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IBAR PROJECT

QUALITY AND STAKEHOLDERS – THE PORTUGUESE CASE

Work Package 9

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1. INTRODUCTION

Governance has become an increasingly contested topic in higher education policy. Part of the tension is inherent to governance itself, since it refers not only to the administration and management of higher education (be it at the system or at the institutional levels), but also to the influence that constituents have in the decision-making processes of higher education (Keller, 2001). The changes in governance have tended to indicate a retrenchment of the classical approach to governance through ‘collegial authority’ and ‘self-governance’. This has been giving way to a more corporate or market approach, spear-headed by the development of New Public Management (Pollitt, 1990) and the rise of quasi-markets in higher education (see Teixeira et al, 2004). This approach tends to consider that higher education institutions should be run more like corporations in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness, and this should lead to an adaptation of governance mechanisms by streamlining and centralizing the decision-making process, the internal setting of priorities and the mission to be pursued. A related trend has been an increasing influence of the role of external forces in the governance of higher education, which are likely to have different views about higher education’s mission and, especially, about the ranking of priorities (Middlehurst and Teixeira, 2012).

These trends have also been present in Portugal, whose higher education system went recently through a deep process of change that followed reviews and recommendations by international organisations, such as the OECD and ENQA (Amaral and Neave, 2012). In the aftermath of these reviews, several new pieces of legislation have been issued, introducing significant changes in the institutional governance structures and the internal organization of higher education and in the quality evaluation system.¹ These recent legal changes have also placed a stronger emphasis on the presence of external stakeholders in institutions, as an attempt to strengthen their relevance by bringing an external perspective about the institution’s strategic development (including quality assurance issues). Moreover, the current economic crisis and the rise of graduate unemployment have strengthened further the idea that higher education institutions should be attentive to labour market needs. Institutionalising stakeholders’ viewpoints, especially the employers’ ones, on issues such as syllabus, programme’s structure, and the portfolio of study programmes, has been regarded as an effective way to promote greater closeness between higher education and the labour market.

Linked to this view is the perspective that quality assurance of study cycles should include the views of external stakeholders, namely employers, when designing new study cycles or re-designing existing ones. Furthermore involving stakeholders in quality assurance activities was expected to lead to the adoption of a richer concept of quality in higher education (IBAR Project, 2011). However, in

¹ These include a new legal framework for all HEIs (which introduces significant changes such as the possibility of adoption of a public foundation status for institutions fulfilling certain conditions, new governance structures), a new law on quality assessment, and new regulations regarding the academic profession.

order to address these concerns, the presence of external stakeholders needs to take place in those governance bodies that discuss and take decisions regarding those issues (and not merely make general statements about the institution's educational provision).

The European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ENQA, 2007) explicitly include references to the presence of external stakeholders in quality assurance, namely concerning the implementation of internal quality assurance systems within higher education institutions. ESG1.1 - Policy and procedures for quality assurance - states that the policy and procedures for quality assurance “should also include a role for students and other stakeholders” (ENQA, 2007: 7), while ESG1.2 – Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards - states that the “quality assurance of programmes and awards are expected to include: (...) regular feedback from employers, labour market representatives and other relevant organisations” (ENQA, 2007, 17).

In the case of Portugal, A3ES has commissioned a study on European processes to assess and certify internal quality assurance systems (Santos, 2011), where a proposal is made concerning a set of guidelines for setting up these systems, complying with the ESG. According to this report, external stakeholders presence is foreseen as a way to implement such systems, being stated that the central role played by students and the effective participation of stakeholders (both internal and external) in internal quality processes are consensually considered as essential elements to a quality institutional culture. Furthermore, and under the quality assessment and accreditation system now existent in Portugal, external stakeholders are present both in the external assessment commissions, and during the self-evaluation and external evaluation phases of the process, as representatives of the external community's opinions about the study programme under accreditation.

The main goal of WP 9 on *Quality and Stakeholders* is to understand which ‘good practices’ and ‘barriers’ can be identified at different levels when it comes to stakeholders’ contribution to the processes of internal quality assurance (e.g. decisions on improving the primary processes in the higher education institutions, namely the teaching and learning one) and to what extent stakeholders’ inputs are in line with expectations on processes and content of undergraduate education from the ESG.

This report begins with a short explanation on the methodology upon which this research is built. Next, the findings across the four institutions are presented under six broad sections that reflect the six research questions defined in the framework of this work package. The report concludes with a synthesis of the main findings, the identification of barriers and institutional good practices to the effective participation of external stakeholders in higher education institutions, namely in the

implementation of quality assurance systems, and with a set of recommendations for institutional managers and for policy makers.

2. METHODOLOGY

Following the methodology used in the former work packages (6, 7 and 8), the analysis for this work package will also focus on a sample of higher education institutions (HEIs). Four public HEIs have then been selected as the Portuguese case studies, belonging both to the university (HEI α and HEI β) and the polytechnic subsystems (HEI γ and HEI δ). They are also different in terms of number of students and location in order to provide a diversified sample, able to empirically base the research.

The analysis was developed in two steps. Firstly, we started by analysing national legal texts and policy documents issued at institutional level referring to different aspects related to stakeholders' formal representation and function in institutional governance and management decision making bodies, especially the ones that have a say about quality relevant issues. Secondly, a total of 36 interviews were conducted with different groups of actors in each of these institutions and transcribed later on for content analysis.

These interviews targeted, in each of the four selected institutions, both members of the central management and administration and members of the faculties/schools. The first group comprised the Rector/President (or, in its place, a vice-rector/vice-president, or a pro-rector) and the representative of the Quality Assurance structure (or, in its place, of the Senate, of the structure responsible for study programmes, or for the Student Support Services). The second group was constituted by the Dean (or equivalent), the representative of the Quality Assurance structure (at unit level), the study programme director, and by two focus groups, one composed by academics and the other by students (around five participants in each focus group).

Again, and due to methodological reasons, a selection was made of, firstly, the scientific areas and, secondly, the study programmes to which the members of this second group belonged. The purpose was to choose different scientific areas and study programmes offered in all institutions, regardless of their sub-system (university or polytechnic). As a result, two major distinct scientific areas were chosen – Engineering and Arts – and two study programmes (first cycle level study programmes only), from each area, were selected in each institution: Civil Engineering and Design, in HEI α ; Civil Engineering and Communication Design, in HEI β ; Civil Engineering and Arts and Design, in HEI γ ; and Civil Engineering and Fine Arts, in HEI δ . For ease of reference and consistency, the broad terminology *Engineering* and *Arts* is used throughout the report to name the two investigated areas.

Findings based on all the collected data (both from legal documents and interviews) are presented in the following section, answering the work package research questions. While document analysis has been the main source of information to know about the external stakeholders' formal presence in

higher education institutions decision-making and advisory bodies, the interviews allowed understanding what their real and effective participation is in fact and how it happens.

3. FINDINGS

The following sections offer a synthesis of the findings across the four surveyed HEIs, highlighting also the differences that emerged between them. Annex 1 presents the detailed findings for each institution.

3.1 Question 1

What are the national rules that govern higher education institutions' inclusion or exclusion of stakeholders in/from decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues and have they changed in the past five years? If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total members?

National legislation and the higher education institutions' statutes are the legal documents that set up the rules (both at national and institutional level) that govern higher education institutions' inclusion or exclusion of stakeholders in/from decision-making or advisory bodies, namely the ones that have a say about quality-relevant issues. As already referred, this legal framework has changed in the last five years and we now have a situation where there is a clear promotion of the presence of external stakeholders in higher education institutions' governance bodies.

Although the 2007 Legal Framework of Higher Education Institutions (RJIES) leaves to the institutions the definition of their governance and management bodies' structure, composition, competences and ways of election or nomination of its members, it nevertheless establishes the mandatory presence of the following governance bodies: general council, rector and management council, in the case of universities, and general council, president and management council, in the case of polytechnic institutions. At unit level, schools/faculties in universities must have a scientific and a pedagogic council, while in polytechnics they are obliged to have a technical-scientific and a pedagogic council.

