Higher Education

Ensuring Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary

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Foreword

Digital technologies have transformed the way people interact, work and learn. In higher education, this has led governments, quality assurance (QA) agencies and higher education institutions (HEIs) across the OECD to reflect on how to ensure that digital education in its fully online and hybrid forms provides learners with opportunities to reach learning and employment outcomes similar to those achieved through traditional in person instruction. Concerns have emerged following the COVID-19 pandemic, during which some HEIs, instructors and students had negative experiences of fully remote online instruction as they were insufficiently prepared and supported for the digital transition. As digital technologies have – or in the very near future will – become an intrinsic part of all higher education, jurisdictions across the OECD have started to reflect on how to adapt their QA systems to strengthen the capacity of HEIs for assuring the quality of their education offer, including digital courses and programmes, and how to ensure accountability through meaningful and purposeful external QA that includes specific indicators for digital education.

The Hungarian government sees digitalisation as a key pillar for driving greater flexibility, quality and equity in higher education. As part of wider efforts to support the digital transformation of Hungarian society, the government has taken several steps to support HEIs to strengthen their digital infrastructure, especially in expanding high-speed internet access. In parallel, many HEIs, their staff and students have adopted digital practices, with the use of digital technology increasing significantly as a result of the pandemic. The government is also developing instruments to monitor the digital transformation of higher education at national and institutional level, building on a list of potential indicators developed as part of the project "Supporting the Digital Transformation of Higher Education in Hungary", carried out by the OECD in 2021–22. The project also recommended that Hungary will need to review its existing accreditation and QA practices to strengthen the digital transformation of higher education while assuring high-quality delivery. Specifically, institutions in Hungary need greater flexibility and supports to take advantage of the new opportunities presented by digital technologies to develop innovative, flexible and student-centred programmes, and should be held accountable for the outcomes as part of external QA processes.

The project "Ensuring Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary" offers an assessment of Hungary's QA system for higher education and, more specifically, its strengths and weaknesses in assuring the quality of digital higher education. It offers recommendations and policy options to support the ongoing reform of Hungary's higher education accreditation system, as well as a list of potential digital education indicators to be integrated in the assessment frameworks used by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) for the accreditation of higher education institutions.

The analysis and recommendations contained in this report are based on analyses of the Hungarian higher education system, international examples of policy and practice for the QA of digital higher education, and a wide range of stakeholder engagement activities. Stakeholder engagement included interviews and roundtable discussions with higher education stakeholders, as well as international peer learning and virtual site visits to six HEIs to collect the opinions of higher education students, staff and leaders.

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- ***Virtual launch event***, organised by the Hungarian Ministry for Culture and Innovation (KIM), in collaboration with the OECD project team to officially launch the project (18 November 2021).
- ***Interviews with key higher education stakeholder organisations***, carried out by the OECD project team. The organisations interviewed were: the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), the Hungarian Ministry for Culture and Innovation (KIM), the Hungarian Rectors' Conference (MRK), the Educational Authority (OH), the National Doctoral Council, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), the Association of Hungarian PhD and DLA Candidates (DOSZ), Digital Success Nonprofit Ltd., and Tempus Public Foundation (February 2022).
- ***Virtual site visits to six HEIs***, involving 107 stakeholders, including higher education leadership, administrators, students and instructors. The six participating HEIs were: Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), the University of Debrecen (DE), Budapest Metropolitan University of Applied Sciences (METU), Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE), Tomori Pál College (TPF) and the University of Szeged (SE) (March 2022).
- ***Virtual national roundtable***, organised by KIM, in collaboration with the OECD project team and MAB, involving 48 stakeholders from 21 different organisations (31 May 2022).
- ***Online international videoconference***, organised by the OECD project team, attended by more than 50 participants (14 June 2022).
- ***National roundtable in Budapest (Hungary)***, organised by KIM, with support from MAB. The roundtable event was hosted by the Hungarian University of Sports Science and brought together 35 stakeholders from 17 different organisations (4 October 2022).
- ***Stakeholder consultation*** on a draft set of recommendations and policy options prepared by the OECD project team (November 2022).
- ***Final conference in Győr (Hungary)***, organised by the OECD project team in collaboration with KIM and MAB. The conference was hosted by Széchenyi István University and was attended by stakeholders across the entire Hungarian higher education sector (29 March 2023).

While the report draws on data and analysis from the OECD, data and information provided by Hungarian stakeholders and international experts to the OECD team, as well as a wide range of other published sources, any errors or misinterpretations remain the responsibility of the OECD project team.

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Executive summary

While accredited distance learning programmes represent only a very small share of the total number of higher education programmes on offer in Hungary today (0.004% in 2021), the COVID-19 pandemic prompted many higher education institutions (HEIs) to rapidly develop their digital course offerings. This has happened outside of existing regulation on study formats and programme accreditation, with public authorities granting exceptional approval to authorise their initiatives. As part of wider efforts to support a modernisation of teaching and learning ***in general***, the Hungarian government is committed to supporting a further expansion of ***digital*** higher education in Hungary and introduce measures to assure its quality.

Based on an analysis of existing policies and practices for the quality assurance of digital higher education in Hungary, and drawing on international best practice, this report presents nine recommendations – and within those, a range of policy options – across three areas for the Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM) and the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), in consultation with HEIs, to consider.

- ***Area 1: Modernisation of regulation and external quality assurance to increase flexibility, innovation and digitalisation***. The first area includes recommendations and policy options for the adoption of new quality standards as a basis for government policymaking, as well as a revision of the existing regulation on study formats. They seek to give institutions greater flexibility to develop innovative (and digital) study programmes (including micro-credentials) that permit students to more flexibly choose when, where, and how to study, and for academic instructors to make fuller use of the potential of digital technology to enhance the quality of teaching and assessment.
- ***Area 2: Reorientation of accreditation processes to strengthen institutional responsibility for quality***. The second area includes recommendations and policy options for a reorientation of the existing accreditation processes for higher education. They seek to support Hungary to move from an *ex ante* (or input-oriented) to an *ex post* (or process and output-oriented) accreditation system that places enhanced responsibility and accountability with HEIs for assuring the quality of their (digital) education offerings.
- ***Area 3: Strengthening institutional supports for the quality enhancement of digital teaching and learning***. The third area includes recommendations and policy options on how the Hungarian government and other key higher education stakeholder organisations can provide institutions, instructors, and support staff with additional supports and incentives to take up their enhanced responsibilities for quality and fully capitalise on the opportunities offered by the revised regulatory framework for higher education to expand study flexibility and digital delivery.

Co-ordinated and continued action across all three areas will be needed in the years ahead to support a deep modernisation of teaching and learning in Hungarian higher education. The implementation of the recommendations and policy options will need to be carefully sequenced, piloted, and accompanied by proper incentives and supports to drive individual behaviour and institutional action. Institutions, instructors, and support staff need to be supported to meet their enhanced responsibilities for quality and equipped with the (digital) skills and resources to offer students a high-quality learning experience, appropriately supported by digital technology. Any student, regardless of their background, the discipline or mode within which they study, should have access to high-quality (digital) teaching, learning and assessment.

Modernisation of regulation and external quality assurance to increase flexibility, innovation and digitalisation

The OECD review team identified the existing regulation on study formats in Hungarian higher education as one of the main barriers to the further development of digital higher education in Hungary. This distinguishes between full-time, part-time and distance learning programmes, including strict requirements on the minimum/maximum number of contact hours per semester (*study intensity*) as well as when (i.e. evening/daytime, weekdays/weekend) and how (i.e. online/in-person) instruction is to be delivered (*study mode*). This categorisation does not reflect an up-to-date understanding of how teaching and learning takes place in today's digital world, and is unable to meet the demands from digitally savvy secondary school graduates (who have lived through remote instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic) and adult learners (in search of flexible, and often online, upskilling and reskilling opportunities) for greater flexibility to decide on what, how, where, and when to study.

The second key barrier is the near absence of specific digital considerations in the minimum operating requirements of HEIs as well as the standards and indicators employed by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) for the external quality assurance of higher education providers and their programmes. Specific standards for digital education can only be found in MAB's procedures for the *ex ante* accreditation of distance learning programmes. Institutions that wish to offer distance learning programmes are required to meet ten criteria (or, "special provisions") in addition to those that apply to regular programmes.

Table 1 summarises the recommendations and policy options for area 1, which were developed in close consultation with higher education stakeholders and draw on international best practice across the OECD.

Table 1. Recommendations and policy options for Hungary to support a modernisation of regulation and external quality assurance for digital higher education

Recommendations	Policy Options
Recommendation 1: Consider allowing institutions to offer programmes in three study modes, with some limits on study intensity	The report recommends Hungary to revise its existing categorisation of study formats by introducing a clear distinction between three modes of study (i.e. online, hybrid and in-person/blended) and two types of study intensity (i.e. full-time, part-time). Institutions should have full autonomy to decide whether to offer courses or programmes in the online, hybrid or in-person/blended study mode, whether to offer them on a full-time or part-time basis, and whether to introduce additional requirements or supports for fully online or hybrid study to mitigate the risk of study delays or drop-out. The following definitions of digital education are proposed: • ***Online education*** refers to a study mode where instruction is delivered off campus, either synchronously or asynchronously, or a combination of both. Students complete their course or programme of study at a distance, without the need for on-campus instruction. • ***Hybrid education*** refers to a study mode where instruction involves a mix of on-campus and off-campus instruction. Learners have some flexibility regarding the location in which they complete their study. For example, learners might complete laboratory segments of an engineering course on campus, while participating in lecture-based course segments through live web streaming. • ***Blended education*** refers to a study mode where courses are intentionally designed to harness the capacities of digital technology, using it to enrich rather than substitute in-person instruction. For example, a language or mathematics course delivered on campus might use learning analytics to adapt problem sets to learner abilities. Importantly, most instruction continues to take place on a physical campus.
Recommendation 2: Develop specific indicators for digital education and embed them in existing accreditation frameworks	The report recommends that Hungary co-ordinate the development and integration of specific indicators for digital education across all its accreditation frameworks, drawing on existing quality frameworks for digital higher education developed by the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European Commission, and Hungarian HEIs. To support Hungary with this task, based on an analysis of specific indicators for digital education included in international quality frameworks across the OECD and European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the report provides a list of: • ***Potential minimum requirement for providers of digital higher education***, related to HEIs' capacity for digital delivery, pedagogical innovation and study flexibility. • ***Potential indicators for institutional accreditation***, including 24 additional indicators for digital education, as well as small revisions to the wording of existing indicators across all parts of the template.

Reorientation of accreditation processes to strengthen institutional responsibility for quality

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted Hungarian HEIs to adapt their internal quality assurance systems to the ***specific*** challenges of digital education. The expansion of fully online and hybrid education has now become an explicit priority in many Hungarian HEIs' institutional development strategies, with many scaling up investments in digital technology – although a renewed emphasis on place-based education is present in several institutions. There is also an emergence of staff professional development for digital education, and an increased focus on supporting students with digital learning. Incentivising staff to engage in the professional development of their pedagogical practices and providing greater mental health support to students will be key challenges going forward. Processes to monitor student performance and collect feedback on the quality of digital education are developing at a slower pace in Hungarian HEIs. Institutions are primarily embedding questions related to digital education in end-of-course or end-of-year staff and student feedback surveys, and are only slowly starting to make use of the opportunities offered by digital technology – such as learning analytics – to diversity their methods of data collection and analysis to get a more in-depth and real-time picture of quality.

Despite an emergence of inspiring practice across Hungarian HEIs for the QA of digital higher education, higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team underlined that institutional quality cultures ***in general*** are still developing in Hungary. Stakeholders explained that in many institutions, QA is still seen as a "box-ticking exercise" purely to satisfy external expectations. In this context, HEIs mentioned the two-stage *ex ante* programme accreditation process as an example of a highly burdensome administrative procedure, which diverts institutions' – and MAB's – attention from quality enhancement. In recent years, however, MAB has introduced several changes to its accreditation procedures, increasing its compliance with international quality standards and practices. Higher education stakeholders mentioned that the introduction of cyclical accreditation for institutions and doctoral schools based on the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) – and the recommendations emerging from the institutional self-assessment and site visit underpinning its process – were highly relevant for institutional quality enhancement. Stakeholders welcomed a further evolution towards institutional and outcomes-oriented approaches to QA, including at programme level.

Table 2 summarises the recommendations and policy options for area 2, which were developed in close consultation with higher education stakeholders and draw on international best practice across the OECD.

Table 2. Recommendations and policy options for Hungary to support a reorientation of MAB's accreditation processes

Recommendations	Policy Options
Recommendation 3: Grant self-accreditation status to institutions with demonstrated capacity to manage study programmes at a high level of quality	The report recommends that Hungary considers granting self-accreditation status to HEIs with demonstrated capacity to manage study programmes at a high level of quality, in line with the ESG. Based on international examples of best practice across the OECD and EHEA, the report presents a potential model for the introduction of a performance-based self-accreditation system in Hungary: • ***Unlimited self-accreditation status*** could be granted to those HEIs demonstrating the capacity to manage ***all*** their study programmes at a high level of quality, including in different disciplines, study modes (fully online, hybrid, blended), intensities (full-time, part-time) and levels (bachelor's, master's, PhD). • ***Limited self-accreditation status*** could be granted to those HEIs demonstrating the capacity to manage ***some (types of)*** study programmes at a high level of quality, for example programmes in certain disciplines, certain study modes (fully online, hybrid, blended), certain intensities (full-time, part-time) or at certain levels (bachelor's, master's, PhD).
Recommendation 4: Introduce a performance and outcomes-based	The report recommends that Hungary considers introducing a performance and outcomes-based programme monitoring system for ***all HEIs***, based on a limited number of national key performance indicators (KPIs), complemented by a cyclical programme review procedure (in disciplinary clusters) for ***HEIs without self-accreditation status***.

Recommendations	Policy Options
programme monitoring system, coupled with a targeted cyclical programme review procedure	Based on international examples of best practice across the OECD and EHEA, the report presents a potential model for the introduction of a performance and outcomes-based programme review system in Hungary: • ***Ongoing monitoring of programme performance*** against numerical thresholds for a limited set of national KPIs (e.g. drop-out rates, completion rates, graduate employment rates), developed in close consultation with HEIs and based on available national data on sectoral trends. The ongoing monitoring of programme quality could be used as a mechanism to identify "potential concerns with quality", and form the basis for more in-depth and *ad hoc* reviews of specific courses or programmes, to understand the reasons and propose solutions for potential poor performance against national KPIs. • ***Cyclical programme review (in disciplinary clusters)*** could be introduced for HEIs without self-accreditation status, and build on the approach followed by MAB for the accreditation of medical training programmes. This process consists of the preparation of a self-assessment report by the institution, based on the standards of the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME), followed by an institutional site visit and accreditation report, which are conducted and prepared by an external review team co-ordinated by MAB.
Recommendation 5: Increase institutional autonomy for the establishment of new programmes, depending on accreditation status	The report recommends that Hungary gives institutions and instructors more autonomy and flexibility to launch new study programmes in line with key societal challenges and emerging skills needs nationally and internationally, rather than the rarely updated education and learning outcome requirements included in the National Qualifications Register. A simplification of the two-stage programme accreditation process would free up MAB's capacity to conduct cyclical quality reviews of programmes, and to play a bigger role in expanding its quality enhancement services for HEIs. Based on international examples of best practice across the OECD and EHEA, the report presents a potential model for a simplification of the *ex ante* programme accreditation procedures in Hungary, with progressive responsibility for institutions depending on their accreditation status: • ***Institutions with self-accreditation status*** could be allowed to establish new programmes directly with the Educational Authority (OH), providing basic information such as the relevance and need for the new programme, and the institution's own account of the programme's proposed educational content and learning outcomes. • ***Accredited institutions*** without self-accreditation status could also be allowed to establish new programmes directly with the OH, except in the case of programmes launched in certain study fields, modes or levels within which the institution is not yet offering degree programmes. • Only the new programme proposals of n***on-accredited institutions*** would be required to undergo a full quality review by MAB prior to the programme being registered with the OH.

Strengthening institutional supports for the quality enhancement of digital teaching and learning

While responsibility for the formal ***quality assurance*** of higher education in Hungary is shared between MAB, the OH and KIM, a wide range of organisations can (and do) play a role in the ***quality enhancement*** of (digital) higher education in Hungary. This includes Tempus Public Foundation, the Hungarian Rectors' Conference (MRK), the National Union of Students (HÖOK), the Association of Hungarian PhD and DLA Candidates (DOSZ), the academies of science as well as the Digital Government Development and Project Management Ltd. (DKFKT). Several of these organisations have started to more actively support HEIs with the quality enhancement of their digital teaching and learning practices. For example, by launching national surveys on the quality of digital learning, developing guidance materials and self-assessment tools for HEIs, organising conferences on digital higher education and managing online platforms to facilitate peer learning, or by increasing funding for the development of institutions' digital education infrastructure.

However, stakeholder interviews carried out by the OECD review team reveal that the current institutional support landscape in Hungary is insufficiently coordinated and focused on the key challenges facing HEIs for the quality enhancement of their digital teaching and learning practices. The three key challenges mentioned by higher education stakeholders were: developing, maintaining, upgrading, and supporting the effective use of digital technology; supporting and incentivising the professional development and assessment of staff for digital teaching and learning; and developing effective processes for the collection, monitoring and use of data on the performance of digital higher education.

Table 3 summarises the recommendations and policy options for area 3, which were developed in close consultation with higher education stakeholders and draw on international best practice across the OECD.

Table 3. Recommendations and policy options for Hungary to strengthen institutional support for the quality enhancement of digital teaching and learning

Recommendations	Policy Options
Recommendation 6: Support the development of shared national standards and guidance for the purchase, maintenance, upgrading and effective use of digital technology	Based on international examples of best practice across the OECD and EHEA, the report presents the following policy options to support Hungarian HEIs with the purchase, maintenance, upgrading and effective use of digital technology: • ***Steering and targeted funding***: Through national steering as well as targeted and competitive funding, the government (KIM) and its responsible bodies (e.g. Digital Hungary Academy) could support and incentivise HEIs to invest in digital technologies that have demonstrated potential to enhance the quality of digital higher education, without prescribing which providers to choose. • ***IT maintenance and support***: Hungary's National Research and Education Network (NREN), KIFÜ, could strengthen its role in supporting institutions with central network management and hosting services, to free up the capacity of institutional IT support staff to help instructors with the effective use of digital technology. • ***Guidance and training***: The NREN (KIFÜ), MAB or a sectoral (stakeholder) organisation could be tasked with coordinating the development of shared sectoral guidance and training, to support HEIs with the purchase, maintenance and effective use of digital technologies.
Recommendation 7: Introduce national regulation and support for the quality enhancement of staff professional development	Based on international examples of best practice across the OECD and EHEA, the report presents the following policy options to strengthen the professional development of academic staff for digital teaching and learning in Hungarian HEIs: • ***National regulation on staff professional development***: Hungary could introduce a requirement for HEIs to organise staff professional development and performance assessments of instructors' pedagogical skills, including their skills for online course design, delivery and assessment. • ***National standards for staff professional development programmes***: Hungary could coordinate the development of national standards for the QA of HEIs' staff professional development programmes. • ***Guidance and training for the (self-) assessment of instructors' digital skills***: Hungary could coordinate the provision of national training, guidance materials and capacity building activities for the performance assessment of staff's (digital) skills and competencies by HEIs. • ***National centre for teaching and learning***: Hungary could fund the establishment of a national centre for teaching and learning in higher education, with dedicated responsibility for developing quality enhancement activities for teaching and learning, including online course design, delivery and assessment. • ***National digital content sharing platform***: Building on already existing online platforms, Hungary could fund the development of a national digital education content sharing platform for higher education instructors.
Recommendation 8: Embed digitalisation in existing national data collection and monitoring instruments for higher education	Based on international examples of best practice across the OECD and EHEA, the report presents the following policy options for Hungary to strengthen its system-level evidence base on the quality of digital higher education, to inform institutional decision-making, inter-institutional benchmarking and best practice sharing: • ***National administrative data collection and information on digital higher education***: Hungary could add a "digitalisation lens" to its Graduate Career Tracking Survey (DPR), Higher Education Database and Information System (FIR) and Felvi.hu student admission and application website, to collect and publish up-to-date information on the performance of digital study programmes. • ***National survey on digital teaching and learning***: Building on existing national surveys of digital learning, Hungary could introduce a regular national survey of students' and/or staff's experience with digital teaching and learning, informed by a careful methodological analysis of the existing survey instruments. • ***Thematic reviews of digital higher education***: Through competitive funding calls, Hungary could fund thematic reviews of key challenges and best practices in digital higher education across institutions, focused on specific areas of focus or priority (e.g. student online mental health and wellbeing, online assessment). • ***Thematic reviews of institutional quality assurance***: As part of its accreditation reviews, MAB could ask experts to collect best practices identified as part of their analysis of institutional self-assessment reports and site visits, for dissemination through MAB's communication channels with the sector.
Recommendation 9: Support and coordinate the development of an institutional self-assessment or benchmarking tool for digital higher education	Based on international examples of best practice across the OECD and EHEA, the report recommends Hungary to support the development of a Working Group (WG), consisting of national and international digital education experts and practitioners, to develop a self-assessment or benchmarking toolkit for digital higher education, adapted to the specific needs and challenges of the Hungarian higher education sector. The WG could focus on the following three questions: • ***Plan and adjust***: How can digital teaching and learning be embedded in the institutional strategy and quality culture, and supported through investments in digital technology? • ***Implement***: Which quality assurance processes and supports should be developed to enhance the quality of digital teaching and learning across the institution? • ***Monitor***: Which processes can be implemented to collect feedback on and monitor the performance of digital teaching and learning quality, and how is this data best used?

1 Introduction

This project, led and implemented by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), was carried out with financial support provided by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM), and in close collaboration with the Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM) and the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB).

This chapter presents the project's context and objectives, defines key concepts and starting points, and presents the analytical approach and methodology underpinning the project.

1.1 Context and objectives of the project

This section summarises key findings from the project "Supporting the Digital Transformation of Higher Education in Hungary" (OECD, 2021[1]) and describes how the current project builds on the achievements of this project to further support the digital transformation and quality of higher education in Hungary.

Supporting the digital transformation of higher education in Hungary

"Supporting the Digital Transformation of Higher Education in Hungary" (OECD, 2021[1]) reviewed the state of higher education digitalisation in Hungary, analysing three dimensions of higher education digitalisation: digital readiness, digital practices, and digital performance. The project found that the Hungarian higher education system made a successful transition to emergency remote instruction in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, using digital technologies to ensure that learners had continued access to their study programmes. However, according to students and academic staff, the quality of the digital higher education provided during the pandemic varied. When surveyed as part of the project, among other issues they highlighted significant deficiencies in access to digital infrastructure and digital resources, and insufficiently tailored course design, delivery and assessment practices in digital study environments.

The project also identified Hungary's existing regulatory and external quality assurance (QA) frameworks for higher education as one of the main barriers to further strengthening the digitalisation and quality of teaching and learning in higher education. Recommendation 2 of the project states (OECD, 2021, p. 54[1]):

> *The government should use feedback from higher education stakeholders to develop a system change plan designed to remove obstacles to the adoption of digitally enhanced learning, make legislative or regulation changes as necessary, and use funding incentives to encourage change in particular areas. This could involve […] reviewing accreditation and QA practices and requirements (in the legislation and rules of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee, as necessary) to ensure they are neutral between different modes of delivery; and providing guidance to institutions on how to implement internal QA processes in a digital environment.*

Ensuring quality digital higher education in Hungary

"Ensuring Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary" has sought to build on the findings and recommendations of the project "Supporting the Digital Transformation of Higher Education in Hungary" (OECD, 2021[1]), It was launched to support:

- The adoption of new quality standards as a basis for government policymaking and a revised external quality assurance framework; and
- The development of new external and internal QA services and support mechanisms by the government and implemented by HEIs.

Its recommendations and policy options for Hungary encompass three areas:

- ***Standards***. Policy recommendations and policy options to support the development of QA standards and procedures that can be adopted into Hungarian legislation by KIM and implemented by MAB and HEIs to assure and improve digital higher education.
- ***Practices***. Policy recommendations and options to strengthen HEIs' autonomy and capacity to adopt practices to effectively manage the quality of their digital education offerings.
- ***Supports***. Policy recommendations and options to develop relevant institutional supports for the enhancement of digital and learning infrastructures to assist HEIs in meeting quality standards for digital education.

1.2 Definition of key concepts and starting points for the review

This section defines key concepts underpinning the review: digital education and quality assurance. It then outlines the importance of quality assurance in the context of digital higher education.

Understanding digital education

Three types of digital education

Based on differences in time and location of instruction, three broad types of digital education can be identified: online, hybrid and blended education (see Box 1.1). The location of instruction considers the amount of time spent learning online (remotely) versus in-person; the time of instruction refers to whether learning takes place synchronously (i.e., "learning in which learner(s) and instructor(s) are in the same place, at the same time, in order for learning to take place") or asynchronously (i.e., "different times and spaces particular to each learner […] instructors usually set up a learning path, which students engage with at their own pace") (Finol, 2020[3]).

Box 1.1. Three types of digital education

Online education

All instruction is delivered online, either synchronously or asynchronously, or a combination of both. While instruction is delivered solely at a distance, learners may have the option to meet in person with peers or instructors, or to make use of on-campus facilities and learning materials. It is different from "distance education", which describes all forms of education where learner and instructor are physically separated (e.g., internet, radio, television, and print-based instruction).

Hybrid education

Education is delivered through a mix of online and on-campus instruction, with the online components taking place synchronously, asynchronously, or a combination of both. The online components replace, and therefore reduce the frequency of, in-person instruction.

Blended education

Instruction takes place fully in-person and is blended with or enhanced by online materials and activities, such as a virtual learning environment or learning management system (VLE/LMS), open educational resources (OER), simulations, or gaming. In contrast to hybrid education, the online components are intended to build upon classroom instruction rather than replace it.

Source: Adapted from Staring et al. (2022[2]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Blended education as the new normal

The definition above recognises that all education is – or soon will be – "blended" or enhanced by some form of digital technology. Gourlay (2021[4]) explains that there is almost no in-person instruction that is not supported, at least to some extent, by digital tools or a virtual learning environment or learning management system (VLE/LMS) to structure and support teaching and learning. For example, even in cases where instruction takes place fully face-to-face between instructors and students, most instructors

make use of presentational tools (such as PowerPoint) and other forms of digital technology to accompany and structure their lectures or use email to facilitate communication and collaboration with and between their students for the preparation, submission, and assessment of assignments. Likewise, adopting a socio-material perspective, Gourlay (2021[4]) argues that – especially since the COVID-19 pandemic – our human connection with technology has become such an integral part of our everyday lives that the very notion of "virtual learning" is flawed. Even when studying at home and alone in front of a screen, Gourlay argues, learning has an in-person dimension (Gourlay, 2021, p. 57[4]).

Understanding quality assurance in higher education

The development of QA systems in higher education is a relatively recent phenomenon (OECD, 2019[5]). It is only during the last three decades that most governments across the OECD have introduced some form of external QA for higher education and that HEIs have started to adopt internal processes to ensure that the educational content, teaching and learning practices, student support services, and outcomes of their courses and programmes meet national and international quality standards. These developments represent a change in direction from the historic tradition of leaving the QA of learning and teaching in higher education to qualified academic staff with an established record of scholarship. A high degree of academic autonomy in universities has also meant that it has traditionally been very difficult for governments and HEI management to intervene in the teaching activities of higher education staff members.

The emergence of quality assurance

Increased government intervention to assure the quality of higher education provision is particularly linked to the fact that HEIs have had to adapt their course offerings and instructional practices to an increasingly diverse student population and a competitive higher education market. On the one hand, HEIs are being asked to rapidly adapt and diversify their course offer to meet the demands of an increasingly wide range of higher education audiences, or "clients", ranging from students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds to (working) adults in need of upskilling or reskilling. HEIs are also being challenged to diversify their course offer in response to an expanded and increasingly competitive higher education market, filled with private providers offering many of their courses and programmes online. For example, Allied Market Research, estimated the total value of the e-learning market to be at USD 197 billion in 2020 and to reach USD 840 billion by 2030, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 17.5% from 2021 to 2030 (Allied Market Research, 2020[6]). Coupled with shrinking public budgets and investments in higher education, it has become more important than ever for governments and HEIs to ensure that higher education teaching and learning remains of the highest possible quality, and delivers the outcomes needed by students and society.

The purpose of quality assurance

Within the higher education community, there exists a distinction between external QA for the purpose of accountability (assurance) and external QA for the purpose of improvement (enhancement) (ENQA, 2015[7]; CHEA, 2016[8]). Quality assurance (QA) can be described as "regulatory" or formal activities aimed at providing information to assure the public beneficiaries or "clients" of higher education (students, employers, governments, civil society) of the quality of HEIs' activities or "the process of establishing stakeholder confidence that provision (input, process and outcomes) fulfils expectations and measures up to threshold minimum requirements" (Harvey, n.d.[9]). Quality enhancement (QE) refers to "enabling" activities that seek to build institutions' capacity for the development of their own internal QA processes by providing them with advice, recommendations and supports (OECD, 2018, p. 53[10]). The relationship between QA and QE – and the role of QA agencies in both – has dominated the international QA debate for several decades (see Box 1.2).

Box 1.2. The relationship between quality assurance and quality enhancement

Looking at the relationship between quality assurance (QA) and quality enhancement (QE), Williams (2016[11]) identifies a spectrum of views. Firstly, there are those who believe that QA and QE "must be conceptually and practically distinct, with separate resourcing" (Williams, 2016, p. 98[11]). This creates the perception that QA and QE can work in isolation from each other, which has often been the case in the past, with national QA processes not leading to any significant QE outcomes. Several critics see QA and QE in opposition to each other, with QE presented in a much more positive light than QA. QA, according to this group, is seen as a negative and burdensome "naming and shaming" practice which undermines the academic integrity and expertise of scholars. Other perspectives view QA and QE on a linear scale, where "quality enhancement is dependent on QA. This implies a need for good QA data that is then used to inform enhancement" (Williams, 2016, p. 100[11]). Finally, there are those who view QA and QE as an integral part of the same process, with the results of each process feeding into the other. According to this last view, external QA carried out by national or government agencies should not only encourage but also be informed by QE activities, including the practices of HEIs themselves.

Source: Williams (2016[11]), "Quality assurance and quality enhancement: is there a relationship?", *Quality in Higher Education 22* (2), pp. 97-102, https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2016.1227207

Quality assurance of digital higher education

There is a lack of sound evidence on the risks and benefits of online learning, however, and the few studies to date that *have* evaluated the quality of online and hybrid instruction are not always conclusive and often focus on comparing online instruction with face-to-face instruction. For example, one paper, which reviews several US studies on the quality of online instruction during the pandemic, highlights that most studies to date show mixed results, have been carried out on a single institution (or even a single course within that institution) and that "the content, instructor, assignments, and other course features might differ across online and in-person modes as well, which makes apples-to-apples comparisons difficult" (Riegg and Friday, 2021[12]). The negative impacts of digital education are most often experienced among bachelor-level and disadvantaged students. Potential positive impacts include lower time-to-degree completion for more advanced students, highlighting potential efficiency gains for higher education, although there is also a high number of online programmes with high drop-out rates.

Despite the lack of conclusive evidence – so far – on the quality of online and hybrid instruction, the COVID-19 pandemic has made it clear that digital higher education in its fully online, hybrid and blended formats is here to stay. It is therefore important to guide, assess and support institutions to enhance the quality of their digital provision. As we are moving towards a "*post-digital* understanding of teaching and learning environments" (Nørgård, 2021, p. 12[13]) in which digital and online has become part of our everyday actions, interactions and experiences – including education – it should therefore be within the scope of QA agencies. Not covering digital education would entail maintaining an "*implicit* bias […] towards the 'presential' learning found in classrooms and seminar rooms" (Bacsich et al., 2015, p. 7[14]). Delivering high-quality digital higher education requires HEIs and instructors to put in place a range of additional considerations, which should therefore form part of the quality indicators monitored by QA agencies and the supports offered by public authorities. One study estimates that the provision of quality and equitable digital education requires almost doubling the human and financial resources of institutions (EDUCAUSE, 2021[15]).

A comprehensive view of quality assurance

Building on the view that QA and QE are an integral part of the same process, ensuring the quality of digital higher education requires three mutually reinforcing mechanisms (see Figure 1.1).

- National quality ***standards***, enhanced for digital education, embedded in national legislation, and monitored by an independent external QA agency, to steer and guide institutional practices, while guaranteeing their autonomy and flexibility to develop innovative (and digital) study programmes.
- Meaningful accreditation processes that enable HEIs to take responsibility for the development of internal quality management ***practices*** to ensure their (digital) courses and programmes provide students with relevant learning outcomes and labour market opportunities.
- ***Supports*** and incentives to build the capacity of HEIs to effectively manage the quality of their (digital) course offerings and support the enhancement of (digital) teaching and learning practices.

At the heart of these three mechanisms – and, ultimately, at the heart of higher education quality – should be the shared ambition of all stakeholders to ***enhance*** the quality of teaching, learning and research.

Figure 1.1. Standards, practices and supports for the quality assurance of digital higher education

1.3 Analytical framework and methodology

This section presents the analytical framework and methodology underpinning the project. It describes the research questions guiding the analysis, as well as the primary and secondary research methods used to conduct the analysis and engage higher education stakeholder organisations and institutions in the project, both across Hungary and internationally.

Analytical framework

The project was guided by three overarching research questions (see Figure 1.2):

- ***Research question 1***. What is the impact of Hungary's regulatory framework and external quality assurance system for higher education on the development and quality of digital higher education?
- ***Research question 2***. What is the capacity of higher education institutions in Hungary to manage the quality of their digital study programmes and courses?
- ***Research question 3***. What supports are available to higher education institutions and instructors in Hungary to enhance the quality of their digital teaching and learning practices and internal quality management practices?

Regulatory framework and external quality assurance of digital higher education

The first research question was broken down into two areas of analysis. First, Hungary's regulatory framework for higher education, or how teaching and learning in higher education is organised at institutional and programme level. Specific consideration was given to the degree structure and study formats in Hungarian higher education, and how they shape the student learning experience (e.g. student admission, course selection, progression and certification), as well as how national regulation defines the flexibility of institutions and instructors to develop innovative and labour market relevant (digital) study programmes.

The second area of analysis concerned Hungary's external quality assurance system of higher education, focusing more specifically on the role of MAB as the designated independent higher education QA agency in Hungary. This included looking at MAB's activities for assuring and reviewing the quality of HEIs and their operations at institution and programme level (i.e. *quality assurance*), as well as how MAB supports HEIs with the quality enhancement of their institutional quality management practices (i.e. *quality enhancement*).

- ***Quality assurance***. Looking at the QA activities typically carried out by QA bodies across the OECD, a distinction is commonly made between agencies that conduct reviews and accreditation at institution or programme level, or a combination of both. There are also differences in terms of the stage at which accreditation takes place. While in many jurisdictions, there is still a strong focus on ensuring that institutions and programmes meet a number of minimum requirements set out in national regulation prior to operation (i.e. *ex ante* accreditation), many jurisdictions have also introduced processes to monitor and assure the quality of the processes and outputs of higher education (i.e. *ex post* accreditation) (Krcal, Glass and Tremblay, 2014[16]).
- ***Quality enhancement***. A review of common policies and practices for the QE of digital higher education across QA agencies in the OECD (Staring et al., 2022[2]) identified three main mechanisms that agencies are using to support institutions with the QE of their digital teaching and learning practices and institutional quality management systems: the development of a common taxonomy of guidelines for the QE of digital higher education; the collection and dissemination of resources and good practice for digital teaching and learning; and training and support for instructors and QA staff.

Table 1.1 presents the analytical framework guiding the review of Hungary's regulatory framework and external quality assurance system for digital higher education.

Table 1.1. Analytical framework for the analysis of Hungary's regulatory framework and external quality assurance system for digital higher education

Areas	Research questions
1. Regulatory framework for higher education	
Institutional landscape	How is the institutional landscape in Hungary organised, and what are the minimum requirements for higher education institutions that wish to offer digital higher education?
	What is the impact of these regulations on the development and quality of digital higher education?
Study formats	What is the degree and study format structure guiding student learning and instruction in Hungarian higher education?
	What is the impact of these regulations on the development and quality of digital higher education?
2. External quality assurance	
Institution	What are the minimum operating requirements (i.e. ***ex ante*** accreditation) for higher education institutions that wish to offer digital education in Hungary?
	What are the standards, procedures and associated indicators implemented by MAB for the ***ex post*** accreditation of higher education institutions, and to what extent do these take into specific considerations for digital education?
Programme	What are the standards, procedures and associated indicators implemented by MAB for the ***ex ante*** accreditation of study programmes, and to what extent do these take into specific considerations for digital education?
	What are the standards, procedures and associated indicators implemented by MAB for the ***ex post*** accreditation of study programmes, and to what extent do these take into specific considerations for digital education?
3. Quality enhancement	
Common taxonomy and guidelines	What is the taxonomy or definition of digital education used by MAB? Does this reflect the understanding of digital education internationally?
	Does MAB provide specific guidance to HEIs on how to implement national quality standards in digital settings?
Collection and dissemination of best practices	Does MAB engage in the collection and/or dissemination of best practices and/or resources to support institutions with the quality enhancement of their digital teaching and learning practices and/or quality management practices?
Training and peer learning	Does MAB provide opportunities for HEIs to take part in (online) training and peer learning activities to strengthen their capacity around quality digital education and internal quality management?

Source: Adapted from Staring et al. (2022[2]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Institutional quality management of digital higher education

As the principal responsibility for quality rests with HEIs, the second research question focused on how HEIs in Hungary are managing the quality of their digital study programmes. This involved looking at how the overall structure, governance, and management of HEIs in Hungary affects the development of internal quality cultures. The specific institutional practices for the quality management of digital courses and study programmes were analysed following the key principles for effective institutional QA of digital higher education identified in Staring et al. (2022, p. 26[2]):

- ***Planning and investment***. The institutional quality management of digital higher education requires clear digitalisation objectives and indicators for monitoring their implementation in all areas of institutional activity, including policies and processes for QA and development, supported by investments in the necessary digital education infrastructure. Decisions on digital education policies and infrastructure investments should be evidence-based, developed in consultation with relevant stakeholder groups, set out in writing and communicated transparently.
- ***Implementation***. The implementation of an institutional digitalisation and QA strategy should be carried out on a decentralised basis, by the directly responsible unit(s). The institution should support the QA and development processes centrally, through professional services and the provision of the necessary resources, and should pay specific attention to supporting students and instructors with the effective use of digital technologies for pedagogical purposes.

- ***Monitoring***. Institutional strategies and implementation processes should be embedded in a system of monitoring and feedback loops to assess the performance and quality of digital higher education (and QA processes) on an ongoing basis. Monitoring practices should seek to collect data and feedback from stakeholder groups across the institution through a variety of both qualitative and quantitative data collection mechanisms (e.g. interviews, surveys, learning analytics data), as well as specific internal or external reviews and/or benchmarking exercises of digital teaching and learning practice.

Table 1.2 presents the analytical framework guiding the review of institutional practices for the QA of digital higher education in Hungary.

Table 1.2. Analytical framework for the analysis of institutional quality management practices for digital higher education in Hungary

Areas	Research questions
1. Institutional quality management *in general*	
Quality culture	How are institutions in Hungary structured, managed and governed internally?
	What is the impact of the internal structure, governance and management practices of Hungarian HEIs on the development of quality cultures in general?
2. Institutional quality management of *digital higher education*	
Planning and investment	How are Hungarian higher education institutions embedding digitalisation in their institutional vision, mission and strategy?
	How are Hungarian higher education institutions strengthening the quality of their digital education infrastructure to support digital teaching and learning?
Implementation	How are Hungarian higher education institutions supporting and incentivising staff professional development for digital instruction?
	How are Hungarian higher education institutions preparing and supporting students for digital learning?
Monitoring	How are Hungarian higher education institutions monitoring the quality of digital teaching and learning?
	How are Hungarian higher education institutions strengthening their feedback and monitoring practices (for example, through the use of digital technologies)?

