make them available where they are needed.

Other constraints regarded the difficulty to introduce changes in long-standing scenarios. The fact that some teachers are used to working alone contrasts with this being a collaborative process between teaching staff, Course Committees and Course Directors. Since attitudes are not easy to change, we are debating quality values in order to develop a common ground upon which we can build a quality culture (1.1.2, 3.5). Once the change happens, even if some things go backwards, most never return to the departure point; some changes are accepted and pave the way for others.

An important part in furthering the implementation of Bologna guidelines was the already mentioned degree programme and individual course unit descriptions intended for the ECTS Label application (1.2.2.2, 3.2, 3.5). Together, they reflect the assumptions of the Bologna Process as they imply an alignment between syllabus, learning outcomes, and teaching and learning and evaluation methods which are translated into the ECTS credits allocated to each course unit. This was a significant step not only in what concerns transparency and provision of information – to students, teachers, external stakeholders and society – but also because it required a time of reflection enabling teachers to think of what has been done, how is it working and what remains and needs to be done.

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[120] From the "Santander Totta" bank.

In order to support this process, the GDAE organised several teacher training sessions. Although the completion of degree programme and individual course unit descriptions was the short-term objective, the ultimate goals were the continuous (present and future) re-thinking of pedagogical methods in order to develop student-based teaching and learning methods, discuss evaluation methods and ultimately provide students with improved conditions for achieving the expected learning outcomes .

In the future, we need to continue to reflect upon all of these changes, in order to assess their impact.

The Steering Committee considers that, in order to further the implementation of the Bologna guidelines, the teaching and learning process should have similar resources and support structures as the ones provided for the ICI. The GDAE should also reinforce its ties with the Pedagogical Councils, because current connections mainly rely on the mere exchange of information.

Students consider that furthering the Bologna process demands a more flexible curriculum, one in which they are allowed to make more personal choices regarding optional course units. The current limitations in public funding and the circumstances mentioned as barriers to internal mobility (3.2) make this flexible curriculum difficult to implement.

5. Closing remarks

This report is a result both of in-depth discussions within the Self-evaluation Steering Committee and the input from the academic community. It created a new opportunity to reflect, in a systematic and comprehensive way, on the strategic areas at UBI.

The Self-evaluation Steering Committee stands that, since the last EUA report, UBI has improved owing to its strategy and efforts in implementing earlier EUA recommendations. Nevertheless, the strategic areas illustrate distinct levels of achievement, mostly due to different starting points.

We rely on the feedback from the EUA team in identifying possible ways to reach quality levels consistent with the mission and overall strategy of UBI.