From all these bodies, the general council is the only one where the presence of external stakeholders is mandatory by law. Their number should never be less than 30% of all the council members (which may vary between 15 and 35), and they should be persons of recognizable merit, external to the institutions but with knowledge and experience relevant for it. These members are co-opted by the internal ones, after a proposal that has to be subscribed to by at least a third of those internal members (academic staff and students). According to the law the general council can invite other persons to participate in their meetings to have their views on special matters; nevertheless these invitees are not allowed to vote. At school's level the presence of external stakeholders in the scientific or technical-scientific council depends on the institutions' decision. This decision should be established in the institutions' statutes.

Finally if an institution has the status of a public foundation operating under private law (as it is the case with one of the higher education institutions that is part of our sample – HEI β), there is an additional governance body, responsible for administering the foundation, that is composed of five members external to the university and appointed by the government.

3.2 Question 2

What are the institutional rules that govern higher education institutions' inclusion or exclusion of stakeholders in/from decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues and have they changed in the past five years? If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total members.

In the case of the four institutions under analysis, their statutes (approved less than five years ago) refer the presence of external stakeholders in the decision-making bodies presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – Decision-making bodies that include external stakeholders among their members

| Higher Education Institution | Decision-making body | N.º and type of external stakeholders |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| HEI α | General Council (25 members) | 7 members of recognizable merit and with knowledge and experience relevant for the HEI (co-opted by the others). |
| | Schools scientific councils (maximum 25 members) | Up to 5 members co-opted among academics and/or researchers from other HEIs or from external society of recognizable merit |
| HEI β | General Council (23 members) | 6 members of recognizable merit and with knowledge and experience relevant for the HEI (co-opted by the others). |
| | Faculty or Department level representatives councils (15 members) | 1 or 2 personalities, co-opted by the other members (after a proposal from the organic unit Director and having been heard the unit scientific council) |
| | Faculty or Department scientific councils (maximum of 25 members) | There is the option of inviting academics and/or researchers from other institutions relevant for the HEI mission (there number can never exceed 15% of the total number of members) |
| | Doctoral school external commission (maximum of 25 members) | 3 to 5 personalities (national or international), of recognizable scientific competencies |
| HEI γ | General council (25 members) | 7 personalities of recognizable merit, with knowledge and experience relevant for the HEI |
| HEI δ | General council (21 members) | 6 personalities of recognizable merit, with knowledge and experience relevant for the HEI (one for each one of the HEI scientific areas) |
| | Schools technical-scientific councils | May have up to 4 academics and/or researchers from other HEIs or personalities of recognizable merit |

Furthermore, in some of the institutions advisory boards have been established where there is also the presence of external stakeholders. This is the case of HEI α , where there is an Academic Senate with three members from other universities, and of the HEI δ , where there is an Advisory Council including personalities of recognisable merit, with knowledge and experience relevant for the institution (their number should exceed the number of the other members and they are appointed by the HEI's President).

3.3 Question 3

What is nominal and real stakeholder's representation in institutional decision-making bodies? Has it changed and why?

Basically three ideas come to the fore when analysing the different interviewed actors' responses about the real representation of external stakeholders in decision-making and advisory bodies, both at central and organic unit level. There are actors that do think stakeholders' presence and intervention is active and that their contribution has been relevant for the institution development; there are other actors who consider their intervention is not as significant as it should be, being a bit disappointed with their role in the bodies where they are supposed to actively participate; and there are even actors (mostly students but also academic staff) that did not know about their presence (which is mandatory by law) in decision-making bodies such as the general council.

For a first group of members of the central management and administration and members of the faculties/schools, stakeholders have an effective role and this has changed in the last years. However, the changes were not so much in the areas of defining graduate profiles, study cycles' curricula, and graduates' competences or even in terms of internal processes of quality assurance. The main changes were in the attention given nowadays to the institutions' plans (institutional annual plan of activities, annual report and strategic plan). They also look carefully at the institution's financial situation. The real change seems to have occurred in the introduction of a more formal evaluative culture, with greater accountability towards society, which is seen as a contribution of the general council's external members, especially the ones that come from industry.

For a second group of members of the central management and administration and members of the faculties/schools we have opinions such as the one transmitted by the engineering study programme director of one institution, which mentioned that the participation of the external members in the general council has not been that relevant. Those expressing this view reflect either an expectation of a greater engagement in issues related to the external stakeholders' scientific background or because they regard external stakeholders as rather absent and find little evidence of effective improvements in the functioning of decision making bodies. Moreover, some of the interviewees mention the fact that external stakeholders may not have sufficient knowledge about the specificities of a HEI.

In relation to a third group members of the central management and administration and members of the faculties/schools, it is worth mentioning that most of the interviewees do not question the quality of the work of the decision-making bodies that include external stakeholders; it is just that they are simply not informed about what is discussed there.

Nevertheless almost all of the members of the central management and administration and members of the faculties/schools interviewed mentioned the importance of external stakeholders' presence, since they can indeed bring an external view (from the labour market, but also from the civil society) to the institutions, helping in the definition of their strategic development. For example, a member of one of the universities' leadership team stated that there is the feeling that external stakeholders' participation should be reinforced, namely because it is seen as fundamental for the strategic development and for the quality and diversity of teaching. Their presence is often underlined in relation to the articulation between study programmes and the labour market, by contributing to make adjustments in degree programmes and helping to increase graduates' employability.

Although it is not possible to establish clear differences of opinion regarding external stakeholders' real representation in decision-making bodies and their real participation in the institutions' life between the four case studies, it seems nevertheless that polytechnics are more positive about external stakeholders' intervention than universities. This is probably due to the fact that polytechnics are by nature institutions that are supposed to be more inclined to develop closer links and relationships with the region and the labour market where they are located in and they had external members in their decision-making bodies before the new legislation was passed.

3.4 Question 4

Do different units in the institution (faculties) or programmes have stakeholder representation on decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues, beyond what is prescribed? If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total membership?

Only in HEI δ was it possible to identify decision-making or advisory bodies where external stakeholder representation is present although this is not prescribed in national and/or institutional rules. These are the cases of the advisory councils of the arts and engineering study programmes.

Also interesting is the case of HEI γ where the presidency has organised thematic meetings between each school and the external members presented in the general council that are more related to each school scientific area. The main goal is to promote a stronger relationship between the schools and the business world. This is an informal mechanism and an extension of what are the formal activities of the general council external members. These meetings are rather informal and aimed at promoting an

exchange of ideas between the schools and these external stakeholders, collecting opinions about the schools' development (not only in terms of their study cycles' portfolio, but also regarding the establishment of relationships with society, namely external organizations and/or business companies). The opinions expressed by the external members are much more of a general nature and not that specific about a study programme curriculum or the scientific content of the different courses.

In HEI α there is a proposal to include external representatives in the study programme committees; the proposal is not in the sense of this representation being mandatory, but more in the sense of this being possible if the committee feels it would be positive for the study programme. So far some experiments have been made in the Management Department, namely when there is a study programme under restructuring.

Again no significant differences emerged between the four case studies that allow us to establish some type of pattern.

3.5 Question 5

To what extent are stakeholder's views (and from which stakeholders?) taken into account and why?

One relevant issue, when analysing the relevance of external stakeholders for a higher education institution's development, is to know how far their views are taken into account with respect to one of the HEIs' core functions, namely teaching and learning. Thus, we examined if stakeholders' views were relevant for issues such as establishing graduate profiles, learning outcomes, assessment requirements and syllabus' reviews, acquisition of soft and entrepreneurial skills, and internal quality assurance's processes.

The data collected suggests that only informally are external stakeholders' views taken into account regarding these issues, and this regardless of the case study under analysis. Interviewees have basically referred to indirect mechanisms such as the participation of some external members (which are nevertheless academics from other national and foreign HEIs) in the development of new joint PhD and master programmes; the existence of study-visits, that work as a way to improve the programmes' quality; internships and competitions in which the students participate, that help them to develop a professional approach during their academic training; the consultation of external members when new programmes are developed or adapted; partnerships established in some courses; the use of questionnaires to survey a pool of employers and *alumni* about the employment situation and to what extent the programme provided students with the competences needed for their current job; and research and consultancy projects.