Source: Adapted from Staring et al. (2022[2]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en,

Supporting the quality enhancement of digital teaching and learning

The third research question focused on analysing Hungary's wider institutional support landscape for the quality enhancement of digital higher education. Building on the four "phases of action" identified as part of the OECD project "Supporting the Digital Transformation of Higher Education in Hungary" (i.e. setting the direction, building the foundation, developing the processes, and delivering benefits to users) (OECD, 2021, p. 48[1]) and on a mapping of institutional supports for digital higher education across the OECD in Staring et al. (2022, pp. 53-55[2]), this was done by focusing on three key questions:

- ***Who* are the actors supporting the quality enhancement of (digital) teaching and learning in Hungary**? The government and other publicly funded national bodies have a key role to play in supporting institutions to enhance the quality of their digital practices and develop sound internal QA systems. In addition to this, a wide range of sectoral stakeholder associations (can) also play a role in supporting the quality enhancement of digital higher education, including student and staff associations, and national academies of science.
- ***How* are different actors in Hungary supporting the quality enhancement of digital teaching and learning in higher education?** Institutional support can be provided through four main policy levers or mechanisms: strategy setting and guidance; financial support and incentives; stakeholder capacity building and collaboration; and national performance monitoring and evidence collection.

- ***What* are the key areas in which HEIs require support?** Four main areas of institutional support can be targeted through these mechanisms: the development of institutional policies for the QA of digital higher education; the development and effective use of digital resources; the professional development of instructors; and the development of institutional performance monitoring processes.

Table 1.3 presents the analytical framework guiding the review of Hungary's institutional support landscape for digital higher education.

Table 1.3. Analytical framework for the analysis of Hungary's institutional support landscape for digital higher education

Areas	Research questions
1. *Who* are the actors supporting the quality enhancement of (digital) teaching and learning in Hungary?	
Government and other publicly funded bodies	How are the government and other publicly funded bodies in Hungary supporting the quality enhancement of digital higher education?
Sectoral stakeholder organisations	How are sectoral stakeholder organisations and associations, including higher education institutions themselves, supporting the quality enhancement of digital higher education in Hungary?
2. *How* are different actors in Hungary supporting the quality enhancement of digital teaching and learning in higher education?	
Strategy setting and guidance	How is Hungary supporting the quality enhancement of digital higher education through national strategy setting and guidance?
Financial supports	How is Hungary supporting institutions financially to develop digital higher education courses and programmes?
Capacity building	How is Hungary supporting the development of instructors and students' digital skills and competencies?
Performance monitoring	How is Hungary monitoring the performance of digital higher education nationally?
3. *What* are the key areas in which HEIs in Hungary require support to enhance the quality of their digital teaching and learning practices?	
Policies	What are the key challenges facing Hungarian HEIs in the development of institutional digitalisation policies and strategies for the QA of digital higher education?
Resources	What are the key challenges facing Hungarian HEIs in the development, maintenance and effective us of digital education technologies?
People	What are the key challenges facing institutions in the development of institutional supports and incentives for students and instructors to make effective use of digital technologies for pedagogical purposes?
Processes	What are the key challenges facing Hungarian HEIs in the development of performance monitoring and feedback processes for the QA of digital teaching and learning?

Source: Adapted from Staring et al. (2022[2]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en .

Figure 1.2. Research questions guiding the project

Regulation and external quality assurance of digital higher education		Institutional quality management of digital higher education		Supporting institutions to enhance the quality of digital higher education	
Regulatory framework	**External quality assurance**	**Institutional quality management in general**	**Institutional quality management of digital higher education**	**Institutional support landscape for digital higher education**	**Key challenges facing institutions to enhance digital education quality**
Institutional landscape: How is the institutional landscape in Hungary structured and governed, and how does this affect the development and quality of digital higher education? **Study formats:** How is higher education study organised and regulated, and how does this affect the development and quality of digital higher education?	**Quality assurance:** What are the formal quality assurance standards and procedures implemented by MAB, and how do these reflect considerations for digital education? **Quality enhancement:** How is MAB supporting the quality enhancement of digital higher education and institutional quality management practices?	**Institutional structure, governance and management:** How are Hungarian HEIs structured, governed and managed, and how does this impact the development of quality cultures in institutions?	**Planning and investment:** How are Hungarian HEIs funding and embedding digital education in their institutional strategies and quality assurance plans? **Implementation:** How are Hungarian HEIs implementing and supporting the quality assurance of digital teaching and learning? **Monitoring:** How are Hungarian HEIs monitoring the quality and performance of digital courses and programmes?	***Who* is supporting:** Who are the national level actors that (can) play a role in supporting Hungarian HEIs to enhance the quality of digital teaching and learning practices? ***How* is support provided:** How are Hungarian HEIs supported to develop their digital teaching and learning practices and internal quality management practices?	***What* (additional) support is needed:** What are the key challenges facing Hungarian HEIs in enhancing the quality of their digital teaching and learning practices, and institutional quality management practices?

Source: Based on a review of emerging quality standards, practices and supports for digital higher education in Staring et al. (2022[2]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Methodology

The project included two main activities undertaken between November 2021 and March 2023: a national and international review of policies and practices for ensuring quality digital higher education, and a wide range of stakeholder engagement activities (see Figure 1.3 overleaf).

- ***National and international policy and practice review***. The project collected and analysed evidence – through desk research and expert interviews – on policies and practices for the quality assurance of digital higher education in Hungary and internationally. The review of policies and practices in Hungary – carried out in collaboration with national experts – led to the preparation of an internal report *Analysis of the Hungarian Quality Assurance Landscape for Higher Education*, submitted to the project Steering Committee in July 2022. The international mapping of policies and practices across the OECD and European Higher Education Area (EHEA) – carried out in collaboration with international experts – led to the publication of an OECD Working Paper on *Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports* in November 2022 (Staring et al., 2022[2]). The findings included in both reports form the basis for the analysis, policy options and recommendations presented in this report.
- ***Stakeholder engagement activities***. As part of the project, the OECD review team organised a range of stakeholder engagement activities to involve policymakers, higher education stakeholder organisations, institutions, practitioners and students across the sector in a national dialogue reflecting on how Hungary's regulatory, quality assurance and institutional support frameworks for higher education could be revised to enhance the capacity of institutions and instructors to offer high-quality digital study programmes. As part of these activities, the OECD review team engaged more than 200 higher education stakeholders across Hungary. An overview of the stakeholder engagement activities is presented in Annex A.

1.4 Structure of the report

The report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 1** provides an introduction to the report.
- **Chapter 2** presents a review of Hungary's regulatory framework and external quality assurance system for higher education, and presents policy options and recommendations on how both can be revised to support a modernisation of Hungary's higher education system that embeds flexibility and digitalisation at the heard of its system.
- **Chapter 3** reviews institutional practices for the quality management of digital higher education in Hungary, including recommendations and policy options on how Hungary's existing accreditation processes can be revised to incentivise greater institutional responsibility for assuring the quality of (digital) course offers.
- **Chapter 4** analyses Hungary's institutional support landscape for digital higher education and proposes recommendations and policy options on how Hungary can support institutions in the quality enhancement of their digital teaching and learning practices.
- **Annex A** provides an overview of the stakeholder engagement activities carried out as part of the project, the research tools used and participants in each activity.
- **Annex B** presents an analysis of the assessment frameworks used by MAB for the accreditation of institutions, bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes.

Figure 1.3. Methodology guiding the project

National and international policy and practice review		Stakeholder engagement activities	
Review of policies and practices in Hungary	**Review of policies and practices across the OECD and EHEA**	**Individual and institutional stakeholder interviews**	**Peer learning events and activities**
National review: Analysis of the Hungarian Quality Assurance Landscape for Higher Education (January-June 2022)	**International review:** Mapping of International Standards, Practices and Supports for the Quality Assurance of Digital Higher Education (January-June 2022)	**Stakeholder interviews (online):** Interviews with Hungarian higher education stakeholder organisations and institutions (February 2022) **Institutional site visits (online):** Virtual site visits to six Hungarian HEIs (March 2022) **Stakeholder consultation (online):** Stakeholder consultation on draft policy options for Hungary to assure the quality of digital higher education (November 2022)	**Launch event (online):** Launch Event on "Supporting Quality Digital Higher Education In Hungary: Findings to Date and What's Next" (18 November 2021) **National roundtable (online):** National Roundtable on "Best Practices and New Policies for the Quality Assurance of Digital Higher Education in Hungary" (31 May 2022) **International conference (online):** Conference on "International Quality Assurance Standards, Practices and Supports for Digital Higher Education" (14 June 2022) **National roundtable (Budapest, Hungary):** National Roundtable on "Policy Options for Hungary to Assure the Quality of Digital Higher Education" (4 October 2022) **Final Conference (Györ, Hungary):** Final Conference on "Ensuring Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary" (29 March 2023)

Source: The authors, based on the Detailed Project Description (DPD) agreed between the European Commission's DG REFORM, KIM, MAB and the OECD.

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2 Regulation and external quality assurance of digital higher education

This project, led and implemented by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), was carried out with financial support provided by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM), and in close collaboration with the Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM) and the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB).

This chapter provides an analysis of Hungary's regulatory framework and external quality assurance system for higher education, and provides recommendations on how they can be modified to support the further development and quality enhancement of digital higher education.

2.1 Analysis of regulation and external quality assurance of digital higher education in Hungary

This section analyses Hungary's higher education regulation and external quality assurance (QA) system, and identifies two key barriers for the further development and quality of digital higher education.

Regulatory framework for digital higher education in Hungary

This section starts by describing Hungary's institutional landscape and recent legislative changes affecting the overall governance and funding structure of higher education institutions (HEIs). It then analyses the existing regulation on programme and study formats, and how this impact on the development of digital higher education, programme innovation and study flexibility.

Institutional landscape and recent legislative changes

The Hungarian higher education system is comprised of 64 accredited HEIs (Educational Authority, 2021[1]). Table 2.1 provides an overview of the number and different types of HEIs operating in the country, broken down by educational profile and type of provider. The h*igher education law distinguishes between three types of institutions:* universities (*egyetem*), universities of applied sciences (UAS) *(alkalmazott tudományok egyeteme)* and university colleges *(főiskola)*. HEIs also differ from each other depending on whether they are state-owned or non-state operated. The latter are private entities operated by churches, business organisations or public interest trust foundations (DSN/DHECC, 2020[2]).

Table 2.1. Number of accredited higher education institutions (HEIs) in Hungary by type of provider and educational profile (2022)

Type	University	UAS	College	Total
State-owned	5	0	1	**6**
Foundation	17	5	2	**24**
Private	1	4	3	**8**
Church-owned	6	1	19	**26**
Total	**29**	**10**	**25**	**64**

Source: Educational Authority (2021[1]) *Államilag elismert magyar felsőoktatási intézmények, Felsőoktatási Információs Rendszer [Hungarian higher education institutions recognised by the state]*, Felsőoktatási Információs Rendszer [Higher Education Information System], Budapest, https://firgraf.oh.gov.hu/tematikus-lista/magyar-felsooktatasi-intezmenyek/html/page/2/pageCount/50/orderBy/-/direction/ASC.

Minimum operating requirements for higher education institutions (HEIs)

Table 2.2 provides an overview of the minimum operating requirements for HEIs in Hungary, which include the minimum number of academic staff that should hold a doctoral qualification or above, and the minimum number of bachelor's and master's programmes to be offered for recognition as either a university, a UAS or a university college. Besides these minimum requirements, which take into account differences between institutions based on their educational profile, all HEIs in Hungary must be accredited by the Educational Authority (OH) at institution and programme level to be allowed to operate. HEIs in Hungary are not required to meet any specific criteria related to their capacity to offer flexible or digital study programmes, the only two exceptions to this rule being the requirement for libraries of public universities to "offer conventional and virtual learning environments" (Government of Hungary, 2011a[3]) and – since March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic – for all HEIs to have in place a virtual learning environment (VLE) or learning management system (LMS) that can support the flexible planning and organisation of student learning, the delivery of digital programmes, and the evaluation and recording of student learning.

Table 2.2. Minimum operating requirements for higher education institutions (HEIs) in Hungary

Standards	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution/Programme/ Course/Individual	Compulsory/ Optional
Part I: Minimum requirements for initial operating authorisation of institutions								
1. Minimum requirements for universities (*egyetem*)								
1.1 Min. eight bachelor's and six master's programmes	1	0	0	1	0	0	Programme	Compulsory
1.2 Min. 60% of teaching staff with academic qualification	1	0	0	1	0	0	Individual (academic staff)	Compulsory
1.3 Capacity to deliver some programmes in foreign languages	0	1	0	1	0	0	Individual (academic staff)	Compulsory
1.4 Has student research societies	0	1	0	1	0	0	Institution	Compulsory
TOTAL	**2**	**2**	**0**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**Mix**	**Compulsory**
2. Minimum requirements for universities of applied sciences (UAS) *(alkalmazott tudományok egyeteme)*								
2.1 Min. four bachelor's and two master's programmes	1	0	0	1	0	0	Programme	Compulsory
2.2 Min. two bachelor's programmes with dual training	1	0	0	1	0	0	Programme	Compulsory
2.3 Min. 45% of teaching staff with academic qualification	1	0	0	1	0	0	Individual (academic staff)	Compulsory
2.4 Capacity to deliver some programmes in foreign languages	0	1	0	1	0	0	Individual (academic staff)	Compulsory
2.5 Has student research societies	0	1	0	1	0	0	Institution	Compulsory
TOTAL	**3**	**2**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**Mix**	**Compulsory**
3. Minimum requirements for university colleges *(főiskola)*								
3.1 Min. 1/3rd of teaching staff with academic qualification	1	0	0	1	0	0	Individual (academic staff)	Compulsory
3.2 May have student research societies	0	1	0	1	0	0	Institution	Optional
TOTAL	**1**	**1**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**Focus on human resources**	**Mix**
Part II: Programme accreditation								
All programmes require accreditation	See relevant programme accreditation requirements.						Programme	Pass/fail

Source: Adapted from Government of Hungary (2011b[4]), *Áht. - 2011. évi CXCV. törvény az államháztartásról [Law on Public Finance - Collection of Legislation in Force]*, Government of Hungary, Budapest, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=a1100195.tv.

Organisation, management and funding of higher education institutions (HEIs)

Since 2011, the government has taken several steps to introduce a foundation management model of HEIs to ensure a more modern and competitive operation of HEIs that is adjusted to the needs of the modern economy (KIM, 2020[5]; Vida, 2021[6]). The stated rationale for the change also includes increasing HEIs' responsibility and accountability for assuring the quality of their teaching, learning and research activities, measured in terms of direct economic benefits.

Hungary's recent institutional landscape reform included the following three phases:

- ***Introduction of a dual management model in public institutions***. In 2014, Hungary introduced a "dual management" model in public HEIs to tackle the practice of HEIs appointing rectors with an outstanding academic track record, but limited managerial, organisational or financial skills or experience. As a result, each state-owned HEI in Hungary is now led by both a Rector and a Chancellor. The Rector chairs the Senate and is responsible for teaching and research matters whereas the Chancellor chairs the Consistory and oversees operational, financial and strategic matters. However, as the Chancellor, Rector and three members of the Consistory are directly appointed by the Ministry, this provides Hungarian government with a potentially high degree of influence over how teaching and learning takes place in public HEIs.
- ***Establishment of institutions as Public Trust Foundations***. Public Trust Foundations were introduced by the Ministry in 2018, starting with the "model change" of Corvinus University. At its core, the model change involves changing the maintenance and governance model of HEIs from a public status into a private charitable organisation. The public property of these HEIs (such as historical buildings) passes from public to foundation ownership. Permanently appointed employees also lose their civil service rights and benefits granted to them in the National Act on Civil Servants and State Employees (Government of Hungary, 1992[7]).
- ***Introduction of a performance-based funding model***. In 2021-22, Hungary introduced a 3-to-5-year performance-based financing system, using performance indicators agreed between the government and individual HEIs. The aim is that, by 2024-25, 50% of all funding of foundation institutions will be based on a set of nationally agreed key performance indicators (KPIs), many of which include a focus on the outcomes of HEIs' educational offer (see Table 2.3), to incentivise greater institutional attention to quality enhancement and labour market alignment.

Table 2.3. Draft indicators for institutional performance agreements

Areas	Indicators	Basic funding	Performance-based funding
1. Education	1.1 Number of students	✓	
	1.2 Completion rates 1.3 Drop-out rates 1.4 Graduate unemployment rates		✓
2. Research	2.1 Number of full-time research staff	✓	
	2.2 Research and development (R&D) grant revenue 2.3 Publication output 2.4 Revenue from corporate partnerships		✓
3. Infrastructure	3.1 Base (operational contribution)	✓	
	3.2 Investment rate 3.3 Capacity utilisation 3.4 User satisfaction		✓
4. Sectoral objectives	4.1 Internationalisation (number of foreign students, number of foreign language teachers, number of participants in mobility programmes)	✓	
	4.2 Talent management (number of participants and winners in the National Conference of Scientific Students (OTDK), number of students in colleges of applied sciences) 4.3 Sport activity (student activity) 4.4 Social inclusion (number of students with disabilities, number of students coming from areas with a high concentration of disadvantages, number of students with children)		✓

Source: Based on information provided to the OECD review team by the Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM).

Some higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team expressed concern that the introduction of a labour market and performance-oriented management and funding model would diminish the priority of academic excellence in higher education. Stakeholders also underlined that HEIs would require additional resources and support from the government to meet the additional quality expectations, and that the implementation and monitoring of performance indicators should accommodate the diversity of institutions, programmes, and modes of instruction (Vida, 2021[6]). For example, stakeholders felt that fully online programmes should not be assessed against the same performance criteria as in-person or hybrid study programmes, as evidence shows that there are higher risks of non-completion for students enrolled in fully online or distance learning programmes. As discussed in this section, adult learners are most likely to enrol in distance learning programmes, as this allows them to combine work and studies. These additional commitments, however, mean that they are at higher risk of dropping out than "regular" daytime students.

The wider impact of these legislative changes on the development and quality of HEIs' internal operations and the quality of teaching and learning is yet to be seen. Actors at government and institutional level have different views on the expected benefits and perceived risks associated with the model change process, with some strongly opposed to its implementation (Derényi, 2020[8]). Table 2.4 provides an overview of the expected benefits and risks perceived by governmental and institutional stakeholders.

Table 2.4. Overview of stakeholder views on expected benefits and perceived risks of model change reform

Actors	Expected benefits	Perceived risks
Government		
Ministry responsible for budget	• (Partial) replacement of public funding by private sources • More efficient and sound management	• Wasteful or impractical use of public resources
Ministry responsible for state wealth		• Loss of wealth
Ministry responsible for state management and institutional maintenance	• More flexible operation of HEIs • Increased quality in all three HE missions (i.e., teaching, research, engagement)	• Loss of control over operations • Loss of influence
Institutions		
Leadership	• Increased managerial autonomy • Reduced administrative burden • Simpler decision-making procedures • Opportunities for organisational development • Introduction of HR/performance management principles in HE management	• Maintaining (delegated) excessive influence (through excessive state control) • Financial uncertainty and vulnerability • Transformation of management • Loss of influence, due to transformation of institutional appointment and election processes
Academic staff	• Higher income • Less state control • Professional management • Less administration • Better services	• The prevalence of market logic above academic values • Loss of civil servant status (and related benefits) • Putting the performance principle first • Excessive leadership

Source: Adapted from Derényi (2020[8]). "Az intézményi működési keretek átalakítási kísérletei a magyar felsőoktatásban" [Attempts to transform the institutional operating framework in Hungarian higher education], *Opus et Educatio 29 (1)*, pp. 64-77, http://epa.oszk.hu/01500/01551/00111/pdf/EPA01551_educatio_2020_01_064-077.pdf.

Study formats in Hungarian higher education

Hungary has adopted the *three-cycle bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree structure, thereby following the official three-cycle qualifications framework in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)* (EHEA, 2005[9]). The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is used to define the average number of study hours and semesters for each level of education, with one ECTS credit equalling an average of 30 hours of study. In addition, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH, 2011[10]) indicates the level to which each programme corresponds using the International Standard of Classification of Education (ISCED). In addition to bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes, HEIs in can offer three other types of programmes: higher vocational education and training (VET) programmes, single-cycle long programmes and postgraduate specialisation programmes (see Table 2.5).

Higher VET programmes serve primarily as a bridge between secondary and tertiary education and are a rather recent initiative in the Hungarian higher education system, the first of these programmes being launched in 2013. Most higher VET programmes are four semesters in length and worth 120 ECTS credits. Upon completion, students receive a certificate that can provide access to bachelor's programmes. *Single-cycle long programmes* are different to the three-cycle structure and have kept their original (pre-Bologna) structure. They are linked to, and typically regulated by, the respective profession such as medicine, dentistry, forestry or law. Upon completing these programmes, students receive a master's degree. Professional specialisation programmes do not lead to a higher-level qualification. They are aimed at training the workforce in a specific professional field after having completed higher education degree.

Table 2.5. Degree structure in Hungarian higher education

Programme type	ECTS credits	Semesters	Student working hours	ISCED level	Certificate or qualification
1. Bologna programme structure					
Bachelor's	180-240	6-8	5 400-7 200	6	Bachelor's degree
Master's	60-120	2-4	1 800-3 600	7	Master's degree
Doctoral	240	8	7 200	8	Doctoral degree
2. Other programme types					
Higher VET	(60-)120	(2-)4	3 600	5	Certificate of completion
Single-cycle long	300-360	10-12	9 000-9 180	7	Master's degree
Postgraduate specialisation	60-120	2-4	1 800-3 600	6-7	Specialist qualification

Sources: Government of Hungary (2011a[3]), *Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education*, Government of Hungary, Budapest, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1100204.TV; KSH (2011[10]), *Az oktatási programok egységes nemzetközi osztályozási rendszere [A uniform international classification system for educational programmes]*, KSH, Budapest, https://www.ksh.hu/docs/osztalyozasok/isced/isced_2011_tartalom.pdf.

Regulation on the study format of higher education programmes

Within the overarching three-cycle Bologna structure, higher education law in Hungary strictly regulates the study formats that HEIs may use to offer degree programmes and courses. According to Article 17 of the National Act on Higher Education (Government of Hungary, 2011a[3]), HEIs can offer study programmes as full-time, part-time or distance learning programmes according to the provisions of the training and outcome requirements. Each of these has strict requirements on the minimum/maximum number of contact hours per semester (*study intensity*) as well as when (i.e. evening/daytime, weekdays/weekend) and how (i.e. online/in-person) instruction is to be delivered (*study mode*). The definition of distance learning and contact hours in Hungarian higher education law is presented in Box 2.1. An overview of the requirements for the delivery of instruction is included in Table 2.6.

Box 2.1. Definition of distance learning and contact hour in Hungarian higher education law

In Hungarian higher education law, distance learning and a contact hour are defined as follows:

- ***Distance learning*** is defined as "a form of training in which the theoretical training knowledge is taught within a digital curriculum, and in co-operation of the teacher and the student in a closed distance virtual learning environment or learning management system (VLE/LMS) via the internal IT network of the higher education institution (internet, intranet). Within this VLE/LMS, the instructor, the computer and the IT network, as well as the VLE/LMS and the study system, are the common means of communication between the education organiser and the student or person participating in the training".
- ***One contact hour*** is defined as "a session (lecture, seminar, practice session, consultation) with a duration of not less than 45 and not more than 60 minutes, where the personal contribution of a lecturer or professor is needed for the fulfilment of the academic requirements laid down in the curriculum".

Source: Government of Hungary (2011a[3]), *Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education*, Government of Hungary, Budapest, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1100204.TV.

Several stakeholders from HEIs interviewed by the OECD review team highlighted that under current study format rules, HEIs are not authorised to offer hybrid study programmes. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to case-by-case derogations that have permitted HEIs to offer "regular" programmes as fully online and hybrid study programmes, and several HEIs are continuing to do so, albeit without legal background. The current rules reduce the flexibility for learners to organise their studies in line with their individual needs and interests (Tolnai, 2021[11]). However, in the case of postgraduate training programmes, HEIs only need to register their programmes with the OH and are not required to go through *ex ante* programme accreditation.

Table 2.6. Overview of study formats in Hungarian higher education

Study format		Requirements
Full-time programme (*intensity*)	**Regular study programme (*mode*)**	Contact hours for full-time and regular study programmes should be organised on weekdays, during the daytime, and have a minimum of 200 contact hours per semester. If consent from the student union has been obtained, the institution can derogate from the minimum number of contact hours required.
	Dual study programme (*mode*)	The number of contact hours for full-time dual study programmes can be more freely decided by the institution, in consultation with the employer. Students should spend at least 22-24 weeks per year carrying out practical training in a company.
Part-time programme (*intensity*)	**Evening study programme (*mode*)**	Contact hours for part-time evening study programmes should be at least 30% and at most 50% of the contact hours of full-time training programmes. Contact hours should be organised after 4PM on weekdays or during weekends (note: for postgraduate specialisation programmes, the minimum number of contact hours is 20% of the contact hours of full-time training programmes).
	Correspondence study programme (*mode*)	Contact hours for part-time correspondence study programmes should be at least 30% and at most 50% of the contact hours of full-time study programmes. Contact hours should be organised in blocks, often every two weeks (or less frequently) on weekdays or during weekends, and distance learning delivery methods are used for the rest of the programme (note: for postgraduate specialisation programmes, the minimum number of contact hours is 20% of the contact hours of full-time training programmes).
Distance programme (*mode and intensity*)		Contact hours for distance study programmes should be less than 30% of the contact hours of full-time training programmes and should be offered through the use of "ICT-based teaching materials, special teaching and learning methods, and digital learning materials, based on an interactive teacher-student relationship and independent student work".

Source: Government of Hungary (2011a[3]), *Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education*, Government of Hungary, Budapest, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1100204.TV.

Hungarian law[1] also distinguishes between highly theory-oriented, theory-oriented, balanced, practice-oriented and highly practice-oriented programmes (Government of Hungary, 2011a[3]). According to the administrative data system for higher education (Educational Authority, 2022a[12]), in 2021-22 there were 515 different programmes in Hungarian higher education (excluding PhD programmes and postgraduate specialisation programmes). Of these 515 programmes, 4 (1%) were highly theory-oriented, 80 (16%) theory-oriented, 264 (51%) balanced, 134 (26%) practice-oriented and 33 (6%) highly practice-oriented. In practice, however, teaching in Hungarian higher education is primarily lecture-based. According to a recent study comparing the teaching approaches of Hungarian and Finnish academics, the least characteristic teaching approach of Hungarian lecturers was practice-based teaching, focused on combining theory and practice and connecting the content of a course to practical exercises (Kálmán, Tynjälä and Skaniakos, 2020[13]). These results are confirmed by a study commissioned by the European Commission. Around 60% of higher education leaders interviewed as part of this study stated that lecture-based teaching is the most common teaching method in their institutions (OECD/EU, 2017[14]).

Regulation on the content of higher education programmes

Regulation stipulates that HEIs can only launch new programmes in registered fields of study. Applications for new fields of study must be evaluated by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) as an expert body and subsequently approved by the OH and the Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM). Table 2.7 provides an overview of the criteria applied by MAB in the evaluation of applications for the establishment of programmes in new fields of study. Applications consist of two parts: part one asks institutions to justify the establishment of a programme in a new field of study in the context of the existing higher education offer in Hungary and internationally; part two relates to the new field of study's proposed education plan and learning outcomes. Approved applications are included in the official Higher Education Qualifications Register.[2]

Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team highlighted that the Higher Education Qualifications Register is rarely reviewed and is therefore not aligned with the latest developments in their research field or the labour market, which hinders programme innovation. In practice, however, as there is no *ex post* programme review procedure in Hungary, institutions and instructors are able to deviate from the national content requirements once a programme has been launched. While some instructors saw this flexibility as beneficial, as it allows them to ensure the relevance of the content delivered to their students, others felt that the lack of a regular programme review procedure leads to disparities in the quality of teaching and learning across higher education in Hungary, and does not sufficiently incentivise institutions or instructors to take responsibility for assuring the quality of instruction and student learning outcomes.

Regulation on student admission, course selection and progression, and the recognition of courses and degree programmes

The enrolment capacity of HEIs is set by the OH based upon an assessment of HEIs' instructional sites, computers, library spaces, and student accommodation, as well as their student and career counselling services and available sports facilities (Educational Authority, 2022b[15]). Based on this assessment, the institutions themselves are responsible for defining the maximum student numbers and admission criteria for each programme. Admission criteria typically include applicants' previous academic performance, the student capacity of the selected programme and the order of preference indicated by applicants. The OH's higher education admissions and information website Felvi.hu provides information for applicants on the maximum student capacity and admission requirements for each programme (Educational Authority, n.d.[16]).

Table 2.7. Requirements for the establishment of programmes in new study fields

Requirements	Evidence		Focus					Number of indicators
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution/ Programme/ Course/ Individual	
Part I: Sufficiently compelling reasons for establishing a new discipline								
1. Difference from other existing subjects	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Programme content	1
2. Probability of equivalence with courses taught abroad	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A		1
3. (In the case of teacher training) Proof that the subject and the knowledge provided fit with primary and secondary education	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A		1
TOTAL Part I	**0**	**3**	**0**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**Programme**	**3**
Part II: The discipline's planned education requirements and outcomes								
1. The name of the degree and the qualification(s) obtained should be consistent	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Programme content and organisation	1
2. The qualification obtained through the course (specialisation) is in line with the required competence elements	0	1	0	0	0	1		1
3. The competencies students are required to develop and the courses/modules students are required to take	0	1	0	0	0	1		1
4. The proposed entry requirements for students	0	1	0	1	0	0		1
5. The indicated orientation of the course must be consistent with the professional content of the training provided	0	1	0	1	0	0		1
6. The planned study time for the acquisition of the indicated professional contents and competencies should be appropriate	0	1	0	1	0	0		1
7. The course fits into the indicated field of training	0	1	0	1	0	0		1
TOTAL PART II	**0**	**6**	**0**	**4**	**0**	**2**	**Programme**	**7**

Source: MAB (2017c[17]), *A SZAKMAI BÍRÁLATI SZEMPONTJAI (SzBSz) mesterképzési szak létesítésének, képzési és kimeneti követelményeinek (KKK) véleményezésében [Sectoral Judgment Points (SJP) on the establishment, training and outcome requirements) of a master's degree],* Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/MA_L_b%C3%ADr%C3%A1lati-szempontok.pdf.

Upon enrolling, students must choose one of the five legally authorised study formats. Based on the selected study mode, HEIs provide students with a recommended curriculum from which they can create their own study plans. For full-time study programmes, the curricula proposed by HEIs typically recommend 30 ECTS credits per semester. To retain their scholarship, state-funded students must have completed at least 18 ECTS credits in each of their previous two semesters and obtain a minimum weighted grade point average (GPA).[3] The GPA requirement differs depending on the discipline (see Table 2.8). When composing their individual curricula, students can typically select courses from other study programmes at their home institution or at another HEI in Hungary (as guest students), provided that these courses relate to their field of study.

In principle, it is not possible for students to select courses from programmes taking place at different times (e.g. selecting courses from evening study programmes as a full-time daytime student), or to follow a course organised in a different study mode (e.g. choosing courses from a distance learning programme as a full-time student), as the programme intensity and mode of study is strictly regulated at national level, and often also at institutional level. In practice, however, higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team mentioned that students and institutions are trying to find "loopholes" in the legislation to give students more flexibility. For example, in some institutions it is possible for students to enrol for the same programme twice (e.g. as a full-time day student and as a part-time evening student), and submit a credit transfer form to have courses completed in the part-time evening programme recognised for the completion of their full-time day programme (or vice-versa).

Table 2.8. Minimum weighted GPA requirements for state scholarship holders

Discipline	Minimum weighted GPA required (maximum = 5)	Discipline	Minimum weighted GPA required (maximum is 5)
Agricultural Sciences	3	Arts	3.5
Arts and Humanities	3.5	Art Education	3.5
Economic Sciences	3	Health Sciences	3
Computer Science and Information Technology	3	Teacher Training	3.5
Legal Sciences	3	Sports Sciences	3.5
Public Administration, Law Enforcement and Military Sciences	3	Social Sciences	3.5
Technology	3	Natural Sciences	3

Source: Adapted from Government of Hungary (2015[18]), 87/*2015. (IV. 9.) Korm. rendelet a nemzeti felsőoktatásról szóló 2011. évi CCIV. törvény egyes rendelkezéseinek végrehajtásáról [Government Decree on the implementation of certain provisions of Act CCIV of 2011 on National Act on Higher Education]*, Government of Hungary, Budapest, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=a1500087.kor.

For the recognition of courses and degree programmes completed by students at other institutions, higher education law recommends that HEIs verify a 75% match in student learning outcomes (Government of Hungary, 2011a[3]). This assessment is typically carried out by an institutional Credit Transfer Committee, which is also responsible for the recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning, as well as work experience. Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team noted that staff working in such committees typically focus on comparing the content of courses rather than students' learning outcomes, for which evidence is often lacking. Credit Transfer Committees often do not have sufficient information on courses and programmes offered at other institutions, as not all HEIs in Hungary publish regular and up-to-date information on the content and learning outcomes of their study programmes online. This often leads to the non-recognition of courses or full degrees that have been successfully completed by students at other institutions, and students having to take up additional courses at their home institution

to replace non-recognised courses. This significantly increases their study load for some students, which negatively impacts their higher education experience, and increases the risk of drop-out.

Finally, higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team noted that a major barrier to the further development and internationalisation of higher education in Hungary is that the law still prescribes paper-based administration for several procedures. For example, Government Decree 87/2015 (IV. 9.) specifies that "enrolment can be initiated by filling in and signing the enrolment form", and that diplomas can only be awarded on paper. Article 39/A states that non-Hungarian nationality students can start their studies in distance learning format by sending their enrolment form electronically to the institution (Government of Hungary, 2015[18]). Article 12 (5) of Government Decree 423/2012 (XII. 29.) specifies that students are required to present original, paper-based documents upon enrolment, prior to starting their degree. By contrast, distance learning and correspondence students are given the flexibility to present these documents in person only when they arrive at the institution for their first lecture or consultation (Government of Hungary, 2011a[3]).

The higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team shared the following reflections related to the existing regulations on student admission and enrolment, course selection and progression, and the recognition of courses and degrees:

- ***Regulation on student admission and enrolment***. Higher education stakeholders felt the current student admission and selection criteria are too strict, and have discouraged student applications and enrolments, especially among socio-economically disadvantaged groups. They also felt that the practice of regulating the maximum student capacity of HEIs based on their physical infrastructure, staff and available support services might need to be revised to take into account the specific types of digital equipment and supports needed to ensure quality and inclusive teaching and learning in fully online and hybrid study programmes.
- ***Regulation on course selection and progression***. Higher education stakeholders pointed out that the current regulation on course selection and progression limits students' flexibility to choose what, when (e.g. daytime, evening) and from where (e.g. online, in person) to study. Making course and programme selection requirements more flexible and supporting institutions to develop hybrid flexible or "hy-flex" programmes[4] were mentioned as options that could help Hungary move towards a more student-centred, modern, flexible and inclusive higher education system.
- ***Regulation on the recognition of courses and degree programmes***. Stakeholders highlighted the need to support and monitor the application of the learning outcomes approach by recognition officers, as well as the need for greater flexibility in the application of recognition procedures by institutions to expand (virtual) student mobility and encourage students to explore courses from other institutions and disciplines, thereby promoting inter-disciplinary teaching and learning approaches, and inter-institutional co-operation, both nationally and internationally. They also highlighted the importance of ensuring that all institutions publish reliable and up-to-date information on their courses online, including details on the study materials, teaching methods and assessment practices used to develop student learning outcomes, to facilitate the work of recognition officers. In this context, the use of digitalisation (e.g. block-chain technology) for the reliable and secure exchange of student and course information was highlighted as having the potential to transform the quality, fairness and efficiency of recognition practices.

Impact of regulation on the development and quality of digital higher education

The introduction of a state of "epidemiological preparedness" (Government of Hungary, 2011a[3]) by KIM in response to the COVID-19 pandemic prompted many HEIs to rapidly develop fully online and hybrid study programmes, outside of the existing regulation on study formats, and for public authorities to grant exceptional approval – derogations – to authorise their initiatives (see Table 2.9).

While some form of digital education is now offered across all Hungarian HEIs, it is difficult to reliably identify the exact number of fully online and hybrid study programmes currently on offer in Hungary, because national-level data collection by the OH is still based on the legal categories of full-time, part-time and distance learning (Educational Authority, 2019[19]), meaning only distance learning programmes delivered in their traditional form can be counted. In September 2021, 45 distance learning programmes were on offer at nine institutions.[5] As the total number of programmes offered in Hungary that year was 11 246, officially accredited distance learning programmes represented only a very small proportion (0.004%) of the higher education offer in Hungary (Educational Authority, 2021[20]).

Table 2.9. Examples of derogation from study format requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic

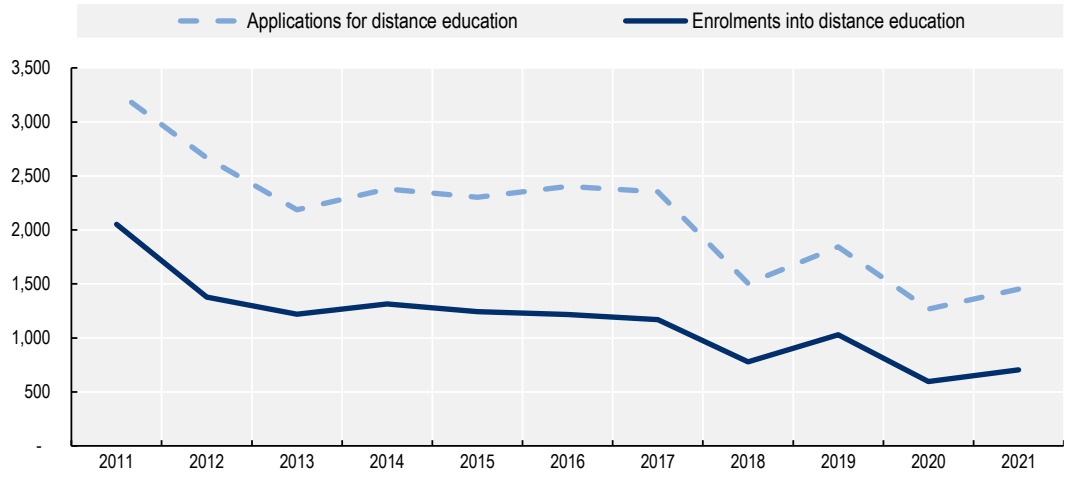
Institution	Derogation
Examples of derogation in March 2021	
Corvinus University of Budapest (BCE)	• 2020-21 spring semester commenced in fully online study format • Foreign students unable to enter Hungary allowed to complete the entire semester online
University of Public Service (NKE)	• 2020-21 spring semester commenced in fully online study format • Some practical seminars and regular surveys of full-time students at the Faculty of Military Science and Army Training and the Faculty of Law Enforcement held in person, with permission of the provider
Semmelweis University (SE)	• 2020-21 spring semester commenced in hybrid study format • Theory-based lectures continued online, but practical seminars held in person
Budapest Business School (BGE)	• 2020-21 spring semester commenced in fully online study format • Majority of courses held online, but in exceptional cases some practical seminars held in person • Rules on internships treated more flexibly, for example by not expecting close professional coherence between theoretical training and internship
Széchenyi István University (SZE)	• 2020-21 spring semester commenced in fully online study format, except for music education • Students allowed on campus to sit final exams, for consultations on research or doctoral dissertations, to participate in internships, research projects or other complex exams/projects
Examples of derogation in November 2021	
Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)	• Different derogations allowed/implemented for the 2021-22 academic year, depending on Faculty: ○ in the Faculty of Humanities, theory-based lectures held online, practical seminars held in person ○ in the Faculty of Law, except for final exam, all oral and written examinations held online
Budapest Metropolitan University (METU)	• Switched to fully online education, except for more practical seminars or (individual) use of laboratories, studies, IT rooms or special equipment by students/staff at the university, which could be used by a limited number of students after pre-registration • Students not required to attend exams in person
Károli Gáspár University (KRE)	• Consultations, lectures and practical seminars moved primarily online for all correspondence training. In-person classes only held with special permission of the Dean, and only if not possible to organise an online seminar or lecture in a particular subject

Source: Based on a desk-based review of institutional websites and stakeholder interviews.

Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team indicated that one of the main reasons for the low number of officially accredited distance learning programmes in Hungary may be the fact that the public authorities view “full-time daytime study” as the preferred mode of study. Another reason could be the strict requirements for launching programmes in distance learning format, which are discussed further in this section. Figure 2.1 shows that, between 2011 and 2020, the total number of applicants and enrolment in distance learning programmes dropped from 2 219 (applicants) and 1 202 (enrolments) in 2011 to 653 (applications) and 251 (enrolments) in 2020. In 2021, however, student demand for distance

learning programmes slightly increased again to 1 055 (applications) and 452 (enrolments), perhaps as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 2.1. Applicants and enrolments in distance learning programmes between 2011 and 2021



Source: FELVI (2021[20]), *Statistics from the past years of applications and acceptance (2001-2021)*, Educational Authority (OH), Budapest, https://www.felvi.hu/felveteli/ponthatarok_statisztikak/elmult_evek/!ElmultEvek/index.php/elmult_evek_statisztikai/munkarendenkent.

StatLink https://stat.link/ixaj2u

Another factor contributing to the low number of officially accredited distance learning programmes in Hungary may be the longstanding status of regular full-time programmes, which have higher completion rates. Across all levels of education, evidence shows that distance learning students are at higher risk of dropping out than students enrolled in full-time, correspondence or evening education.[6] Table 2.10 shows that in 2011-12, 54.3% of bachelor's students enrolled in a distance learning programme had dropped out, compared to 31.5% of full-time students. Moreover, evidence shows that students from a lower socio-economic background, students from rural areas and adult learners are at higher risk of dropping out than younger students from a more socio-economically advantaged and urban background. However, as adult learners are most likely to enrol in distance learning, evening or correspondence programmes, which allow them to combine work and studies, much of the observed difference in drop-out rates might be the result of student characteristics, rather than study modes (Vida, 2021[6]).

All stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team highlighted the need to expand and increase the quality of digital higher education in Hungary as a key priority for the future, especially to tackle major challenges related to demographics and skills. Digital higher education can play a role in upskilling and reskilling the active workforce. This is important, as studies show a low uptake of lifelong learning among the active labour force in Hungary. For example, in 2019 only 5.8% of Hungarian adults were participating in formal education or training courses, which was well below the EU average of 10.8% (European Commission, 2020[21]). Digital higher education can also be an important lever to increase tertiary education participation and attainment rates, especially among students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and international students. Retaining students after they graduate, however, is a wider systemic challenge facing Hungary that goes beyond higher education policy alone. Hungary is one of the few countries across the OECD where those with high levels of educational attainment are more likely to emigrate than those with lower levels of educational attainment (European Commission, 2020[21]), (Hárs, 2019[22]). A recent report by the Hungarian State Audit office noted that up to 14% of students in tertiary education hope that their degree will allow them to gain employment abroad (Vida, 2021[6]).

Table 2.10. Drop-out rates by level and programme type

Level and programme type	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Bachelor's programmes			
Daytime	34.9%	33.4%	31.6%
Correspondence	47.6%	46.5%	45.9%
Distance learning	55.4%	55.3%	54.3%
Evening	54%	51.8%	51.9%
Master's programmes			
Daytime	13.3%	13.6%	14.4%
Correspondence	28.2%	30.5%	26.9%
Distance learning[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
Evening	30.4%	43.8%	43.3%
Single-cycle			
Daytime	23.8%	22.4%	21.8%
Correspondence	60.1%	60.9%	54.4%
Distance[2]	N/A	N/A	N/A
Evening[3]	N/A	N/A	N/A

Sources: Demcsákné Ódor and Huszárik (2020[23]), Lemorzsolódási vizsgálatok a felsőoktatásban: Összefoglaló tanulmány [Attrition studies in higher education: a synthesis study], Educational Authority (OH), Budapest, https://www.oktatas.hu/pub_bin/dload/felsooktatas/projektek/fir/EFOP345_FIR_LEMORZSOLODAS_VIZSGALAT_tanulmany.pdf; Vida, C. (2021[6]), *Elemzés: Felsőoktatás a változások tükrében – verseny, minőség, teljesítmény (Analysis: Higher education in the face of change - competition, quality, performance)*, Állami Számvevőszék, Budapest, https://www.asz.hu/storage/files/files/elemzesek/2021/felsooktatas_valtozasok_tukreben_20210406.pdf.

External quality assurance of digital higher education in Hungary

This section starts by describing the overall structure and governance of Hungary's external QA system for higher education. It then focuses more specifically on the role and activities carried out by MAB as the independent expert body tasked with ensuring the quality of teaching, learning, research and artistic activities in Hungarian higher education, and the extent to which the standards and procedures implemented by MAB reflect specific considerations for digital education. First, recent (international) developments driving MAB's procedures are reviewed. Next, as per the analytical framework presented in Table 1.1 (Chapter 1), this section describes and analyses how MAB ensures the quality of (digital) higher education in Hungary through both formal quality assurance and institutional quality enhancement.

The review of standards and indicators as part of MAB's formal quality assurance procedures is carried out as follows:

- ***Number of indicators***. For each procedure, the total number of indicators for which institutions are required to provide evidence is set out.
- ***Level and focus of indicators***. For each indicator, an assessment is made as to whether it focuses on requirements at the institution, programme, course, or individual student/instructor level, as well as whether it focusses on the inputs, processes or outputs of education, and includes any specific considerations or requirements for digital education.
- ***Evidence***. For each indicator, an assessment is made as to whether it requires HEIs to provide quantitative or qualitative evidence, or a mix of both.

[1] No distance learning master's programmes were offered during the period reviewed in the study.

[2] No distance learning single-cycle programmes were offered during the period reviewed in the study.

[3] No evening single-cycle programmes were offered during the period reviewed in the study.

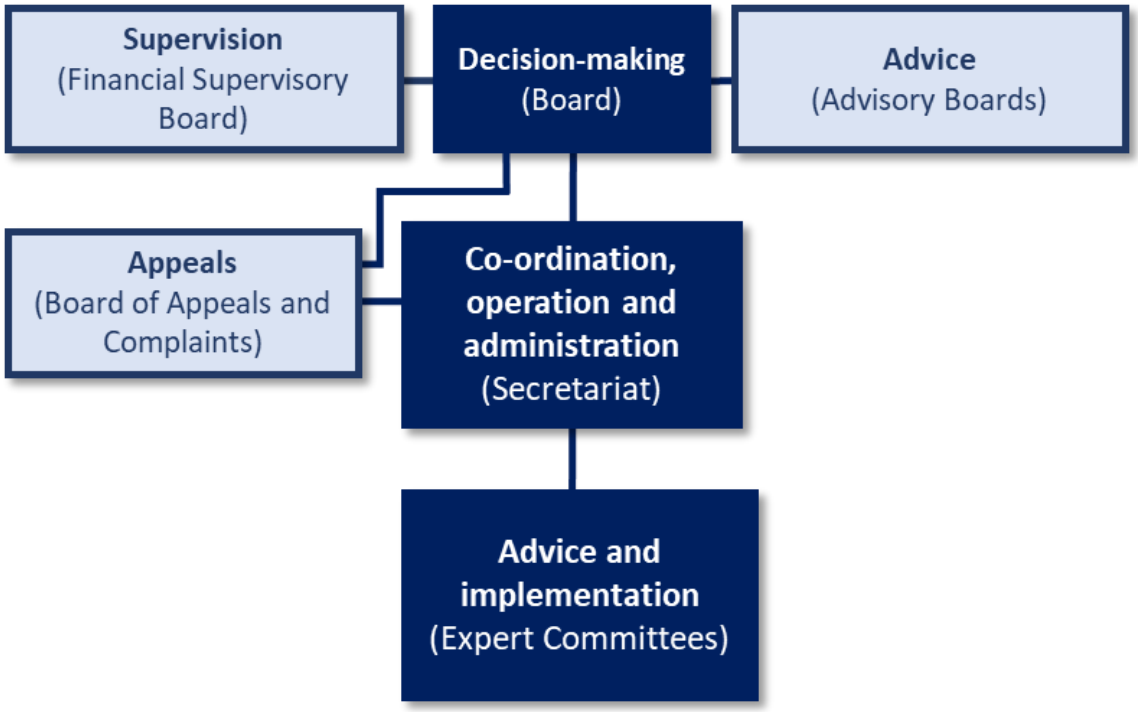
Structure and governance of external quality assurance

A report published by the OH on the Hungarian Qualifications Framework states that a "multi-level and multifunctional accreditation system is operated in Hungarian higher education linked with licensing procedures" (Szlamka, 2015, p. 5[24]). This means that the external QA of higher education teaching, learning, research and artistic activities in Hungary is ensured through inter-related processes of regulation (set by the Minister responsible for higher education), evaluation (carried out by MAB, based on the quality standards embedded in the regulation) and licensing (granted by the OH, based on MAB expert reports):

- ***Evaluation***. MAB is responsible for carrying out *ex ante* evaluations of applications for the establishment of new HEIs, higher VET, bachelor's and master's programmes, as well as the establishment of foreign HEIs and new doctoral schools at universities. It also carries out *ex pos*t reviews of the operations of HEIs and doctoral schools in five-year cycles. In addition to this, with the involvement of Hungarian and international reviewers, MAB evaluates the educational and scientific/artistic performance of applicants for university professor positions, based on specific and publicly available criteria. MAB carries out its evaluations following a formal request from the OH and, based upon the results of its reviews, develops and submits reports to the OH.
- ***Regulation***. KIM is the authority with "second instance competence" (*appellate forum*)[7] for the external QA of higher education. In addition to being responsible for setting the overall regulation governing the overall structure and operations of HEIs, the Minister responsible for higher education also acts as a partner of the OH (or the HEI, in the case of voluntary requests from institutions to have specific programmes evaluated) in requesting MAB to carry out evaluations of specific training programmes, institutions or university professors, and to submit an expert report to the OH.
- ***Licensing***. The OH is "the body designated by the Government for the performance of certain tasks falling within the sphere of the public education responsibilities of the Minister" (Government of Hungary, 2011a[3]). This means it is a body operating at arms' length of the Ministry to support the implementation of all regulation pertaining to education. With regards to the external QA of higher education, the OH is the institution with "first instance competence"[8] to license, register and grant permissions to HEIs and their programmes to operate by "issuing formal approval (in the form of regulatory acts) for the operation of higher education institutions and individual […] programmes" (Government of Hungary, 2011a[3]). The OH orders MAB to carry out institutional or programme evaluations, bases its decisions on their expert reports, and also makes the final decision on university professor applications. If requested by the Minister, the OH can participate in inspections carried out by MAB.

MAB was established in 1993 together with the country's first higher education law. Figure 2.2 provides an overview of MAB's organisational structure. MAB is an independent higher education QA agency, participating as an expert body in assuring and reviewing the quality of HEIs and their operations. KIM exercises legal supervision over MAB's activities and provides budget support for the performance of its public tasks. MAB's budget is under the control of the agency's President, who is supported by the Board of Financial Supervisors and appointed directly by the Ministry. The bulk of the organisation's expenditure goes is on personnel (wages of Board members and MAB staff, including site visit teams), followed by social contributions and material expenses (MAB, 2018[25]). MAB performs its role as the provider of expert evaluations through its Discipline-Specific Expert Committees, as well as several additional Advisory and Ad Hoc Expert Committees. In addition to carrying out reviews of institutions, the senior academic experts (both Hungarian and foreign experts) included in these committees are responsible for reviewing the quality of study programmes and university professor applications, as well as advising MAB on the preparation and implementation of QA decisions and reforms.

Figure 2.2. MAB organisational structure



Source: Adapted from MAB (2022a[26]), *A MAB [About MAB]*, https://www.mab.hu/mab/.

International drivers for external quality assurance in Hungary

In recent years, MAB has taken several steps to increase its compliance with international standards and practices for the external QA of higher education, and succeeded in raising the international profile and engagement of Hungarian higher education. MAB has embedded the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) (ENQA, 2015[27]) in its accreditation procedures as well as increased compliance with other international standards and practices, such as the standards of the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) (MAB, 2021b[28]). It is also active in various international networks and projects related to higher education QA, and there are plans to grant accredited institutions self-accreditation status to independently launch new master's level programmes.

Increasing compliance with the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG)

The use of the ESG is a key requirement for membership in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). MAB has therefore taken several steps to embed the ESG across its accreditation procedures, starting in 2017 with the introduction of the accreditation of institutions based on the ESG. Prior to this, there had been a five-yearly institutional accreditation procedure in Hungary, but this focused primarily on technical requirements, with limited attention to teaching and learning processes, outcomes and internal QA practices. In September 2019, MAB then introduced the accreditation of doctoral schools in five-year cycles based on the ESG. More recently, upon the request of KIM, MAB has started a project – in collaboration with the OH and the Hungarian Rectors' Conference (MRK) – aimed at reflecting on how to embed the ESG standards and principles in programme accreditation, as well as how to strengthen the capacity of HEIs to take responsibility and ownership for the quality enhancement of their (digital) teaching and learning offerings (see Box 2.2), as the ESG sate that "higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance" (ENQA, 2015, p. 8[27]).

Box 2.2. Modernisation of higher education and accreditation in Hungary

In April 2022, Hungary started a project on the modernisation of higher education and accreditation, funded by KIM and implemented in collaboration with the OH and MRK. Among other objectives, the project seeks to address longstanding challenges in Hungarian higher education and support the development of quality teaching and learning. Longstanding challenges in Hungary include:

- Institutions' and instructors' strong attachment to discipline-specific knowledge transfer
- Limited focus on transversal skills development, experimentation and innovation
- Limited labour market and societal relevance of higher education programmes.

In line with leading international practice across the OECD, options the project is exploring include:

- The introduction of a self-accreditation status for HEIs with demonstrated capacity to manage programmes of high quality
- The introduction of an *ex post* programme review procedure focused on the education and labour market outcomes of courses and programmes
- Simplification of the current two-stage *ex ante* programme accreditation procedure.

Source: Based on stakeholder interviews with MAB as well as (2022f[29]), "Why and how to change the program accreditation system in Hungary", *National Roundtable on Policy Options for Hungary to Assure the Quality of Digital Higher Education*, Presentation by Prof Dr Valéria Csépe on 4 October 2022, Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/en/publications/.

MAB has been an official member of ENQA since 2002 and has undergone regular external evaluations to ensure it complies with Parts 2 and 3 of the ESG. Following ENQA's latest external review of its activities, MAB received official re-confirmation of its membership on 13 September 2018. In its evaluation report (ENQA, 2015[27]), the ENQA panel found MAB to be fully compliant with nine of the ESG Part 2 and Part 3 standards, substantially compliant with four, and partially compliant with one. In preparation for the next ENQA review (in 2023), MAB was asked to submit a follow-up report in 2020, setting out planned and completed actions to address ENQA's recommendations. MAB submitted the report to ENQA in October 2020, followed by two international experts from the ENQA review panel conducting a (virtual) visit to MAB on 27 January 2021, to discuss MAB's planned and completed actions in response to ENQA's review (MAB, 2021d, p. 10[30]). Table 2.11 outlines the recommendations included in ENQA's external evaluation report in relation to the five standards with which MAB was found to be partially and substantially compliant, as well as the actions taken by MAB to improve compliance with them, is presented.

Table 2.11. Actions taken by MAB in 2018-2022 to increase compliance with the ESG (2015)

ESG Standard	ENQA recommendations (2018)	Actions taken by MAB (2018-2022)
1. Substantially compliant		
ESG 3.4: Thematic analysis	**Increase the number and scope of thematic analyses** ENQA recommended that MAB should ensure "publication of the thematic work under way, disseminates it widely and follows up on the promise to publish reports and conduct more system-wide analyses. These are a key resource in supporting QA and establishing a quality culture" (ENQA, 2018, p. 26[31]).	**Introduction of independent and external thematic analyses of MAB standards and procedures** Since 2020, MAB has been increasing the number of independent thematic analyses of its standards and procedures. The first was completed in December 2020, carried out by PwC and reviewed MAB's activities between 2017 and 2020 (PwC, 2020[32]). The second review is ongoing, carried out by the OECD and focuses on the relevance of MAB's standards and procedures for digital higher education. A third review has started in 2022 in

ESG Standard	ENQA recommendations (2018)	Actions taken by MAB (2018-2022)
		collaboration with OH and MRK and focuses on revising and simplifying MAB's procedures for programme launch and establishment. The objective is to develop a cyclical programme review procedure. **Creation of the Hungarian Accreditation Review** MAB has also started carrying out thematic reviews itself. In November 2020, MAB published the first issue of its *Hungarian Accreditation Review*, a bi-annual publication to inform the higher education sector in Hungary about (1) recent MAB developments and activities and, (2) recent developments and good practices from HEIs in Hungary and (3) good practice examples from other HEIs in the EHEA (MAB, 2022c[33]). **MAB webinar series** To increase national and international communication and collaboration with higher education stakeholders, MAB has launched a webinar series, which is open for participation to Hungarian HEIs. To date, three webinars have been organised: one with ENQA (27 January 2021), one with DEQAR (on 16 February 2022) and one webinar on QA in the European Universities Initiative (on 9 March 2022).
ESG 3.6: Internal QA and professional conduct	**Use and follow up on feedback received by stakeholders on MAB procedures** ENQA recommended that MAB should ensure "methodical follow-up on and feedback from all procedures and all types of stakeholders, conducts systematic analysis of data regularly, informs users of improvements and developments from feedback and prepares the aggregated system-wide analysis on the impact of its own activity suggested by the former review panel in 2013" (ENQA, 2018, p. 30[31]).	**Actions taken by the Committee for Quality Assurance, Development and Strategy** The Committee for the Quality Assurance, Development and Strategy (QADS) has been working on updating MAB's internal QA system since 2019 to include a regular internal and external review of MAB's criteria and processes. By-laws and regulations for evaluations and accreditation carried out by independent experts, as well as survey templates for institutional self-evaluations, applications and external review teams have also been updated and published on the MAB website, as well as guidance and training on how to use them.
ESG 2.2: Designing methodologies fit for purpose	**(1) Review accreditation procedures of Doctoral Schools** ENQA's first recommendation to MAB was for "the practice of evaluating doctoral schools every six months be discontinued. It is unnecessary, time-consuming, and resource consuming. If this practice remains, the panel is of the opinion, with which the MAB agrees, that it should be the mission of the National Doctoral Council and not the HAC to assess the qualifications of the faculty in doctoral schools. In order to ensure effectiveness, the panel also recommends that the HAC considers including the evaluation of doctoral schools with the institutional evaluation procedure" (ENQA, 2018, p. 34[31]). **(2) Involve a wider range of stakeholders and experts** ENQA's second recommendation to MAB was for "non-academic stakeholders, e.g. representatives of civil society, labour unions, entrepreneurs and regional/local authorities, together with international experts be consulted and involved in the design and improvement of the QA procedures of the HAC [MAB]" (ENQA, 2018, p. 34[31]).	**(1) Revised procedure for accreditation of Doctoral Schools in five-year cycles** Since September 2019, the accreditation of Doctoral Schools follows the (slightly revised) standards and procedures for institutional accreditation. There are plans to further embed Doctoral Schools accreditation in institutional accreditation processes, but due to logistical reasons at the time, this was not possible yet. **(2) Increased involvement of international and labour market experts** MAB has increased the involvement of international experts and employers in its review panels, although these are still mostly Hungarians working abroad.
ESG 2.7: Complaints and appeals	**Develop an appeals and complaints procedure** ENQA recommended MAB to develop "a policy of complaints and communicates to the public how they will be handled" (ENQA, 2018, p. 43[31]).	**Adoption of complaint management policy** As per Decision 2020/8/VII/2 of the Body of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee, MAB now has a dedicated complaint management policy in place (MAB, 2020a[34]).

ESG Standard	ENQA recommendations (2018)	Actions taken by MAB (2018-2022)
2. Partially compliant		
ESG 2.4: Peer review experts	**(1) Make public the experts carrying out ex-ante procedures** The first ENQA recommendation was for MAB to "include the names of the experts involved. This will increase the trust of the public in the agency" (ENQA, 2018[31]).	**(1) Public information on peer review experts** The names of experts included in all expert committees are now available on MAB's website. (Magyar Felsőoktatási Akkreditációs Bizottság, 2022[35]).
	(2) Include foreign experts in review teams The second recommendation was for foreign experts to be included "in all visiting panels and disciplinary committees. It is important to rely on outside QA experience for comparative analysis and exchange of good practices" (ENQA, 2018[31]).	**(2) Inclusion of foreign experts in review procedures** MAB has increased the involvement of international experts and employers in its review panels, although these are still mostly Hungarians working abroad.
	(3) Include students in review teams The third recommendation was for MAB to include students "in all ex-ante evaluations, processes and decisions" (ENQA, 2018[31]).	**(3) Inclusion of students in procedures** Students participate in decision making on all levels, including the MAB Board and all standing expert committees.
	(4) Increase training volume of MAB experts The fourth recommendation was for MAB to increase "the volume of training of experts and the standards and method of training according to the purpose and type of the evaluation activity" (ENQA, 2018[31]).	**(4) Training of MAB experts** MAB has increased the amount of training provided to its staff members and experts. For example, evaluation committee experts are trained prior to site visits, provided with detailed guidelines on evaluation criteria and weighting prior to carrying out their assessments; and MAB staff members are increasingly attending and organising (online) events on key quality assurance issues to build their capacity and expertise.

Sources: ENQA (2018[31]), *Report of the panel of the external review of the HAC (Hungarian Accreditation Committee)*, European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in the European Higher Education Area (ENQA), Brussels, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/HAC_REVIEW_REPORT_Final_7_30_2018.pdf; MAB (2020b[36]), *Hungarian Accreditation Committee Follow-up Report to the Recommendations of the Panel of the External Review of the HAC of May 2018*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/HAC_Followup-report-2020-2.pdf; PwC (2020[32]), *Thematic review of activities (2017–2020).* Carried out for the Hungarian Accreditation Committee. Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/Thematic-review-of-HAC-activities_deliverable.pdf; interviews carried out by OECD review team.

Introduction of self-accreditation of master's programmes for accredited institutions

International and regional bodies active in the field of (higher) education and QA, such as the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), ENQA and the European Commission have been calling upon higher education systems to move towards the introduction of self-accreditation for HEIs, to further enhance their responsibility for quality. On 13 April 2022, the EU adopted a *Council Recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education co-operation*, in which it called upon EU Member States to "move further towards the use of institutional-based external quality assurance" and "consider the possibility of allowing for self-accreditation of programmes to underpin the self-responsibility of higher education institutions" (Council of the European Union, 2022a, p. 12[37]).

In Hungary, the Parliament adopted a package of legislative changes which will make it possible for all accredited HEIs in Hungary to independently launch new programmes at master's level in disciplines in which they are already offering programmes (see Box 2.3). Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD team mentioned that they expect this will be a major game changer for how HEIs in Hungary perceive external accreditation as well as their role in QA. Stakeholders expect this change to have the potential to contribute to the quality enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education.

Box 2.3. Introduction of self-accreditation in Hungary

On 20 December 2022, a new package of legislative changes was adopted by the Hungarian Parliament and introduced to the National Act on Higher Education of 2011. One of these is the possibility for higher education institutions with valid institutional accreditation by MAB to independently launch new master's programmes in disciplines within which they have previously obtained the right to offer bachelor's, master's or single-cycle long programmes.

The legislative change allows Hungarian HEIs to freely design the curriculum and learning outcomes of new master's programmes, and to register them directly with the OH, without first having to apply for MAB accreditation. The only requirement checked by the OH is that the name of the proposed new programme cannot be confused with the names of other already existing study programmes. Teacher training programmes and master's programmes in the field of political science are excluded from this rule, and still require *ex ante* accreditation by MAB.

Source: Government of Hungary (2011a[3]), *Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education*, Government of Hungary, Budapest, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1100204.TV.

Increasing compliance with international quality standards and practices

Following ENQA's confirmation of its full compliance with the ESG, MAB applied for listing in the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies in the European Higher Education Area (EQAR) and was admitted as a full member ("substantially compliant with the ESG") for the first time in April 2019. MAB's membership will remain valid until 30 September 2023 and has led to participation in several international projects aimed at further strengthening the international relevance of MAB's accreditation procedures and the quality of Hungarian higher education. Participation in these international projects is seen by MAB as "necessary to strengthen the organisation's reaction capabilities and to incorporate the new European trends that are useful for the country's higher education" (MAB, 2021d, p. 9[30]). Some of the main actions taken by MAB to increase compliance with international quality standards are described below.

- ***Application of international quality standards***. The quality of medical education in Hungary is receiving increasing international recognition. For example, in 2020 the national QA body of Kazakhstan asked MAB to provide medical experts to participate in their external quality reviews. To further support the quality enhancement of medical education in Hungary, MAB has started the implementation of an *ex post* evaluation procedure for medical training programmes based on the standards of the WFME (MAB, 2021b[28]), and was recently recognised by the WFME.
- ***Participation in international quality assurance events***. MAB staff members regularly attend international workshops and conferences to stay up to date of the latest international developments in higher education QA. For example, in 2020 and 2021 MAB staff members attended a range of international conferences and events organised by international bodies active in the area of higher education QA, such as ENQA, the European University Association (EUA), or the European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF) (MAB, 2021d, pp. 9-13[30]).
- ***Regional co-operation on quality assurance***. MAB is very active in transnational and regional collaboration on higher education QA. Examples include the following:
    - MAB is a founding member of the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA). The network assembles 27 QA agencies that follow internationally recognised standards and guidelines for QA in higher education such as the ESG (ENQA, 2015[27]), the INQAAHE *Guidelines of Good Practice* (INQAAHE, 2018[38]) and the ECA *Code of Good Practice* (ECA, n.d.[39]).

- On 7 October 2021, the leaders of the higher education QA agencies of the four Visegrád countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) signed a memorandum of understanding, valid for five years (NAB, Czechia; PKA, Poland; SAAHE; MAB, Hungary, 2021[40]). This has led to the establishment of the Visegrád Four Quality Assurance Forum (V4QA Forum), aimed at facilitating regional collaboration and exchange between MAB and the QA agencies in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia, to develop joint policy proposals on higher education and QA in the EHEA.
- In August 2021, MAB visited Romania's QA agency for higher education (ARACIS) (MAB, 2021d, p. 11[30]). Following this visit, a memorandum of collaboration was signed on 15 December 2021, in which both agencies agreed to "participate in joint projects, organise professional exchange programmes, publish in each other's publications and support each other's work through the regular exchange of experience" (MAB, 2021a[41]).

- ***Participation in international projects***. MAB also participates in several international projects on higher education QA. Examples include the following:
  - As part of the DEQAR CONNECT project (EQAR, n.d.[42]), MAB has been uploading its agency review reports to the EQAR Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR) to help EQAR expand DEQAR's coverage to currently under-represented countries (EQAR, n.d.[43]).
  - Between 2018 and 2022, MAB took part in the MICROBOL Working Group on the Quality Assurance of Micro-Credentials. The discussions of this Working Group fed into the publication of a *Common Framework for Micro-Credentials in the EHEA,* in March 2022. Micro-credentials are "certified small volumes of learning", often offered in online or hybrid formats, targeting the working adult population in search of upskilling or reskilling to meet rapidly changing skills and labour market demands. The report recommends that "the focus of external QA should be on the institutional approach to micro-credentials and their explicit inclusion in existing or new processes" (MICROBOL, 2022, p. 7[44]). The report also suggests that setting up a register of trustworthy (or accredited) higher education providers that are allowed to offer micro-credentials could be a good way of both promoting and ensuring the quality of micro-credentials. At a webinar organised by MAB, in co-operation with DEQAR, on 16 February 2022, MAB underlined the importance of opening up Hungary's higher education system to alternative providers and making changes to existing regulations to make it possible for providers to offer micro-credentials. HEIs would, however, need specific guidance, and regulations on programme types would need to be made more flexible (MAB, 2022e[45]).

Quality assurance of higher education in Hungary

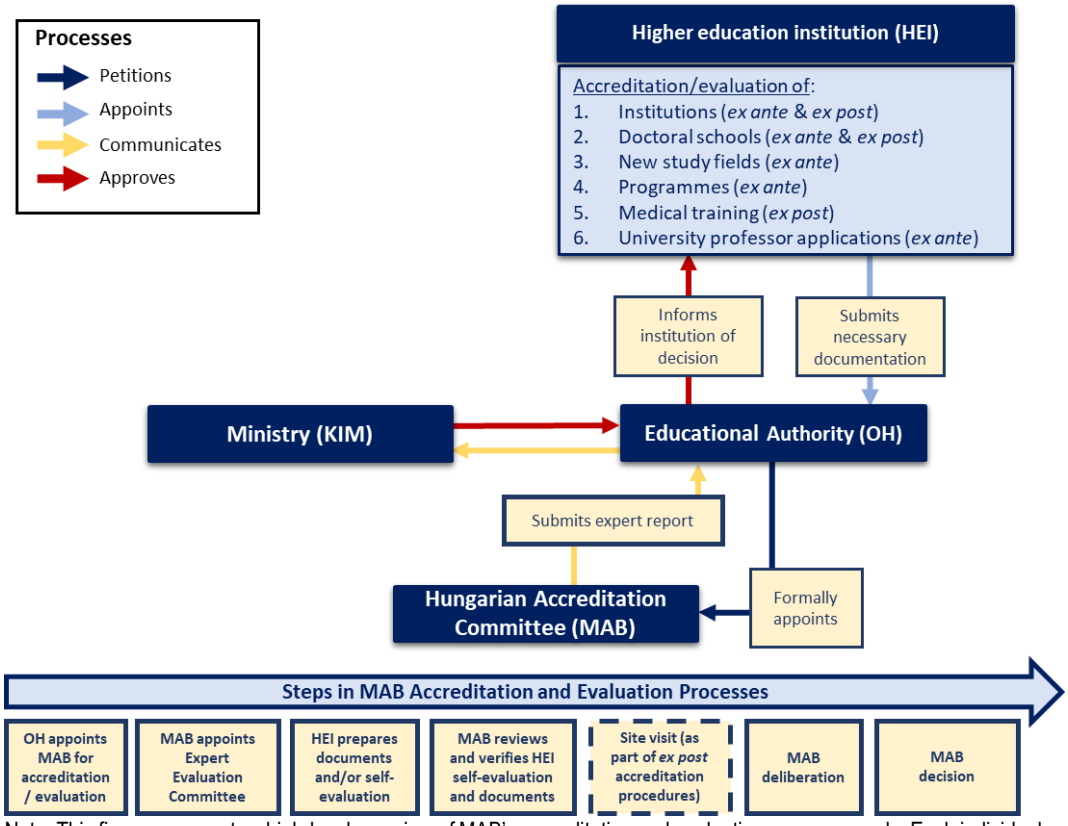
This section analyses the formal QA procedures for which MAB is responsible, including the standards underpinning their implementation. For each set of procedures and standards, there is analysis of their relevance and impact on the development of digital higher education and institutional quality management. The standards and procedures for the formal QA of higher education are defined by Government Decree 19/2012 on higher education QA and enhancement (Government of Hungary, 2012a[46]) and government Decree 387/2012 on doctoral schools (Government of Hungary, 2012b[47]).

Procedures for the accreditation of higher education in Hungary

Table B.1 (Annex B) provides an overview of the external QA processes for which MAB is responsible. This includes both *ex ante* (i.e. prior to operation) and *ex post* (i.e. in operation) procedures at institutional, programme and individual instructor level. While each procedure differs in terms of the specific steps underpinning its implementation, as well as which actors are involved in the process, both types of procedure largely adhere to the following steps (see Figure 2.3).

- ***Ex ante accreditation*** (to establish a new institution, programme or doctoral school) is initiated by HEIs petitioning the OH. The OH then formally appoints MAB to undertake an independent evaluation of the application documents submitted by the HEI, carried out by an independent expert committee of national and international experts in relevant discipline(s). Based on their evaluation of the documentation submitted by the institution, the expert committee prepares a report, which is reviewed by the MAB Secretariat. Based on this review, MAB makes an accreditation decision and communicates this decision to the OH. The OH then reviews MAB's expert report and makes a final decision, informing the Ministry and relevant HEI of the outcome, registering the institution or new (doctoral programme), giving it the official license to operate.
- ***Ex post accreditation*** is carried out at institutional and doctoral schools every five years, and every eight years for medical training programmes. As part of this process, institutions are not required to petition the OH. MAB is directly responsible for contacting institutions that are up for review, asking them to submit relevant documentation and to prepare a self-evaluation report. This is followed by an institutional site visit carried out by an independent expert committee. Based on the written documentation and evidence collected through the site visit, the expert committee prepares a report which is reviewed by the MAB Secretariat. MAB's accreditation decision is then communicated directly to the HEI.

Figure 2.3. Overview of MAB accreditation and evaluation procedures



Note: This figure represents a high-level overview of MAB's accreditation and evaluation processes only. Each individual procedure may include more or fewer steps and/or actors in the evaluation or accreditation process. For example, while the establishment of new HEIs, programmes and the appointment of university professors requires specific ministerial approval, this is not the case for the *ex post* accreditation of institutions, doctoral schools and medical training programmes, which is led by MAB. MAB is also only appointed by the OH for the *ex ante* evaluation of new (doctoral) programmes; all other processes are initiated by MAB (for *ex post* review) and the HEIs themselves (for university professor applications). Institutional site visits and the preparation of a self-evaluation report by HEIs is also only part of institutional, doctoral schools and medical training accreditation. Full details on each accreditation procedure are presented in Table B.1 (Annex B).
Source: Adapted from MAB (2022b[48]), *MAB Eljárások (MAB Procedures)*, https://www.mab.hu/eljarasok/.

A first observation made by higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team is that the various steps underpinning MAB's accreditation procedures are a significant administrative burden for all actors involved. The two-stage *ex ante* programme accreditation process (requiring institutions to obtain separate study field and programme accreditation) was highlighted as the process most in need of simplification. The accreditation procedures in general also require multiple interactions between the OH, MAB, HEIs and the Ministry, making this a burdensome process. As stated earlier in this section, MAB is keen to simplify the existing programme accreditation process and to make better use of digital technology to enhance the efficiency of QA procedures in general. As mentioned by MAB's President, Prof Dr Valéria Csépe, at a national roundtable event which took place on 31 May 2022 as part of this project, MAB wants to develop modern QA processes that are "digital, well-organised and supportive". MAB has recently started to develop a new information system (TIR2) that will allow institutions to submit all accreditation documents in one integrated online platform.

> "We would like to have a digital, well-organised and supportive QA system" (Prof Dr Valéria Csépe, President of MAB, national roundtable, 31 May 2022)

A second observation made by higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD team is that MAB's programme accreditation procedures are characterised by low success rates. A thematic review of MAB's operations[9] between 2017 and 2019 (PwC, 2020[32]) found that the success rate of new study field and programme launch applications were 56% and 53% respectively. An analysis of new study field and programme launch applications between 2018 and 2021 shows that MAB evaluated 69 new study field applications, of which 33 were approved and 36 were rejected. MAB also evaluated 459 applications for the launch of new programmes, of which 237 were approved and 222 were rejected (see Table B.2, Annex B). As a consequence, MAB is required to ask almost half of all institutions to revise and re-submit their programme accreditation application documents, adding to the already very lengthy and administratively burdensome two-stage *ex ante* programme accreditation process. A small number of higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team questioned the motivation of reviewers, speculating that they would reject some programme applications to hamper programmatic competition.

Table 2.12 presents an overview of the main reasons for rejection of new study field and programme launch applications. This shows that the *ex ante* programme accreditation process puts a strong focus on ensuring the quality of programme content and inputs. The evaluation of applications for the launch of programmes in new study fields, for example, primarily consists of assessing the relevance and demand for the proposed new programme against the – rarely updated – education and learning outcome content requirements included in the Higher Education Qualifications Register (Government of Hungary, 2011a[3]).[10] The second stage consists of assessing programmes against 24 requirements (see Table 2.15), of which 20 focus on the proposed inputs for programme delivery (e.g. infrastructure, qualifications of teaching staff, educational content). The template only includes three process indicators (e.g. the proposed student support services or teaching and assessment practices) and one output indicator (publications of proposed teaching staff in the scientific discipline).

Stakeholders felt that the strong focus on programme inputs, and the lack of an *ex post* programme review procedure are hindering the development of institutional quality cultures in Hungary. In the past, MAB has attempted to carry out *ex post* reviews of study programmes in disciplinary clusters. MAB has assessed bachelor's and master's programmes in Economics in 32 institutions between 2017 and 2019. However, this process was discontinued as MAB did not have sufficient capacity to carry out such reviews on a more regular basis for more study fields, and there were no regulatory framework or standards to conduct *ex post* programme review.

Table 2.12. Main reasons for rejection of applications for the establishment of new study fields and the launch of new programmes

Establishment of new study fields	Launch of new study programmes
The proposed new programme is not sufficiently different to existing programmes in the system. There are (minor) shortcomings in the justification for the establishment of the programme. The expected knowledge cannot be acquired within the allocated timeframe of the programme. There is insufficient information on the employability of future graduates and their contribution to the labour market. The conciseness and academic alignment of the programme are questionable. The proposed name of the new programme is not appropriate. The wording of the competencies to be acquired via the programme is inadequate or too general. Prerequisite knowledge and skill requirements and enrolment criteria are not specified (for master's degrees).	Inaccuracies in relation to subjects: overlaps between subjects, inadequate content and classification of subjects, disproportionate credit values. Literature: not relevant, incomplete, unavailable, obsolete or excessive, volume or content of compulsory literature is not sufficient. Inadequacies of personnel (lecturers, supervisors, researchers): inadequate expertise, insufficient number or quality of publications, a lecturer from a non-relevant field. Education and learning outcome requirements: the proposed programme does not meet the education and learning outcome requirements included in the Higher Education Qualifications Register. Expected student numbers: estimated student number on the proposed programme are not realistic. Admission criteria to the programme: not clearly specified, not outlined, not included in the submitted documents or not properly explained.

Source: Adapted from PwC (2020[32]), *Thematic review of activities (2017–2020).* Carried out for the Hungarian Accreditation Committee. Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/Thematic-review-of-HAC-activities_deliverable.pdf.

The third observation made by higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team is that the recommendations emerging from the accreditation of institutions and doctoral schools, based on the ESG, are seen as highly relevant to supporting institutional quality enhancement. Stakeholders explained that both the self-evaluation reports and the site visits undertaken as part of these reviews constitute good learning experiences and an opportunity to engage the entire institutional stakeholder community in quality discussions. They felt that it would be helpful if all MAB procedures followed the ESG approach and focused more on processes and outputs.

Higher education stakeholders mentioned the introduction of accreditation based on the ESG as an important driver for directing institutions' attention to the quality of their pedagogical practices and student support mechanisms. Dr Levente Kiss, who presented at a national roundtable event organised on 31 May 2022 as part of this project, said "MAB is our ally, as it stresses that education is important", and thereby redirects institutions' and instructors' attention from their historic primary focus on research.

> "MAB is our ally, as it stresses that education is important" (Dr Levente Kiss, Semmelweis University, national roundtable, 31 May 2022)

Standards and indicators for the *ex post* accreditation of institutions and doctoral schools

Table 2.13 and Table 2.14 provide an overview of standards used by MAB for the *ex post* accreditation of institutions and doctoral schools. Each standard is accompanied by a list of indicators for which HEIs are required to provide evidence in their self-evaluation report. For institutional accreditation, the template covers three parts: the general situation of the HEI (Part 1), the actions taken to increase compliance with the ESG (Part 2), and a description of the scientific, academic and educational activities of the HEI (Part 3). In the case of doctoral schools, the focus of parts 1 and 2 is the same, although the exact number and type of indicators differs. Part 3 of the template asks doctoral schools to provide miscellaneous information such as an updated list of doctoral school members, certified by the Rector, or statistical information on completion and degree award rates from the last 14 academic years.