In fact, and as mentioned by some interviewees, formal decision-making bodies, such as the general council, hardly discuss scientific-pedagogic matters, unless these have a link to the institution's funding and overall strategy. Moreover, they recognise it may be difficult for the stakeholders to discuss issues in great detail, possibly because they think that they do not have sufficient knowledge on the topic or due to the lack of sufficient time for that in the meetings of the whole institutions. From the data collected we can then conclude that the vast majority of pedagogic and scientific discussions still happen in decision-making bodies constituted only by internal members, which leads us to think that, so far, the ESG guidelines towards external stakeholders' participation have not been fully implemented, at least in these four Portuguese HEIs.

In this respect, no significant differences have emerged between the four case studies. The differences that occur lie much more on the type of degree programmes the interviewees belong to. Competitions, for example, are referred only by interviewees of the arts' schools, while internships and applied research seem to be more common in engineering degrees.

3.6 Question 6

Are stakeholder viewpoints filtering into the standard undergraduate curriculum and requirements?

The data collected from the interviews indicates that stakeholders' views are filtered into standard curriculum and requirements mostly through informal and indirect mechanisms: internships, competitions (in the arts' study programmes), contacts with businesses and other organisations in the framework of applied research, consultancy projects and dissertations conducted in a business environment. On a more formal level, it was also mentioned the fulfilment of requirements from external professional bodies (in the engineering study programmes). Furthermore references were made to the accreditation of study programmes by the national agency (A3ES) as an opportunity to obtain feedback from external stakeholders. This refers not only to the feedback provided by members of the external assessment commissions, but also from employers and other organisations during the self-assessment and the external assessment phases of the accreditation process. This mechanism is seen by one Dean (from where and engineering school) as allowing for a strong influence in the review processes of the study programmes.

More precise examples of these indirect contacts can be found in the data collected from the interviews. Some of them seem to be **worth mentioning** mention. In the case of the arts' schools covered in the study, we have found examples of efforts to include students from different programmes in activities with the external community, namely through their inclusion in theatre companies, orchestras, organization of exhibitions, etc., which have allowed for the development of informal contacts with external members. Other significant examples include events presenting

students' work to external entities, aiming at raising the employers' awareness, improving future graduates' employability, and collecting feedback from them to improve teaching and learning in accordance with labour market needs. In another school, this is also promoted through agreements with local authorities and art galleries, which help students getting a better idea of their professional future. In the case of the arts schools the interactions are also supported through the regular presence of artists and national and foreign academics that come to give open lectures or to lead workshops. According to one Dean these interactions contribute to the programmes' improvement, though he considers that the influence should be stronger. In the case of the engineering schools analysed in the study, we have found that feedback from the society also comes through those members of the academic staff who keep some external professional activity outside academia. In those schools there are also informal relationships developed with external members who come to the university to do postgraduate degrees, which contribute to the development of some applied research. Finally, one school of technology and management covered in the study has also been promoting partnerships with industry and teaching laboratories in several of its study programmes, with some of the teaching activities being either delivered by people from the external community or outside the institution.

On the contrary, the formal presence of external stakeholders in the decision-making bodies is regarded as neither having contributed (at least directly and in a way easily perceived by institutional actors) to the development and improvement of programmes' curriculum and requirements, nor to the implementation and/or development of teaching and learning quality assurance systems. A kind of exception to this general situation seems to come from one of the polytechnic institutes included in our sample, where meetings between the School's leadership and the external members of the Institution's General Council have been allowing the former to look more systematically at the services it may provide to the business world (consultancy, technical services, laboratory services) and also to analyse its portfolio of study programmes, not only in terms of short vocational degrees, bachelor and masters programmes, but also regarding other possible types of training programmes.

Again there are no significant differences between the four case studies. The differences that emerged are much more connected to the scientific area and degree programme the interviewees are attached to than with institutional characteristics such as the subsystem HEIs belong to or the HEIs' location.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Summary of Findings

In Portugal, in recent years, a wave of governance reforms has given an enhanced visibility to various external stakeholders in various domains of higher education. These attempts have tried to go beyond the symbolic presence by giving them a real and effective role in shaping some important aspects of institutional priorities. This report tries to shed some light on the actual impact the increasing participation of external stakeholders may have in institutional governance and quality assurance mechanisms. Although national legal texts, and even policy documents issued at institutional level, have been establishing the effective presence and role to be performed by external stakeholders within higher education institutions, the reality seems to fall short of the high expectations.

The results suggest that the presence of external stakeholders in decision-making and advisory bodies has become part of the reality of higher education in Portugal and has been strengthened over the last decade. However, it seems that to a certain extent this nominal presence has not yet had a real reflection in the way higher education institutions are being governed and managed, nor on the internal quality assurance processes and mechanisms they are implementing. From our data it seems that so far external stakeholders continue to play a minor or even negligible role in the formal definition of quality assurance policies and procedures and their implementation. Apparently, it is hard to find more than a weak and rather informal participation of this group of actors in real terms, namely regarding their effective participation in setting up a policy and procedures for quality assurance. Most of their influence still takes place through informal mechanisms and consultation, which may create some opportunities for the internal stakeholders to adopt a selective approach regarding which external stakeholders and which parts of their feedback they want to take into consideration.

An important aspect to take into account when discussing the weak impact of the external stakeholders' presence has to do with the different levels of power inside academic institutions. Whereas external stakeholders seem to be more present at the top level, many of the specific decisions regarding teaching and learning are taken at lower levels (of Faculty or even Department). Moreover, that presence can only express general views about the institutional educational portfolio and its future strategy, while the specifics will have to be negotiated with those external stakeholders that have a significant knowledge about a certain field. The latter seems also to be far more valued by internal stakeholders, since it is supported by a professional legitimacy and by the elusive expectation that a closer interaction with business interests may open new opportunities for future graduates, research ventures, and funding sources. Nevertheless, although the legal framework has made the

presence compulsory at the top level, it has left to the institution the decision to include external stakeholders as well at the basic units' level.

It seems that despite all changes in the legal framework, and its unquestionable role as a facilitator of external stakeholders' participation in higher education institutions, these new members continue to be seen inside academia as no more than imaginary friends or foes (Magalhães and Amaral, 2000). Thus, one could say that the fears that their presence could undermine the traditional balance of priorities or create significant tensions regarding the internal decision-making process have not been fulfilled. However, the analysis also suggests that the influence of external stakeholders seems to be taking place in a more nuanced and subtle way and that with time they may be poised to have some visible impact regarding some important strategic decisions. Moreover, there are also indications that institutions are taking their views more seriously or, at least, feel obliged to state that those views have been consulted and taken into account in the internal decision-making processes aiming at improving the quality of their activities, especially teaching ones. The internal actors still hold the upper hand regarding most of the specific decisions related to programmes, but they are seeking more frequently the advice and the blessing of external stakeholders. They can still circumvent them in case of conflicting views, but feel the need to justify their options and to create the perceptions that they listen to the views of the external world.

The analysis of the various dimensions considered in this synthesis as well as the detailed institutional data have allowed the identification of both good practices as well as barriers to the presence and active participation of external stakeholders in higher education institutions and the implementation of Standards 1.1 and 1.2 of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance. These are synthesised below.

4.2 Identification of Barriers and Institutional Good Practices

From all the data collected and analysed for the Portuguese case, we have come to the following set of barriers to the effective participation of external stakeholders and the full ESG Part I implementation:

1. a culture of internally-focused decision-making process;
2. lack of knowledge of external stakeholders about HEIs' internal politics and peculiarities;
3. absence of external stakeholders from low-level decision-making bodies;
4. absenteeism and lack of interest from some external stakeholders;
5. lack of rewards and incentives (financial, reputational, etc.) for institutions to engage external stakeholders and take their views into account;

6. lack of rewards and incentives (financial, reputational, etc.) for external stakeholders to participate;
7. low degree of social participation from businesses and other social actors.

In terms of institutional good practices, the following emerged from the analysis performed over all the collected data:

1. involvement of external stakeholders in degree-programmes committees;
2. involvement of external stakeholders in teaching and research initiatives;
3. promotion of targeted specific meetings at the school/faculty level;
4. development of partnerships with prospective employers (competitions, etc.);
5. engagement of students with external partnerships and work experiences (study visits, internships, etc.);
6. showcasing the work of students;
7. applied research, consultancy projects and dissertations in business environment;
8. surveys to employers and *alumni*.

4.3 Recommendations for institutional managers and for policy makers

Taking into consideration all the data collected and the analysis done for the Portuguese case, we come up to the following set of recommendations, target at both institutional managers and policy makers.

Recommendations for institutional managers

1. promote specific/targeted meetings with external stakeholders;
2. avoid multiplication of meetings to prevent external stakeholders institutional fatigue;
3. involve external stakeholders in teaching and research review committees at the school/faculty level;
4. promote activities that bring together internal and external actors;
5. reward those units with best achievement on this issue;
6. reward individual achievement on this aspect.

Recommendations for policy-makers

1. enforce the participation of external stakeholders at the lower institutional levels;
2. ensure the participation of external stakeholders in teaching and research quality reviews;
3. create financial and reputational incentives for cases of institutions with best practices that could be replicated.

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ANNEX - INSTITUTIONAL DATA BY HEI

HEI α

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| <p>WP9.2</p> <p>What are the institutional rules that govern higher education institutions' inclusion or exclusion of stakeholders in/from decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues and have they changed in the past five years?</p> <p>If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total members.</p> | <p>α HEI Statutes (October 2008)</p> <p>The General Council (total of 25 members) has 7 external personalities of recognizable merit, that do not belong to the HEI and that have knowledge and experience relevant for it.</p> <p>The Academic Senate has 3 external members, co-opted by the remaining ones (internal), which come from other universities.</p> <p>Each school Scientific Council (maximum 25 members) has up to 5 external members co-opted by the remaining ones. These can be academics or researchers from other HEIs or personalities of recognizable competences in each school scope.</p> <p><i>Engineering and Arts</i></p> <p>Statutes of the Sciences and Technology School (January 2010) and Statues of the Arts School (January 2010)</p> <p>Each school Scientific Council (maximum 25 members) has up to 5 external members co-opted by the remaining ones. These can be academics or researchers from other HEIs or personalities of recognizable competences in each school scope.</p> <p>In terms of Departments or Degree Committees the presence of external elements is not foreseen.</p> <p>In this moment a revision of the HEI statutes is being conducted and there is a proposal to include 2 external members proposed by the General Council in the institution Evaluation Council.</p> |
| <p>WP9.3</p> <p>What is nominal and real stakeholder's representation in institutional decision-making bodies? Has it changed and why?</p> | <p>External stakeholders' intervention in the university life is less than it should be. The reinforcement of the external stakeholders' participation is seen as necessary once it represents an advantage for HEIs.</p> <p>External stakeholders' intervention is not that significant because external personalities most of the time do not have sufficient</p> |

knowledge about an HEI and do not fully understand what should be done and what can be done. These external members have a perspective of the HEI that does not correspond to what the HEI is indeed, so they cannot do much more than what they actually do. Sometimes external members give ideas in the General Council, for the institution, as they were in their business companies, like for example “closing all study cycles”... and do not understand academics position towards the institution, the difficulties sometimes the rector has when trying to implement some principles and guidelines that are not so aligned with academic tradition, even the university autonomy is not that understandable to them...

When choosing the external members it is important that the institutions choose not only people from different social and business backgrounds, but also people that effectively know how an HEI works (and not just as students).

Engineering

The contribution of external stakeholders is seen as positive. “The change of information, the update of information, is very useful and definitely increases quality” (civil engineering teacher)

The engineering study cycles directors referred that the participation of the external members in the General Council has not been that relevant. Since one of the members has an engineering background they were expecting its contribution for the study cycles improvement but that didn’t happened which caused some disappointment.

The initial expectation was that the presence of external members in the General Council would be more noticed and relevant. But their participation is still reduced. For example it is still not possible to see the external society supporting (financially) the research or partnerships with universities.

Arts

In the School of Arts there is always a concern that external members have a say about what is being done at the school. But this tends to happen rather informally in exhibitions, conferences, congresses ... Also because sometimes the school does not have all the academic staff it would like to have and needs to recur to external personalities.

In the school the knowledge about what is done and discussed at the General Council is rather limited. The same is true in relation to the school Scientific Council. In the case of the School of Arts the Scientific council has only full and associate professors and their number is rather small. That is why most of the academic staff does not know what is discussed in the Scientific Council. It is not that they doubt about the quality of the work of these two decision making bodies; it is just that do they not know much about what is discussed there.

Teachers of Arts did not know about the presence of external members in the General Council or the schools Scientific Councils.

The participation of external stakeholders is seen as fundamental for the strategic development and for the quality and diversity of teaching.

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| | <p>Students do not know anything about the participation of external members in the General Council or the schools' Scientific Councils</p> |
| <p>WP9.4</p> <p>Do different units in the institution (faculties) or programmes have stakeholder representation on decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues, beyond what is prescribed? If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total membership?</p> | <p>There is a proposal to include external representatives in the study cycles committees; the proposal is not in the sense of this representation being mandatory, but more in the sense of being possible if the committee feels it would be positive for the study cycle. So far some experiences have been made in the Management Department, namely when there is a study cycle restructuring. The last time a study cycle was restructured some external personalities were invited to share their opinion on the proposed new curriculum</p> |
| <p>WP9.5</p> <p>To what extent are stakeholder's views (and from which stakeholders?) taken into account and why specifically with respect to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate profiles, learning outcomes Exam requirements and curriculum review Soft and entrepreneurial skills acquisition Internal quality assurance processes | <p><i>Engineering</i></p> <p>The participation of external members (academics nevertheless, from other HEIs, national and international) occurs through the development of PhD and master programmes together with other HEIs.</p> <p>Furthermore students go to companies to know how they really operate. Study visits also help to improve study cycles quality because students can see in practice what they have learned theoretically. So indirectly they help to improve students' competences.</p> <p><i>Arts</i></p> <p>The contribution of external stakeholders is rather indirect. It happens mainly through the internships and the competitions where the students participate, helping them to have a professional view during their degree. All these relationships (through internships and competitions) have had a very positive feedback from the external organisations involved. And allow students to develop other competences that cannot be acquired in the teaching room.</p> |
| <p>WP9.6</p> <p>Are stakeholder views filtering into standard undergraduate curriculum and requirements through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Employment requirements for staff | <p><i>Engineering</i></p> <p>Students refer to the existence of a partnership with the Civil Engineering National Laboratory that supports the practical part of their master thesis. And they say this helps in doing the thesis, promoting also the contact with people from the area. They do not know about any other external members that have a say about the study cycle, except for the external evaluation commission that is evaluating the study cycle for its accreditation (A3ES)</p> |