The following observations can be made on the indicators covered by each of the templates:

- ***Number of indicators***. For institutional accreditation, HEIs are required to provide evidence on 93 indicators and doctoral schools on 36 indicators. Stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team mentioned that the amount of evidence to be provided in the evaluation template, while relevant, is highly time-consuming. They therefore recommended that MAB considers simplifying the template by reducing the total number of indicators and focus areas, especially for those institutions that have already obtained positive accreditation.
- ***Level and focus of indicators***. The majority of the template (80 indicators for institutional accreditation; 28 for doctoral schools accreditation) focuses on actions taken by the HEI to increase compliance with the ESG. The areas assessed by MAB in this part of the template are comprehensive, including input, process and output indicators at the institution, programme, course and individual instructor/learner level. However, except for ESG standards 1.7 (Information management) and 1.8 (Public information), the standards do not include any specific e-learning considerations. The reason for this is that the ESG – which are used by MAB as a guideline – have been designed with broad applicability to "all higher education offered in the EHEA regardless of the mode of study or place of delivery" (ENQA, 2015, p. 9[27]).
- ***Evidence***. The evidence MAB asks institutions to provide in their self-evaluation report is primarily qualitative in nature. Institutions are only asked under ESG standards 1.2 and 1.9 to specify the number of courses that are reviewed per semester and study cycle. However, HEIs have the option to submit additional data to MAB to supplement their self-evaluation report.

Stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team explained that compliance with ESG Standard 1.1 (Policy for quality assurance) is the only mandatory requirement for institutions to obtain accreditation. In cases where institutional QA policies exist but are deemed insufficiently comprehensive (e.g. an overall QA system is in place, but there are insufficient policies to support teaching staff or students), an institution can be "accredited with monitoring arrangements". This means that, during its five-year accreditation period, the institution will be required to undergo an interim evaluation by MAB.

Table 2.13. MAB standards and indicators for *ex post* accreditation of institutions

Standards	Evidence		Focus				Level				Number of indicators
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution	Programme	Course	Individual	
Part I: The general situation of the institution, its management, and the actions taken following the previous institutional accreditation											
TOTAL	**0**	**6**	**0**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**6**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**6**
Part II: Compliance with the ESG (2015)											
ESG 1.1: Policy for quality assurance	0	12	0	5	7	3	1	0	0	0	12
ESG 1.2 & 1.9: Design and approval of programmes & Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes	2	9	0	3	5	3	0	1	0	0	11
ESG 1.3: Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment	0	9	0	8	1	0	0	0	1	0	9
ESG 1.4: Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	0	18	0	4	12	2	0	0	0	1	18
ESG 1.5: Teaching staff	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	2
ESG 1.6: Learning resources and student support	0	6	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	1	6
ESG 1.7: Information management	0	8	3	4	3	1	1	0	0	0	8
ESG 1.8: Public information	0	13	9	0	13	0	1	0	0	0	13
ESG 1.10: Cyclical external quality assurance	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	**2**	**78**	**12**	**28**	**46**	**9**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**80**
Part III: The academic, scientific and educational activities of the HEI											
TOTAL	**0**	**6**	**0**	**2**	**4**	**1**	Institution				**6**

Note: The full template for *ex post* accreditation of institutions can be found in Table B.3 (Annex B).
Source: MAB (2021e[49]), *Önértékelési útmutató [Institutional accreditation]*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/OnertUtmut_Intakkr2021.pdf.

Table 2.14. MAB standards and indicators for *ex post* accreditation of doctoral schools

Standards	Evidence		Focus				Level				Number of indicators
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution	Programme	Course	Individual	
Part I: The general situation of the institution, its management, and the actions taken following the previous institutional accreditation											
TOTAL	**0**	**0**	**0**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Part II: Compliance with the ESG (2015)											
ESG 1.1: Policy for quality assurance	0	6	0	1	4	1	1	0	0	0	6
ESG 1.2 & 1.9: Design and approval of programmes & Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
ESG 1.3: Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment	0	4	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	4
ESG 1.4: Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	0	4	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	4
ESG 1.5: Teaching staff	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
ESG 1.6: Learning resources and student support	2	3	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	4
ESG 1.7: Information management	2	1	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	3
ESG 1.8: Public information	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
ESG 1.10: Cyclical external quality assurance	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	**6**	**23**	**1**	**9**	**14**	**5**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**28**
Part III: The academic, scientific and educational activities of the HEI											
TOTAL	**12**	**46**	**2**	**18**	**28**	**10**	Programme				**4**

Note: The full template for *ex post* accreditation of doctoral schools can be found in Table B.4 (Annex B).
Source: MAB (2021c[50]), *Doktori akkreditációs útmutató: Önértékelési szempontrendszer [Doctoral accreditation guide: self-evaluation criteria]*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/eljarasok/

Standards and indicators for the *ex ante* accreditation of programmes

Table 2.15 presents the standards applied by MAB for the accreditation of new bachelor's and master's programmes in already established study fields (i.e. the second stage of the programme accreditation process). With the exception of Part III (Sufficient scientific expertise), which only applies to master's programmes, both bachelor's and master's programmes are required to broadly meet the same requirements – although there are some subject-specific differences in the accreditation templates for different disciplines (e.g. History or Economics).

The following observations can be made on the indicators covered by the templates:

- ***Number of indicators***. The application template includes 34 requirements that must be met before institutions can launch a new master's programme, or 32 in the case of bachelor's programmes. For certain disciplines, the application template includes additional requirements in relation to the content of the study programme. Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team commented that the template is difficult to complete and the type of information to be provided is often unclear. As a result, many applications are rejected by MAB (as discussed earlier in this section). Stakeholders mentioned better guidance and a simplification of the *ex ante* programme accreditation requirements as potential options to make it easier for HEIs to launch new study programmes and remain competitive in an increasingly international higher education landscape.
- ***Level and focus of indicators***. The application template focuses primarily on input indicators, such as the proposed programme content (Part I), infrastructure (Part IV) or the qualifications of teaching staff (Part II). The template only includes one output criterion, which relates to the scientific output of the proposed teaching staff for master's programmes (Part III). Finally, only three process indicators under Part I (Programme content) ask institutions to describe how the programme will ensure the implementation of effective and varied teaching practices, as well as high-quality practical teaching and student evaluation. In Part VII (Special provisions for distance learning), four process indicators seek to ensure that institutions adopt tailored academic models, teaching resources, grading and student evaluation protocols for the delivery of distance learning programmes.
- ***Evidence***. While most of the template asks institutions to provide qualitative information on the programme content, policies and processes, several more quantitative indicators seek to verify that the institution has a sufficient number of qualified teaching and administrative staff, as well as realistic expectations on the number of students in the programme.

Table 2.15. MAB standards and indicators for *ex ante* programme accreditation

Standards	Evidence		Focus				Level				Number of indicators
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution	Programme	Course	Individual	
Part I: Programme content	0	8	0	5	3	0	0	5	3	0	8
Part II: Personnel responsible for the programme	2	3	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	4	5
Part III: Sufficient scientific expertise[11]	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	2
Part IV: The Infrastructure for the programme	2	5	0	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	5
Part V: Capacity and student caps	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Part VI: Teaching activities outside of Hungary	2	1	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	3
Part VII: Special provisions for distance learning	1	9	10	6	4	41	42	543	123	287	10
TOTAL	**9**	**28**	**10**	**26**	**7**	**42**	**43**	**556**	**126**	**294**	**34**

Note: The full templates for the *ex ante* accreditation of bachelor's and master's programmes can be found in Table B.5 and Table B.6 (Annex B).

Sources: MAB (2017a[51]), *SZAKMAI BÍRÁLATI SZEMPONTJAI (SzBSz) (osztott és osztatlan) mesterképzési szak / szakirány*, tanárszak indításának véleményezésében [PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT POINTS in the assessment of the start of a Master's degree programme (split and undivided)]*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/eljarasok/; MAB (2017b[52]), *SZAKMAI BÍRÁLATI SZEMPONTJAI (SzBSz) alapképzési szak/szakirány indításának véleményezésében [COMMITTEE OF EXAMINERS OF PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION (CEAS) for the opinion on the opening of a bachelor's degree course/sub-discipline]*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/BA_I_b%C3%ADr%C3%A1lati-szempontok.pdf.

Table 2.16 presents the personnel requirements for programme management and delivery. Of note is that the template includes no specific requirements on student-teacher ratios. For example, there are no upper or lower limits provided for the requirements to ensure "sufficient numbers of teaching and support personnel" and "locally-based teaching staff". Instead, institutions have to specify the maximum number of students they will accept in the programme and, based on this estimate, justify the proposed number of administrative and teaching staff. By contrast, for distance learning programmes there is a specified maximum of 50 students per instructor. In the case of programmes delivered fully asynchronously and online, stakeholders felt that this upper limit might be too low and might therefore be limiting the further development of digital higher education in Hungary.

Table 2.16. Personnel requirements for programme management and delivery

General requirements (Parts IV, V and VI)	
Enough teaching and support personnel should be available to ensure the operation of the programme. The institution must provide an explanation of how and why it has estimated the upper student limit for the programme. Locally based teaching staff should be available for students. There should be at least one locally based member of staff responsible for the programme.	
Specific requirements for heads of study fields (Part II)	**Specific requirements for teaching staff (Part II)**
Any subject or specialisation that is worth 30 credits or more must have an institutional Head of Subject. This person must have a civil service work contract (or equivalent), must be a specialist of the field in question and must personally teach at least five credits' worth of the subject.	At least 50% of teaching personnel delivering core content/subjects of the study programme must have a PhD.
All Heads of Programme, Sub-discipline or Subject must have a civil service work contract (or equivalent) with the HEI in question and must have at least 3 years of teaching experience. Their research activities must be relevant for the programme.	One lecturer can teach a maximum of three core subjects/courses/classes (with a maximum of 36 ECTS credits). Only half (50%) of teaching personnel may teach more than 25 ECTS credits' worth of classes.
The Head of Subject must partake in the teaching and evaluation of that subject to the value of at least three credits.	Lecturers without a PhD may only be responsible for 15 ECTS credits' worth of classes.

Sources: MAB (2017a[51]), *SZAKMAI BÍRÁLATI SZEMPONTJAI (SzBSz) (osztott és osztatlan) mesterképzési szak / szakirány*, tanárszak indításának véleményezésében (PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT POINTS in the assessment of the start of a Master's degree programme (split and undivided))*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/eljarasok/; (MAB, 2017b[52]), *SZAKMAI BÍRÁLATI SZEMPONTJAI (SzBSz) alapképzési szak/szakirány indításának véleményezésében [COMMITTEE OF EXAMINERS OF PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION (CEAS) for the opinion on the opening of a bachelor's degree course/sub-discipline]*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/BA_I_b%C3%ADr%C3%A1lati-szempontok.pdf.

Special provisions for the *ex ante* accreditation of distance learning programmes

Institutions that wish to offer programmes in distance learning format must meet several requirements in addition to those that apply to in-person study programmes. Table 2.17 provides an overview of these special provisions, with a more detailed description of each indicator as follows:

- ***Indicator 1: Content and unit responsible for managing the distance learning programme***. Under this indicator, institutions are asked to explain the organisational structure, logistics and processes used to manage the distance learning programme (e.g. the instructional technology and LMS/VLE used, the student supports provided). Institutions also need to submit an adapted curriculum for distance learning students, as well as explain the process for ongoing curriculum development and renewal. Students should also be provided with a study guide for the entire duration of the distance learning programme, including semester-based guidelines that indicate mandatory and optional (printed and online) study content and media.
- ***Indicator 2: Teaching resources***. This indicator asks institutions to submit one sample online module per course plus sample course guidelines, as well as explain how the institution will ensure ongoing access to teaching materials. Some stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team highlighted that this requirement is too demanding, as it is not always possible for HEIs to have developed digital educational content for all courses before they start. Often, instructors develop the content of their courses on a rolling basis, throughout the academic year and based on feedback from students on their specific learning needs.
- ***Indicator 3: Grading and student evaluation***. Here, institutions are asked to describe how they will ensure trusted and authentic remote (online) assessment. In line with national regulation, student assessment should form an integral part of the curriculum and be adjusted to meet individual learning needs (i.e. a mix of formative and summative assessment). The final exam should take place in person at the institution and the examination committee should include an external and reputable member that does not have a legal relationship with the institution. Typically,

this is an expert from another Hungarian HEI. Stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team said that the requirement for students to take the final exam in person was a significant barrier to the further development of fully online study programmes in Hungary and to attracting remote international students. However, institutions require guidance on how to effectively conduct student assessments online.

- ***Indicator 4: Academic consultations***. This indicator asks institutions to explain how distance learning students will be provided with opportunities to consult with academic staff during their studies (e.g. through a consultation centre or regular contact hours established in the distance learning curriculum).
- ***Indicators 5-7: Teaching staff***. Three indicators focus on the qualifications and responsibilities of distance learning teaching staff. First, a dedicated full-time or part-time staff member should be appointed to oversee the content of the entire distance learning programme. Distance learning programmes should also be managed by a staff member with at least five years of distance learning experience. For institutions that are just starting to introduce digital education, the vast majority of stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team saw this requirement as almost impossible to meet. For many HEIs in Hungary, the COVID-19 pandemic was the first time they had started experimenting with online and hybrid education, meaning very few HEIs have staff that meet this requirement. Finally, instructors cannot be responsible for more than 50 students or more than three courses per semester. This requirement was felt to be inappropriate for fully online or hybrid programmes where the online components are delivered asynchronously, as asynchronous online instruction allows courses to be opened up to a much higher number and more diverse range of students.
- ***Indicators 8-9: Digital infrastructure***. Under these indicators, institutions should provide details on the (digital) infrastructure used to deliver the distance learning programme, as well as how it will be reviewed and developed. However, few details are included on the type(s) of digital tools and technologies that institutions should consider implementing or supporting. More guidance on good quality digital tools and resources that are secure and compatible with the existing institution and national-level infrastructure were highlighted as important by higher education stakeholders.
- ***Indicator 10: Consultation centre***. Finally, institutions that wish to launch a distance learning programme need to have in place a dedicated consultation centre for distance learning students that will provide them with access to technical support, teaching materials and any other supports they might need to complete their programme at a distance.

Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team said that on the one hand, some of the distance learning indicators are too demanding for institutions (e.g. the requirement to present a sample online module for each course of the distance learning programme, or the requirement for distance learning programme managers to have five years' distance learning experience). On the other hand, some are not detailed enough (e.g. the digital infrastructure and student support requirements). Others were felt to be inappropriate or limiting (e.g., the threshold of 50 students and three courses for distance learning teaching staff). They also underlined that the current provisions only apply to fully online study programmes, and that there is a need to revise the existing standards to also reflect the specificities of hybrid education.

Table 2.17. Special provisions for the *ex ante* accreditation of distance learning programmes

Standards	Evidence		Focus				Level			
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution	Programme	Course	Individual
1. Distance learning content and organisational unit	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
2. Quality and access of distance learning teaching resources	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
3. Grading and student evaluation	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
4. Academic consultations	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
5. Dedicated staff member to oversee distance learning course content	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
6. Manager to oversee the activities of distance learning teaching staff	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
7. Maximum number of courses and students per instructional staff member	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
8. A clear distance learning infrastructure plan	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
9. Conditions for methodological development of distance learning infrastructure	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
10. Distance learning consultation centre	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
TOTAL	**1**	**9**	**0**	**6**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Sources: MAB (2017a[51]), *SZAKMAI BÍRÁLATI SZEMPONTJAI (SzBSz) (osztott és osztatlan) mesterképzési szak / szakirány*, tanárszak indításának véleményezésében [PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT POINTS in the assessment of the start of a Master's degree programme (split and undivided)]*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/eljarasok/; (MAB, 2017b[52]), *SZAKMAI BÍRÁLATI SZEMPONTJAI (SzBSz) alapképzési szak/szakirány indításának véleményezésében [COMMITTEE OF EXAMINERS OF PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION (CEAS) for the opinion on the opening of a bachelor's degree course/sub-discipline]*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/BA_I_b%C3%ADr%C3%A1lati-szempontok.pdf.

Quality enhancement of higher education in Hungary

In addition to accrediting institutions and programmes based on the ESG (ENQA, 2015[27]) and WFME (MAB, 2021b[28]) standards, in line with international best practice across the OECD, MAB has also started to implement a range of quality enhancement-oriented activities to more actively support institutions to build their capacity for the internal quality management of their (digital) education offerings.

Collection and dissemination of best practices

In line with international practice, MAB has been publishing all its accreditation reports and decisions on its website since 2006. In addition to increasing the transparency of its procedures, MAB stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team explained that the publication of these reports serves as a tool for HEIs to learn about each other's internal QA systems. However, the higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team noted that few practitioners consult the accreditation reports from other institutions. They felt that it might be more helpful to have guidelines and best practices distilled from accreditation reports, based on a transversal thematic analysis of institutional quality management practices, co-ordinated by MAB in collaboration with HEIs and external experts.

In 2020, MAB launched the *Hungarian Accreditation Review*, an online journal published twice a year with the aim of more regularly informing institutions on MAB's activities and international QA developments (MAB, 2022c[33]). As an example of content, the first issue explains how MAB's procedures for the accreditation of institutions and doctoral schools work, as well as the timing and process for submitting applications for university professor status. It also explains the international QA landscape within which higher education in Hungary functions (e.g. the ECTS credit system, ENQA, the Bologna process) as well as key findings from PwC's thematic review of MAB's activities between 2017 and 2019 (PwC, 2020[32]). Stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team felt that more regular engagement by MAB (with the support of external experts and HEIs) in thematic analyses such as these, including on the topic of digitalisation, would be beneficial to support them.

Training and peer learning

During the COVID-19 pandemic, MAB organised several online knowledge-sharing webinars for HEIs, focused on topics relevant to the sector. Examples include online webinars organised with ENQA (27 January 2021) and DEQAR (16 February 2022), as well as a webinar focused on QA in the European Universities Initiative (EUI) (9 March 2022). As part of the current project, two online webinars were organised on the QA of digital higher education in Hungary (31 May 2022) and internationally (14 June 2022), as well as a national roundtable in Budapest to discuss policy options for the QA of digital higher education in Hungary (4 October 2022).

MAB has also been involved in supporting Hungarian HEIs to join the EUI. For example, following the successful application of 11 universities during the first EUI call, MAB started negotiations on the QA of these new joint programmes in 2019. In February 2020, Tempus Public Foundation, in collaboration with the higher education policy field, organised a workshop for institutions taking part in the first and second call of the EUI, which also involved MAB: "the main focus was on bridging the Hungarian legislative restrictions and the flexible approaches needed for the international university model" (MAB, 2021d, p. 9[30]).

Specific quality enhancement for digital higher education

However, compared with other QA agencies in the OECD, the majority of MAB's activities are QA-oriented (i.e. focused on checking that institutions and programmes meet minimum requirements laid out in national regulation). Furthermore, with the exception of the events organised as part of the current OECD project, none of the QE-oriented activities carried out to date focus specifically on the topic of digitalisation. One of the reasons for this might be the lack of in-house expertise on digitalisation as well as a lack of capacity for MAB to organise such activities, due to the large volume of QA activities it is responsible for.

Table 2.18 compares the QA and QE activities implemented by MAB with those of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in the United Kingdom (UK) and the Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education in Estonia (HAKA).

Table 2.18. Comparison of quality assurance and quality enhancement activities for digital higher education: QAA (United Kingdom), MAB (Hungary) and HAKA (Estonia)

Activities	Description	QAA	MAB	HAKA
1. Quality assurance				
The agency carries out external evaluation of institutions and/or programmes to **assure the quality** of digital provision				
Institution	***Ex ante*** evaluation of minimum operating requirements for institutions offering digital education	Yes	No	No
	Ex post evaluation of institutions offering digital education	Yes	No	Yes
Programme	***Ex ante*** evaluation of minimum requirements for the launch of digital study programmes	No	Yes	No
	Ex post evaluation of the quality of digital study programmes	No	No	Yes
2. Quality enhancement				
The agency carries out activities to **build the capacity of HEIs** to improve the quality of their digital provision and internal quality management practices				
Common taxonomy and guidelines	The agency has developed a common taxonomy for digital education and/or guidelines explaining "why" and "how" quality standards and indicators can be met in digital settings	Yes	No	Yes
Collection and dissemination of best practices	The agency engages in thematic reviews of digital teaching and learning quality, and/or has developed repositories and resources for HEIs to access and share good practice on digital education	Yes	No	Yes
Training and peer learning	The agency provides opportunities for HEIs to take part in (online) training and peer learning activities to strengthen their capacity around quality digital education	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Based on an analysis of the QA standards and procedures of QAA (UK), MAB (Hungary) and HAKA (Estonia). QAA (2022[53]), *The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education*, https://www.qaa.ac.uk/; MAB (2022d[54]), *Magyar Felsőoktatási Akkreditációs Bizottság [The Hungarian Accreditation Committee]*, https://www.mab.hu/en/home-page/; and HAKA (2022a[55]), *Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (HAKA)*, https://HAKA.edu.ee/en/. Adapted from Staring et al. (2022[56]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, pp. 14-15, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Key barriers for the further development and quality enhancement of digital higher education in Hungary

Based the analysis and stakeholder consultations conducted by the OECD review team, two key barriers for the further development and quality enhancement of digital higher education in Hungary emerge:

- The existing set of study format hinders the development of digital higher education; and
- There is a lack of up-to-date definitions, standards, and indicators for digital higher education.

Existing set of study formats hinders the development of digital higher education

A first key barrier to the further development of digital higher education in Hungary is the existing categorisation of study formats. These do not reflect an up-to-date understanding of how teaching and learning takes place in today's digital world. Digitally savvy secondary school graduates who have lived through remote instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as adult learners in search of flexible (and often online) opportunities for upskilling and reskilling, are entering higher education with expectations of increased flexibility to decide on what, how, where, and when to study. They also expect – and deserve – to receive the same quality of instruction and support, regardless of their chosen study mode.

As evidenced by the name – "regular training" -- Hungary's study format regulations are based on the view that full-time study on weekdays, during the day, and on a face-to-face basis, is the normative or default study mode. Part-time and distance forms of education are, according to this view, to be offered exceptionally to learners who are unable to study on a "regular" basis, while hybrid study programmes do not even fall within the range of permissible study formats.

As a result, the total share of accredited distance learning programmes in Hungary has remained low. In addition, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the (effective) use of digital technologies by instructors was very limited in Hungary (Eurydice/EACEA/EC, 2019[57]; Hülber, Papp-Danka and Dringó-Horváth, 2020[58]). However, this picture has changed, though, and today digital education has emerged across all HEIs in Hungary. Although it is difficult to define the While precise figures on the full offer exact number of online and hybrid study programmes available in Hungary is lacking, there is evidently a need for this calls for a deep reconceptualisation of how higher education study is organised and regulated.

Lack of up-to-date definitions, standards, and indicators for digital higher education

A second key barrier is the near absence of digital considerations in the minimum operating requirements for HEIs as well as the standards and indicators employed by MAB for the external QA of higher education providers and programmes. With the exception of the March 2020 requirement that HEIs should have a VLE/LMS in place, the minimum operating requirements for universities, UAS and university colleges do not otherwise include any specific requirements related to their capacity to deliver digital education. The ESG, which Hungarian HEIs are required to follow for the development of their internal quality management policies and processes, and which are used by MAB for the external QA of HEIs and doctoral schools, also do not include any specific education indicators. The guidelines apply broadly to “all higher education offered in the EHEA regardless of the mode of study or place of delivery” (KIM, 2016[59]).

Specific standards for digital education can only be found in MAB’s procedures for the accreditation of distance learning programmes. Institutions that wish to offer distance learning programmes are required to meet ten criteria (or, “special provisions”) in addition to those that apply to regular programmes. These criteria are used by MAB as part of *ex ante* programme accreditation. Stakeholders from HEIs interviewed by the OECD review team felt that the distance learning criteria used by MAB are sometimes either too burdensome (e.g. institutions are required to present a sample online module for each course of the distance learning programme, distance learning programme managers must have five years’ distance learning experience), or too limiting (e.g. maximum of 50 students per distance learning programme, three courses per distance learning teaching staff), while in other instances they provide less guidance than is necessary (e.g. on digital infrastructure and student support requirements).

2.2 International practice and recommendations to support a modernisation of regulation and external quality assurance in Hungary to increase study flexibility, innovation, and digitalisation in higher education

If institutions in Hungary are to expand their ***digital*** education offers and deliver high-quality digital education, there will need to be significant modernisation to enhance how teaching and learning ***in general*** takes place in Hungarian higher education. This will require Hungary to revise its overarching regulatory and external QA systems for higher education, to ensure that they provide institutions and instructors with the flexibility they need to develop innovative and digitally enhanced study programmes that permit students to more flexibly choose when, where and how to study, and allow academic instructors to make better use of the potential of digital technologies. It will also be necessary to ensure that the QA framework for higher education sets relevant and up-to-date quality standards that reflect specific considerations for digital education.

This section presents examples of international practice from which Hungary could take inspiration, as well as two proposed policy recommendations Hungary should consider adopting as a matter of priority to boost study flexibility, innovation and digitalisation in its higher education system.

Revise study format regulations to increase the flexibility and diversity of study modes and the provision of digital education

If Hungary wishes to expand its digital higher education offer, it will be necessary to update its definition and conceptualisation of digital education in the categorisation of higher education study formats. At present, digital higher education is narrowly understood as distance (or fully online) education, and entirely different or separate to in-person forms of study. While digital education requires different methodological considerations, such a definition of digital education is problematic, as it suggests a binary opposition between online and in-person learning. As mentioned in the introduction of this report, more often than not the two modes are combined in practice, and there is – or soon will be – no fully in-person instruction that is not supported in some way by digital technologies, such as a VLE/LMS or Open Education Resources (OER) (Gourlay, 2021[60]), (D'Agostino, 2022[61]). As outlined in the introduction of this report, there are three broad categories of digital education:

- ***Blended education*** refers to a study mode where courses are intentionally designed to harness the capacities of digital technology, using it to enrich rather than substitute in-person instruction. For example, a language or mathematics course delivered on campus might use learning analytics to adapt problem sets to learner abilities. Importantly, most instruction continues to take place on a physical campus.
- ***Hybrid education*** refers to a study mode where instruction involves a mix of on-campus and off-campus instruction. Learners have some flexibility regarding the location in which they complete their study. For example, learners might complete laboratory segments of an engineering course on campus, while participating in lecture-based course segments through live web streaming.
- ***Online education*** refers to a study mode where instruction is delivered off campus, either synchronously or asynchronously, or a combination of both. Students complete their course or programme of study at a distance, without the need for on-campus instruction.

To achieve flexibility and diversity of provision, Hungary should decouple study *mode* (i.e. online, hybrid, blended) and study *intensity* (i.e. full-time, part-time) in any revised categorisation of study formats. A decision will need to be taken on how much flexibility to allow students with regard to enrolment intensity – i.e. whether learners may study at any pace they wish – as there is evidence that studying on a less than a half-time basis can lead to higher non-completion rates (OECD, 2021a[62]). Box 2.4 provides examples of how study intensity is managed in different OECD jurisdictions.

Box 2.4. International examples of managing study flexibility in higher education

Flemish Community of Belgium

The Flemish Community of Belgium operates a highly flexible enrolment system for higher education. Students can choose to enrol in a full degree programme ("diploma contract"), selected courses ("credit contract") or ("exam contract"). Students can also enrol in different courses, degree programmes and exams at the same time, either at the same institution or at different institutions (Flemish Department of Education and Training, 2022[63]). However, the Flemish higher education system has high rates of initial re-orientation, slow progression and drop-out due to its system of open access to higher education (i.e. anyone who has successfully completed secondary education can enter higher education, albeit with some specific entry requirements for certain disciplines such as medicine), even in comparison to other OECD jurisdictions with similar open access and entry systems, such as the Netherlands or Austria (OECD, 2021a, p. 43[62]).

United States

In Community of Belgium, most institutions set upper and lower enrolment limits for full-time and part-time programmes, based on students' performance. For example, Pennsylvania State University has recently raised the maximum number of credits for undergraduate programmes from 19 to 24 credits per semester.[12] Students that wish to exceed the recommended credit load of 15-19 credits per semester are advised to consult with their designated academic adviser. Newly admitted students, transfer students and students not meeting a cumulative minimum GPA, cannot exceed 19 credits per semester (PennState, 2022[64]).

United Kingdom and Ireland

The United Kingdom and Ireland have strict national definitions for full-time and part-time study, including strict entry requirements for higher education, and relatively structured study paths to mitigate the risk of study delays and student drop-out (OECD, 2021a[62]).

Source: Based on a review of emerging quality standards, practices and supports for digital higher education in Staring et al. (2022[56]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Institutions in Hungary will also need to decide whether to introduce restrictions to the development of fully online and hybrid courses and programmes (i.e. whether to allow fully online education for all types of students and study fields, or whether to set some limits or access requirements), as international evidence indicates that students with poor academic backgrounds and other risk factors may struggle to complete fully online courses if they are insufficiently prepared or supported (Baum and Mcpherson, 2019[65]), (Staring et al., 2022[56]). Not all courses and programmes – especially those with a higher proportion of practical components – can be moved fully online as easily or at the same level of quality (Study International, 2020[66]). Box 2.5 presents examples of measures introduced by institutions in various OECD jurisdiction to mitigate the risk of drop-out and non-completion in fully online and hybrid courses and study programmes.

Box 2.5. International examples of institutional practices for mitigating the risk of drop-out and non-completion in digital study programmes

Several institutions across the OECD have introduced the successful completion of preparatory courses and/or digital skills assessments as an entry requirement for online learning, as they have sought to mitigate the risk of study delays and non-completion while expanding their digital provision. Some institutions have also experimented with the opportunities offered by digital technologies to enhance the overall online learning experience for students with the aim of lowering the risk of drop-out.

Digital skills assessment

International best practice shows that well-developed digital competencies and self-directed learning skills are crucial for students to mitigate the risk of study delays and non-completion, and ensure the successful completion of online or hybrid courses. Several institutions provide students with (online) training prior to entering fully online or hybrid courses, or assess their (digital) skills upon entry into higher education. Examples of preparatory training courses can be found at Athabasca University in Canada (Athabasca University, 2022[67]) or Dublin City University in Ireland (FutureLearn, 2022[68]). The University of Tasmania in Australia is an example of an institution that has developed an interactive online digital skills self-assessment tool for students (University of Tasmania, 2022[69]). The tool assesses seven key competencies for online learning included in a Digital Capabilities Framework for Students, developed by the institution in 2020 based on Jisc's digital capability framework (Jisc, 2022a[70]). Based on their result, students are directed to specific training materials and courses to develop their digital skills and competencies.

Enhancing students' (online) learning experience

Other institutions, especially in the United States, are experimenting with the potential offered by artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) to create digital twin "metaversities" to offer online students an almost identical online learning experience as on campus students, including for practical seminars (D'Agostino, 2022[71]; Paykmian, 2022[72]). A 'metaversity' is a "portmanteau of 'metaverse' and 'universities' […] an immersive virtual reality platform where remote faculty and students don VR headsets and meet synchronously as they would on a physical campus" (D'Agostino, 2022[71]). By creating an almost identical campus experience for fully remote online and on campus students, these institutions aim to mitigate the potential risk of non-completion and drop-out due to a poorer learning experience. Some university leaders believe that "the vast majority of the schools that are going to close in the next 10 years are going to be schools […] that pay no attention to the student-life experience" (Hatch, 2022[73]).

Source: Based on a review of emerging quality standards, practices and supports for digital higher education in Staring et al. (2022[56]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

A recommendation for Hungary related to embedding flexibility and digitalisation in its higher education teaching and learning architecture is as follows.

Recommendation 1: Consider allowing institutions to offer programmes in three study modes, with some limits on study intensity

- In consultation with HEIs and based on the definition of digital higher education presented above, Hungary should revise the categorisation of study formats in Article 17 of the National Act on Higher Education, to clearly distinguish between three modes of study (i.e. online, hybrid and

in-person/blended) and two types of study intensity (i.e. full-time, part-time). Institutions should have full autonomy to decide whether to offer courses or programmes in the online, hybrid or in-person/blended study mode, and whether to offer them on a full-time or part-time basis (within agreed definitions of full-time and part-time study).

- If institutions (and students) are given greater flexibility to offer (and choose between) full-time or part-time programmes in fully online, hybrid and blended formats, institutions will need to strengthen their student support services to inform student choice and support students in successfully navigating and completing an increasingly diverse and flexible higher education offer.
- In consultation with HEIs, Hungary should consider whether fully online and asynchronous online delivery in certain "high stakes" disciplines (such as medicine) or for the delivery of certain learning outcomes or courses as part of programmes (such as practical skills) is advisable, to ensure that learners continue to meet the required learning outcomes. The burden of proof for disallowing a fully online offer should rest with those proposing its exclusion. At their discretion, individual HEIs should have the opportunity to introduce additional entry requirements or measures to mitigate the risk of study delays and drop-outs, such as a requirement for students to complete a digital skills assessment or training course prior to enrolment in a fully online course, or a requirement for hybrid programmes to contain a minimum amount of on-campus instruction.

Table 2.19 provides a potential model for the revised categorisation of study modes in Hungarian higher education.

Table 2.19. Potential categorisation of study formats in Hungarian higher education

Mode	Location	Study intensity		Potential limits
		Full-time	Part-time	
Online	Off campus (100% of ECTS credits delivered online)	Yes	Yes	**Limits for certain disciplines, learning outcomes and levels (set nationally)**: In consultation with HEIs, Hungary limits the development of fully online and asynchronous online programmes for certain study fields (e.g. medical education) or courses (e.g. practically oriented courses) to mitigate the risk of student drop-out, study delays and students not achieving learning outcomes. **Limits for certain disciplines and/or minimum requirements for learners, instructors and institutions (set at institution or faculty level)**: Institutions (and individual faculties) have full autonomy to decide which courses and programmes are allowed in online study mode, based on their digital capacity, student population, skills of instructors and learning outcomes to be acquired. To mitigate the risk of study delays and drop-outs, HEIs can introduce a digital skills assessment or training as a requirement for instructors that wish to offer or students that wish to enrol in fully online programmes or courses.
Hybrid	On campus & off campus	Yes	Yes	**Minimum amount of in-person instruction for hybrid courses (set at institution or faculty level)**: To mitigate the risk of study delays and drop-outs, institutions (and within those, individual faculties) have full autonomy to decide whether to introduce additional requirements for the development of hybrid programmes, such as a minimum number of ECTS credits (e.g. 20-30%) to be taught on campus), practical components of study programmes to be taught in person, or training for students and/or instructors that wish to offer or enrol in hybrid programmes or courses.
In-person/ blended	On campus (100% of ECTS credits delivered in person)	Yes	Yes	**No limits required**: Institutions in Hungary are incentivised and supported to use the full range possibilities offered by digital technology and embed its use in all forms of fully in-person and on-campus instruction.

Source: Based on a review of emerging quality standards, practices and supports for digital higher education in Staring et al. (2022[56]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Develop specific standards and indicators for digital education, and embed them in existing quality assurance frameworks

An international mapping of emerging quality standards, practices and supports for digital higher education carried out as part of this project (Staring et al., 2022[56]) shows that, so far, only a limited number of QA agencies across the OECD and EHEA have developed specific quality standards or guidance for digital higher education and integrated them into their existing QA frameworks and procedures There appear to be two approaches to the challenge of embedding these quality standards into existing QA frameworks and procedures:

- The first approach consists of embedding the specific standards for digital education as an ***additional set of criteria*** to be met by higher education providers of digital education, in addition to those that apply to traditional study modes. For example:
  - Campus Alberta's Quality Council (CACQ) in **Canada** has developed *Additional Quality Assessment Standards for Programs Delivered in Blended, Distributed or Distance Modes* (CAQC, 2011[74]). Since 2021, institutions offering programmes in either of these study modes are required to meet these additional standards in addition to those that apply to in-person study modes (CAQC, 2021[75]).
  - **Romania** follows a similar approach and has developed additional standards for fully online (ARACIS, 2020[76]) and hybrid programmes (ARACIS, 2022[77]) in addition to those that apply to in-person study modes.
  - In some jurisdictions, for example **Estonia** and **Spain**, the specific standards for digital higher education are used for a voluntary quality review process of digital courses and programmes. In these systems, HEIs have the option to apply (and pay) for an external review of their digital course offer by an external team of digitalisation experts and receive a "quality label" upon successful assessment, but this is not mandatory (HAKA, 2020[78]; ANECA, 2022[79]).
- The second approach consists of systematically ***integrating specific criteria*** for digital education across the standards included in accreditation frameworks used for in person study modes. For example:
  - **Estonia** has revised its *Guidelines for Institutional Accreditation* (HAKA, 2022b[80]) by including specific guidance for the implementation of the quality standards in digital contexts. Every seven years, institutions are evaluated against these standards as part of institutional accreditation.
  - In **Australia**, specific guidance on how to implement the *Higher Education Standards (HES) Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* in a digital context is provided in a separate *Guidance Note on Technology-Enhanced Learning* (TEQSA, 2019[81]). While the Guidance Note is not binding for institutions or formally checked as part of accreditation, the note provides a list of "risks to quality" in technology-enhanced learning (TEL), linked to the relevant HES standards. As part of institutional accreditation, the Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) includes digital education experts in site visit teams (TEQSA, 2022[82]), and institutions are required to demonstrate how they ensure the implementation of HES standards in TEL settings.
  - **Malta** uses a similar approach. Each of the eight standards included in the national *Guidelines for the Quality Assurance of Online Learning Providers* (MFHEA, 2021[83]) provides an explicit link to the overarching national standards for institutional accreditation.

International and regional quality organisations, such as ENQA or the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), recommend the second approach. Namely that instead of developing separate standards or procedures for the accreditation of digital higher education, QA agencies should develop and integrate specific quality indicators for digital education across the

standards applied for in-person education, to make them more "multidimensional" and "multifunctional" (Staring et al., 2022[56]). The advantage of adopting such an approach, in their view, is that one common set of standards and procedures applies to all types of provision, but the standards are enhanced to reflect the specific methodological considerations for ensuring quality in digital settings. An integrated approach also recognises that, as stated earlier in this section, all instruction will (in future) at least to some extent make use of digital technology.

Researchers and practitioners from a wide range of private, non-profit, non-governmental and academic organisations active in the field of QA and (digital) education, have been fast-moving to develop quality frameworks, specifically designed to support QA agencies and HEIs with the development of specific considerations for digital higher education. An overview of such quality frameworks, which have been primarily developed to inform the institutional self-assessment of digital learning by HEIs, can be found in publications by Esfijani (2018[84]), the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) (Ossiannilsson et al., 2015[85]), and the EUA (Volungevičienė et al., 2021[86]). However, as stated by Staring et al. (2022[56]), "since the principal responsibility for quality rests with HEIs, and national standards should be informed by the work of HEIs, the standards and indicators included in these frameworks can be used as a basis by QA agencies to develop evidence- and practice-based digital education standards, to be integrated in existing QA frameworks" (Staring et al., 2022, p. 26[56]).

Several of these frameworks include a specific focus on the European context, taking into consideration the ESG, and might therefore be particularly relevant to inform the development of specific digital education standards and indicators in Hungary. In addition to this, any national guidance or standards for digital education should also take into consideration the guidance developed by institutions in Hungary.