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| <p>(if and which stakeholders decide on the hiring and promotion criteria)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> b. Internships (are the informal contacts with businesses during students' internships used for curriculum reviews) c. Special professional development courses – job-related continuing education and training courses distinct from the standard degree-courses (are insights from such courses used to inform the 'standard curriculum' and its requirements) d. Contacts with business and other organizations (e.g. public research institutes) (are R&D projects with external research organizations/companies influencing the 'standard curriculum'?; do business/industry professionals co-supervise MA and PhD theses? Are they external examiners?) e. Requirements of external professional bodies | <p>Study cycles directors refer to informal relationships with external members that come to the university to do their masters but that are working in interesting external organisations from the point of view of collaborations. This type of relationship contributes to the development of applied research, since the problems dealt with in the master thesis are real problems.</p> <p>There are also relationships established with external organisations through the participation of academics in those organisations bodies.</p> <p>Also much of the equipment of the engineering study cycles has been offered by business companies. It is their contribution for research in certain areas where they know they will have some input?. And this has increased through the masters' thesis.</p> <p><i>Alumni</i> are also an important element in the establishment of relationships with the external community.</p> <p>Applied research is an informal way to establish relationships with external entities, helping them to find solutions for their problems. Most of the times nevertheless there are no formal protocols when establishing the partnerships created.</p> <p><i>Arts</i></p> <p>In the School of Arts there is an effort to include students from different study cycles (Music, Theatre, Design, Architecture and also Visual Arts) in the external community, through their inclusion in theatre companies, orchestras, exhibitions ... This also allows for an informal contact with external members, contributing to the "identification of potentialities, identification of problems, acting strategic lines that need to be reinforced, and not only reinforce in those areas [Design, Music] but also to expand to other areas of the school." Furthermore it allows students to speak directly to potential "clients" (the organisation clients) developing competences that cannot be taught in the classroom.</p> <p>Students from Design do assignments in collaboration with industry that end up being implemented in the market (including not only the product development but also the strategies for its communication and promotion). The Music department promotes a series of concerts to the external community. And Theatre also works this dimension of relationship with the external community in strategic terms. Sometimes these collaborations happen through the form of a competition.</p> <p>This year the school management promoted one day for the students' work to be presented to external entities. The goals were: to let employers know about the quality of students' work in order to improve their employability and insertion in the labour market; to collect feedback from those entities to improve teaching and learning in accordance with labour market needs.</p> <p>The school promotes an open day and some external entities are invited. There was also a day where several companies, persons</p> |
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| | <p>and other entities (employers mainly) were invited and the idea was to show them the school, the study cycles, etc.</p> <p>There are also some protocols established with business industries that end up helping to define the briefing of the assignments</p> <p>The Design study cycle also tries to maintain contact with <i>alumni</i>, not only at institutional level, but also personally through some professors that keep accompanying their students work after their graduation. And the employability is quite satisfactory.</p> <p>The PhD programme on Visual Arts is a good opportunity to contact academics from different international HEIs and discuss with them different themes linked to research, cultural issues ...</p> <p>Teachers from the Arts school refer the existence of internships, protocols, collaborations, projects with entities and people from the external community. But these are rather informal mechanisms. There are no formal ones.</p> <p>In the Design study cycle the effective participation of external stakeholders only happened on a rather experimental basis Until 2007/08 the Arts department received the regular contribution of academics from other HEIs, namely European ones (on workshops, projects ...).</p> |
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WP9.2

What are the institutional rules that govern higher education institutions' inclusion or exclusion of stakeholders in/from decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues and have they changed in the past five years?
 If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total members.

β HEI Statutes (May 2009)

The General Council (total of 23 members) has 6 external personalities of recognizable merit, that do not belong to the HEI and that have knowledge and experience relevant for it (co-opted by the remaining members).

In each one of its *organic units* external members representation is foreseen in the case of the:

- Scientific Council (maximum 25 members): up to 15% of its members can be invited academics or researchers from other HEIs with recognizable competences in each school's mission scope (it is optional).
- Representatives Council (15 members): 1 or 2 external personalities co-opted by the remaining members of the council (proposed by the school director and after the hearing of the scientific council)

HEI β Doctoral School

There is an external accompanying commission (maximum of 25 members) that includes 3 to 5 external personalities, national or international, of recognizable scientific competences, invited by the Rector, after hearing the School Director, and proposed on a list prepared by the Coordinator Council

Engineering

Statutes of the Faculty of Engineering (December 2009)

- In the Representative Council (15 members) there are 2 external personalities co-opted by the remaining members
- In each department the Council of Department (maximum of 30 members) may have some external personalities that may be relevant for the department's scientific activities

Arts

Statutes of the Faculty of Fine Arts (February 2010)

- In the Representative Council (15 members) there are 2 external personalities co-opted by the remaining members (proposed by the Director and after hearing the scientific council)
- In the Scientific Council (20 members) there are 2 external personalities that may be academics or researchers from other HEIs or specialists of recognizable merit within the faculty mission
- In each one of the four organic subunits there is an Organic Subunit Council with invited personalities working in entities with relevance for the scientific activities of the subunit

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| | <p>There is one external stakeholder in the arts subunit council. It is a representative of the technological centre of the University that is in permanent contact with the business companies and the external world, less academic.</p> |
| <p>WP9.3 What is nominal and real stakeholder's representation in institutional decision-making bodies? Has it changed and why?</p> | <p>Stakeholders have a real role and their role has really changed in the last years. But not in the areas of defining graduate profiles, study cycles' curricula, graduate competences or even in terms of internal quality assurance processes.</p> <p>What changed was the organisational culture, the governance structure that now is a little different. For example now much more attention is given to the institution plans and budgets and to the institution strategic plan. And the institution has even created a scorecard, with performance indicators that show what it has done better and worse in each academic year according to the goals previously defined. There was an effective change in terms of the introduction of a more formal evaluative culture, with more accountability elements towards the society. This is a contribution of the General Council external members, especially from the ones that come from business companies and that are used to have solid elements and facts to make decisions.</p> <p>The external stakeholders' participation is inferior to what it should be. "The civil society should have a significant participation in the supervision of the university's activities. (...) We have to be accountable. ... the civil society has a very important role in selecting the institution's leaders, starting with the Rector" (Engineering faculty Director)</p> <p>"Stakeholders are particularly relevant in the General Council. Instead of the present 6, they should be 8 (...) the proportion should be higher, because then they would have a big importance, or more importance in choosing the rector."</p> <p>"At each faculty level a Faculty Council with external members should be created to mandatorily advise the Rector regarding the nomination of the faculty director (...) but the Rector should decide who the faculty director is (...). And these stakeholders should also give their opinions on the activities' plans, budgets and the activities and accounts reports." (Engineering faculty Director)</p> <p><i>Engineering</i></p> <p><i>Arts</i></p> <p>"It is obvious that they have a certain weight in those bodies and consequently they have some responsibility. (...) But the external stakeholders have also some weight in the study cycle." (Design and Communication study cycle director)</p> <p>"I do believe they do not participate that much, they miss most of the meetings and in a certain way they do not involve themselves as much as we were expecting in the faculty problems. (...) there is little evidence of effective improvements in the</p> |