- ***Guidance developed by ENQA***. Between 2016 and 2018, ENQA co-ordinated a Working Group to assess the relevance of the ESG for digital education. This led to the publication of the report *Considerations for the quality assurance of e-learning provision*, which provides a list of 36 indicators for digital education, mapped across the ESG (see Box 2.6). Importantly, the Working Group report advises that "external quality assurance considers the characteristics of e-learning in regular procedures" (Huertas et al., 2018, p. 18[87]). Among other suggestions, it recommends that QA agencies ensure institutions make specific reference to e-learning in their self-assessment reports, that site visits take place at the location where most of the institution's technical infrastructure is located, that QA agencies include e-learning competence in the selection process of peer review experts, and that they provide training to experts prior to conducting institutional reviews. ENQA has now embarked on a revision of the ESG and, as part of this process, will build on the 2018 ENQA Working Group report to ensure that the revised set of standards and guidelines includes specific considerations for digital education.
- ***Guidance developed with financial support from the European Commission***. In recent years, the European Commission has funded several organisations to develop specific frameworks to support the QA of digital (higher) education. This includes the *E-xcellence* (EADTU, 2016[88]), *DigCompOrg* (Kampylis et al., 2015[89]) and *DigCopmEdu* frameworks (Redecker and Punie, 2017[90]). A more recent framework, which includes a list of considerations for assuring the quality of hybrid courses and programmes, is the *European Maturity Model for Blended Education* (EMBED) (Goeman, Poelmans and Van Rompaey, 2018[91]).
- ***Guidance developed by Hungarian HEIs***. In 2020, digital education experts from four HEIs in Hungary[13] developed a handbook to promote and support the use of digital tools among Hungarian higher education instructors (Dringó-Horváth et al., 2020[92]), following the six domains included in the EU's *DigiCompEdu* framework frameworks (Redecker and Punie, 2017[90]). The publication is available in English and Hungarian, and is the result of an annual conference series on digitalisation in higher education, launched in November 2020 and co-ordinated by the ICT Research Centre and the Centre for Continuing Education in Educational Informatics at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (Pintér, 2021[93]; KRE, 2021[94]).

Box 2.6. Considerations for the quality assurance of e-learning provision, ENQA, 2018

Part I of the ESG includes a set of ten standards and guidelines that can be used by external QA agencies operating in the EHEA to guide their development of national standards for institutions' internal QA processes. Across these ten standards, the ENQA Working Group report (Huertas et al., 2018[87]). provides 36 indicators for the QA of digital education:

- ***ESG 1.1 Policies for quality assurance***. Seven indicators are outlined under this standard, for example the inclusion of e-learning in the institution's overall strategy and the involvement of remote learners in the internal QA system.
- ***ESG 1.2 Design and approval of programmes***. This standard covers six indicators, including "the institution has a clear strategy for digital innovation… E-learning programmes are aligned with the institutional mission… [and] Curricula design reflects pedagogical practices and innovation" (Huertas et al., 2018[87]). The report also recommends checking that the people involved in designing, developing and evaluating e-learning have the required academic and technical expertise, and that teaching staff are made aware of the challenges and opportunities of developing e-learning programmes. Finally, students are mentioned as key stakeholders to be consulted when developing e-learning curricula.
- ***ESG 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment***. Nine indicators are proposed for this standard. Under this standard, the report recommends that QA agencies check the chosen teaching and learning processes, learning materials and technical infrastructure meet the aim of achieving learning outcomes, allow for e-assessment, facilitate student learning and are regularly reviewed and updated. QA agencies are also advised to check if students are made aware of e-assessment processes and plagiarism rules, and advised on how to appropriately work with online materials and behave in online environments.
- ***ESG 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification***. The three indicators proposed for this standard are: (1) (prospective) students are informed about the equipment, e-learning, digital skills and knowledge requirements; (2) students are informed about the workload and pedagogical model and (3) there is an institutional policy and procedure in place to recognise prior learning.
- ***ESG 1.5 Teaching staff***. Eight indicators are covered under this standard, including: "The teaching staff is trained and proficient in the use of learning technologies and e-assessment methods… The institution has developed procedures to identify the support requirements of the teaching staff… [and] Technological and pedagogical support services for teachers are adequate, accessible, and timely" (Huertas et al., 2018[87]). The report also recommends that QA agencies assess whether institutions monitor student-staff ratio to keep teachers' workload manageable, as well as assessing staff hiring and recruitment procedures.
- ***ESG 1.6 Learning resources and student support***. Five indicators are outlined under this standard, including: "The VLE supports a variety of methods and tools … The technical infrastructure ensures the accessibility of the e-learning programme by students with special educational needs … [or] The institution provides students with an adequate e-library and virtual labs" (Huertas et al., 2018[87]).
- ***ESG 1.7 Information management***. The four indicators proposed under this standard recommend QA agencies to check whether institutions adequately collect and use data to evaluate the quality of e-learning programmes, including learning analytics to track students' performance in real time. The HEI should also have information management systems that include "relevant, updated, and reliable information concerning the institution and its

programmes" and policies that consider "ethical norms and government policy with respect to data protection and the privacy of students" (Huertas et al., 2018[87]).

- ***ESG 1.8 Public information***. This standard includes four indicators. They focus on making sure that institutions publish reliable, complete and up-to-date information on: (1) study programmes, (2) technical supports, (3) technical requirements to use the system and (4) completion rates, pass rates and drop-out rates.
- ***ESG 1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes***. The four indicators under this standard advise QA agencies to assess whether: e-learning programmes are regularly reviewed, updated and improved; pedagogical developments are aligned with institutional strategy; information and communication technology (ICT) and pedagogy developments are analysed and implemented; and the internal quality assurance system takes into account feedback from key stakeholders (especially students).
- ***ESG 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance***. The report recommends including the assessment of e-learning in external QA procedures in the same way as for provision through other means. It recommends institutions contact their respective QA agencies regarding their e-learning provision and start a process of exchange of information and collaboration for the development of sector-wide accepted standards and processes for the QA of digital education.

Source: Adapted from Huertas et al. (2018[87]), *Considerations for Quality Assurance of E-Learning Provision,* European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), Brussels, https://www.aqu.cat/elButlleti/butlleti91/articles2_en.html#.YGY_R5NKhTZ.

In addition to considering how to embed specific standards for fully online and hybrid education in existing QA frameworks, higher education systems across the OECD are also reflecting on how to embed micro-credentials in national QA frameworks. Micro-credentials are "increasingly recognised by institutions as a means to deliver more flexible and personalised pathways for learners to upskill and reskill throughout life" and are often offered as fully online courses or programmes (OECD, 2021, p. 13[95]). While an in-depth analysis on the current state of micro-credentials in Hungary, including how to embed them in the existing higher education and QA systems was outside of the scope of this project, the OECD's 2021 Economic Survey of Hungary highlighted that HEIs in Hungary are not widely involved in adult learning, and few of them offer alternative credentials. To stimulate the development of alternative credentials, the report recommended "funding and deregulation measures" as well as "incorporating shorter learning programmes into the existing higher education framework" (OECD, 2021b, p. 86[96]).

On 16 June 2022, the EU adopted a *Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability* (Council of the European Union, 2022b[97]). In this recommendation, the EU proposes ten principles for the QA of micro-credentials and recommends EU Member States consider "integrating micro-credentials in national qualifications frameworks and systems" and assure their quality using the same standards and principles that apply to other programmes. Box 2.7 describes emerging approaches to the regulation and QA of micro-credentials in three OECD jurisdictions.

Box 2.7. International examples of regulating and assuring the quality of micro-credentials

Ireland

The Irish Higher Education Authority has funded the development of micro-credentials through its Human Capital Initiative (HEA, 2020[98]). Micro-credentials are defined by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) as "minor, special purpose or supplemental award-types" that may be used by individuals "to gain exemptions from parts of, and advanced entry to, programmes leading to NFQ qualification" and to "record the acquisition of specific skills needed by individuals, e.g. for work" (QQI, 2021a, p. 5[99]). Micro-credentials are seen, in Ireland, as alternative credentials oriented to both the labour market and educational advancement. While this definition does not include a clear upper or lower limit for micro-credentials, their value typically ranges between 10 and 30 ECTS credits (QQI, 2021b[100]).

New Zealand

In 2018, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) created a QA system for micro-credentials, by defining them in specific regulations and setting quality standards (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 2018[101]). In 2019, the New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission started providing funding to higher education providers for the development and delivery of micro-credentials. Micro-credentials range in size between 5 and 40 credits (equivalent to 2.5-20 ECTS credits) and serve to reskill and upskill the labour force. They require compulsory employer involvement and, to obtain recognition by the NZQA, HEIs need to demonstrate that they do not duplicate an existing programme offer (OECD, 2021[95]).

Australia

Australia adopted a National Microcredentials Framework in March 2022 to guide learners, instructors and providers in the development and delivery of micro-credentials. The Framework defines microcredentials as "a certification of assessed learning or competency, with a minimum volume of learning of one hour and less than an AQF award qualification, that is additional, alternate, complementary to or a component part of an AQF award qualification" (Government of Australia, 2022, p. 9[102]). Among other elements, the Framework establishes critical information requirements, and outlines a minimum standard for providers to apply as they develop and deliver micro-credentials that will sit on the Microcredentials Marketplace. The Microcredentials Marketplace, released as MicroCred Seeker in December 2022, is a nationally consistent platform that allows student to search and compare higher education micro-credentials and understand how they can be stacked and used for credit towards a complete qualification. The Marketplace connects providers with learners, employers and industry groups to facilitate lifelong learning and meet emerging workforce demands.

Source: Adapted from OECD (2021[95]), *Quality and value of micro-credentials in higher education : Preparing for the future*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/quality-and-value-of-micro-credentials-in-higher-education_9c4ad26d-en.

A recommendation for Hungary to related to the adaptation of its existing accreditation and QA frameworks to digital education is as follows.

Recommendation 2: Develop specific indicators for digital education and embed them in existing accreditation frameworks by systematically integrating them across all standards

- Develop a Working Group of national and international digital higher education experts, responsible for the development of revised assessment frameworks to be used by MAB for its accreditation procedures. The Working Group should consist of experts representing as wide a range of higher

education training profiles and disciplines as possible, as well as representatives from national-level higher education, stakeholder representatives and supporting organisations (e.g. national student union, Erasmus+ national agency, academies of sciences, etc.). The same group of experts could – in future – be appointed as external members of MAB (appointed for a specific cycle) and be involved on a regular basis in Disciplinary Committees or site visit teams for the accreditation of institutions, doctoral schools and study programmes.

- In collaboration with HEIs, the Working Group on Digital Higher Education analyses the standards and indicators included in international quality frameworks for digital higher education, especially those identified in the paper *Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports* (Staring et al., 2022[56]) developed as part of this project, the ESG (ENQA, 2015[27]), and the existing frameworks for institution and programme accreditation used by MAB. Based on this analysis, the Working Group identifies relevant standards and indicators for the QA of digital education in Hungary at institution, programme, course and individual learner/instructor level, and advises on how they can be embedded in the existing frameworks.
- Prior to finalising these standards and indicators, MAB could conduct pilot reviews of a small sample of fully online and hybrid study programmes, as well as institutions with a high number of fully online and hybrid courses and programmes, to assess the suitability of the updated assessment frameworks and make adjustments where necessary prior to rolling them out across all accreditation procedures.

Potential standards and indicators for the quality assurance of digital higher education providers in Hungary

This section illustrates how the existing assessment frameworks used by MAB could be revised to reflect specific considerations for digital education. As demonstrated below, such a revision does not necessarily require major changes. As well as adding a limited number of indicators for digital education, small revisions to the phrasing or wording of the existing standards and indicators can be sufficient to reflect the specificities of digital education. It is important to note that the additional and revised standards and indicators presented in this section are indicative only and should be used as a starting point for a more comprehensive revision, led by a dedicated Working Group of experts (as per Recommendation 2).

Options for embedding specific considerations for digital education in the minimum operating requirements of higher education institutions in Hungary

Higher education providers in Hungary are not currently expected to meet any specific minimum requirements related to their capacity to deliver digital education. To address this gap, one option for Hungary is to develop an additional requirement or standard related to HEIs' capacity for digital delivery, pedagogical innovation and study flexibility, consisting of three indicators (see Table 2.20).

- ***Institutional capacity for digital delivery***: The first indicator consists of ensuring that HEIs have the required digital learning resources and virtual learning environments in place (e.g., institution-wide VLE/LMS or electronic access to digital library resources) to support the type(s) of digital courses and study programmes they wish to offer (i.e. online, hybrid and/or in person/blended).
- ***Institutional capacity for pedagogical innovation***: The second indicator focuses on instructors' pedagogical skills and institutional supports to build the capacity of instructors and students to effectively use digital technologies for pedagogical innovation.
- ***Institutional capacity for flexible delivery***: The third indicator seeks to ensure that HEIs have a flexible and adapted (digital) course offer that meets the needs of its targeted student population.

Table 2.20. Potential indicators and evidence requirements to assess institutions' capacity for digital delivery, learning innovation and study flexibility in Hungary

INDICATORS	EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS		
Capacity for digital delivery, learning innovation and study flexibility		**Why?**	**Potential evidence requirements**
1. Digital delivery	The available digital learning resources and virtual learning environments are appropriate to support the delivery of the type(s) of digital study programmes and courses the institution seeks to offer (i.e. online, hybrid and/or in-person/blended).	All instruction will be blended in the future	1.a Institution-wide LMS/VLE 1.b Access to digital library/resources 1.c Widespread access to rich digital learning media
2. Pedagogical innovation	The proposed pedagogical skills and supports for instructors and students are sufficient to enable the effective use of learning resources and virtual learning environments, as well as stimulate pedagogical innovation and learner success.	Digital capacity of instructors and learners enables and is a driver of learning innovation	2.a Institution-wide LME/VLE 2.b Pedagogical innovation in the learning design of programmes 2.c Dedicated support for instructors and learners
3. Flexible delivery	The proposed study modes and intensity of the institution's programmes are appropriate and adapted to meet the needs of learners.	Increases opportunities for learner flexibility	3.a Analysis of learner needs 3.b Common learning design framework 3.c Delivery mode and methods align to learner needs and achievement of learning outcomes

Source: Based on a review of emerging quality standards, practices and supports for digital higher education in Staring et al. (2022[56]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Options for embedding specific considerations for digital education in the institutional accreditation template in Hungary

Building on the review of standards and indicators for the QA of digital higher education included in Staring et al. (2022[56]), Table 2.21 presents a potential model of embedding specific indicators for digital education across the institutional accreditation template currently being used by MAB. 24 additional indicators are proposed, as well as small revisions to the wording of existing indicators across all parts of the template.

- ***The general situation of the institution (Part I)***: This part of the framework could be enhanced by including two additional indicators for digital education, drawn from ENQA's *Considerations for the quality assurance of e-learning provision* (Huertas et al., 2018[87]). The first proposed indicator recognises the importance of alignment between digital capacity and the institution's mission and overall strategy. The second emphasises the crucial role of leadership and management in developing strategic plans, defining performance indicators and influencing the overall quality culture across the institution.
- ***Compliance with the ESG (Part II)***: This part of the framework already lists over 80 elements, meaning the scope to add a comprehensive list of additional requirements specific to digital education is limited, and this needs to be weighed up against the additional cost and time required to be compliant (for both HEIs and MAB). However, an analysis of the indicators included in the current framework reveals several significant gaps in relation to digital education. Table 2.21 illustrates how some of these gaps could be addressed with the inclusion of 24 additional quality indicators, as well as rewording some of the existing indicators (the proposed revisions to existing indicators is emphasised ***In bold and italics***).
- ***The academic, scientific and educational activities of the institution (Part III)***: In this part of the template, one additional indicator is proposed, which recognises institutional engagement in professional bodies, partnerships and educational alliances that help to benchmark best practice in digital higher education.

Table 2.21. Potential standards and indicators for institutional accreditation in Hungary

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	
Part I: The general situation of the institution	**Additional Indicators**	
	1. Describe how digital delivery, learning innovation and study flexibility are part of the institution's mission and overall strategy for development. 2. Leadership and management actively support the development and implementation of quality blended, hybrid and online learning by developing strategic plans, defining performance indicators and influencing the quality culture within the institution.	
Part II: Compliance with Part I of the ESG (2015)	**Additional Indicators**	**Revisions to existing indicators**
ESG 1.1: Policy for quality assurance	3. If external service providers are used in the provision of the digital learning environment, written agreements/contracts are in place defining specific roles and responsibilities.	6. If the specificities of a training area [***or delivery mode]*** justify the definition of specific quality criteria, please present a document containing them and explain any additional quality criteria other than those in point 3. 11. Describe how quality policy supports academic freedom, academic integrity [***and the monitoring and prevention of contract cheating***].
ESG 1.2 & 1.9: Design and approval of programmes & Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes	4. Does the institution have a clear strategy for embedding digital innovation and flexible delivery in the curriculum? Is this strategy known throughout the institution at all levels? 5. Are teaching staff involved in designing/developing/evaluating programmes familiar with the advantages/disadvantages of digital innovation and flexible delivery in particular course contexts? 6. What models or approaches to learning design inform the development, delivery and evaluation of programmes?	3. During the latest strategic review of the HEI, was the number, provision ***[and delivery mode***] of courses examined? If yes, which courses? 10. Provide examples of student skills development and the way in which these skills are linked to the subject studied ***[including any learning related to the use of new digital technologies***].
ESG 1.3: Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment	7. To what extent are students engaged in active learning in digital or digitally enriched learning environments? 8. How does digital innovation support assessment of learning and student feedback? 9. How is teaching, learning and assessment informed by best practice in digital higher education?	1. Number of courses per semester [***by study intensity and study mode***].
ESG 1.4: Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	10. The institution has policies and procedures in place for the recognition of prior learning. 11. How and to what extent are students provided with the opportunity to study their subjects through flexible provision? 12. Students/prospective students are informed about requirements concerning digital equipment, digital skills and expected workload for each delivery mode.	
ESG 1.5: Teaching staff	13. Do staff involved in teaching have appropriate qualifications, knowledge and skills required to promote digital innovation and study flexibility? 14. What training and professional development activities are available to new instructors and existing staff to harness the potential of digital innovation and the provision of flexible delivery	2. Models, criteria, [***and competencies***] for [***assessment***] and [**tailored**] professional development of teaching staff [***including development of digital skills***].

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	
	modes? 15. What expert professional support staff and internal service units are available for digitally enhanced course design, pedagogy and assessment?	
ESG 1.6: Learning resources and student support	16. The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is regularly updated and supports a variety of tools and learning resources. 17. Students can access electronic library resources and digital textbooks from wherever they choose to study. 18. Digital media and Open Educational Resources (OER) are embedded in the curriculum to enhance the student learning experience. 19. Student resources, development and support services are available to facilitate the acquisition of digital skills (including the ethical use of digital devices, data and cybersecurity risks) and students are provided with (online) mental wellbeing support. 20. Students have increasing access to simulations, virtual labs and other forms of augmented reality to support their study.	
ESG 1.7: Information management	21. Does the institution have a strategy on the use and purpose of learning analytics with the aim of improving student engagement and success?	6. What does the institution do to ensure data and information security [***and ethical norms with respect to student privacy***]?
ESG 1.8: Public information		6. Where can prospective students find information (on admission procedures, admission requirements, fees, qualifications, expected qualifications, learning outcomes, [***study modes***] and diploma requirements)? Is it available somewhere in an extract/simplified language?
1.9. Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes	22. What student satisfaction and programme evaluation data are available on the maturity of digital infrastructure, quality of learning innovation and provision of study flexibility? 23. What data is available on student retention, time to completion and student success? 24. What data is available on graduate destination and employer satisfaction? 25. What institutional self-assessment and benchmarking takes place specific to the maturity of digital infrastructure, quality of learning innovation and provision of study flexibility?	
Part III: The academic, scientific and educational activities of the institution	**Additional indicators**	
	26. There is active engagement in professional bodies, membership of educational alliances and/or partnerships with the EdTech sector that help to support organisational learning in digitally enhanced learning and teaching.	

Source: Based on a review of emerging quality standards, practices and supports for digital higher education in Staring et al. (2022[56]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

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Notes

[1] Government Decree No. 18/2016 (VIII. 5.).

[2] Government Decree No. 139/2015. (VI. 9.).

[3] Government Decree No. 87/2015 (IV. 9).

[4] The hybrid flexible or "hy-flex" education model is "an instructional approach that combines face-to-face (F2F) and online learning. Each class session and learning activity is offered in-person, synchronously online, and asynchronously online. Students can decide how to participate" (Milman Natalie et al., 2020[103]).

[5] Eszterházy Károly Catholic University (BSc in Business Administration and Management); Gábor Dénes College (BSc in Tourism and Catering); Kodolányi János University (BSc in Human Resources BSc); Széchenyi István University (BSc in Transportation Engineering); University of Szeged (business administration and management BSc); University of Miskolc (Higher VET in Information Technology Engineering); University of Pécs (Higher VET programme in Law); University of Pannonia (MA in Educational Sciences); and Sárospatak Reformed Theological Academy (MA in Theology).

[6] Quantifying student drop-out in Hungarian higher education is complicated, as there is no officially agreed definition on what constitutes dropping out. Evidence is also primarily collected in ad-hoc reports and research papers, which use different methodologies (Kálmán, Tynjälä and Skaniakos, 2020[13]).

[7] "Second instance competence" refers to the authority responsible for deciding on appeals made against decisions made by the authority with first instance competence.

[8] "First instance competence" refers to the authority acting as the first instance in the administrative/judicial procedure.

[9] The study focused on MAB's procedures for institutional accreditation, programme launch and establishment.

[10] Appendix to the Government Decree No. 139/2015. (VI. 9.).

[11] This requirement only applies to master's programmes.

[12] One US credit point equals two ECTS credits. The typical "full course load" at an American university implies 15 US credits per semester, which is equal to 30 ECTS credits at a European university.

[13] Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church, Budapest Business School, the University of Pécs and the Hungarian Dance Academy.

3 Institutional quality management of digital higher education

This project, led and implemented by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), was carried out with financial support provided by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM), in close collaboration with the Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM) and the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB).

This chapter analyses trends in institutional practice for the quality management of digital higher education in Hungary and provides recommendations on how accreditation processes can be revised to incentivise institutions to take greater responsibility for the quality management and innovation of their (digital) education offerings.

3.1 Analysis of institutional quality management practices for digital higher education in Hungary

This section starts by analysing the general development of institutional quality cultures for teaching and learning in Hungarian higher education institutions (HEIs), followed by trends in how HEIs in Hungary have responded to the challenge of managing the quality of digital higher education more specifically. It then presents three key barriers to the further development of institutional quality cultures in Hungary.

Slow development of institutional quality cultures for teaching and learning

It is a well-known principle, articulated in international quality circles (e.g. the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) or the European Association of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), that responsibility for assuring the quality of teaching and learning rests principally with higher education providers, while quality assurance (QA) agencies, in their capacity as independent expert bodies, are responsible for ensuring the inputs, processes and outcomes of programmes offered by HEIs meet quality standards set out in national law and regulation. The *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*, for example, state that "higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance" (ENQA, 2015[1]). Similarly, INQAAHE's *Guidelines of Good Practice* state that "institutional and programmatic quality and quality assurance are primarily the responsibility of the higher education institutions (HEIs) themselves, and [this] respects the academic autonomy, identity and integrity of the institutions and programmes" (INQAAHE, 2018, p. 7[2]).

From as early as 1993, Hungarian HEIs were required to put in place regulations and processes for the quality management of their internal operations, programmes, staff and student support services, in line with Part 1 of the ESG. The National Act on Higher Education stipulates that the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), in its external reviews of HEIs, should "tak[e] into account the Standards and Guidelines in the European Higher Education Area" (Government of Hungary, 2011[3]). Institutional quality cultures for teaching and learning are still developing in Hungary, slowed by three main conditions.

Perceptions of quality assurance as administratively burdensome

The first reason relates to the wider political history of the country. Stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team explained that before the regime change in 1989, the tradition and practice of QA was not common among Hungarian HEIs, as it was seen as a control mechanism exercised by the ruling communist party. This has significantly shaped how QA is perceived in Hungary today, i.e. as a "regulatory" administrative process to exert control over the practice of individual institutions and instructors rather than an "enabling" process to support quality enhancement (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983[4]). In this context, HEIs mentioned the *ex ante* programme accreditation process as an example of a highly burdensome administrative procedure that hinders the development of institutional quality cultures. However, international evidence also shows that the perception of QA as an administratively burdensome or "box-ticking exercise" purely to satisfy external expectations is common across many higher education systems (Greere, 2022[5]). One higher education stakeholder interviewed by the OECD review team described the issue as follows:

> "Quality assurance should not be seen as necessary or a burden. It should provide helpful and competitive services and information to students and staff" (Higher education stakeholder, February 2022)

Lack of shared national guidance, training, or support

The second reason highlighted by higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team is the lack of nationally shared guidance, support and resources on "why" or "how" to embed the ESG in institutional contexts. The only resources currently available to HEIs in Hungary are the highly detailed application and evaluation sheets used by MAB as part of accreditation procedures. However, several stakeholders felt that these templates could not be used as guidance materials to support quality enhancement.

In other OECD jurisdictions, QA agencies have developed specific guidance to support institutions with the implementation of national and international quality standards. An example is **Malta**, which in addition to its national standards and guidelines for institutional accreditation, has developed a *Step-by-Step Guide to Internal Quality Assurance*. The guide is "aimed mainly at providers that are still developing their IQA [internal quality assurance] policy" (National Commission for Further and Higher Education Malta, 2017a, p. 5[6]) and addresses all standards included in the national QA framework for further and higher education (National Commission for Further and Higher Education Malta, 2017b[7]), as well as the ESG. Other systems have developed specialised training programmes for institutional QA staff, as evidence shows that these actors are often appointed "with minimum preparation or training; and only external quality assurance requirements to guide internal action" (Greere, 2022, p. 2[5]). In **Spain**, for example, the national QA agency runs a specific programmes to support HEIs with the development of their internal QA systems and teacher performance assessment systems (ANECA, 2022a[8]; ANECA, 2022b[9]). Other agencies, such as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in the **United Kingdom**, regularly organise (online) training for institutional QA staff. Based on a review of trainings organised by several QA agencies, Greere (2022[5]). has developed a framework of potential topics to be considered in the design of QA training (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Potential topics to be considered in the design of quality assurance training programmes

Content blocks	Potential topics
A. Setting the scene	Understanding quality in higher education Aims, objectives and approaches to QA Features of quality assurance systems or frameworks
	Consideration of national contexts (What are national/regional/international motivators? Who influences sectoral directions? What requirements do HEIs need to comply with? What standards are expected? How do HEIs compare at system level?) Consideration of institutional contexts (What is specific about HEIs? What is the interplay between various structures?)
B. Internal quality assurance	Overview of areas in focus for internal QA (What is subject to internal QA? How are interdependencies accounted for?)
	Benefits and challenges of internal QA procedures (What structural set-ups are available? How can quality assurance support institutional development? What quality assurance instruments can render effective outcomes?)
	Detailed analysis of problematic areas (How are standards/expectations increasing? What must be addressed?) Context-specific solutions available for institutional implementation (What are effective ways of addressing quality issues?)
	Involvement of stakeholders in internal quality assurance (How to involve various stakeholder groups? What contributions may be expected? What impact may such contributions have?)
C. External quality assurance	Overview of areas in focus for external QA (How are areas clustered? What reference points are applicable?)
	Benefits and challenges of external QA procedures (What is the rationale for external review/assessments? What contributions can they make institutionally/nationally/regionally/internationally?)
	External QA methodologies for institutional or programme review/assessment (What are defining features? What is likely to happen during a review? What are reviewers likely to focus on? What standards are used and how?) Outcomes from external QA methodologies (How are outcomes arrived at? What outcomes are possible and what consequences do they carry? What is frequently commended/recommended?)
	Involvement of stakeholders in external quality assurance (How to involve various stakeholder groups? What contributions may be expected? What impact may such contributions have?)
D. Conclusions	Discussion of the synergies between internal and external QA. Summary of key messages relevant for quality assurance development. Summary of expectations of roles involved with quality assurance.

Source: Adapted from Greere (2022[5]), "Training for quality assurance in higher education: practical insights for effective design and successful delivery", *Quality in Higher Education*, p. 9, https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2021.2020978.

Limited involvement of institutional stakeholders

The third and related reason interviewees highlighted for the slow development of institutional quality cultures in Hungarian higher education is the challenge of developing institutional QA systems that are able to successfully engage actors across the entire institution in a process of continuous quality enhancement. International evidence shows that the development of institutional quality cultures requires both centralised guidance and decentralised implementation (Staring et al., 2022[10]). In other words, it requires institutions "to move from the existing control framework to a *culture creation framework* and integrate QA activities into their institutional cultures and everyday practices" (Jung, 2022, p. 12[11]). However, in institutions where QA is still developing or has only recently been introduced, "a centralised system may be the most effective when an institution first introduces the QA system" (Jung, 2022, p. 7[11]).

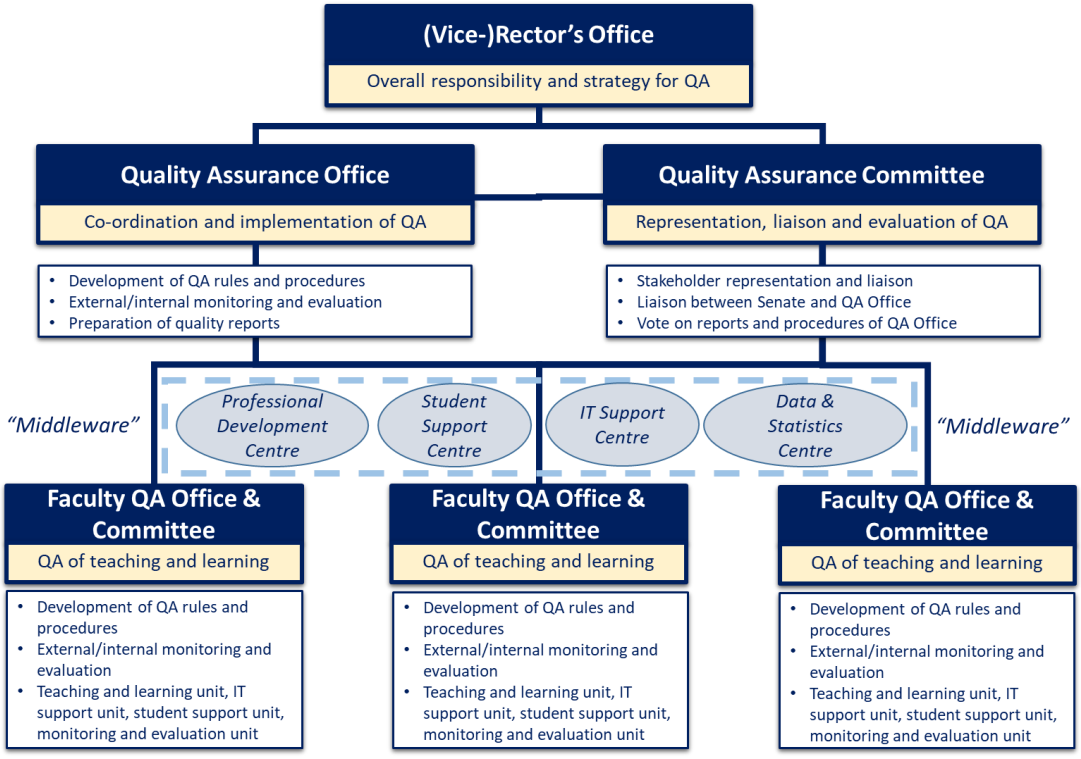
Efforts to steer institutional QA practice are being made in several Hungarian HEIs. For example, **Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)**, a large public university located in Budapest, adopted an institution-level *Quality Manual* in 2016 (Eötvös Loránd University, 2016[12]) and the institution-level *Academic Regulations for Students* also include some "provisions pertaining to certain faculties" (ELTE, 2022[13]). Based on the guidelines included in these documents, each faculty is responsible for formulating its own quality goals, have them approved by a Faculty Quality Council, and report annually on the actions taken to meet institution-level quality goals. Implementation of these central level QA guidelines however is still developing. For example, the Faculty of Education and Psychology's QA website states: "although the university has created quality improvement documents, the development of a faculty quality improvement system requires more than a mechanical adoption of these documents. It requires shared thinking, shared goals, and joint commitment" (ELTE, 2022[13]). Similarly, at **Budapest Metropolitan University (METU)**, a private institution, centralised coordination of QA processes is seen as key for the development of an institutional quality culture: "quality management processes are under continuous monitoring and control co-ordinated by the Strategic and Quality Management Directorate" (Budapest Metropolitan University, n.d.[14]). At the **University of Debrecen (DE)**, a large foundation university with 14 Faculties, a Quality Manual was first developed in 2004. The eighth version of the manual states that it aims at "co-ordinating the operation of the university's quality assurance system" (University of Debrecen, 2017, p. 7[15]).

There are significant differences between institutions in terms of how institutional QA is organised, and a lack of evidence as to whether a centralised or decentralised approach leads to better outcomes (Jung, 2022[11]), (EUA, 2022[16]). However, the institutional site visits and interviews carried out by the OECD review team as part of this project reveal that those HEIs with more developed QA systems in Hungary are typically organised as follows. This structure can provide a potential model for HEIs in Hungary that are either just starting or still in the process of developing their internal QA systems (see Figure 3.1):

- ***Rector or Vice Rector***. In Hungarian HEIs, teaching, learning and research matters typically fall under the responsibility of the Rector, and this includes the QA of teaching and learning. In many institutions, the responsibility for QA is delegated to the Vice Rector for Educational Affairs. Along with the Senate, the (Vice-)Rector is responsible for formulating quality goals at institutional level, along with drafting the institution's development plan, in which the institution is required by law to outline its strategic goals and priorities for the next five years (OECD, 2021, p. 92[17]).
- ***Institution and Faculty-Level Quality Assurance Office***. Depending on the size of the institution, the (Vice-)Rector will appoint a Quality Assurance Officer, who is responsible for co-ordinating the activities of a dedicated Quality Assurance (QA) Office. The QA Office is typically responsible for formulating the institution's rules and procedures for internal QA in line with the institutional development plan. It is also responsible for co-ordinating the internal and external monitoring and evaluation activities across the institution. Depending on the size of the institution, the QA Office will either play a more co-ordinating role (i.e. compiling and analysing data collected by faculty-level QA Offices) or a more active role (i.e. central data collection, for example through institution-wide surveys of students and staff). Most often, a combination of both is present in HEIs.

- ***Institution and Faculty-Level Quality Assurance Committee***. HEIs and faculties typically also have a Quality Assurance Committee, which at institution level is often chaired by the Head of the QA Office and includes student and senior staff members (e.g. Deans or Vice-Deans) involved in managing, supporting or monitoring the quality of teaching and learning at faculty level. In some cases, the Committee also includes representatives from the labour market. However, a recent OECD review on the labour market relevance and outcomes of doctoral education in Hungary (OECD, 2022[18]) shows that the inclusion of feedback from labour market stakeholders in the development of study programmes is not common. The QA Committee is typically responsible for reviewing and voting on the QA rules, procedures and reports prepared by the QA Office, and for advising the Senate and/or (Vice-)Rector on quality-related issues. In some institutions, the QA Office, QA Committee and Senate also review the quality and performance of study programmes (and instructors) on an annual basis, based on administrative data and stakeholder feedback.
- ***Institution and Faculty-Level Support Centres***. To support implementation and bridge the QA activities at institution, faculty and individual student/instructor level, some HEIs have established dedicated centres to support students, instructors and administrative support staff with specific quality issues (e.g. centres for digital teaching and learning). Other institutions have expanded the scope of the supports provided by existing centres to these specific issues (e.g. student union, student information centre, library, IT support centre, faculty administration). A smaller number of institutions has started pooling the supports provided by different centres into one dedicated centre for (digital) teaching and learning. Depending on the size of the institution, these support centres either operate as "middleware" organisations, providing supports across the institution, or at faculty level. Often, a combination of both types are present in institutions.

Figure 3.1. Potential model for the organisation of quality management in Hungarian HEIs



Source: Based on stakeholder interviews and institutional site visits, as well as a review of emerging quality standards, practices and supports for digital higher education in Staring et al. (2022[10]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Emerging practices for the quality management of digital higher education

This section describes trends in how HEIs in Hungary have responded to the challenge of managing the quality of their digital course offerings. It starts by describing how digitalisation is embedded in the strategy and investment plans of institutions. Next, it describes how institutions are supporting the implementation of quality practices, focusing specifically on the teaching and learning practices of instructors and students. Finally, it looks at how institutions are monitoring the performance of digital higher education.

Strategy and investments for the development of digital higher education

A major survey of 368 institutions from 48 countries in Europe**,** carried out by the European Universities Association (EUA) in 2020 (Gaebel et al., 2021[19]), found that 95% of HEIs saw digitalisation as a strategic priority over the next five years. In 51% of HEIs, digitally enhanced teaching and learning was already included in their internal QA systems, and in 41% this was under development. This represents a significant increase compared with 2014, when the figures were 29% and 35% respectively. In Hungary, too, several HEIs have included the expansion of their fully online and hybrid course offer as an explicit priority in their institutional development plans, as well as the investments in digital technology to strengthen the quality of pedagogical practices.

Integration of digitalisation in institutional vision, mission and strategy

Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team explained that digitalisation is not a new issue in Hungary. Digitalisation has already been on HEIs' agenda for several years, and they are increasingly aware of the many benefits it offers. The most frequently cited benefits are that digitalisation has the potential to support greater inclusion, sustainability, internationalisation, quality, flexibility, and openness. Tolnai (2021[20]) confirms that "during the pandemic, institutions lagging behind in digital development have, by necessity, significantly improved their digital services, which will lead to strong competition in the Hungarian higher education market for courses that exploit the potential of online space" (Tolnai, 2021, p. 173[20]). One higher education stakeholder interviewed by the OECD review team noted:

> "The digital transformation is not a requirement that comes from inside [the institution] or the government. It is a driver that comes from society itself. It is difficult to be competitive in the European scene without up-to-date teaching methodologies, up-to-date digital infrastructure or without improved competences of teachers" (Higher education administrator, March 2022)

However, the consultations carried out by the OECD review team reveal that there are differences in the way in which higher education leadership are seeking to embed digitalisation across their course offers. At one end of the spectrum, there are those institutions that wish to fully embrace the opportunities offered by digitalisation and develop fully online and hybrid courses across their entire academic offer. At the other end, there are those which take a more reticent approach and would prefer to maintain an emphasis on place-based education (see Box 3.1). This renewed emphasis on place-based education is present in many OECD jurisdictions and is a "reaction to the pandemic and the far from ideal experience of emergency remote teaching" (Ó Caollaí, 2022[21]). It highlights the need to strengthen commitment and alignment at the level of institutional leadership, staff and students around the benefits and potential of digitalisation to support programme innovation, international collaboration, and to strengthen the quality of pedagogical practices in general in higher education.

Box 3.1. Examples of institutional responses to the digitalisation of higher education

Institutions fully embracing the opportunities offered by digitalisation

Interviews with stakeholders from **Budapest Metropolitan University (METU)** revealed that there is a desire among leadership to support the development of fully online and hybrid programmes across virtually the entire institution's course offer. The main reasons cited are to attract more international students, and to provide students with greater flexibility and a high-quality learning experience. More specifically, the expansion of digitalisation is seen as a means to strengthen the implementation of the *MyBRAND* pedagogical model (Budapest Metropolitan University, n.d.[22]), which encourages students to approach their studies as a "portfolio-building exercise" to prepare for their future career. The pedagogical model is based on self-paced study, engagement with the labour market and personal learning projects in addition to the core curriculum. A partnership with Coursera is one of the strategies used to expand the institution's online course offer (Budapest Metropolitan University, n.d.[23]).

The **University of Szeged (SZTE)** has developed a dedicated digital education strategy. Like METU, SZTE is seeking to expand its digital course offer to attract more international students and meet student demands for greater flexibility. More specifically, SZTE is actively exploring the further development of its hybrid course offer, in which students would only have to be physically present for some courses or semesters (e.g. practical training), while theoretical courses would be delivered primarily online. The university hopes that this could attract more Hungarian and international students. During the pandemic, the institution also set up a partnership with Coursera to provide students with free access to courses from the world's leading universities and industry educators (University of Szeged, 2020[24]).

Institutions placing a renewed emphasis on place-based education

Interviews with higher education leadership at the **University of Debrecen** revealed a more reticent approach towards the development of digital higher education. One of the main reasons cited is the fact that in-person instruction and student life in the city of Debrecen are seen as key features of the student experience. This view is also based on the results emerging from two surveys carried out among students and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, co-ordinated by the institution's Directorate for Quality Policies and Developments (University of Debrecen, 2017[15]). The results from the first survey (carried out in spring 2020), showed that 63% of students and instructors wanted future study programmes to be delivered in hybrid format, 33% wanted to return to fully in-person courses and 4% favoured fully online instruction. A second survey (carried out in the autumn of 2020) showed a significant decrease for hybrid delivery (49%) and an increase of students and staff in favour of returning to traditional delivery (41%). Fully online instruction also increased to 10%.

Similarly, at **Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE)** and **Tomori Pál College (TPF)**, there is a desire to return to on-campus education. In the case of KRE, interviewees underlined that, as a church-owned institution, the "humanistic values" of the institution required a continued commitment to in-person instruction. The view of leadership, however, seems to contrast with that of instructors and students, who are in favour of expanding the institution's digital course offer and building on the lessons learned during the pandemic. At TPF, a small and relatively young private college (founded in 2004), interviewees explained that the main focus is on offering practical higher vocational education and training (VET), bachelor's and postgraduate specialisation programmes for adults, which require on-campus instruction. Several students and instructors agreed with this view and highlighted many challenges related to online learning, particularly a lack of digital skills.

Source: Based on stakeholder interviews conducted as part of virtual site visits carried out by the OECD review team in March 2022.

While there are significant differences between HEIs in terms of the extent to which they envisage digitalising their course offerings, there is an almost universal commitment among HEIs to move towards e-administration (Tolnai, 2021[20]). The pandemic has pushed institutions to digitise virtually all administrative processes, which has highlighted benefits for internal and external collaboration with students and instructors, as well as attracting (and retaining) more international students. Higher education stakeholders indicated that international developments such as the European Commission's *Erasmus Without Papers* initiative will drive all HEIs to move their administration online (European Commission, n.d.[25]). Box 3.2 provides details on a mobile application developed by the **University of Debrecen (DE)** in 2020, specifically designed to support students with the organisation and administration of their studies.

Box 3.2. Studyversity mobile application, University of Debrecen

Available in Hungarian and English, the Studyversity mobile application developed by the **University of Debrecen (DE)** provides students with access to up-to-date information on the organisational and administrative aspects of their studies. Integrated with NEPTUN, it allows students to easily consult their calendar and courses, which the application can synchronise with their personal calendar. The application also offers a platform for initiating and completing certain administrative procedures and reminds students about major university events or scholarship opportunities.

Source: Adapted from DE (2020b[26]), *Studyversity – University in your pocket*, University of Debrecen (DE), Debrecen, https://mad-hatter.it.unideb.hu/promo/studyversity/en.html.

The integration of specific standards and indicators to support and monitor the implementation of institutional quality goals for digital higher education is, however, still developing in most Hungarian HEIs. For example, the latest version of the **University of Debrecen's (DE)** Quality Manual (8th version) does not include any specific e-learning considerations (University of Debrecen, 2017[15]). Similarly, in the QA policy at the **Eszterházy Károly Catholic University (EKKE)** reference to digitalisation is only made at the organisational policy level in relation to a Centre for Distance Learning under the Vice Rector, responsible for faculty development for distance learning and teaching, training students in using the LMS, and developing pedagogical and accreditation support for distance learning programmes (Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, 2022[27]). At **Gábor Dénes College (GDF)**, a private institution with longstanding experience in offering distance learning programmes, digital learning is fully embedded in the institution's QA processes, including a definition of some broad implementation goals and indicators (see Box 3.3).

Box 3.3. Quality assurance strategy for digital learning at Gábor Dénes College (GDF)

Gábor Dénes College (GDF) has a well-developed internal QA system for distance learning programmes that takes into account Hungarian higher education law, MAB guidelines and the ESG. The institution's QA documentation includes clearly defined process descriptions for various aspects of its operations. As an example, the quality goals for 2020 included the following areas:

- Creating five new interactive e-learning materials
- Enhancing the quality of final theses
- Increasing the number of publications by teachers
- Increasing student satisfaction (reducing number of official student complaints)
- Increasing the efficiency of successful grant applications.

Distance learning is understood as an individual form of instruction where students are mostly studying from home. Students therefore require various supports, including:

- Digitally available teaching materials that support self-directed learning
- Access to the institution's virtual learning environment or learning management system (VLE/LMS), which includes teaching materials, self-assessments, glossaries, animated and interactive content that makes learning engaging
- Qualified tutors providing professional support in using the digital materials and resources.

GDF also has an online database of teaching materials and a prize for the best digital materials. The award is based on detailed process regulations for the QA of distance learning programmes and courses. The institution's quality standards for digital materials are:

- Students are able to use them as individual learning materials
- They conform to the course syllabus
- They contain the most up-to-date content

Sources: Adapted from GDF (2022a[28]), *Minőségbiztosítás (Quality Assurance)*, Gábor Dénes College, http://gdf.hu/nyilvanos-adatok/minosegbiztositas/; GDF (2022b[29]), *Távoktatás (Distance education)*, Gábor Dénes College, http://gdf.hu/felvetelizoknek/tavoktatas/.

Strong investments in digital education infrastructure

In addition to embedding digitalisation in the institution's overall vision, mission and strategy, to date, HEIs in Hungary have focused primarily on strengthening their physical digital education infrastructure. In some cases, this digital transformation was already under way before the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the pandemic highlighted that some challenges remain – for example, connectivity issues for some students and institutions (OECD, 2021[17]) – HEIs' digital infrastructure is overall quite well-developed. This is confirmed by the speed with which institutions and instructors were able to respond to the challenge of moving education entirely online during the COVID-19 pandemic (DSN/DHECC, 2020[30]). Some institutions visited by the OECD review team have invested in professional video recording equipment to support instructors to develop online courses. Students entering higher education also have good access to digital tools and internet connectivity. An OECD survey carried out as part of the project *Supporting the Digital Transformation of Higher Education in Hungary* (OECD, 2021[17]) confirmed that 93% of students have access to an adequate (or better) computer at home and have adequate internet access. There are however indications that disadvantaged groups such as Roma and students with

disabilities, who are already under-represented in Hungarian higher education, may be at risk of further disadvantages due to the digitalisation of higher education (KIM, 2016[31]; KIM, 2021[32]).

HEIs in Hungary are free to choose which LMS/VLE they use for the organisation and management of teaching and learning activities. Many institutions use Moodle or Blackboard (both widely used systems internationally) or the Hungarian system CourseGarden (DSN/DHECC, 2021[33]). The delivery of online courses themselves, however, differs significantly between individual departments and instructors (e.g. the most used online course delivery tools are Microsoft Teams, Zoom or Google Meets). In addition to this, while private institutions are free to select their own student information system (SIS), public HEIs are required to use the NEPTUN system to collect and store student and course data (OECD, 2021[17]). Stakeholders interviewed by the OECD team, especially students, mentioned that the large variety of digital tools and systems used across institutions, departments and individual instructors means that they have to use multiple usernames and passwords to log in to different systems. This proliferation of accounts not only creates time management challenges, but it also increases cybersecurity risks for the institution. Stakeholders also noted that many instructors were insufficiently trained to effectively use digital technologies for pedagogical purposes, and that HEIs face challenges into linking their institutional software and platforms to central systems such as NEPTUN (Tolnai, 2021, p. 172[20]).

Supporting the quality enhancement of teaching and learning practices

Varying levels of quality in online instruction have refocused attention on previously documented concerns in national and international studies about the need to modernise pedagogical practices in Hungary (KIM, 2016[31]; KIM, 2021[32]). For example, one OECD survey (OECD, 2021[17]) shows that 45% of Hungarian students found the online learning offered as an emergency response during the COVID-19 pandemic to be less engaging than in-person instruction. Despite digital breakthroughs globally, improvements in digital pedagogy are lagging in Hungary (Eurydice/EACEA/EC, 2019[34]; Hülber, Papp-Danka and Dringó-Horváth, 2020[35]). Recent empirical studies on the competencies of Hungarian academics confirm that instructors' digital and pedagogical skills are underdeveloped and considered to be less important by HEIs in Hungary (Kálmán, 2019[36]; Redecker and Punie, 2017[37]). The pandemic, however, has required all instructors to move their instruction online and experiment with digital tools. Likewise, the shift to online learning has required students to develop their digital and self-directed learning skills. One higher education student interviewed by the OECD review team said:

> "Suddenly, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were expectations for teachers and students to improve how they were teaching and learning" (Higher education student, March 2022).

Emergence of supports for the professional development of academic staff

Some HEIs in Hungary have set up staff professional development centres to support the professional development of academic staff in their institutions. Table 3.2 shows that, in 2021, eight HEIs in Hungary had set up a staff professional development centre, representing only a small proportion of the total of 64 accredited HEIs in the country. However, stakeholder interviews carried out by the OECD review team revealed that this list is not up-to-date, and that more institutions are considering setting up such units (e.g. **University of Debrecen**). Other institutions either do not publish up to date public information on the activities of their teaching and learning centres, or the centres operate more at faculty level (e.g. **Hungarian Dance Academy**). Nevertheless, compared with other OECD and European Higher Education Are (EHEA) jurisdictions, the number of centres remains small. A recent EUA report found that institutions in 28 European countries are organising continuous professional development (CPD) for their teaching staff, typically through a teaching and learning centre (Zhang, 2022, p. 36[38]). The study found that in

The Netherlands, for example, all universities have teaching and learning centres that offer basic and senior teaching qualifications, as well as leadership development. In some countries (e.g. **Lithuania**, **The Netherlands**, **Norway**, **Sweden** and **Switzerland**), the teaching enhancement offer is often shared between HEIs, to the benefit of smaller institutions that either do not have the resources to run such centres or cannot cover all their training needs independently.

The supports typically provided to instructors by these staff professional development centres include: the development of information guides and teaching materials, including YouTube videos and podcasts (e.g. the **University of Pannonia** information page on online teaching (University of Pannonia, 2020[39])); the organisation of training programmes; the creation and maintenance of informal support structures, such as individual counselling or peer learning groups; and the provision of prizes and awards. Most of these services focus on improving the digital skills and methods of teaching staff. In terms of governance, the centres usually sit under the responsibility of the Rector, Vice-Rector or Chancellor. In many cases they are also linked to a specific faculty or department with expertise on education and/or staff professional development. For example, at **Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)**, the Education Development and Talent Support Department is linked to the Faculty of Education and Psychology. At **Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE)**, the ICT Research Centre has strong links to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Table 3.2. Staff professional development centres in Hungarian HEIs, 2021

Institution	Year of establishment	Number of full-time staff
Eszterházy Károly University (EKKE)	2000	15
Corvnius University (BCE)	2009	23
Central European University (CEU)	2011	6
Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)	2015	10
Budapest Business School (BGE)	2017	6
Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE)	2018	3
University of Pannonia (PE)	2020	5
University of Pécs (PTE)	2021	8

Sources: Dringó-Horváth, I., Nagy, J. and Weber, A. (2022[40]), "Felsőoktatásban oktatók digitális kompetenciáinak fejlesztési lehetőségei" (Measurement and complex development of digital competence of teachers in higher education), *Educatio 30* (3), pp. 496-507, DOI: 10.1556/2063.30.2021.3.9; Pintér et al. (2021[41]), "Oktatásinformatikai helyzetkép a magyarországi felsőoktatásban" (ate of play of educational technology in higher education in Hungary), *Új Pedagógiai Szemle (New Pedagoical Review) 71 (3-4)*, pp. 54-7, https://upszonline.hu/index.php?article=710304009

An increasing number of HEIs in Hungary has also started to conduct performance assessments of instructors' pedagogical skills and to include these in appraisal procedures. A recent survey conducted as part of a benchmarking study on the landscape of higher education teacher performance assessments (PROFFORMANCE, 2022[42]) found that 88% of HEIs in Hungary have a dedicated framework or process in place for the assessment and appraisal of academic staff. The study compared practices in six countries (**Austria**, **Croatia**, **Czech Republic**, **Georgia**, **Hungary**, and **Serbia**) and found that teaching, research and student feedback/learning outcomes were the three most common types of evidence included in performance assessments. Table 3.3 presents an overview of the priorities included in the appraisal procedures of HEIs in the six participating countries.

Table 3.3. Priorities for the evaluation of academic staff in six countries

Ranking	Austria	Croatia	Czech Republic	Georgia	Hungary	Serbia
1.	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching
2.	Research performance	Professional experience and disciplinary knowledge	Research performance	Assessment of students/ learning outcomes	Research performance	Professional experience and disciplinary knowledge
3.	Specific teaching approaches/ methodologies	Assessment of students/ learning outcomes	Internationalisation	Curriculum development and planning of the learning process and the outcomes	Assessment of students/learning outcomes	Supervision/ mentoring of students

Source: Horvath, L. (2021[43]), *The landscape of higher education teachers' performance. Final report on the results of the benchmarking exercise*, Tempus Public Foundation, Budapest, https://tka.hu/docs/palyazatok/proff_kiadv_final_op.pdf

As in many other OECD systems, one of the main challenges faced by HEIs in Hungary is getting staff other than the "digital frontrunners" to engage in professional development (Tømte et al., 2019[44]; Staring et al., 2022[10]). As noted by Tolnai (2021[20]), "due to the isolated development, general digital developments covering the whole higher education or a specific field, level or type of education have not been implemented" (Tolnai, 2021, p. 173[20]), Many instructors remain hesitant about the benefits offered by digital technology, with interviews revealing that senior academics and staff teaching more practical disciplines have the greatest reservations, and that career structures prioritise research excellence. HEIs are, however, introducing several incentives for professional development (see Box 3.4).

Box 3.4. Incentivising staff engagement in professional development

Hungarian HEIs have introduced various incentives to support the engagement of academic staff in professional development activities:

- ***Prizes and awards***. Some HEIs have launched prizes and awards for the best online teaching materials, for example Gábor Dénes College (GDF) and Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE). The University of Nyiregyhaza (NYF) also publishes a yearly top ten of those teachers rated highest in student evaluations (Horváth, 2021[43]).
- ***Mandatory training and skills assessment***. Some institutions are introducing digital skills assessments or staff professional development as a mandatory requirement in recruitment and staff appraisal processes. For example, at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), some job advertisements (e.g. for Assistant Professor) explicitly ask applicants to demonstrate practical knowledge/experience of digital tools and platforms such as MS Office, MS Teams, Zoom, Outlook, Canvas and Moodle (Közigállás, 2022[45]). At Corvinus University (BCE), academics who receive a sub-standard performance evaluation are required to participate in a coaching programme with a teaching and learning expert (Horváth, 2021[43]).
- ***Institutional platforms to support best practice sharing***. Several instructors interviewed by the OECD review team said that they use digital platforms, such as the institutional LMS, MS Teams or Facebook, to create groups to store and exchange digital resources and methods. There is however a lack of coordination at faculty and institutional level to more widely disseminate the best practices shared in these informal discussion channels.

Source: Based on stakeholder interviews conducted as part of virtual site visits carried out by the OECD review team in March 2022.

The Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM), in collaboration with Tempus Public Foundation, recently launched a higher education teacher performance self-assessment tool as part of the PROFFORMANCE project (PROFFORMANCE, 2022[42]). The tool was piloted in HEIs from six participating countries and is structured around three main dimensions and four horizontal dimensions, one of which is digitalisation. For each of these dimensions, sample questionnaires have been developed to support the self-assessment, peer review, student assessment and appraisal of staff's pedagogical skills. The questionnaires focus on six thematic areas, representing the core tasks of academic staff: teaching and learning; curriculum design and development; teaching performance and student support; assessment; professional development; teaching-related research, innovation and social impact; and organisational and administrative tasks.

Finally, some HEIs in Hungary have taken the lead in organising annual conferences on the topic of digital learning to support inter-institutional collaboration and peer learning on digital higher education. For example, in 2020, the ICT Research Centre and the Centre for Continuing Education in Educational Informatics at **Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE)** launched an annual conference series on digitalisation in higher education. The first conference, in November 2020, focused on dialogue and co-operation for the identification and development of good practices in digital teaching and learning (Pintér, 2021[41]). The second conference, in October 2021, focused on the organisational, regulatory and infrastructural changes in Hungarian higher education that have occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic (Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church, 2021[47]). As a result of the inter-institutional collaboration on digital teaching and learning, experts from four HEIs in Hungary have developed a handbook to promote and support the conscious use of digital tools among Hungarian HEIs (see Box 3.5).

Box 3.5. Handbook to promote and support the conscious use of digital tools among Hungarian higher education instructors

In 2020, experts from Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church, Budapest Business School, the University of Pécs and the Hungarian Dance Academy collaborated on the development of a handbook to promote and support the conscious use of digital tools among Hungarian higher education instructors. The handbook follows the six dimensions included in the EU's *DigCompEdu* framework (Redecker and Punie, 2017[37]) and provides guidance on how each of these dimensions can be implemented in practice by instructors.

The chapters explore the topics of professional engagement (how to use digital technologies to promote communication, collaboration and professional development, and scientific visibility), digital resources (how to find, create and share digital resources effectively), teaching and learning (good practices and useful applications to support the effective use of digital technologies in teaching and learning), assessment (how to increase the effectiveness of assessment by using digital technologies or strategies), supporting learners (how to use digital tools to support inclusion, personalisation and student engagement), and the acquisition of digital competencies (how to help students use digital technologies creatively and responsibly to obtain information, communicate, create different types of content, and solve problems).

Source: Dringó-Horváth et al. (2020[46]), *Az oktatásinformatika módszertana a felsőoktatásban (Educational Technology in Higher Education – Methodological Considerations)*, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church, Budapest, https://btk.kre.hu/images/ikt/oktatasinformatika_a_felsooktatasban.pdf.

Increased focus on student support for digital learning

Many higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic had raised institutions' awareness of the need to strengthen both their student services in general, and to prepare students specifically for digital learning. As noted by Tolnai (2021[20]), the emergence of digital higher education in Hungary has underlined the need to strengthen the "link between student needs and programme development" (Tolnai, 2021, p. 176.[20]).

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, institutions in Hungary have implemented various practices to (better) prepare and support students for digital learning. First, several institutions have started offering students online consultation opportunities, which has significantly increased their accessibility. Next, both during and following the pandemic, many HEIs have strengthened their online presence and communication with students. Finally, several institutions have developed manuals and training courses to teach students "how to learn online" (see Box 3.6), with a particular focus on self-directed and autonomous learning skills. As Hungary's higher education system is characterised by a high number of weekly student-teacher contact hours (see Chapter 2), as well as a primarily lecture-, knowledge- and teacher-based instructional model, stakeholders felt that these skills are particularly underdeveloped among students in Hungary.

Box 3.6. Emergence of online training courses and MOOC partnerships

In response to the emergency remote instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic, several institutions in Hungary have developed (online) courses – often in collaboration with Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) providers – to support the development of students' digital and self-directed learning skills. **Szeged University (SZTE),** for example, collaborates with Coursera and international online learning experts to offer a MOOC on autonomous learning (Coursera, 2022[48]). The MOOC has over 8 000 enrolled students and is also being used by other institutions in Hungary **Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)**, for example, refers to the course on its info page for distance learning students and teachers (Eötvös Loránd University, 2022[49]). Likewise, at **Budapest University of Technology and Engineering (BME)**, the Directorate for Student Services offers online courses to both first-year and more advanced students to prepare them for digital learning (Budapest University of Technology and Economics, 2022[50]). At the **Budapest Business School (BBS)**, a specific remedial e-learning course has been created for mathematics (Budapest Business School, 2022[51]).

Source: Based on stakeholder interviews conducted as part of virtual site visits carried out by the OECD review team in March 2022.

Almost all higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team highlighted the urgent need to strengthen mental health support for students. Although several HEIs and instructors have started to provide some form of online (mental wellbeing) support, the number of consultations is usually limited. **Szeged University (SZTE)**, for example, employs multiple full-time psychologists to provide individual and group sessions online as well as in person. However, the university only subsidises five therapy sessions per student (University of Szeged, 2022[52]). The **University of Debrecen (DE)** has a separate Mental Health Centre, which offers counselling to students and specific supports to students with special educational needs (University of Debrecen, 2022[53]). The university also has a student-mentoring programme managed by the Distance Education Learning Centre (Hungarian Insider, 2021[54]).

The COVID-19 pandemic has also driven some institutions to move their student feedback surveys online, and to pay greater attention in general to students' (digital) learning experience in programme development and QA. As stated by one interviewee: "Learning about quality is best done through learners themselves". However, this is not the case for all HEIs in Hungary. Many institutions still carry out paper-based feedback surveys. Digital education is not yet embedded as a regular topic in institution- and faculty-level data

collection exercises, and it is much less common for HEIs to collect feedback from PhD students. Some interviewees also mentioned that student feedback surveys are rarely carried out more than once or twice per year, and that response rates are often low and insufficiently representative, especially in HEIs and courses with low student numbers where anonymity cannot always be guaranteed. Tolnai (2021, p. 175[20]) further notes that "respondents may be either only the unsatisfied or only the highly satisfied students".

> "Learning about quality is best done through learners"
> (Higher education stakeholder, February 2022)

At **Szeged University (SZTE)**, first-year full-time student can have their skills assessed upon entry (University of Szeged, 2021[55]). **Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)** conducts an end-of-first-year survey, end-of-course evaluations, occasional student and employee satisfaction surveys, as well as other more ad hoc thematic surveys (Eötvös Loránd University, 2022[56]). By contrast, in the spring semester of 2020 **Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE)** carried out weekly surveys to rapidly identify and respond to online learning issues faced by students. At **Semmelweis University (SE)**, a QR code system has been developed to collect student feedback after each lecture (see Box 3.7).

Box 3.7. QR code-based student feedback system, Semmelweis University

In 2020, **Semmelweis University** introduced a QR code-based student feedback system in response to the high demand for immediate student feedback and educational development. The system allows instructors to gather immediate and anonymous student feedback at the end of each lecture to help them reflect on changes to be made for their next lesson. By scanning a QR code with their mobile phone at the end of lectures or practical seminars, the system asks students to answer a small number of fixed-response questions (nine questions for lectures, ten for practical seminars). Students also have the option not to answer questions or to expand on their answers. The system is run by the Centre for Educational Development, Methodology and Organisation and seeks to encourage a culture of continuous feedback and collaboration between students and teachers and support the overall quality enhancement of teaching and learning at the university.

Source: Adapted from Kiss (2022[57]), "QR code system helps student feedback on teaching at Semmelweis University", *Semmelweis News*, https://semmelweis.hu/english/2022/01/qr-code-system-helps-student-feedback-on-teaching-at-semmelweis-university/.

Feedback and performance monitoring of digital higher education

As mentioned at the start of this section, QA is still seen by many institutions and instructors in Hungary as a compliance or "box-ticking exercise", rather than an opportunity for critical and open self-reflection or dialogue to inform continuous quality enhancement. Higher education stakeholders also mentioned that, as Hungary currently does not have any *ex post* programme review procedures (see Chapter 2), HEIs and instructors have limited incentives to focus on the development of their internal programme review and monitoring procedures. Stakeholders flagged this as one of the main barriers to the further development of institutional quality management in Hungary. Moreover, at present "quality assurance measurement in higher education is mainly optimised for contact learning" (Tolnai, 2021, p. 176[20]).

Limited institutional self-assessment of digital higher education

In Hungarian higher education, there is a lack of comprehensive and institution-wide self-assessment and benchmarking exercises for digital learning that consider the institution's entire digital learning ecosystem. Exceptions are **the University of Debrecen (DE)**, which has carried out a self-assessment of its digital education infrastructure and human resources (University of Debrecen, 2020a[58]), and **Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE)**, which has conducted a self-assessment of its digital readiness using the *DigCompEdu* framework (Dringó-Horváth et al., 2020[46]).

There are several reasons why only a few institutions to date have carried out comprehensive reviews of their digital practices at institution or programme level. The first reason is that the self-evaluations carried out by HEIs as part of the five-yearly institutional accreditation process are based on the ESG, which do not include an in-depth reflection of digital education (see Chapter 2). The second reason is the limited capacity and expertise of HEIs on how to conduct specific reviews of their digital capacity, especially in smaller HEIs. This is a common challenge among institutions in many OECD jurisdictions (Staring et al., 2022[10]). In some OECD jurisdictions, public authorities have (co-)funded the development of self-assessment toolkits and guidelines to support specific institutional, programmatic and course level reviews of digital education. In **Germany**, for example, the Leibniz Institute for Knowledge Media has developed a *Digital Benchmarking Toolkit* in collaboration with several German universities for application in the German context (Leibniz Institute for Knowledge Media, 2022[59]). In **New Zealand**, funding from Ako Aotearoa (via two major grants) and later the Tertiary Education Commission (one grant) has supported the development of the *E-Learning Maturity Model*, led by experts across New Zealand (Marshall, 2012[60]).

Limited variety and digitalisation of data collection tools and methods

The higher education stakeholder consultations carried out by the OECD review team also highlighted a need for institutions to diversify their methods of data collection and analysis to support more comprehensive and in-depth quality reviews. Stakeholders also noted the potential offered by digital technologies to strengthen data collection and analytical processes. One instructor said:

> "Digital education can provide an evidence-rich and adaptable framework for quality development"
> (Higher education instructor, March 2022).

Student and staff satisfaction surveys are the approach most commonly used by HEIs to assess the quality of digital practices, with some institutions carrying out institution-wide surveys to obtain a more comprehensive view of the challenges facing students and teachers. For example, the 2020 and 2021 annual student surveys at **Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)** were expanded to include a section on digital teaching and learning, while the end-of-semester course evaluations in NEPTUN were updated to include questions related to digital aspects of courses (Eötvös Loránd University, 2022[56]). National- and institution-level administrative data, while strong in Hungary, are not widely used by institutions as part of their internal QA systems for digital learning. One reason for this might be the limited amount of information related to digitalisation included in these datasets (OECD, 2021[17]). For example, the Higher Education Database and Information System (FIR) does not include any data on the delivery mode of study programmes (i.e. online, hybrid or in person/blended) (DSN/DHECC, 2021[33]).

Learning analytics data generated through the institutional LMS/VLE is also used by only a small number of HEIs for QA purposes (DSN/DHECC, 2020[30]). The Society for Research in Learning Analytics (SoLAR) defines learning analytics as "the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of data about learners and their contexts, for purposes of understanding and optimising learning and the environments in which

it occurs" (SoLAR, n.d.[61]). Triangulated with survey and administrative data, learning analytics "can generate rich insights into student engagement in learning and can be used to support student success" (OECD, 2021, p. 13[17]). At **Szeged University (SZTE)** and **Corvinus University (BCE)**, however, stakeholder interviews carried out by the OECD review team revealed that there are plans to increase the use of learning analytics data to track student performance in real time.

Stakeholders also underlined the importance of qualitative feedback to supplement survey, administrative and learning analytics data. This is confirmed by international research, which states that qualitative research methods can help institutions understand the "context and illuminate the 'why' behind patterns encountered in institutional assessment" (Sillat, Tammets and Laanpere, 2021, p. 11[62]). Finally, higher education stakeholders underlined the importance of finding better mechanisms to capture employer feedback on students' labour market outcomes and performance. While most Hungarian HEIs participate in the national Graduate Career Tracking Survey (DPR), carried out by the Educational Authority (OH) (Educational Authority, 2020[63]), the inclusion of employer feedback in institutional QA systems is not common. At present, labour market feedback is primarily collected at faculty level and through informal feedback mechanisms. At **Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)**, for example, the institution-level QA guidelines recommend that faculties consult with employers on required and acquired learning outcomes (ELTE, 2022[13]), but stakeholders from the university interviewed by the OECD review team explained that the practice of regularly collecting feedback differs significantly from faculty to faculty. At **Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE)**, employer feedback is primarily collected informally as part of study programmes that have a work-based learning component, such as teacher training programmes. Similarly, at **the University of Debrecen**, the way in which employer feedback is collected is "partly formal and partly informal by nature" (University of Debrecen, 2017, p. 61[15]).

Key barriers to the further development of institutional responsibility for the quality management and innovation of (digital) education

The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed institutions and instructors across Hungarian higher education to reflect on their internal quality management systems and pedagogical practices, with some institutions putting in place policies and practices to support and monitor the quality of ***digital*** teaching and learning specifically. For example, several institutions and faculties have established dedicated teaching and learning centres to support the professional development of academic staff, provided additional supports to students for online learning or collected feedback from students and instructors on the quality of fully online and hybrid courses. However, compared to other OECD systems, institutional quality cultures ***in general*** are still developing in Hungarian HEIs. Institutional policies and processes to support the professional development of instructors remain limited to date, as does the regular collection of data and feedback from students, instructors and employers on the quality of (digital) programmes, including through learning analytics data generated from the LMS/VLE.

Stakeholder consultations carried out by the OECD review team point to three key barriers for the further development of institutions' responsibility for the quality management and innovation of their provision:

- Accreditation procedures do not sufficiently incentivise institutional responsibility for quality
- *Ex ante* accreditation procedures focus on compliance with input requirements rather than programme performance
- *Ex ante* accreditation procedures are burdensome for HEIs and MAB, diverting attention and resource away from quality enhancement.

Accreditation procedures do not sufficiently incentivise institutional responsibility for quality

In recent years Hungary has introduced several reforms to its accreditation procedures for institutions, doctoral schools, and medical training to provide HEIs with greater incentives to take responsibility for the quality management of their educational offerings. More recently, legislation was passed that grants all accredited institutions the freedom to launch new master's programmes in disciplines within which they are already offering bachelor's programmes. The introduction of this self-accreditation status for HEIs in Hungary will be an important stimulus for the further development of institutional quality management in Hungarian higher education (see Chapter 2).

Despite all these reforms, stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team said that quality cultures are still developing in many Hungary HEIs, for three main reasons: historical resistance to QA as an administratively burdensome "box-checking exercise" rather than an "enabling" process supporting quality enhancement; limited guidance and support offered by MAB to institutions to support the implementation of national quality standards in institutional contexts; and challenges facing HEIs to engage the wider stakeholder community across their institution in quality enhancement processes.

Ex ante accreditation procedures focus on compliance with input requirements rather than programme performance

Another key barrier to the development of institutional responsibility for quality management is the limited capacity of institutions to monitor and assess the performance and quality of their (digital) study programmes. One reason for this is that current programme accreditation procedures focus exclusively on ensuring compliance with a wide range of input requirements, and therefore do not incentivise institutions to pay attention to ensuring the quality of programme outputs. Once a new programme proposal has been successfully evaluated by MAB and formally included in the National Qualifications Register by the OH, there is no incentive or requirement for institutions or instructors to update programmes or courses in line with the latest international developments in their scientific field, innovate teaching and assessment practices or experiment with the various opportunities offered by digital technologies (such as descriptive or predictive learning analytics) to support greater student success and learning outcomes. This lack of an *ex post* programme review procedure was mentioned by HEIs as one of the main barriers to incentivising greater institutional responsibility for quality (see Chapter 2).

Ex ante accreditation procedures are administratively burdensome for HEIs and MAB, diverting attention and capacity from quality enhancement

The third key barrier mentioned by higher education stakeholders is the heavy cost, low success rate and high administrative burden associated with the formal *quality assurance* of higher education programmes (see Chapter 2). This has limited the capacity of both HEIs and MAB to focus on the *quality enhancement* of the (digital) education offer. Stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team highlighted a desire for MAB to take a more proactive and supporting role in building the capacity of HEIs to develop their internal quality management policies and procedures through the organisation of more quality enhancement-oriented activities. However, MAB's capacity to expand such activities remains limited, especially in relation to digital education.

3.2 International practice and recommendations to further develop accreditation processes in Hungary and incentivise institutions to take greater responsibility for the quality management and innovation of their education offer

Hungary has already taken several steps to devolve greater responsibility for the QA of higher education to institutions and strengthen MAB's capacity to organise quality enhancement activities, and additional reforms are being planned to further support this process. However, several barriers remain – especially in relation to the current programme accreditation procedures – that are preventing institutions from taking greater responsibility for programme QA and MAB from taking greater responsibility in relation to quality enhancement. These barriers are also preventing institutions and instructors from fully experimenting with and exploiting the potential offered by digital technologies to innovate teaching and learning practices and improve student success and outcomes.

This section presents examples of international practice that Hungary could learn from, as well as three proposed policy recommendations. The main message for Hungary, as it seeks to implement these proposals, is to ensure a careful balance between processes that encourage institutional experimentation and innovation alongside the need for public accountability and transparency.

Grant self-accreditation status to institutions with demonstrated capacity to manage study programmes at a high level of quality

In several OECD jurisdictions, institutions with demonstrated capacity to manage their study programmes at a high level of quality are granted self-accreditation status and are not required to undergo programme accreditation. This is the case in **England (the United Kingdom)**, for example, where all higher education providers are granted self-accreditation status upon successful initial registration with the Office for Students (OfS) as the designated quality body for English higher education. When a provider first registers with the OfS, they are assessed upon seven conditions[1] (OfS, 2022a[64]). In **Ireland**, publicly funded providers have self-accreditation status and are allowed to independently launch new study programmes. Private and independent providers have to meet a number of sector specific guidelines if they wish to offer recognised qualifications (QQI, 2016[65]), in addition to the *Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines* applicable to all providers (QQI, 2016b[66]). In **Norway**, HEIs are granted self-accreditation status based on their legal status and training profile. Universities are allowed to self-accredit study programmes at all levels. Specialised university institutions and accredited university colleges can self-accredit study programmes at bachelor's level, as well as all levels in which they have been granted the right to award doctoral degrees. For all other master's and PhD programmes, these institutions must apply for accreditation (NOKUT, 2022[67]).

In **Australia**, providers can apply to the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) for two types of self-accrediting authority. Institutions can either be granted unlimited self-accrediting authority (i.e. the provider is allowed to self-accredit programmes in any level or field of education) or limited self-accrediting authority (i.e. the provider may self-accredit programmes in a specific set of levels and/or fields) (TEQSA, 2022[68]). The criteria applied by TEQSA for the evaluation of applications for self-accrediting authority are presented in Box 3.8. Institutions without self-accrediting authority must apply for new programme accreditation and renewal. However, for new undergraduate- (i.e. bachelor's) and postgraduate- (i.e. master's) level programmes, a simplified, or "short course assessment" is provided drawing together four units from existing accredited undergraduate/graduate programmes. All other programmes are required to meet the scope and evidence requirements described in a detailed assessment framework for the launch of new programmes (TEQSA, 2020[69]).

Box 3.8. Criteria for seeking self-accrediting authority in Australia

In Australia, higher education providers applying for self-accrediting authority are required to meet the criteria set out in section B2 of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*. If a provider wishes to apply for unlimited self-accrediting authority, it must demonstrate it has "mature and advanced processes for the design, delivery, accreditation, monitoring, institutional quality assurance, review and improvement of courses of study, and the maintenance of academic integrity across at least three (2 digit) fields of education" (Australian Government, 2021[70]).

Providers seeking limited self-accrediting authority must demonstrate:

- A track record of consistent compliance with Part A of the *Higher Education Standards (HES) Framework (Threshold Standards)*, including a five-year track record of compliance of the programme (or programmes) for which self-accrediting authority is sought
- That there are no unresolved compliance matters or conditions outstanding from its most recent registration with TEQSA or a recognised registration or accreditation authority
- Completion of at least one review and improvement cycle in relation to the study programme(s) for which self-accrediting authority is sought
- Successful implementation of evidence-based improvements arising from reviews
- The existence of course review and improvement activities that cover the programme(s) for which self-accrediting authority is sought
- Course review and improvement activities as effective features of their operations across all courses of study.

Source: Adapted from Australian Government (2021[70]), *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, Australian Government, Melbourne, https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2022C00105.

Recommendation 3: Grant self-accreditation status to institutions with demonstrated capacity to manage study programmes at a high level of quality

As Hungary seeks to revise its existing accreditation procedures to enable greater institutional autonomy for quality, the OECD team advises that it give consideration to granting self-accreditation status to HEIs with a demonstrated capacity to manage study programmes at a high level of quality in line with the ESG (ENQA, 2015[1]) and national key performance indicators (see Recommendation 5). A small number of exceptions to programme self-accreditation could be established for study fields such as medical education, with a special process of external accreditation.

To ensure a streamlined process that is meaningful to HEIs, the granting of self-accreditation status should be embedded in a revised institutional accreditation process. The revised institutional review should ensure that HEIs have adequate processes in place to monitor and support the quality enhancement of study programmes in different fields, modes and levels of study. Depending on their performance, HEIs could be granted "unlimited" or "limited" self-accreditation status, as per the Australian model (see Table 3.4). HEIs without self-accreditation status would be required to undergo cyclical quality reviews of their programmes (see Recommendation 5); non-accredited HEIs would be required to undergo *ex ante* programme accreditation (see Recommendation 6). These exemptions could serve as a strong incentive for HEIs to put in place sound internal QA systems.

Table 3.4. Potential model for performance-based self-accreditation in Hungary

Status	Description	Potential criteria	Potential procedure(s)
Unlimited self-accreditation	The institution is allowed to launch and self-accredit study programmes in all study modes (fully online, hybrid, blended), intensities (full-time, part-time), levels (bachelor's, master's, PhD), and disciplines (except for regulated study fields, such as medical education).	1. The institution's **QA procedures** meet the ESG (2015) and cover all study programmes, as well as all study modes (fully online, hybrid, blended), intensities (full-time, part-time) and levels (bachelor's, master's, PhD) within which they are offered. 2. The institution has a track record (e.g. five years) of **positive student outcomes** against national key performance indicators (KPIs) (e.g. low or reduced student drop-out rates, high or consistently increasing student completion and graduate employment rates).	**Option 1**: Embedded in institutional review process **Option 2**: Specific application process for HEIs with accreditation status **Option 3**: Embedded in institutional review process + Specific application process for HEIs with accreditation status
Limited self-accreditation	The institution is allowed to self-accredit study programmes in a limited set of study fields (e.g. Economics, Arts and Humanities), modes (fully online, hybrid, blended), levels (bachelor's, master's, PhD), and intensities (full-time, part-time).	The programme – including the study mode, intensity and level – for which the institution is applying to receive self-accrediting status demonstrates: a. A track record of **positive student outcomes** against national KPIs (e.g. low or reduced student drop-out rates, high or consistently increasing student completion and graduate employment rates) b. Consistent application of institutional **QA procedures** in line with the ESG (2015) c. Successful completion of at least one **external programme review** carried out by MAB or another (discipline-specific) accreditation body recognised by MAB d. **No outstanding quality issues** related to previous external programme reviews carried out by MAB or another (discipline-specific) accreditation body recognised by MAB e. Track record of **evidence-based improvements** to the quality of the programme f. Sound **programme design and review procedures** are in place for the programme	

Source: Based on Australian Government (2021[70]), *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, Australian Government, Melbourne, https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2022C00105.

Introduce a performance and outcomes-based programme monitoring and review procedure

In international quality circles. there is widespread agreement that in addition to assuring the quality of inputs to higher education programmes, it is important to also ensure the quality of teaching, learning and assessment processes, as well as student outcomes (i.e. time-to-completion and drop-out rates, graduate employment rates) (ENQA, 2015[1]; CHEA, 2016[71]; OECD, 2018[72]; OECD, 2019[73]). In this context, the opinions of the main "beneficiaries" of higher education are becoming increasingly important in the assessment of the relative success or failure of institutions and their programmes. This includes employers, civil society and students (Braun et al., 2020[74]; Egloffstein and Ifenthaler, 2021[75]).

An increasing number of higher education systems across the OECD has therefore introduced a cyclical *ex post* programme review procedure, focused on the performance of study programmes against a limited set of national key performance indicators (KPIs) and quality standards. Higher education systems are also increasingly introducing monitoring practices to track the performance of higher education providers and programmes on an ongoing basis to inform more focused quality reviews.