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| <p>decision making bodies functioning” (Director of the Faculty of Fine Arts)</p> <p>External members tend to participate more in the Representative Council than in the Scientific Council. According to the faculty director in this last decision making body the result of their participation is almost none.</p> <p>In the meetings that the General Council promotes in the different faculties the external members are not seen. The faculty has not had any benefit from the external members’ participation in the decision making bodies. And this is bad because the faculty needs new ideas, that come from outside their walls and that help refresh a close circuit.</p> <p>The direct influence of the participation of external members in the decision making bodies is still not visible. The most visible influence comes from the partnerships established in some curricular units, namely internship project. In this case their influence is highly visible because students do their final projects in organisations external to the institutions.</p> | <p>WP9.4</p> <p>Do different units in the institution (faculties) or programmes have stakeholder representation on decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues, beyond what is prescribed?</p> <p>If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total membership?</p> <p>WP9.5</p> <p>To what extent are stakeholder’s views (and from which stakeholders?) taken into account and why specifically with respect to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate profiles, learning outcomes Exam requirements and curriculum review Soft and entrepreneurial skills acquisition Internal quality assurance processes | <p>It depends on the faculty culture, but usually external members are listened whenever new study cycles are designed or adjusted. This has happened for a long time, even before the changes in the governance structures of the institution took place. It is nevertheless easier in an Engineering faculty than in a Humanities one, because in the former the link with the labour market is stronger.</p> <p>Nowadays external stakeholders do not give much feedback about graduates’ profiles, learning outcomes, exam requirements,... It is difficult for the stakeholders of the General Council or of the Representative Councils (in each faculty) to discuss these details. The civil society should have a say about these issues but through the accreditation of study cycles, through the A3ES or the EURACE, the European seal of quality for engineering study cycles.</p> <p><i>Engineering</i></p> <p>In Civil Engineering each year (starting two years ago) a workshop is organised to discuss the study cycle performance and the</p> |
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| | <p>need of eventually changing its curriculum. In these workshops people from the industry and companies linked to the civil engineering area are invited, namely <i>alumni</i>. And they give a very relevant contribution because they inform the study cycle about the labour market needs in terms of graduate competences (including behavioural ones, the need of being dynamic and flexible people and the need for them to be adaptable to international contexts) and the scientific areas that should be covered by course contents. And in fact some changes in the study cycle structure resulted from these external members' points of view.</p> <p>Civil engineering students know their study cycle is going to be reformulated but they do not know who is involved in the process, namely if there are external members involved. They do not have a sound idea about the influence of external members in the course contents. Only the internships are referred to by the students as a possible way for external members to have some indirect influence. But they think the presence of external members is a valuable thing.</p> <p><i>Arts</i></p> <p>The arts subunit council has a very relevant role regarding the options that are made for the management of the Design and Communication study cycle. Things such as curricular or pedagogical revisions and the distribution of teaching duties are validated by the study cycle scientific committee (that only has academic staff) but always in close connection to the arts subunit council. And the external member of this council has really a very active role and influences significantly the votes that are made about the revisions (medium and long term) of the curriculum, due to its knowledge of the labour market needs and tendencies.</p> <p>Presently the Communication and Design study cycle is under a curricular review and attempts are made to include or at least take into consideration the feedback that is given by labour market agents, whether professionals, designers, companies or final clients (with whom there is an indirect contact when students do their internships).</p> <p>The most visible influence comes from the partnerships established in some curricular units, namely the internship project one. In this case their influence is highly visible because students do their final projects in organisations external to the institution. And these external entities obviously have a say in terms of students assessment and also on pedagogical matters. It is the only curricular unit in the Communication and Design study cycle where this contamination of the interior by the exterior is more visible.</p> |
| <p>WP9.6</p> <p>Are stakeholder views filtering into standard undergraduate curriculum and requirements through:</p> <p>a. Employment requirements for staff (if and which stakeholders decide</p> | <p><i>Engineering</i></p> <p>The accreditation of study cycles by the A3ES and the award of the European seal of quality for engineering study cycles (EURACE) are the ways the civil society should have a voice in the design of study cycles curricula, structure and course contents. These two mechanisms allow the civil society to intervene, either as evaluators of the study cycles, or as employers whose opinion is listened to in the scope of the study cycle evaluation process. So these kind of mechanisms allow for a strong influence in the curricular review processes of the study cycles.</p> |

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| <p>on the hiring and promotion criteria)</p> <p>b. Internships (are the informal contacts with businesses during students' internships used for curriculum reviews)</p> <p>c. Special professional development courses – job-related continuing education and training courses distinct from the standard degree-courses (are insights from such courses used to inform the 'standard curriculum' and its requirements)</p> <p>d. Contacts with business and other organizations (e.g. public research institutes) (are R&D projects with external research organizations/companies influencing the 'standard curriculum'?, do business/industry professionals co-supervise MA and PhD theses? Are they external examiners?)</p> <p>e. Requirements of external professional bodies</p> | <p>Civil engineering students also claim that more contact with business companies, employers, civil engineering offices should be promoted. Only in the last year (5th) is there a stronger contact with the labour market through internships and proposals of thesis to be done in a business environment. They mention that the programme? is much more research focused than labour market focused; the link between the labour market world and the study cycle is rather weak during the whole study cycle curriculum.</p> <p>Civil engineering academic staff refer to the research projects and dissertations as a way to indirectly collect feedback from external members and entities. Dissertations in a business environment are particularly relevant as a way to establish contacts between students, academic staff and business companies and industries and to collect feedback (although indirectly) about what is being done in the labour market in terms of civil engineering and also what are the present tendencies. But this is not a way to include external members' views in a study cycle restructuring; it is just a way to have some knowledge transfer from the labour market world to the academic world.</p> <p>Furthermore in informal terms the feedback from the external society also comes through the academic staff who also works outside the faculty, as members of project offices, partners in civil engineering business companies, etc.</p> <p>But the weight of these contacts with the external world in the study cycle curriculum, or in the course contents, is rather low, almost inexistent. The study cycle has not changed that much due to the labour market concerns and/or needs, even the ones expressed in the workshop.</p> <p><i>Arts</i></p> <p>The students' internships with future employers also allow the contact with external members and persons: designers and/or design companies. This happens in the curricular unit the internship project. The study cycle always tries to have as much feedback as possible from these people regarding the students' performance, the competences they lack when they start the internship and that eventually they think would be needed in the labour market. But this all happens rather informally and the study cycle director thinks it should be done on a more formal basis.</p> <p>There is also some form of contact with alumni but they are not easy to contact because the Communication and Design study cycle does not have a database of all its former students.</p> <p>The faculty of arts is a very open school, with a very active cultural activity. This allows contacting the external world, surpassing its low involvement through the formal decision making bodies. The faculty receives a significant number of artists and academics from other HEIs, national and international, every week. They come for open classes, workshops, ... The faculty is also very solicited to participate in exhibitions and activities developed by other entities. All these interactions certainly contribute to the study cycles improvement but the director feels the influence should be higher in terms of curriculum improvements. The curricula should be more flexible, allowing each student to design his/her own curriculum.</p> <p>This year there was a project with the <i>Instituto do Vinho do Porto</i> where this institution was responsible for all the pedagogical</p> |
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| | <p>and even part of the scientific component of the project. Classes have been given by external persons and only after the students started to develop their own work. In the future there is the will to develop more relationships of this kind.</p> |
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| <p>WP9.2</p> <p>What are the institutional rules that govern higher education institutions' inclusion or exclusion of stakeholders in/from decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues and have they changed in the past five years?</p> <p>If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total members.</p> | <p>HEI γ Statutes (December 2008)</p> <p>The General Council (total of 25 members) has 7 external personalities of recognizable merit, with knowledge and experience relevant for the HEI (nominated by the remaining members).</p> <p>There are no statutes specific for each school.</p> |
| <p>WP9.3</p> <p>What is nominal and real stakeholder's representation in institutional decision-making bodies?</p> <p>Has it changed and why?</p> | <p>In the General Council seven external members were chosen in order to have a representative of each of the schools' scientific areas. They all have connections to the region where the institute is located.</p> <p>Their contribution has been very positive because they are active and highly interested in the institute's activities. They tend to go to all the meetings. They do not interfere directly in each one of the degrees, intervening much more at the level of the institution as a whole due to the General Council functions: approval of the institute's activities plan, the institute's activities report and the institute's strategic plan. They also look carefully at the institute's financial situation, mainly the members from private companies.</p> <p>The Institute's presidency also promotes meetings between the different external members and the schools they are more connected to. These meetings are rather informal and are meant for the schools to change ideas with these external stakeholders, collecting opinions about the schools' development not only in terms of their offer of study cycles, but also regarding the establishment of relationships with the society, namely external organisations and/or business companies. However, the opinions transmitted by the external members are much more of a general character and not that specific about a study cycle curriculum or the scientific content of the different courses.</p> <p>External members are very receptive to participate in these meetings when asked, even if this goes beyond their statutory functions.</p> <p><i>Engineering</i></p> |

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| | <p>Interestingly Civil Engineering students do not know that the General Council has external members. They nevertheless see their presence in this decision making body as positive (they have an external view of the Institute's problems), especially in terms of the possibility of a stronger link between the Institute and the labour market. They could help the Institute to better know what the labour market needs from its future graduates, contributing to make adjustments in the degree programmes and helping to increase graduates employability.</p> <p><i>Arts</i></p> <p>Students from arts did not know about the presence of external members in the Institute General Council. They think that adjustments in the study cycles' curricula should be made after consultation with the institute, and especially the study cycle, academics and students. They do not see as highly relevant to listen to external persons' opinions on their study cycle because they see it as having a large scope, not being that directed towards a specific type of employment or market.</p> <p>Academics from Arts think the General Council does not discuss scientific-pedagogic matters and, since it is the only decision making body where external members are represented, these members end up not discussing this type of issues. The only pedagogical issues they discuss are the ones linked to the Institute's financing. All scientific discussions take place in the Scientific Councils where external members are not represented.</p> <p>The management of the School of Education sees the participation of external stakeholders in the school's meetings as very active and positive for the school development. They tend to support the school as much as they can. This collaboration has been mainly related to research projects and working projects involving students. They also help the school to discuss the issues of the relationship to the community and employability (in the case of the Arts degree).</p> |
| <p>WP9.4</p> <p>Do different units in the institution (faculties) or programmes have stakeholder representation on decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues, beyond what is prescribed? If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total membership?</p> | <p>Each degree programme should listen to their graduates' main employers in order to take their opinions into account in future degrees' adjustments. But this should not be done by the General Council external members</p> <p>The Institute presidency promotes the link between each school and the labour market through the external members in the General Council that are more related to the scientific area of each school. Thematic meetings have been organised between these members and the schools management in order to promote a stronger relationship between the schools and the business world. This is an informal mechanism and an extension of what are the formal activities of the General Council's external members.</p> |
| <p>WP9.5</p> <p>To what extent are stakeholder's views (and from which stakeholders?) taken into</p> | <p>Only in the scope of the General Council are stakeholders' views taken into account.</p> <p>In the Technology and Management School (but not in Civil Engineering) there are internships in the 3rd year where companies</p> |

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| <p>account and why specifically with respect to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate profiles, learning outcomes Exam requirements and curriculum review Soft and entrepreneurial skills acquisition Internal quality assurance processes | <p>help to define the internships' themes offer. That helps the study cycles to see if there are deficiencies in the graduates' profiles, adjusting the course contents accordingly.</p> |
| <p>WP9.6</p> <p>Are stakeholder views filtering into standard undergraduate curriculum and requirements through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Employment requirements for staff (if and which stakeholders decide on the hiring and promotion criteria) Internships (are the informal contacts with businesses during students' internships used for curriculum reviews) Special professional development courses – job-related continuing education and training courses distinct from the standard degree-courses (are insights from such courses used to inform the 'standard curriculum' and its requirements) Contacts with business and other organizations (e.g. public research institutes) (are R&D projects with external research organizations/companies influencing the 'standard curriculum'?, do business/industry | <p><i>Engineering</i></p> <p>The thematic meetings between the school management and the General Council's external members allow the Technology and Management School to look at the services it can provide to the business world (consultancy, technical services, laboratory services) and also to analyse its offer of study cycles, not only in terms of CET, licenciaturas and masters, but also regarding other types of training courses.</p> <p>Due to the accreditation of the study cycles, contacts have also been made with the employers of the Institute's graduates in order to know if the competences they have on graduation correspond to the ones the labour market needs. A questionnaire has been passed to these employers to collect their opinions. These contacts have been done much as a way to have information to answer to the A3ES requirements concerning the study cycles' accreditation.</p> <p>Some short duration training programmes have already been offered due to the relationship with the district Business Association. Some CETs have also been designed and offered to answer labour market needs.</p> <p>In terms of the first cycle the stakeholders views in fact are not formally filtered into the curriculum requirements or the course contents. One of the problems is that the geographical location does not facilitate this type of relationship with the business world, since companies here are scarce.</p> <p>When the civil engineering study cycle was created different contacts were made with external personalities, namely academics from other HEIs, in order to help with the design of the new study cycle.</p> <p>During internships there are also conversations with the persons responsible for the internship, which allows the study cycle to collect opinions on the competences these possible employers would like to see in future graduates.</p> <p>Some of the civil engineering study cycle academics also work outside the Institute, as civil engineers. Others do their research work (mainly applied research) in research centres that do not belong to the institute. It then becomes complicated to make a distinction between external and internal members. In a sense all the civil engineering academics are also external members, with</p> |

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| <p>professionals co-supervise MA and PhD theses? Are they external examiners?)</p> <p>e. Requirements of external professional bodies</p> | <p>a real vision of the labour market that they use when deciding the study cycle curriculum and/or the pedagogical content of each course.</p> <p>Nevertheless the academics mention that all the adjustments that were made so far resulted from informal mechanisms; no formal processes for listening external members and adjust the civil engineering study cycle curriculum accordingly have so far been instituted. But academics see the existence of formal mechanisms as a good thing; they think it should be good to have periodic (annual) meetings with people from the industry just to discuss the links between the study cycle and the labour market.</p> <p>In engineering there are also meetings with the technical engineering professional association, especially during the process of approval by the association of the study cycle.</p> <p><i>Arts</i></p> <p>The study cycle curriculum, as well as the pedagogical contents of the different courses, has been designed based on the academics' perceptions of what should be a good designer and not that much based on what the labour market thinks are the competences of a good designer. There are nevertheless informal contacts with people from the external society and in a way their opinions are filtered into the curriculum and the course contents. But there are no formal mechanisms. Examples of entities with which informal discussions happen: the city museums; the municipality; the region museums. The non-existence of internships in the Arts degree programme also contributes to a lower degree of involvement with external stakeholders in eventual adjustments to the study cycle curriculum and/or the course contents.</p> <p>The school of education has also informal relationships with different institutions from the city that offer internships to their students (not Arts). But most of the times there are no formal meetings with these entities, much of the discussion regarding the future graduates' profile are made informally in different discussion forums. The most actives elements on these relationships are the internship supervisors.</p> <p>There are also research projects where relationships are established with external members and feedback is informally collected from them.</p> |
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HEI δ

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| <p>WP9.2</p> <p>What are the institutional rules that govern higher education institutions' inclusion or exclusion of stakeholders in/from decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues and have they changed in the past five years?</p> <p>If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total members.</p> | <p>HEI δ Statutes (April 2009)</p> <p>The General Council (total of 21 members) has 6 external personalities of recognizable merit, with knowledge and experience relevant for the HEI (co-opted by the remaining members).</p> <p>The general Council external members were chosen among people from “the society, the country, that could be more or less representative of the polytechnic different teaching areas: culture, arts, patrimony (...) then a person connected to one of the big companies in the region (...) And we choose also people connected to the areas of communication, design, marketing, that are more or less the areas we have.” (President)</p> <p>The Advisory Council has external personalities of recognizable academic, scientific or managerial merit</p> <p>So far it has not been established but the HEI is in the process of establishing it. The goal of this council is to discuss internal matters of the HEI, to advise the institution regarding internal issues and problems, such as changes in the study cycles curricula, internal management. It will have a regional or local basis while the General Council has a more national or even international basis. In principle it will be constituted by secondary school directors, people from professional training centres, from employment centres, from the region. The idea is that they bring to the institution information about what is happening in the region. It will meet once or twice a year to discuss the activities plan, to add some projects that may be of interest to the institution, to discuss local or regional problems.</p> <p>In the schools the Technical-Scientific Council may include up to 4 academics or researchers from other HEIs or personalities of recognizable competences for the institution mission.</p> |
| <p>WP9.3</p> <p>What is nominal and real stakeholder's representation in institutional decision-making bodies? Has it changed and why?</p> | <p>Because all the General Council external members are highly qualified persons it is difficult to have them all in the council meetings. They have been involved in the strategic reflexion that is now going on in the council due to the need to change the HEI's strategic plan. When they are really needed, they respond; and their contribution is always valid. Because they bring an external perspective to the discussion: “what is happening from the point of view of the actuality, changes that are happening, information they collect and that are more up to date. And with the experience they have from the point of view of management, (...) they can always add something more positive to the discussions we have.” (President)</p> <p>The HEI community is rather small and they all meet several times in different decision making bodies. So the external members bring in new opinions; they alert for other interventions that are not seen by internal members.</p> <p>The external members' opinion is also relevant for the institution to help in the development of the region where it is located. For</p> |