In **Denmark**, all higher education programmes are subject to review by the Danish Accreditation Institution every six years. The review asks HEIs to provide written documentation on the programme and complete a self-assessment report, in which they are required to answer questions related to five criteria, which are

also used for the *ex ante* approval of new study programme proposals (programme demand and relevance, knowledge base, goals for learning outcomes, organisation and completion, and international quality assurance and development). In addition to this, institutions are required to provide key figures on the programme's outcomes: graduate employment rates, student completion and attrition rates, research publications, ratio of full-time and part-time academic staff, and ratio of students to full-time academic staff. The Application Guide states "if a key figure indicates that there could be problematic circumstances, this will initially be regarded as a sign of potential problems […] you [the institution] will be asked […] to explain which special circumstances you believe influence the key figures" (Danish Accreditation Institution, 2019, p. 9[76]). The self-assessment report and written documentation are prepared by the institution followed by an institutional site visit and accreditation report, which are conducted and prepared by an external review panel. Based on the report, the Accreditation Institution decides whether to grant a positive, conditional, or negative decision. A negative decision means that the programme will no longer be allowed to take new student enrolments, and will eventually have to shut down.

England (United Kingdom) uses a similar outcomes-based approach to assuring the quality of higher education providers and programmes. Once an HEI is registered, the OfS monitors, on an ongoing basis, whether it meets the initial registration conditions, adopting a risk-based approach rather than reviewing the quality of institutions and programmes on a cyclical basis. This means that the OfS only "monitor[s] a provider more closely where [they] have information that the quality or standards of its courses may be of concern" (OfS, 2022a[64]). Importantly, as part of its monitoring arrangements for Condition B3 (student outcomes), the OfS has set numerical thresholds for continuation, completion, and progression, which came into effect on 3 October 2022 and represent "the percentage of students achieving positive outcomes" (OfS, 2022, p. 6[77]). The numerical thresholds were set based on an analysis of overall sector performance (i.e. anonymised sector distributions for the indicator, the sector overall rate, and the median performance of providers in the sector) to identify a "starting point value" for each indicator.[2] This was complemented by an analysis of the impact of student and course characteristics on continuation, completion, and progression rates to inform whether a downward adjustment to the sectoral starting point value is necessary for certain modes or levels of study (see Table 3.5). For example, a downward adjustment is proposed for part-time undergraduate programmes and programmes with a high proportion of students for which there is evidence that they are at a higher risk of underperformance (e.g. students aged 51 years old or above, students from a migrant background, students with a mental health condition or other impairment).

Table 3.5. Selected numerical thresholds for monitoring programme quality in English higher education

Level and mode of study	Continuation	Completion	Progression
Full-time first degree	75%	65%	45%
Full-time first degree	80%	75%	60%
Full-time postgraduate taught masters	80%	80%	80%
Part-time first degree	55%	55%	65%
Part-time first degree	55%	40%	70%

Source: Selection of levels and modes of study, taken from OfS (2022[77]), *Setting numerical thresholds for condition B3*, Office for Students, pp. 6-7, https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1206417b-9b11-402c-9706-d88c080b58fc/setting-minimum-numerical-thresholds-for-condition-b3.pdf.

In addition to disaggregating performance in relation to specific indicators by time, subject, course type or student characteristics, when monitoring institutional performance against numerical thresholds, the OfS considers policy or contextual factors that might explain why a certain provider or programme is performing below a relevant numerical threshold before launching a more in-depth investigation into potential quality issues. This includes external factors that are beyond the provider's control (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic or

local issues), course or profession-specific attributes (e.g. courses designed to provide access to a particular profession that is not classified as managerial or professional in the way the indicator has been constructed) and actions already taken or planned by the institution to address underperformance (e.g. the institution has already decided to stop offering the course or has introduced actions to improve performance) (OfS, 2022[77]). Going forward, the OfS will decide each year which student outcome measures, modes, and levels of study to prioritise as part of its performance monitoring, to be able to identify providers and programmes with performance below a relevant threshold indicator in a more targeted way.

In **New Zealand**, there is a more focused approach to assuring the quality of higher education. Through a regular cycle of academic quality audits, the Academic Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) provides external QA for all New Zealand universities. Each academic audit is linked to a specific "Enhancement Theme", i.e. "a topic in which universities collectively address an issue which is important to individual universities and of national significance" and around which *Te Pokai Tara* (Universities New Zealand) organises quality enhancement activities (Te Pokai Tara, 2022[78]). The current Enhancement Theme is "Access, outcomes and opportunities for Māori students and for Pasifika students". Each university has been required (and supported) to develop specific objectives and actions to address this theme, and will be required to demonstrate progress against the Enhancement Theme as part of the Cycle 6 academic audit (2017-24) conducted by AQA (AQA, 2020[79]).

Recommendation 4: Introduce a performance and outcomes-based programme monitoring system, coupled with a targeted cyclical programme review procedure

A proposed recommendation for Hungary is to introduce a performance and outcomes-based programme monitoring system for all HEIs and programmes, based on a limited number of KPIs, differentiated by study level, mode and intensity. This could be complemented by a cyclical and targeted programme review procedure for those HEIs that have not obtained self-accreditation status, as well as those programmes from HEIs with self-accreditation status for which data indicates there may be a concern with quality.

The development of minimum thresholds for national KPIs as part of a sectoral performance monitoring system should be carried out in close consultation with HEIs and informed by a careful analysis of sector performance on each indicator, based on available data in national datasets for higher education (i.e., the national Higher Education Database and Information System, *Felsőoktatási Információs Rendszer* (FIR), and the national Graduate Career Tracking Survey (DPR)). Table 3.6 provides a grid that can be used by Hungary as a basis to develop numerical thresholds to monitor programme performance by study level, mode and intensity, building on the potential study formats presented in Recommendation 1. The proposed areas are based on data used for the development of institutional performance agreements as part of the model change process (see Chapter 2), provided to the OECD review team by KIM, for which trends and baselines can be accurately defined at national level. The advantage of developing national KPIs for higher education programmes is that MAB has an evidence base to monitor performance on an ongoing basis in between cyclical reviews of institutions and programmes and can carry out ad hoc reviews in cases where quality issues are observed. For institutions, national KPIs do not only provide clear targets and incentives to improve performance and implement QA processes, but they can also serve as a basis to inform evidence-based intra- and inter-institutional benchmarking and peer learning.

Table 3.6. Grid for the development of numerical thresholds for higher education programmes in Hungary by study level, mode, and intensity

Study level, mode, and intensity	1. Education		2. Research	3. (Digital) infrastructure		4. Sectoral objectives	
	Drop-out & Completion rates	Graduate employment	Publication output	Investment rate	Utilisation & user satisfaction	Participation rates in mobility	Disadvantaged student numbers & outcomes
Bachelor programmes							
Online full-time							
Hybrid full-time							
Blended full-time							
Online part-time							
Hybrid part-time							
Blended part-time							
Master programmes							
Online full-time							
Hybrid full-time							
Blended full-time							
Online part-time							
Hybrid part-time							
Blended part-time							
Doctoral programmes							
Online full-time							
Hybrid full-time							
Blended full-time							
Online part-time							
Hybrid part-time							
Blended part-time							
Higher VET programmes							
Online full-time							
Hybrid full-time							
Blended full-time							
Online part-time							
Hybrid part-time							
Blended part-time							
Single-cycle long programmes							
Online full-time							
Hybrid full-time							
Blended full-time							
Online part-time							
Hybrid part-time							
Blended part-time							
Postgraduate specialisation programmes							
Online full-time							
Hybrid full-time							
Blended full-time							
Online part-time							
Hybrid part-time							
Blended part-time							

Source: Based on information provided by KIM to the OECD review team on the data used for the establishment of institutional performance agreements as part of the model change process Table 2.3 (Chapter 2).

For those HEIs and programmes that have not obtained self-accreditation status (as well as programmes from institutions with self-accreditation status for which data indicates that there might be a concern with quality), MAB could consider introducing a cyclical and targeted quality review procedure. The WFME-based programme review procedure for medical training programmes (MAB, 2021[80]) could be used as a basis for the development of such a targeted and cyclical programme review procedure (in disciplinary clusters). The process consists of the preparation of a self-assessment report by the institution based on the WFME standards, followed by an institutional site visit and accreditation report, which are conducted and prepared by an external review team, co-ordinated by MAB. However, to manage the workload associated with these reviews, MAB should reflect carefully on the regularity and focus of programme reviews for different types of HEIs, programmes, and disciplines, possibly in disciplinary clusters.

Table 3.7 presents a potential model for a performance and outcomes-based programme monitoring and review system in Hungary.

Table 3.7. Potential model for performance-based programme monitoring and review in Hungary

Institutional accreditation status	Approach	Potential criteria
All institutions	**Ongoing** quality monitoring of HEIs and programmes against national KPIs **Ad hoc** quality reviews of programmes (in disciplinary clusters) where quality concerns are observed	**Options for the development of national KPIs:** • Education: drop-out, completion and graduate employment rates • Research: publication output • (Digital) infrastructure: user satisfaction • Sectoral objectives: participants in mobility programmes, students with disadvantages
Institutions without self-accreditation status	**Cyclical** quality review of programmes (in disciplinary clusters)	**Options for the *focus* of cyclical quality reviews** • Each cycle focuses on programmes delivered at (a) certain level(s) (e.g. bachelor's, master's, PhD) • Each cycle focuses on programmes in (a) certain study mode(s) (e.g. online, hybrid, blended) • Depending on the status of HEIs (e.g. university, UAS or university college), programmes are reviewed in (a) certain level(s) only (e.g. bachelor's, master's, PhD) **Options for the *regularity* of cyclical quality reviews** • Programmes of institutions with demonstrated capacity to manage quality reviewed every six years • Programmes of institutions where quality concerns are identified reviewed every three years

Source: Based on a review of emerging quality standards, practices and supports for digital higher education in Staring et al. (2022[10]). "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Simplify ex ante programme accreditation procedures

Many QA agencies across the OECD and EHEA have simplified their *ex ante* programme launch requirements for HEIs with demonstrated capacity to manage programmes at a high level of quality, giving them greater independence and flexibility to establish innovative (digital) study programmes.

In **Denmark**, the Accreditation Act of 2013 stipulates that all new programmes must be approved by the Danish Accreditation Institution. Like Hungary, Denmark uses two stages for *ex ante* programme accreditation: prequalification, to assess the demand and relevance of the proposed new programme, and accreditation, to assess the educational content, learning outcomes, organisation and QA provisions of the programme. Providers are required to complete different stages depending on their accreditation status. HEIs that have been granted a positive institutional accreditation decision are only required to obtain

prequalification to launch new programmes. Institutions with conditional accreditation status, or those who have not yet begun the institutional accreditation process, must obtain both prequalification and accreditation for new programmes. Institutions with negative accreditation status cannot establish new programmes.

Table 3.8 below provides an overview of the procedures and criteria for the launch of new higher education programmes in Denmark.

Table 3.8. Procedures and criteria for the launch of new higher education programmes in Denmark

Institutional accreditation status	Programme launch procedure	Criteria
Positive institutional accreditation	Prequalification	1. Demand and relevance of the proposed new programme 2. Coherence of the proposed education and learning outcomes
Conditional positive institutional accreditation	Prequalification + accreditation	1. Demand and relevance: see above. 2. Knowledge base: "The programme builds on the type of knowledge base required by the ministerial rules for the specific type of programme". 3. Goals for learning outcomes: "There is a connection between programme content and goals for learning outcomes". 4. Organisation and completion: "The organisation and practical completion of the programme supports the achievement of the goals for learning outcomes". 5. Internal quality assurance and development: "The quality assurance of the programme complies with the European standards and guidelines for the internal quality assurance at higher education institutions and functions well in practice".
Institutional accreditation has not yet begun	Prequalification + accreditation	See above.
Negative institutional accreditation	Not allowed to launch new programmes	Positive or conditional institutional accreditation must be obtained before the institution is allowed to launch new study programmes.

Source: Adapted from Danish Accreditation Institution (2022a[81]), *New Programmes*, Danish Accreditation Institution, Stockholm, https://akkr.dk/en/accreditation-in-denmark/new-programmes/; Danish Accreditation Institution (2019[76]), *Guide to Programme Accreditation – New programmes and local provision of programmes*, Danish Accreditation Institution, Stockholm, https://akkr.dk/wp-content/filer/akkr/Vejl-til-uddannelsesakkred-Nye-uddannelse-og-udbud-oktober-2019_eng.pdf; and Danish Accreditation Institution (2022[82]), *Vejledning til prækvalifikation af nye uddannelser og nye uddannelsesudbud af videregående uddannelser [Guide to prequalification of new programmes and new offers of higher education]*, Danish Accreditation Institution, Stockholm, https://ufm.dk/uddannelse/institutioner-og-drift/styring-af-uddannelsesudbud/vejledning_revideret_juni2022.pdf.

In **Ireland**, as mentioned earlier in this section, the *ex ante* accreditation of study programmes only applies to private providers. As well as having to comply with the *Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines* (QQI, 2016b[66]) and the sector specific guidelines (QQI, 2016[65]), private providers are also required to meet four "prerequisites for programme validation […] Applications will not be accepted from providers who do not meet these four prerequisites" (QQI, 2017, p. 9[83]). As in Denmark, the programme validation criteria focus on the programme's proposed educational content, learning outcomes, organisation, and QA provisions (see Table 3.9).

Table 3.9. Prerequisites and criteria for the validation of higher education programmes in Ireland

Area	Criteria
A. Provider eligibility	1. The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme and meets the following four prerequisites: • The institution's QA procedures cover the programme submitted for validation. • The institution has established procedures in place to support the access, transfer and progression of learners. • The institution complies with minimum requirements with respect to the protection of enrolled learners. • The institution has consulted with and clearly indicates the involvement of any second provider in its application.
B. Programme concept, objectives, and learning outcomes	2. The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI award sought. 3. The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards are well-informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, and employment objectives).
C. Physical and human resources for the delivery of the programme	4. There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned. 5. There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned. 6. The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners.
D. Teaching, learning, and assessment processes and quality assurance	7. The programme's access, transfer, and progression arrangements are satisfactory. 8. The programme's written curriculum is well-structured and fit for purpose. 9. There are sound teaching and learning strategies. 10. Learners enrolled on the programme are well-informed, guided and cared for. 11. The programme is well-managed.

Source: Adapted from QQI (2017[83]), *Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training*, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), Dublin, pp. 30-38, https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2021-11/qp-17-policies-and-criteria-for-the-validation-of-programmes-of-education-and-training.pdf.

Recommendation 5: Increase institutional autonomy for the establishment of new programmes, depending on accreditation status

To give institutions and instructors increased autonomy and flexibility to develop innovative (and digital) study programmes, as well as free up MAB's capacity to conduct cyclical quality reviews at programme level and support the quality enhancement of institutional quality management practices, Hungary could consider simplifying its *ex ante* programme accreditation procedures. Table 3.10 below presents a model of what a revised programme launch procedure in Hungary might look like, with progressive responsibility for institutions depending on their accreditation status.

- ***Institutions with self-accreditation status*** would be allowed to establish new programmes directly with the OH, providing basic information such as the relevance and need for the new programme and the institution's own account of the programme's proposed educational content and learning outcomes (rather than conformity to a National Qualifications Register).
- ***Accredited institutions*** without self-accreditation status would also be allowed to establish new programmes directly with the OH, except in the case of programmes launched in certain study fields, modes or levels within which the institution is not yet offering degree programmes. For these programmes, MAB would conduct a light, desk-based review of the institution's proposed QA arrangements for the programme, prior to registering the programme with the OH. For example, if a university wanted to offer a master's programme in a new discipline, the proposed programme would need to be reviewed by MAB.
- ***Non-accredited institutions*** would require all new programme proposals to undergo an in-depth quality review by MAB prior to the programme being registered with the OH.

Table 3.10. Potential model for performance-based programme establishment in Hungary

Institutional accreditation status	Programme launch procedure	Potential criteria	Existing MAB template to use/revise
Institutions with self-accreditation status	Direct registration (with OH)	Institutions with self-accreditation status are allowed to directly register new study programmes with the OH, providing the following information in their registration form: 1. The **relevance and need** for the establishment of the new programme, including evidence of student and/or labour market demand, and how the proposed new programme compares to the existing institutional, national and international offer 2. The **educational content and learning outcomes**, including the main learning activities and associated modes of delivery (online, hybrid, blended), and how they consider broader social, cultural, educational and employment objectives	Simple and digitally enhanced programme registration form
Accredited institutions	Direct registration (with OH) + Light, desk-based review for programmes offered in new study fields, modes or levels (by MAB)	Accredited institutions without self-accreditation status are allowed to directly register new programmes with the OH, except for programmes launched in disciplines in which the institution does not yet offer programmes. For those programmes, institutions are required to provide the following information: 1. The **relevance and need** for the establishment of the new programme, including evidence of student and/or labour market demand, and how the proposed new programme compares to the existing institutional, national and international offer 2. The **educational content and learning outcomes**, including the main learning activities and associated modes of delivery (online, hybrid, blended), and how they consider broader social, cultural, educational and employment objectives 3. The institution's **QA procedures** and how they cover: • The proposed new programme and/or study field • The proposed study mode(s) (online, hybrid, blended) • The proposed study level (bachelor's, master's, PhD)	Simple and digitally enhanced programme registration form
Non-accredited institutions	*Ex ante* programme review (by MAB), followed by registration (with OH)	For non-accredited institutions, all programmes must be reviewed by MAB and registered with the OH prior to being launched. Potential criteria include: 1. Justification of the **relevance and need** for the establishment of the new programme, including evidence of student and/or labour market demand, and how the proposed new programme compares to the existing institutional, national and international offer 2. Proposed **educational plan**, content and learning outcomes: • The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the national qualification level sought • The programme concept, implementation strategy (including the learning and teaching strategy for the delivery of the programme) and interpretation are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational and employment objectives). 3. Proposed **(digital) infrastructure** for the delivery of the programme: • (Online) library resources, digital learning media and a well-functioning virtual learning environment (VLE), are in place to support the successful delivery of the programme in the proposed study mode(s). 4. Proposed **human resources** for the delivery of the programme: • Instructors delivering the programme have appropriate skills, knowledge, and research experience in the discipline as well as student-centred course design, delivery and assessment practices (supported by appropriate digital technologies), and have regular opportunities for professional development • Sufficient administrative and support staff is available for the effective management of the programme and student support. 5. Organisation and **QA arrangements** for the proposed new programme: • Institutional and programme/faculty level QA procedures cover the proposed new programme, study field and/or study mode(s) • Programme review and monitoring arrangements are in place, including for digital delivery • Student support arrangements are in place, including for online learners.	Simplified and digitally enhanced programme accreditation template

Source: Based on a review of emerging quality standards, practices and supports for digital higher education in Staring et al. (2022[10]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

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Notes

[1] Access and participation for students from all backgrounds (Condition A); Quality, reliable standards and positive outcomes for all students (Condition B); Protecting the interests of all students (Condition C); Financial sustainability (Condition D); Good governance (Condition E); Information for students (Condition F); and Accountability for fees and funding (Condition G).

[2] A starting point value refers to "a judgement about the point at which we consider there be to minimal risk that a provider is not delivering positive outcomes" (OfS, 2022b, p. 11[84]).

4 Supporting institutions to enhance the quality of digital higher education

This project, led and implemented by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), was carried out with financial support provided by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM), in close collaboration with the Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM) and the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB).

This chapter analyses Hungary's institutional support landscape for digital higher education and provides recommendations on how they can be strengthened to build the capacity of higher education institutions (HEIs) to assure the quality of their (digital) education offerings.

4.1 Institutional support landscape for digital higher education in Hungary

This section examines how higher education institutions (HEIs) in Hungary are being supported to build their capacity to effectively manage the quality of their (digital) education offerings, and presents three key challenges facing institutions as they seek to assure the quality of digital teaching and learning.

Who is supporting the quality enhancement of digital higher education in Hungary?

In systems where the responsibility for quality assurance (QA) rests primarily with HEIs, additional supports and guidance are often provided to institutions to help them enhance the quality and effectiveness of their internal QA policies and practices, including for digital education (Staring et al., 2022[1]). In addition to the (financial) incentives and supports offered by national governments and international organisations (such as the European Commission) for the development of digital higher education, or the strategic guidance, advice and recommendations provided by national governments or national QA bodies, a wide range of actors can play a part in building the capacity of HEIs.

Depending on a country's cultural history and policy traditions, institutional supports for the quality enhancement of (digital) teaching and learning may be provided by – among others – the National Research and Education Network (NREN),[1] the National Rectors' Conference, stakeholder associations (e.g. national students' union, academies of science), non-profit and private actors providing specialised support services, the national statistics office (in its capacity to provide sector-wide data and statistics on the performance of (digital) courses and study programmes), and HEIs themselves (engaging in sectoral co-operatives and partnerships to take ownership for quality enhancement) (Zhang, 2022[2]).

A wide range of actors can support institutional quality enhancement

While responsibility for the formal QA of higher education in Hungary is shared between the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), the Educational Authority (OH) and the Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM), a wide range of organisations can (and do) play a role in the quality enhancement (QE) of (digital) higher education in Hungary. Table 4.1 provides an overview of some of the most important consultative and implementing bodies in Hungarian higher education, including their primary function and activities in QE.

Table 4.1. Overview of consultative and implementing bodies in Hungarian higher education

Organisation	Who does it represent?	Primary function	Activities in QE
Tempus Public Foundation	Ministry	Support the internationalisation and quality enhancement of HEIs	Co-ordinate and organise international mobility, projects and training for HEIs
Governmental Agency for Information Technology Development (KIFÜ)	Ministry	Provide ICT services to institutions in Hungary	Provide ad hoc support to institutions with digitalisation matters
Hungarian Rectors' Conference (MRK)	HEI leadership	Provide a discussion and advocacy forum for higher education leadership	Forum for exchange on internal QA practices; advisory function to the Ministry in developing QA regulation
Hungarian National Doctoral Council	Chairs of HEI Doctoral Councils	Provide a discussion forum and advocacy platform for doctoral students	Advisory function to the Ministry in developing QA regulation
National Union of Students (HÖOK)	Representatives of HEI student unions	Provide a discussion and advocacy platform for university students, and co-ordinate the efforts of student unions	Advisory and advocacy function to the Ministry; ad hoc surveys on students' experience with teaching and learning
Association of Hungarian PhD and DLA Candidates (DOSZ)	Doctoral/PhD students	Provide a discussion and advocacy platform for doctoral candidates	Advisory and advocacy function to the Ministry; ad hoc surveys on students' experience with teaching and learning

Organisation	Who does it represent?	Primary function	Activities in QE
Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Businesses/Private sector, typically industrial or service sector employers	Represent the interests of businesses in Hungarian higher education	Promote the introduction of dual vocational training in higher education; provide training and quality control of businesses in dual training programmes
Hungarian Academy of Arts	Responsible for overseeing and supporting artistic activities in higher education	Provide a co-ordination and funding body for artistic activities in Hungary	Consults on university professor applications in (performing) arts
Hungarian Academy of Sciences	Scientific community	Supporting scientific research and disseminating scientific knowledge	Advisory function to the Ministry in developing regulation regarding scientific research
Hungarian Olympic Committee	Elite and professional sports education	Co-ordinate Hungary's participation in the Olympics and other international sports tournaments	Consults on university professor applications in sports and sports sciences

Source: Government of Hungary (2011[3]), *Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education*, Government of Hungary, Budapest, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1100204.TV.

Establishment of specialised centres for digital higher education

To monitor and support the digital transformation of higher education in Hungary, KIM has recently set up two new bodies: the Digital Higher Education Competence Centre/Digital Success Nonprofit Ltd. (DSN/DHECC) and the Digital Government Development and Project Management Ltd. (DKFKT). However, interviews with higher education stakeholders conducted by the OECD review team reveal that, to date, these bodies have played a limited role in building HEIs' capacity to effectively manage the quality of their digital course offers and internal QA systems.

- ***Digital Higher Education Competence Centre/Digital Success Nonprofit Ltd. (DSN/DHECC)***. The DSN/DHECC was set up by KIM in 2020. In September 2020, the centre carried out its first national-level survey to collect institutional leaders' views on factors influencing HEIs' level of digitalisation, with the aim of identifying ways to monitor digitalisation in Hungarian higher education. Participating institutions were also asked to share their digitalisation practices (e.g. creation of digital content, support services for digital education, updating of pedagogical methods, digital dissemination of research outputs etc.). A second survey was conducted in November 2020 to collect data on access to digital infrastructure at Hungarian HEIs, such as high-speed internet and the availability of digital tools (OECD, 2021[4]).
- ***Digital Government Development and Project Management Ltd (DKFKT)***. DKFKT is a fully state-owned organisation that has been established for an indefinite period of time (Government of Hungary, 2011[3]). It participates as a consortium leader or partner in EU-funded digitalisation projects for the 2021-2027 programming period (e.g. the Digital Europe Programme, the Multiannual Financial Framework and the Recovery and Resilience Fund). DKFKT oversees the implementation of various EU-funded projects to support the development of e-government practices and information and communications technology (ICT) across society.

How is the quality enhancement of digital higher education ensured?

In Hungary, efforts to support institutions with the quality enhancement of their digital higher education offerings and internal QA practices have primarily focused on national strategy setting and guidance to incentivise institutions to embed digitalisation as a strategic priority in institutional policy, and on strengthening the digital infrastructure of HEIs and society more broadly through targeted funding programmes. More specific support for staff professional development programmes and effective internal QA policies and procedures has, however, remained limited. The collection and use of system-level data on the quality and performance of digital higher education is also still developing in Hungary.

National guidance and steering for the development of digital higher education

In most higher education systems across the OECD, institutions have a high degree of autonomy over their organisational, financial, staffing, and educational matters. For example, according to the University Autonomy Scorecard, developed by the European University Association (EUA), the recruitment of senior academic staff is carried out by universities themselves in 18 out of 29 surveyed jurisdictions,[2] and the recruitment of senior administrative staff in 21 jurisdictions[3] (EUA, 2021a[5]). As a result, rather than strictly regulating how institutions should organise their financial and human resources, and educational offerings, governments across the OECD have typically tried to carefully balance institutional autonomy with national guidance or priority setting in governments strategies for higher education, or through the introduction of external quality assurance. In some jurisdictions, such as **Austria**, **Finland**, **the Netherlands** or **the United States**, performance-based funding models are being introduced to more actively steer institutional action (Staring et al., 2022[1]).

National strategy setting to guide institutional strategy development

In Hungary, HEIs are required to submit institutional development plans to KIM, setting out their strategic goals and priorities for the five years ahead (OECD, 2021, p. 92[4]). To guide the priorities included in institutional development plans, the government has adopted two strategic documents. Each of these includes a set of strategic goals and priorities that seek to incentivise HEIs to increase the flexibility, pedagogical innovation, and digitalisation of their higher education course offerings.

- **Digital Education Strategy**. The *Digital Education Strategy* was adopted in 2016 and "covers all parts of the Hungarian education system and aims to enable students at all levels in the education system to use digital tools and experience a digital study environment" (OECD, 2021, p. 49[4]). It includes a range of recommendations and associated action plans, including "the creation of the Digital Higher Education Competence Centre (DHECC)" (now established) and "changes to quality assurance, teacher performance review and other aspects of the current regulatory regime for higher education that currently impede the adoption of digitalisation to encourage instructors to use online channels" (ongoing) (OECD, 2021, p. 51[4]).
- **Shifting of Gears Strategy in Higher Education**. The *Shifting of Gears in Higher Education* strategy presents a set of goals and actions for 2016-30 consisting of three key components: better support for students, instructors and innovative (and digital) programme development, to support the delivery of high-quality and student-centred teaching and learning in higher education to improve student retention and completion rates. Together, these have the aim of making HEIs the primary centre for lifelong learning in Hungary, and to improve the attractiveness and competitiveness of Hungarian higher education internationally (KIM, 2016[6]). Among the 56 objectives listed in the strategy, nine relate directly to the digitalisation of higher education.

Performance-based funding to steer institutional action

In line with international practice across the OECD, Hungary is introducing a performance-based funding model for foundation status institutions. This is based on based on performance against a set of national key performance indicators (KPIs) covering education, research, infrastructure, and sectoral objectives (see Table 2.3, Chapter 2). Moreover, in a presentation delivered on 9 October 2020 during a roundtable discussion organised as part of an OECD on the digital transformation of higher education in Hungary (OECD, 2021[4]), a representative from the OH said that, while not explicitly included in the current strategy, a key objective is that "in five years 30% of all study programmes should be fully online and 50% should be hybrid (where possible)" (KIM, 2020[7]).

Specific financial support for the development of digital higher education

Strategic guidance for the digital transformation of higher education in Hungary is underpinned by financial support for the development of HEIs' digital infrastructure and network connectivity. The *National Digitalisation Strategy* (KIM, 2020[8]) includes a specific "Digital Higher Education, Research and Public Infrastructure Development Strategy", consisting of four separate programmes (Mohácsi, 2018[9]): the Hungarian backBONE++ (HBONE++) programme, the Digital Welfare Services (DJP) programme, investments to support the renovation of institutional infrastructure, and a National Super-Computing Programme (NSZP). As a result of these investments, HEIs' access to the necessary basic digital infrastructure and network connectivity to support digital education has improved significantly in recent years, including for learners from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds (OECD, 2021[4]). Table 4.2 presents the four main dimensions of the strategy, which are currently in the early stages of implementation.

Table 4.2. Digital higher education, research and public infrastructure development strategy

Dimension	Actions
Hungarian backBONE++ (HBONE++)	**Serving data network needs for the next 10-15 years** • Development of HBONE ++ backbone, application and access capacities • By 2023, all institutions should be connected to the Worldwide Web on an anonym or separate wavelength • Providing networking, research and public collections service on the HBONE++ infrastructure **Strengthening network services as part of the Digital Success Programme (DJP)** • General Wi-Fi access, hospital education-research Wi-Fi network, public education digital network etc.
Further development of Digital Welfare Services (DJP)	**Providing public education, higher education, research and public collection services** • Cloud services for education, research and public collections, including data storage (long-term data storage) • Authentication services (eduID, eduroam, synchronisation) • Provision of multimedia services (Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), Video conferencing, videotorium) • Integrated e-learning services (e.g. MOOC, Big Data Analysis, Machine learning, VLE/LMS) **Programmes to support service development** • Content and curriculum development applications
Renovation of the built infrastructure of institutions	**Development of university infrastructure required for the use of digital services** • Modernisation of IT rooms and educational spaces (Classroom 4.0) • Physical and virtual educational spaces, laboratories • Upgrading audio-visual active and passive infrastructure (lighting, acoustics, etc.) • Modernisation of institutional networks, Wi-Fi and IT systems
National Super-Computing Programme (NSZP)	**Momentum-1 High Performance Computing (HPC) construction** • Support for national research objectives • Permanent presence among the world's TOP 100 machines and among the TOP 10 machines in Europe **NSZP Mentor Program** • Complex knowledge HPC supporting network • Development of supporting software **Involvement of SMEs in RDI activities** • Machine time • Mentor programme

Source: Mohácsi, J. (2018[9]), *Digitális Felsőoktatási, Kutatási és Közgyűjteményi Infrastruktúra- fejlesztési Stratégia (Digital Higher Education, Research and Public Library Infrastructure Development Strategy)*, KIFÜ, https://www.niif.hu/sites/default/files/niif_program_strategia_20180124v1_short.pdf.

However, interviews with higher education stakeholders carried out by the OECD review team reveal that more specific support for HEIs to purchase, maintain, upgrade, and effectively use digital technologies is limited. For instance, no nationally shared standards or guidelines exist for HEIs to help them navigate the highly diverse and fast-evolving educational technology (EdTech) landscape and make informed investment decisions or digital technology upgrades. Support staff responsible for the maintenance of information and communications technology (ICT) also do not have access to training, guidance, or support on how to effectively maintain their institution's digital infrastructure, and especially the interoperability, security and data privacy of different ICT systems. The same is true for instructors who – other than the often limited pedagogical or ICT support offered by their own institution – do not have access to any shared guidelines, platform or institution that can provide them with external expert advice or guidance on how to use different educational technologies for pedagogical enhancement. The *Shifting of Gears in Higher Education Strategy* only includes nine broad objectives related to digitalisation (KIM, 2016[6]), and the ESG (ENQA, 2015[10]) also only refer to digital technology in a very broad sense (e.g. under ESG 1.6: Learning resources and student support), without identifying more specific standards or guidelines to support their effective use or maintenance. Hungary's NREN, the Governmental Agency for Information Technology Development (KIFÜ), is also more active in school level capacity building for effective technology purchase, maintenance, and use, than at the higher education level, where support is more ad hoc (Digital Success Programme, 2016[11]; KIFÜ, 2021[12]; OECD, 2021[4]).

Supporting staff professional development for digital teaching and learning

Supports and incentives for the professional development of academic staff's digital and pedagogical skills are less extensive than is support for the adoption of digital infrastructure. Higher education institutions do not have obligations for the professional development academic staff and assessment of their digital and pedagogical skills; there is a lack of nationally shared guidance and training on high-quality digital teaching and learning; and academic staff have limited opportunities, time, and incentives to engage in inter-institutional collaboration and peer learning on the topic of digital higher education and QA.

The professional development of academic staff

As is the case in many other higher education systems across the OECD, HEIs in Hungary are not required by law to organise professional development for their instructors, or to assess instructors' pedagogical skills as part of staff appraisals or performance assessments. However, such practices are slowly emerging in many Hungarian HEIs, including for digital education (see Chapter 3). National regulation (Government of Hungary, 2011[3]) only specifies the minimum number of weekly teaching hours staff are required to deliver (as an average across two consecutive academic semesters) and the qualifications staff should hold. National regulation also distinguishes between staff employed on a "teaching track" and those employed on a "research track". While both tracks include teaching and research duties, staff employed on a "teaching track" are expected to spend at least 80% of their time on teaching activities; for staff employed on a "research track" this is only 20%. Table 4.3 presents an overview of the minimum requirements for staff employed on a "teaching track" in Hungary. National regulation also includes some details on assessment practices. These should be made public to students before the course starts, but instructors can choose freely between diagnostic (i.e. pre-assessment, to test students' knowledge), formative (i.e. as part of the course) and summative (i.e. at the end of the course) assessment. However, the most common form of assessment used by instructors in Hungary is summative, end-of-course assessment (Kálmán, Tynjälä and Skaniakos, 2020[13]).

Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team mentioned that the lack of an explicit acknowledgement or minimum requirement for instructors to engage in staff professional development, or for HEIs to organise staff training and performance assessment, including around skills for digital teaching and learning, constituted a major barrier to the further development of the pedagogical skills of Hungarian academics and the quality of teaching and learning in Hungarian higher education more generally.

Table 4.3. Minimum requirements for staff employed on a "teaching track"

Status	Teaching activities	Research activities	Requirements
Assistant lecturer (*tanársegéd*)	Minimum 12 hours per week (the teaching time may be increased by not more than 40% and reduced by not more than 25%)	At least 20% of total working time allocated to research or artistic activities	Be enrolled in a doctoral programme Skills to teach subjects in foreign languages
Senior lecturer (*adjunktus*)	Minimum 12 hours per week (the teaching time may be increased by not more than 40% and reduced by not more than 25%)	At least 20% of total working time allocated to research or artistic activities	Holder of a doctoral degree
Master lecturer (*mesteroktató*)	Minimum 12 hours per week (the teaching time may be increased by not more than 40% and reduced by not more than 25%)	At least 20% of total working time allocated to research or artistic activities	Holder of master's degree Minimum 10 years of working experience Skills to provide practical training to students
College / university associate professor (*főiskolai / egyetemi docens*)	Minimum 10 hours per week (the teaching time may be increased by not more than 40% and reduced by not more than 25%)	At least 20% of total working time allocated to research or artistic activities	Holder of a doctoral degree Skills to supervise the academic and/or artistic work of students
College / university professor (*főiskolai / egyetemi tanár*)	Minimum 8 hours per week (the teaching time may be increased by not more than 40% and reduced by not more than 25%)	At least 20% of total working time allocated to research or artistic activities	Appointment by Ministry following MAB evaluation of application for university professor title

Source: Government of Hungary (2011[3]), *Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education*, Government of Hungary, Budapest, https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1100204.TV.

National guidance and training on digital teaching and learning

To support the professional development of students and staff for digital higher education, the Hungarian government is planning to fund digital competence development programmes and the further development of the Digital Textbook Library (*Digitális Tankönyvtár*), managed by the OH (Educational Authority, n.d.[14]). Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team mentioned that the library currently consists of a repository of Word and PDF documents, which does not capitalise on the full potential offered by digital technologies to create an interactive, open and collaborative database for the sharing and development of best practices in (digital) teaching and learning. As a result, the national resource bank is felt to be of limited value in the development of academic staff's pedagogical practices. To address this challenge, the Ministry is planning to populate the library with modernised and digitised educational content, starting with priority study fields, as well as a professional development module for instructors.

Several organisations – both publicly and privately funded – as well as HEIs themselves have also started to engage in projects focused on supporting the development of shared national guidance, training and peer learning on digital teaching and learning. For example, as mentioned in Chapter 3, digital education experts from four HEIs in Hungary – Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church, Budapest Business School, the University of Pécs and the Hungarian Dance Academy – have developed a handbook to promote and support the effective use of digital technology among Hungarian higher education instructors (Dringó-Horváth et al., 2020[15]). The Faculty of Education and Psychology at Eötvös Loránd University has also developed a *Faculty Distance Education Handbook* during the COVID-19 pandemic (Bereczki et al., 2020[16]). In 2020, the Hungarian Association for Counselling in Higher Education (FETA), which represents all higher education counselling centres in Hungary (FETA, n.d.[17]), has published *Tips for coping with stress and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic* (Kiss et al., 2020[18]). The Hungarian Academy of Sciences manages a Virtual Collaboration Area (VirCA, n.d.[19]) and Electronic Information Service National Programme (EISZ, n.d.[20]), providing member institutions with a platform for the exchange of digital education content and resources, and to collaborate virtually.

Tempus Public Foundation also regularly organises seminars and workshops to support the professional development of academic staff – including on the topic of digital teaching and learning – which, according to estimates by Tempus Public Foundation, have so far attracted between 1 000 and 2 000 higher education instructors. This however only represents a small share of Hungary's total higher education teaching population and means that the reach of these workshops remains limited to date. With financial support from KIM, Tempus Public Foundation has also developed a tool to support the self-assessment, peer review, student assessment and appraisal of staff's pedagogical skills by HEIs. It also runs an international teaching award and maintains a database of international best practice in higher education teaching and learning (PROFFORMANCE, 2022[21]).

International collaboration and peer learning

Participation in international projects, including student and staff exchanges, was mentioned by almost all higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team as highly beneficial to the development of internal QA systems, as well as staff and student (digital) skills and competencies. Stakeholders were, therefore, positive about existing government supports and incentives for the internationalisation of higher education in Hungary (KIM, 2016[6]). The development of joint programmes as part of EU-funded initiatives such as the European Universities Initiative (EUI) and the Digital Education Hub (see Box 4.1) was mentioned as an important driver for the modernisation and digitalisation of institutional quality management practices. Stakeholders explained that participation in such programmes requires institutions, instructors and QA agencies to collaborate in the joint development and delivery of programmes and QA, often in digitally enhanced formats. However, institutions and instructors currently have limited time and opportunities to engage in inter-institutional collaboration.

Box 4.1. Recent European initiatives driving institutional quality enhancement in Hungary

Digital Education Hub

On 14 February 2022, the European Commission launched the Digital Education Hub, which is intended to strengthen cooperation and exchange in digital education and responds to the need for greater dialogue between stakeholders across Europe. It also seeks to address weak spots and perceived fragmentation of digital education policy, research, and implementation practices at the European level. The Hub aims to develop a European "community of practice" to engage a wide variety of stakeholders and support cross-sector collaboration on digital education in Europe.