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| | <p>instance, a new post-graduate course is being designed to qualify people in an area that is now emerging in the region, that is urban rehabilitation. This has happened through the idea of one of the General Council external members.</p> <p>The General Council has also discussed in the most recent sessions the profile of the offer of study cycles vs. the graduate profiles needed by the labour market. But this is something aside the general council functions. It is more up to the Advisory Council to discuss these issues.</p> <p><i>Engineering</i></p> <p>The external members present in the decision making bodies have a significant influence. They give interesting and relevant inputs to the strategic plan, action plans and the restructuring of the institution.</p> <p><i>Arts</i></p> <p>There is not a direct contact between the external members of the decision making bodies and the arts academic staff.</p> |
| <p>WP9.4</p> <p>Do different units in the institution (faculties) or programmes have stakeholder representation on decision-making or advisory bodies that have a say about quality-relevant issues, beyond what is prescribed? If so, which stakeholders, which bodies, which numbers/proportions of total membership?</p> | <p>During the School of Technology statutory organisation, the statutory committee had 3 external members from the region (out of a total of 12 members): one with links with the industry, other linked to the management of one school and the other... (??)</p> <p>The Plastic Arts Study Cycle has an Advisory Council constituted of several renowned authors and artists. They are plastic arts professionals and do not have anything to do with the academic world. They have been invited because they have professions that cover the different competence areas that the study cycle covers. There are three members in this council: one artist; one gallerist; and one commissioner.</p> <p>Before the recent changes in the institutional organisation each study cycle had its own advisory council, which were useful. Now Civil Engineering only has a Advisory Council.</p> |
| <p>WP9.5</p> <p>To what extent are stakeholder's views (and from which stakeholders?) taken into account and why specifically with respect to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate profiles, learning outcomes Exam requirements and curriculum review Soft and entrepreneurial skills | <p>External stakeholders' influence always happens indirectly. The only direct influence comes through the academic staff who also works outside the institution.</p> <p>The General Council's external members do not have any binding opinion in pedagogical matters, although sometimes they are asked about changes in study cycle curricula, the profile of competences the graduates should have, their professional profile. Sometimes the institution even asks the opinion of external persons who are not members of one of the HEI decision making bodies, because all study cycles directors want to have external members' opinions to support decisions on changes in their study cycles structure and curriculum.</p> <p>During the transition to Bologna, when the study cycles had to be adapted, external members were asked to give their</p> |

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| <p>acquisition</p> <p>d. Internal quality assurance processes</p> | <p>contribution to the design of the new study cycles. Meetings were held at each study cycle level and people with a relevant curriculum in each one of the areas were invited to participate. Also alumni were contacted at the time to understand which were the study cycle areas that needed to be reinforced.</p> <p>Occasionally the HEI resorts to a questionnaire to ask a pool of employers and alumni about their employment situation and how far the study cycle gave the students the competences needed for the work they are doing.</p> <p><i>Engineering</i></p> <p>The Civil Engineering Advisory Council was consulted when there was the need to redesign the study cycle according to the Bologna framework. Currently the study cycle is waiting for the statutory definition of this council's role and functions.</p> <p>Nevertheless through informal mechanisms (internships, relationships with some of the region business companies, relationships through the CETs, etc.) some changes are made in the study cycles, namely in the contents of some curricular units.</p> <p>The majority of the civil engineering study cycle academic staff is now in advanced training and has contacts with academic staff from other institutions. These relationships also contribute to adjustments in the course contents. Again these are not formalised processes to take into account external stakeholders' views, but are implicit dynamics that exist in the institution.</p> <p>Furthermore the research projects and the consultancy projects in which the academic staff is involved with the industry have also led to adjustments in some curricular units contents because they allow an understanding of what the industry needs are. The study cycles goals result also from these interactions.</p> <p>Recently there has been an adjustment in the study cycle, with a stronger emphasis given to the urban regeneration, since there is much less building work nowadays. Students see this as an adjustment that resulted from external influences.</p> <p>The goals for the master programme in the area of urban rehabilitation were defined with the help of a group of business companies with whom the civil engineering study cycle has a history of relationships. Their concerns about the area were included in the design of the new study cycle.</p> <p>Indirect mechanisms, based on direct contacts with external persons and entities, are the way external stakeholders opinions are taken into account in the course contents and in the definition of working methodologies.</p> <p><i>Arts</i></p> <p>The Plastic Arts Study Cycle Advisory Council is always consulted when there is a need to make adjustments (even small ones) to the study cycle curriculum. Its views about the goals the study cycle should have, graduate competences and graduates profiles</p> |
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| <p>WP9.6</p> <p>Are stakeholder views filtering into standard undergraduate curriculum and requirements through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Employment requirements for staff (if and which stakeholders decide on the hiring and promotion criteria) Internships (are the informal contacts with businesses during students' internships used for curriculum reviews) Special professional development courses – job-related continuing education and training courses distinct from the standard degree-courses (are insights from such courses used to inform the 'standard curriculum' and its requirements) Contacts with business and other organizations (e.g. public research institutes) (are R&D projects with external research organizations/companies influencing the 'standard curriculum'?; do business/industry professionals co-supervise MA and PhD theses? Are they external examiners?) Requirements of external professional bodies | <p>are the first to collect. They have a direct responsibility in the design of study cycles curricula.</p> <p>The fact that the Polytechnic Institute has also a significant number of specialists, people that do not work full time in the institution but that have another employment outside it, also helps to establish relationships with the external community, better knowing what it needs in terms of graduate profiles and competences. These people are always included in the study cycles councils (that are responsible for the well-functioning of the study cycles); and their opinions are always asked when a change in the study cycle curriculum is foreseen.</p> <p>External members are also present in the workshops and conferences the HEI organises. Usually the institution invites the most important actors from the region, which allows collecting feedback on the region's development and tendencies.</p> <p>The institution is now promoting in several study cycles partnerships with the industry and laboratories for teaching. Some of the classes of some courses are taught by people from external organisations (although with scientific supervision from one of the institution's academics). Sometimes the classes are even taught in the external organisation and not in the institution.</p> <p>Internships are the most relevant informal mechanism of contact with external stakeholders. This is a situation with positive advantages for the institution and the entity offering the internship. There is an office that provides information about internships.</p> <p><i>Engineering</i></p> <p>Internships are a useful mean to establish contacts with external organisations and persons. They are the most selected option by last year master students. Sometimes the study cycle profile is altered as a consequence of the internships' feedback.</p> <p>Some of the market needs are answered now through the offer of CET's. When these are well accepted, that also allows the study cycle to think about adjustments to its structure, curriculum and the content of the different curricular units.</p> <p>Civil Engineering organises 3 to 4 workshops by year with the presence of external stakeholders. There are also study visits to companies that allow students to see in practice what they learn in the institution.</p> <p>The students feel that changes happen in their study cycle due to external influences but do not really know who is behind them. They do not have that knowledge. They also think most of the times it is the academic staff that make the first contacts with external organisations, opening the way for students to apply for internships.</p> <p>One of the teachers on the Civil Engineering study cycle is a member of the Technical Engineers Association and he has contributed a lot to the definition of the study cycle goals.</p> <p><i>Arts</i></p> |
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| <p>The study cycle has protocols with different municipalities in terms of the promotion of cultural and artistic support. It also has protocols with some galleries. This helps the students to get a better idea of what their work will be once they graduate. When they get out of the school to mount an exhibition they know better what being an artist really means.</p> <p>Several artists participate in the classes and this is very useful for the students, because the artists talk about their work, their experience as artists. This allows students to better understand the labour market.</p> <p>In the institution a project has been set up to publicize its offer and also the work done by the students in the schools and in the cities and villages nearby. There is also the idea of creating an itinerant exhibition that would be presented also in the region.</p> <p>The study cycle has been developing a project named "Galeria" and under its umbrella relationships are established between the academic staff, the students and people from the civil society.</p> <p>A more formal partnership is established with the "Culturgest". There are also some more sporadic regional partnerships with municipalities.</p> | |
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