European Universities Initiative

The European Universities Initiative (EUI) is one of the flagship programmes of the EU's European Education Area with the ambition to build European universities of the future, promote European values and identity, and improve the quality and competitiveness of European higher education. Within the European University Alliances funded as part of the programme, different cooperation models are explored that are based on a common long-term mission and strategy. Joint degree and micro-credential programmes as well as staff and student mobility are at the heart of EUI projects. These partnerships create new challenges in the digitisation of higher education. To date, 24 Hungarian institutions participate in European University Alliances.

Sources: European Commission (2022[22]), *Work starts on the Digital Education Hub Community of Practice*, https://education.ec.europa.eu/news/work-starts-on-the-digital-education-hub-community-of-practice; and European Commission (2020[23]), *European Universities Initiative*, https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area/european-universities-initiative_en.

National performance monitoring of digital higher education

During the COVID-19 pandemic, several organisations in Hungary started to collect feedback from higher education students on their experience of fully online remote learning to inform the institutional quality enhancement of digital teaching and learning. Hungary has also started to take steps to adapt its higher education national administrative data and graduate tracking systems to digitalisation..

National surveys on the quality of digital teaching and learning

In recent years, several organisations in Hungary have started to carry out student feedback surveys on the quality of digital higher education. For example, in 2020 the National Union of Students (HÖOK) conducted **a** student survey shortly after the transition to emergency remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 17 000 students participated (12 000 student responses were used in the analysis), with mostly undergraduate students responding (HÖOK, 2020[24]). KIM also commissioned two surveys on digital higher education in the fall of 2020, administered by the DHECC (DSN/DHECC, 2021[25]). In addition, the OECD conducted a higher education stakeholder consultation survey in February–March 2021 as part of the project *Supporting the Digital Transformation of Higher Education in Hungary* (OECD, 2021[4]). In 2022, the OH included questions related to students' experience with online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic in its annual graduate career tracking survey (DPR) (Educational Authority, 2020[26]). Stakeholder interviews also revealed that the Association of PhD and DLA Candidates (DOSZ) and Rectors' Conference (MRK) conduct annual surveys among their members. In the case of DOSZ, the 2021 paper-based student feedback survey includes questions related to students' experience with digital learning. Finally, as part of the current project, the OECD has collected qualitative feedback from national and institution-level higher education stakeholders on the quality and quality management practices for digital teaching and learning in Hungarian higher education institutions.

Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team noted that there is no regular and national student survey on the quality of (digital) higher education in Hungary. Moreover, stakeholders make limited use of available national (and institutional) survey data on the performance of digital higher education.

System-level administrative data collection on digital higher education

System-level administrative data collection, analysis and dissemination of information on the performance of higher education students, programmes, and institutions is managed by the OH, through three main tools: the administrative Higher Education Database and Information System (*Felsőoktatási Információs Rendszer* – FIR), which compiles institutional student enrolment, progression and completion data, collected through the national student information system NEPTUN (DSN/DHECC, 2021[25]); the annual graduate tracking career survey, which collects information on graduate employment outcomes and in which most HEIs in Hungary participate (Educational Authority, 2020[26]); and the national student information and admissions platform, Felvi.hu, which provides information to prospective students on the content and learning outcomes, as well as the admission, application and enrolment requirements for all higher education study programmes in Hungary (Educational Authority, n.d.[27]).

The data collection for these systems, however, is still based on the existing legal categories of full-time, part-time and distance education. As a result, it is not possible for higher education stakeholders to compare information on the performance of study programmes based on study mode (i.e. online, hybrid, in person/blended) (OECD, 2021[4]). As part of the project *Supporting the Digital Transformation in Hungary*, the OECD has developed a list of potential indicators for Hungary to include in its national data collection systems to adapt them to digitalisation (OECD, 2021, pp. 99-102[4]). However, as recommended in Chapter 2 of this report, an important first step for Hungary will be to revise the existing categorisation of study formats in higher education to reflect digital education.

Higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team also mentioned that the information included on national platforms is insufficiently detailed to inform prospective students. For example, while a link to the national graduate career tacking survey is included on the Felvi.hu website, the information on study programmes is – like the accreditation system – highly input-oriented. The website mainly includes information on the content and learning outcomes of programmes, as well as application and enrolment requirements (see Box 4.2). There is no comparable information on programme outcomes (e.g. drop-out, completion or employment rates of students) as can be found on national higher education information platforms in other OECD jurisdictions For more detailed information on the content, learning outcomes and quality of study programmes, students need to consult the website of individual HEIs and faculties, which often vary in terms of the amount and type of information provided and makes comparison between institutions and programmes challenging. Moreover, Felvi.hu is only available in Hungarian, which does not encourage applications from international students. Recently, however, it has been made possible for students to apply online through Felvi.hu (Educational Authority, n.d.[28]).and further developments to the Felvi.hu system are planned as part of the ongoing OH-MRK-MAB project (see Chapter 2).

Box 4.2. Study programme information included on Felvi.hu

The Felvi.hu database provides the following information on Hungarian higher education programmes:

- Faculty name
- Training level (higher VET/bachelor's/master's/doctoral/post-graduate/single cycle)
- Delivery mode (full-time/part-time/distance/correspondence)
- Form of financing (self-funded/state-funded)
- Cost (per semester)
- Maximum number of students admitted to the study programme
- Secondary school final exam requirements (language competency)
- Major
- Credit limit

Source: Educational Authority (n.d.[28]), *Felvi.hu – E-admission*, https://www.felvi.hu/felveteli/efelveteli.

What are the key challenges facing higher education institutions (HEIs)?

The stakeholder consultations carried out by the OECD review team as part of this project revealed that institutions face several challenges in enhancing the quality of their digital provision. Three main areas of support can be identified: developing, maintaining, upgrading, and supporting the effective use of digital technology; supporting and incentivising the professional development and assessment of staff for digital teaching and learning; and developing effective processes for the collection, monitoring and use of data on the performance of digital higher education.

Developing, maintaining, upgrading, and supporting the effective use of digital technology

As evidenced by the speed with which institutions and instructors were able to switch to remote online instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic (DSN/DHECC, 2020[29]), the infrastructure of HEIs in Hungary is relatively well-developed and funded to support digital teaching and learning. However, several stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team highlighted gaps in the capacity of HEI leadership, instructors, and (IT) support staff to develop, maintain, upgrade, and effectively use educational technology that keeps up with the latest developments in an increasingly fast-developing EdTech landscape.

Apart from a few large and well-resourced institutions (such as the University of Debrecen (University of Debrecen, 2020[30])), institutions in Hungary often lack the financial resources, capacity, and internal expertise to regularly review the quality and suitability of their digital infrastructure to ensure it incorporates the latest technological developments and standards. HEIs also noted challenges related to the maintenance of their digital education infrastructure, in particular ensuring the interoperability, data privacy and security of the multitude of digital technologies and systems used by instructors, learners, and (IT) support staff – for example, many institutions face challenges in linking their institutional software or virtual learning environment/learning management system (VLE/LMS) to the government's NEPTUN system (Tolnai, 2021, p. 172[31]). Finally, institutions highlighted challenges related to ensuring the effective use of digital technologies by students and instructors, especially those technologies that have the potential to transform and enhance quality, inclusion, learner success and flexibility in higher education (e.g. learning analytics, Open Educational Resources (OER), Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), hybrid course design, trusted and authentic online assessment).

Supporting and incentivising the professional development and assessment of staff for digital teaching and learning

It is widely acknowledged by academic staff that teaching innovation and quality are not top priorities for most instructors in Hungary, and that this is the result of a career system in which academics are rewarded (with advancement and preferment) for measurable research and publication activities, not teaching performance. This is also reflected in the absence of a legal requirement for HEIs in Hungary to provide instructors with professional or pedagogical development. Stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team highlighted that few institutions have either the required in-house expertise or the capacity to develop training and guidance for staff around the wide range of professional development areas for effective digital delivery. Where targeted institutional support for digital pedagogy exists, this has often emerged only recently in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and is therefore still in the very early stages of development. While an increasing number of institutions has started to conduct performance assessments of instructors' pedagogical skills and include these in appraisal procedures (see Chapter 3), few have focused specifically on assessing instructors' digital skills. Institutions also struggle to mainstream best practice in digital pedagogy across the institution, and to incentivise instructors to focus on actively enhancing their pedagogical practices. The main barriers cited are the heavy workload for academic staff operating in a competitive research environment combined with a high number of administrative duties and societal engagement activities on top of ensuring quality teaching, for which they receive little recognition. In addition to this, negative attitudes remain towards the potential added value of digitalisation for teaching and learning, especially among senior academics and staff from more practically oriented disciplines.

The "isolated development" of quality digital pedagogy within institutions also affects more "general digital developments" across Hungarian higher education (Tolnai, 2021, p. 173[31]). Higher education instructors interviewed by the OECD review team mentioned that they would benefit from widely discussed, shared, and agreed guidance on what good practice in digital instruction and QA looks like. The ESG (ENQA, 2015, p. 8[10]) and accompanying evaluation sheets developed by MAB for institutional accreditation do not provide sufficiently detailed guidance for institutions on how to manage the quality of their programmes. Stakeholders also highlighted the need for additional opportunities to engage in regular training, peer learning and collaboration around digital teaching and learning and QA, both at national and international level. Institutional support staff and students underlined the importance of building the capacity of student counselling and advice centres to effectively support students in online settings. This was highlighted as particularly important to mitigate the risk of students from rural and socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds falling behind even further in fully online and hybrid courses (due to potential inequalities in access to and effective use of educational technologies), and to tackle students' declining mental health and wellbeing.

Developing effective processes for the collection, monitoring and use of data on the performance of digital higher education

Hungarian higher education law requires institutions to collect feedback from students on the quality of their courses. However, no further specifications, guidance or recommendations are provided on the regularity, methodology, scope or target groups of feedback and data collection practices. As a result, institutions (and within those, individual faculties) have taken varied, and often limited, approaches towards collecting and using institution- and faculty-level data on the performance of their (digital) course offers. In most cases, the collection of feedback on the quality of instruction is limited to a student or staff feedback survey (in some cases still paper-based) distributed at the end of the semester or academic year, and often not adapted to the specificities of digital learning. While ad hoc surveys on the quality of fully remote online instruction have emerged in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, they are often not embedded in regular institution- or faculty-wide feedback processes. More regular feedback loops are still developing in Hungary – for example, the collection of end-of-lecture feedback, as at Semmelweis University (Kiss, 2022[32]), or including student representatives in strategic discussions. While most Hungarian HEIs participate in the national graduate career tracking survey (DPR), carried out by the OH (Educational Authority, 2020[26]), the collection and use feedback from employers or other civil society actors on the labour market relevance of courses and programmes is not common (OECD; European Commission; DGES, 2022[33]). Qualitative stakeholder feedback and learning analytics data generated through the VLE/LMS were highlighted as two important additional data sources for HEIs to triangulate with administrative and survey data to obtain an in-depth and real-time picture on the quality of instruction and support needs of students.

More comprehensive and institution-wide self-assessments or inter-institutional benchmarking of digital learning, such as the institution-wide digital readiness assessment of instructors conducted by Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church, using the EU's *DigCompEdu* framework (Dringó-Horváth et al., 2020[15]), are also rare in Hungary. One of the main reasons for this is that there are, at present, few tools adapted to the Hungarian higher education context to support such self-assessments. Another reason is that critical self-assessment and peer learning in itself is still a relatively new concept for many institutions and instructors in Hungary. Prior to the introduction of institutional accreditation based on the ESG, the accreditation of HEIs in Hungary was primarily focused on technical requirements and paid limited attention to teaching and learning processes, student outcomes or internal QA practices (see Chapter 2). In addition to this, the ESG – which are used by MAB as a basis for their institutional and doctoral schools' accreditation procedures – do not include any specific digital education indicators.

4.2 International practice and recommendations to support higher education institutions to build their capacity for the effective quality management of digital teaching and learning

While several organisations have stepped up to support institutions with the quality enhancement of their digital education infrastructure (e.g. funding provided by the government) or staff professional development (e.g. development and dissemination of self-assessment tools, guidance and best practices by Tempus Public Foundation and HEIs), the current support landscape for HEIs in Hungary has been unable to meet the (in some cases highly specific) support needs of institutions, staff and students. National-level data collection and monitoring of the performance of digital higher education has primarily been carried out in the form of ad hoc student surveys undertaken by various organisations operating at sectoral level (e.g. the OH, HÖOK, DOSZ or the Ministry), but there is a lack of more granular and up-to-date information on the performance of online, hybrid and in-person/blended study programmes. There is also limited effective use of system- and institution-level data on the performance of (digital) higher education by HEIs to inform programme review and development.

The following section presents international examples of best practice for the effective quality management of digital teaching and learning from which Hungary could take inspiration. It also sets out four proposed policy recommendations and associated policy options on how to implement them, as Hungary seeks to strengthen its institutional support system for digital higher education and build the much-needed bridge between national policy ambitions and institutional practices for the QA of digital higher education.

Support the purchase, maintenance, upgrading and effective use of digital technology

In several OECD jurisdictions, in addition to strengthening the general digital infrastructure and connectivity of HEIs as part of wider digital society strategies, governments have also started to fund the development of specific digital technologies in HEIs. **Austria** and **Germany**, for example, have issued strategies to support the integration of OER in higher education (Ebner et al., 2016[34]; BMBF, 2022[35]). In some systems, the NREN or other sectoral organisations support institutions to make joint investments to help reduce the costs associated with purchasing new digital technologies independently. In the **United Kingdom**, for example, APUC (Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges) is a joint procurement service for Scotland's universities and colleges (APUC, 2022[36]). It is one of the eight procurement consortia in UK higher education, six regionally based and two specialist national consortia, supporting collaborative procurement within higher and further education in the UK (UKUPC, 2022[37]).

In addition to national guidance and financial support, NRENs *play a key role in many OECD jurisdictions by supporting HEIs to navigate the highly diverse, complex and fast-evolving EdTech landscape. S*ectoral organisations, as well as private and non-profit (international) organisations, have also developed a variety of guidance materials, tools and resources to support institutions with the maintenance and effective use of digital technologies (Staring et al., 2022[1]). In the **Netherlands**, **Croatia**, **Lithuania** and **Norway**, NRENs provide centralised hosting services on top of central network connectivity, and rely on a combination of peer learning activities and expert advice to guide digital infrastructure choices and the use of digital technologies by HEIs (SURF, 2022[38]; LieDM, 2022[39]; CARNET, 2022[40]; Sikt, n.d.[41]), (LieDM, 2022[39]). Guidance and training focus on both specific technologies (e.g., learning analytics, OER, MOOCs) or dimensions related to their maintenance or use (e.g. interoperability, data privacy and security). Table 4.4 presents examples of resources developed by a variety of both national and international organisations.

Table 4.4. Examples of guidance and resources to inform the purchase, maintenance, and effective use of digital technologies

Digital technology (dimensions)	Examples	Organisation (*and type*)	Description
Open Educational Resources (OER)	Recommendation on the integration of OER (Ebner et al., 2016[34])	Austrian New Media Forum in Higher Education (*sectoral organisation*)	A recommendation to support the integration of OER in higher education has been developed by the Austrian New Media Forum in Higher Education.
Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)	Framework for the QA of MOOCs (OpenupEd, 2022[42])	OpenUpEd (*international network of MOOC providers*)	OpenUpEdu, one of the largest networks of MOOC providers for higher education in Europe – has developed a checklist to support HEIs with the quality enhancement of MOOCs.
Hybrid course design and delivery	Methods and tools for blended education (SURF, n.d.[43])	SURF (*NREN*)	SURF in the Netherlands coordinates a specific working group for the collection of best practices and the development of guidance for hybrid course design and delivery.
Inclusive course design	Framework for inclusive course design (CAST, 2018[44])	CAST (*non-profit organisation*)	CAST, a non-profit educational research and development organization, has developed a framework to support inclusive course design, including 31 indicators.
Trusted and authentic online assessment	Framework for the quality assurance of e-assessment (2019[45]),	TeSLA (*European Commission funded co-operation project*)	A European consortium of universities has developed a framework including eight standards and associated "indicators" and "minimum evidence" for the quality assurance of e-assessment practices.
Learning analytics	Jisc framework for assessing institutional readiness for learning analytics (2020[46])	Jisc (*NREN*)	Jisc in the United Kingdom has developed a framework to review and support the effective use of learning analytics by institutions.
Interoperability	IT Interoperability Framework (Department of State Information Systems, 2005[47])	Estonian Department of State Information Systems (*government*)	Estonia has had a national interoperability framework since 2005, which provides a set of standards and guidelines to ensure interoperability between the systems used by public administration institutions, enterprises, and individual users at both national and European level.
Data security and privacy	Guidance for a safe and reliable learning analytics and student data infrastructure (SURF, 2021[48])	SURF (*NREN*)	SURF, the Netherlands NREN, has developed specific guidance for institutions to help them meet privacy, ethics, and functionality standards when using learning analytics and student data.

Source: Based on a review of international policy and practice included in Staring et al. (2022[1]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Recommendation 6: Support the development of shared national standards and guidance for the purchase, maintenance, upgrading and effective use of digital technology

To assist HEIs with the purchase, maintenance, upgrading and effective use of digital technology, Hungary could consider implementing a combination of guidance and financial support mechanisms (to guide and support institutional investment in digital infrastructure), centralised IT support (to support IT staff with central network maintenance and ensure the security and interoperability of different IT systems) as well as supporting the development of shared sectoral guidance on the effective use of different digital technologies in higher education. Table 4.5 presents an overview of the options and potential international models from which Hungary could take inspiration.

Table 4.5. Options for Hungary to support the purchase, maintenance, and effective use of digital technology in higher education

Options	Description	Potential model(s) for Hungary
1. Steering and targeted funding for specific digital technologies	Through targeted and competitive funding calls, the government (KIM) supports and incentivises HEIs to make investments in digital technologies and resources that have demonstrated potential to enhance the quality of digital higher education (e.g. OER or learning analytics), without prescribing which providers HEIs should choose.	OER strategy in Germany and Austria
2. IT maintenance support	The NREN (KIFÜ) strengthens its role in supporting institutions with central network management and hosting services, as well as a central student assessment (or proctoring) platform to free up the capacity of institutional IT support staff to help instructors with the effective use of digital technology in their pedagogical practice.	Centralised hosting and networking services offered by NRENs in Croatia, Lithuania and Norway
3. Guidance and training for effective technology purchase, maintenance and use	The NREN (KIFÜ), MAB or a sectoral (stakeholder) organisation is supported to take on the responsibility for co-ordinating the development of shared sectoral guidance and training – led by digital education and quality assurance experts and practitioners from the higher education sector – to support HEIs with the purchase, maintenance and effective use of digital technologies.	Shared sectoral guidance developed under the co-ordination of NRENs in the Netherlands and United Kingdom

Source: Based on a review of international policy and practice included in Staring et al. (2022[1]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Support and incentivise the quality enhancement of staff professional development

A 2022 review of national initiatives in teaching and learning in higher education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) found that eight jurisdictions[4] have national regulation in place to direct the professional development of staff offered by HEIs (Zhang, 2022[2]). In these systems, higher education providers are required to offer professional development to their staff and/or evaluate instructors' pedagogical competencies as part of institutional employment and appraisal arrangements. While institutions are mostly free to decide how to organise professional development and which criteria to use for performance assessment, in some cases (e.g. **Norway**) national regulation specifies the minimum number of hours of pedagogical training instructors are required to complete (e.g. **Denmark**, **Estonia** and **France**).

In some systems, national-level sector organisations have developed standards or guidelines to support the quality enhancement of staff professional development. In the **United Kingdom** and **Ireland**, for example, Advance HE (the United Kingdom) and the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (Ireland) have developed national frameworks for the quality enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education (Advance HE, 2019[49]), (National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2016[50]). In the United Kingdom, AdvanceHE uses the framework to review and accredit staff professional development programmes. In **Denmark** and the **Netherlands**, the National Rectors' Conferences have developed national qualifications frameworks for staff professional development programmes, which are reviewed on a cyclical basis. Denmark's national qualifications framework was adopted as recently as 2021 (Universities Denmark, 2021[51]), while the Universities of the Netherlands (*Universiteiten van Nederland*) already had a framework in place in 2008 (VSNU, 2008[52]). Following a review of all university teacher qualifications in 2018, the Universities of the Netherlands concluded that "education and ICT and blended learning" should be one of four key competences for institutions to focus on in staff professional development (VSNU, 2018, p. 16[53]).

Some systems have supported the development of national (online) platforms to promote virtual collaboration and exchange among higher education practitioners (e.g. **Austria** (iMoox, 2022[54]) and **France** (FUN, 2022[55])). Others have funded dedicated national centres to co-ordinate and support the organisation of national guidance, training, and peer learning activities for the quality enhancement of (digital) teaching and learning. Such centres exist in **Ireland** (Education, 2022[56]), **New Zealand** (Coolbear,

2014[57]), **Norway** (Flexible Education Norway, 2018[58]) and **Germany** (Stiftung Innovation in der Hochschullehre, n.d.[59]). In the **United Kingdom**, support is provided by a range of organisations operating at national level, including Jisc, AdvanceHE and the Association for Learning Technology.

Recommendation 7: Introduce national regulation and support for the quality enhancement of staff professional development

To support the professional development of instructional staff, in addition to introducing requirements in national regulation (e.g. that HEIs are required to organise staff professional development or that instructors should complete a minimum number of training hours), Hungary could consider a range of other institutional support options to promote the development of a national "community of practice" around higher education teaching and learning. These options include: supporting HEIs to collaboratively develop shared standards for staff professional development (as in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Ireland); developing guidance, tools and training for the (self-)assessment of instructors' (digital) skills and competencies (building on existing tools such as PROFFORMANCE); or establishing a national centre for teaching and learning in higher education, with dedicated responsibility for organising training, guidance and capacity building activities for staff in HEIs (as in Norway, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Germany). Table 4.6 presents an overview of the options and potential international models from which Hungary could take inspiration.

Table 4.6. Options for Hungary to support the quality enhancement of staff professional development for (digital) teaching and learning

Options	Description	Potential model(s) for Hungary
1. Introduce national regulation on staff professional development	The government (KIM) introduces a requirement in national higher education law, which specifies that institutions are required to offer professional development opportunities to instructional staff and regularly assess their competencies, including digital skills. However, institutions have full autonomy to decide how to organise professional development, as well as which criteria to use for performance assessments.	Regulation on staff professional development in Estonia, France and Norway
2. Develop national standards for staff professional development	The National Rectors' Conference, or another sectoral (stakeholder) association, is given responsibility and resources to co-ordinate the development of institutionally shared national standards and guidelines for staff professional development programmes offered by HEIs in Hungary. Based on these standards, the quality and effectiveness of institutionally-based staff professional development programmes could be carried out.	Standards for staff professional development in Denmark, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Ireland
3. Provide guidance and training for the (self-)assessment of instructors' digital skills by HEIs	Building on the PROFFORMANCE self-assessment tool, Tempus Public Foundation, or another sectoral (stakeholder) organisation, is given the responsibility and resources to co-ordinate the organisation of training, guidance and capacity-building activities for the performance assessment of staff's (digital) skills and competencies by HEIs.	PROFFORMANCE self-assessment tool
4. Support the establishment of a national centre for teaching and learning	Establish a national centre for teaching and learning, with dedicated responsibility for co-ordinating and developing quality enhancement activities for teaching and learning in higher education, including for digital education (e.g., guidance, training, best practice collection and dissemination).	National centres for teaching and learning in higher education in Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway and the United Kingdom
5. Support the development of an (online) national digital content sharing platform	Building on existing national platforms developed by the OH (the Digital Textbook Library) or the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Virtual Collaboration Area, Electronic Information Service National Programme), Hungary develops a national digital education content sharing platform for higher education instructors.	Online digital content sharing platforms developed in Austria, France, Ireland, New Zealand, and Norway

Source: Based on a review of international policy and practice included in Staring et al. (2022[1]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Strengthen the collection of system-level data and the dissemination of comparable information on the performance of digital higher education

There has been a slow but steady emergence of national student and staff surveys on digital learning across OECD and EHEA systems. Most of these surveys, however, are ad hoc and rarely conducted on a cyclical or regular basis (Staring et al., 2022[1]). Examples of regular national surveys of students' experiences of digital learning can be found in the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Australia. First piloted in 2016 and based on the Digital Experience Insights (DEI) survey in **Australia** and **New Zealand** (Beetham, Newman and Knight, 2019[60]), Jisc in the **United Kingdom** has been collecting students' views on the quality of digital teaching and learning through an annual student survey across all UK HEIs since 2017–18. The latest edition of the survey analyses the responses from 62 658 students in the 2020–21 academic year (Jisc, 2021[61]), which is almost three times more than the 27 069 students who responded in the 2019–20 survey (Jisc, 2020[62]). The 2019 **Irish** National Digital Experience (INDEx) survey is based on the UK example and was completed by 2 484 students and 4 445 staff at 32 HEIs (National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2020[63]). Several HEIs have used analysis of students' responses to the survey to shape their response to the pandemic, inform the purchase of additional laptops for their laptop rental schemes or develop and disseminate guidance materials for students and instructors (National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2021b[64]).

A few systems have adapted administrative and graduate tracking systems to assess the performance of digital and traditional programmes and courses. The **United States** Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS) (NCES, 2021[65]) and the **New Zealand** Single Data Return (SDR) system (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2021[66]) are examples of systems that provide detailed information on student enrolment, time-to-completion and drop-out rates based on demographic characteristics, level and field of study.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, several organisations – including QA agencies – have started to engage in thematic reviews of institutional best practices and challenges for digital teaching and learning. For example, QAA in the **United Kingdom** has supported HEIs in England and Wales by collecting and disseminating best practices for fully online and remote instruction through a thematic review of HEI practices and challenges in both nations (QAA, 2020[67]; QAA, 2021[68]). In **Estonia**, too, the national QA body HAKA carried out a thematic review of institutions' experiences with fully online and remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (HAKA, 2020[69]). In **Ireland**, with the Ministry of Education's endorsement, a National Institute for Digital Learning (NIDL) was established as a dedicated national centre to strengthen and disseminate scholarship around digital education (Brown and Keogh, 2021[70]). Similarly, in the **United Kingdom** the Association for Learning Technology aims to raise the profile of research and scholarship in digital teaching and learning to inform best practice through its open access journal *Research in Learning Technology* (Association for Learning Technology, n.d.[71]). In **Norway**, the Nordic Institute for Studies, Innovation and Education has published a report on the use of digital technology in higher education (Korseberg et al., 2022[72]), and the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research also monitors the "digital status" (*Digital tilstand*) of higher education every two years. So far, five of such reports have been prepared, and the latest was published in 2021 (DIKU, 2021[73]). Until 30 June 2021, this responsibility fell under the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education. Since then, it has become part of the Directorate for Higher Education and Skills.

Some OECD jurisdictions have invested in the development of websites to provide prospective students with comparable information on the content and quality of the (digital) higher education programmes on offer in their country. One example is the "Study Choice 123" (*Studiekeuze 123*) platform in the **Netherlands**. Developed with funding provided by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (*OCW*), the website provides clear and comparable information for prospective students on the content and learning outcomes of higher education programmes on offer in the Netherlands, including admission

and selection criteria, student satisfaction rates (e.g. on the atmosphere, study facilities, and content of the programme), employment outcomes (e.g. information on professional orientation of programmes, feedback from alumni), and enrolment, drop-out and completion rates (e.g. drop-out rates among first-year students, gender balance of student population). The information is linked to data collected in national administrative data registers, as well as national student surveys on the quality of higher education (Studiekeuze123, 2022[74]).

Recommendation 8: Embed digitalisation in existing national data collection and monitoring instruments for higher education

A recommendation for Hungary is to firmly embed digitalisation in national data collection and monitoring instruments for higher education to strengthen the system-level evidence base on digital higher education and inform institutional decision making and pedagogical practice. This can be done in different ways, including: further developing or implementing the list of 30 potential indicators for Hungary, developed by the OECD (OECD, 2021, pp. 96-102[4]) and embedding them in national administrative data systems for higher education; introducing an annual or bi-annual student, staff and/or institutional survey on digital teaching and learning, building on various already existing national and international surveys instruments; or supporting thematic reviews of (digital) pedagogy and institutional QA practice. Table 4.7. presents an overview of the options and potential international models from which Hungary could take inspiration.

Table 4.7. Options for Hungary to monitor and evaluate the quality of digital higher education at system level

Options	Description	Regularity of data collection	Potential model(s) for Hungary
1. Adapt national administrative data collection and information systems to digitalisation	Add a "digitalisation lens" to the Graduate Career Tracking Survey (DPR), Higher Education Database and Information System (FIR) and Felvi.hu student admission and application website, to collect and publish up-to-date data on the performance of digital study programmes. This will not only enhance institutional decision making and pedagogical practice, but also allow prospective students to make more informed study choices.	Ongoing	Further develop or implement the list of 30 potential indicators for Hungary, developed by the OECD (OECD, 2021, pp. 96-102[4]); the Netherlands "Study Choice 123" (*Studiekeuze 123*) platform
2. Conduct a regular national survey on digital teaching and learning	Building on the ad hoc surveys on digital learning conducted by DOSZ, HÖOK, the DHECC and the OH, Hungary introduces a regular survey of students' and/or staff's experience with digital teaching and learning, informed by a careful methodological analysis of the existing survey instruments.	Every 1 or 2 years	Digital Experience Insights (DEI) surveys in Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and the United Kingdom
3. Carry out thematic reviews of digital higher education	Through competitive funding calls, Hungary funds thematic reviews of challenges and best practices in digital higher education in Hungary, focused on specific areas of focus or priority.	Every 3 to 5 years	National centres responsible strengthening scholarship and evidence on digital learning in Ireland and the United Kingdom
4. Carry out thematic reviews of institutional quality assurance	As part of its accreditation reviews, MAB asks experts to collect best practices identified as part of reviews, for dissemination through MAB's communication channels with the sector.	Every 3 to 5 years	Thematic reviews of digital learning and QA carried out by QA agencies in Estonia and the United Kingdom

Source: Based on a review of international policy and practice included in Staring et al. (2022[1]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Foster an institutional culture of self-assessment and continuous improvement for digital higher education

As mentioned in Chapter 2, a wide range of quality frameworks, self-assessment and benchmarking tools has been developed to support the promotion of an institutional culture of continuous quality enhancement and reflection for digital teaching and learning. These tools and frameworks aim to incentivise HEIs to engage in specific self-assessments and/or external reviews of their digital practices, in addition to the (often more general) reviews required by law and carried out by the national QA body.

A selection of 20 frameworks with specific relevance to the European context is included in Volungevičienė et al (2021[75]). They include the *DigCompOrg*, *DigCompEdu* and *E-xcellence* frameworks (Kampylis et al., 2015[76]; Redecker and Punie, 2017[77]; EADTU, 2016[78]), with funding provided by the European Commission, as well as several frameworks developed with national funding. In **Germany**, for example, the Leibniz Institute for Knowledge Media has developed a *Digital Benchmarking Toolkit* in collaboration with several German universities for application in the German context (Leibniz Institute for Knowledge Media, 2022[79]). In **New Zealand**, funding from Ako Aotearoa (via two major grants) and later the Tertiary Education Commission (one grant) has supported the development of the *E-Learning Maturity Model*, led by experts from HEIs across New Zealand (Marshall, 2012[80]). Another example is the Distance Learning Benchmarking Club, which was established at the initiative of the **University of Leicester** and involved institutions from Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Using the Pick&Mix framework developed by Maltic Media, the institutions identified 17 critical success factors to be used in the benchmarking exercise (Bacsich, 2011[81]).

Recommendation 9: Support and coordinate the development of an institutional self-assessment or benchmarking tool for digital higher education

Hungarian educators would benefit from the creation of a collaborative Working Group that takes responsibility for the development of a self-assessment or benchmarking toolkit for digital higher education, adapted to the specific needs and challenges of the Hungarian higher education sector. The Working Group could consist of both national and international digital education experts and practitioners, and build on existing national and international frameworks and tools developed for the QA of digital higher education (cf. Volungevičienė et al (2021[75])), the ESG (ENQA, 2015[10]), and MAB's assessment frameworks.

The sector-led collaborative process underpinning this type of initiative has the potential to build a community of practice around digital teaching and learning in Hungary and support the development of institutional quality management policies and practices in line with national and international best practice. Volungevičienė et al. (2021[75]) provide a key lesson in this context (Volungevičienė et al., 2021, p. 5[75]):

> *Institutions cannot just take one of these instruments off the shelf. Rather, searching for one all-encompassing instrument for DELT [i.e. digitally enhanced leaning and teaching] reflection, self-assessment and capability development would require what Paul Bacsich describes "as a 'pick n mix' approach to institutional benchmarking for eLearning" […] This enables the institutions to use and repurpose a range of existing instruments to engage in rich conversations, ask the right questions, identify gaps and areas for development, and collect and assess relevant data against key performance indicators as part of a wider institutional commitment to quality enhancement.*

Table 4.8 presents eight common quality domains included in 12 international quality frameworks for digital higher education that feature prominently in the literature, are being used by HEIs, and have been analysed by Staring et al. (2022, pp. 28-29[1]). *The quality domains are structured along* the "Plan-Do-Check-Adjust" cycle developed by Tague (2005[82]). Table 4.9 provides an overview of self-assessment frameworks, tools and guidance that have been developed with specific reference to the European and Hungarian higher education contexts. Both could be relevant to inform the development of an institutional self-assessment framework for digital higher education in Hungary.

Table 4.8. Eight common quality domains included in 12 institutional self-assessment instruments for digital higher education

Domains for institutional self-assessment of digital higher education		
Plan and adjust	**Implement**	**Monitor**
Institutional strategy, quality culture and infrastructure for digital teaching and learning	Implementation of quality assurance processes and supports for digital teaching and learning	Feedback and performance monitoring of digital teaching and learning quality
Common quality domains	**Common quality domains**	**Common quality domains**
1. Vision, mission and strategy for digitalisation and innovation	4. Digital course content, design, delivery and assessment	7. Monitoring the quality of digital teaching and learning
2. Organisational quality culture for digitalisation, innovation and collaboration	5. Supporting and incentivising staff professional development	8. Strengthening feedback and monitoring practices
3. Digital education infrastructure	6. Preparing and supporting students for digital learning	

Source: Based on a review of international policy and practice included in Staring et al. (2022[1]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

Table 4.9. Selection of self-assessment or benchmarking tool for digital higher education designed for the European and Hungarian higher education context

Quality framework	Focus	Level covered by quality framework			
		Institution	Programme	Course	Instructor/learner
International tools and frameworks					
1. DigCompOrg (Kampylis et al., 2015[76])	All types	✓			
2. European Maturity Model for Blended Learning (Goeman, Poelmans and Van Rompaey, 2018[83])	Hybrid education		✓	✓	
3. E-xcellence (EADTU, 2016[78])	All types	✓	✓	✓	
4. Considerations for the quality assurance of e-learning provision (Huertas et al., 2018[84])	All types	✓			
5. DigCompEdu (Redecker and Punie, 2017[77])	All types				✓
Hungarian tools and frameworks					
6. Methodological considerations for digital technology in higher education (Dringó-Horváth et al., 2020[15])	All types	✓	✓		
7. PROFFORMANCE (PROFFORMANCE, 2022[21])	All types				✓
8. Faculty Distance Education Handbook (Bereczki et al., 2020[16])	Fully online			✓	✓

Source: Based on a review of international policy and practice included in Staring et al. (2022[1]), "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 281, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/digital-higher-education_f622f257-en.

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Notes

[1] NRENs are a specialised internet service providers dedicated to supporting the needs of the research and education communities within a country. While they are known to support a high-speed backbone network, they also have a mandate to provide seamless and secure access to digital education resource (European Commission, 2022[85]).

[2] Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Flanders, Hesse, Iceland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, North Rhine-Westphalia, Norway, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

[3] Austria, Brandenburg, Estonia, Finland, Flanders, Wallonia, Hesse, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, North Rhine-Westphalia, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

[4] Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, and Norway.

Annex A. Stakeholder engagement

As part of the project, the OECD team organised several stakeholder engagement activities to ensure that the views of key higher education stakeholder organisations and institutions in Hungary were taken into account for the development of the analysis, recommendations and policy options included in this report. An overview of the different stakeholder engagement activities organised as part of the project is presented in Table A.1. The research tools and stakeholders to be engaged in each activity were developed in close consultation with the Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM) and the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB). They are presented in the remainder of this Annex.

Table A.1. Overview of stakeholder engagement activities

Stakeholder engagement activity	Timing
Individual and institutional stakeholder interviews	
Stakeholder interviews (online)	3-15 February 2022
Virtual site visits to higher education institutions (online)	16-25 March 2022
Stakeholder consultation on "Policy Options for Hungary to Assure the Quality of Digital Higher Education" (online)	11-25 November 2022
Peer learning events and activities	
Launch event "Supporting Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary: Findings to Date and What's Next" (online)	18 November 2021
National roundtable "Best Practices and New Policies for Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary" (online)	31 May 2022
International conference "International Quality Assurance Standards, Practices and Supports for Digital Higher Education" (online)	14 June 2022
National roundtable "Key Lessons Hungary Might Learn from Other Systems" (Budapest, Hungary)	4 October 2022
Final conference "Ensuring Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary: The Path to Modernisation" (Györ, Hungary)	29 March 2023

Individual and institutional stakeholder interviews

Stakeholder interviews (online)

In February 2022, the OECD review team carried out interviews with a sample of higher education institutions and stakeholder organisations to gain an in-depth understanding of the key challenges and potential approaches to monitoring and improving the quality of the digital education offered by higher education institutions (HEIs) in Hungary. Stakeholders were also invited to share their views on how they think the existing QA standards, practices and supports could or should be adapted in order to be "fit for purpose" for digital teaching and learning in higher education. They were also invited to share examples of institutional best practice for the QA of digital higher education which they might be familiar with in Hungary.

Table A.2 provides an overview of the higher education stakeholder organisations and institutions interviewed by the OECD review team in February 2022. The list of stakeholder organisations interviewed is based on advice provided by KIM and MAB. In total, the OECD review team interviewed 19 stakeholders across all these organisations.

Table A.2. Overview of higher education stakeholder organisations interviewed by the OECD review team

Higher education stakeholder organisations interviewed by the OECD review team in February 2022
• Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM)
• Educational Authority (OH)
• Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB)
• Tempus Public Foundation (TPF)
• Hungarian Rectors' Conference (MRK)
• National Doctoral Council
• European Institute for Innovation and Technology (EIT)
• Association of Hungarian PhD and DLA Candidates
• Digital Success Nonprofit Ltd., Digital Higher Education Competence Centre (DHECC)
• The University of Debrecen

The interviews were structured along the following four main areas of inquiry:

- Key challenges and priorities facing higher education training and digital provision in Hungary today
- Policies and practices carried out by stakeholder organisations interviewed
- Stakeholder views on the quality assurance standards and procedures currently used by MAB and HEIs for the QA of digital study programmes
- Recommendation which the OECD might usefully develop to help improve the quality of digital higher education in Hungary

A. Key challenges and priorities for enhancing the quality of digital higher education in Hungary

In this part, we would like to hear your views on the key challenges facing higher education training and digital provision in Hungary today and, more specifically, in relation to the quality of teaching and learning offered in fully online and/or hybrid courses and programmes.

1. What do you think are the **key challenges facing higher** education training and digital provision in Hungary today?
   a. Please highlight challenges related to the higher education system *in general*, as well as the higher education training and digital provision system more specifically, elaborating on any contextual factors and/or factors that may help explain these challenges.
   b. Please highlight challenges related to the quality of teaching and learning *more specifically*, both in in-person and in online/hybrid courses and programmes. Reflect in particular on the digital readiness of institutions, instructors and students, and the supports and incentives that are currently available to them in order to ensure high-quality teaching and learning.
   c. Which of these do you see as being the most urgent priority areas to be addressed?
2. What do you think is **the role or potential of digitalisation** in overcoming (some of) these challenges and, more specifically, in improving the quality of their teaching and learning currently offered by HEIs in Hungary?
   a. What do you think might be some of the key benefits of digitalisation for tackling systemic challenges and improving the quality of higher education in Hungary?
   b. What do you think might be some of the main risks of digitalisation for the future development of Hungary's higher education system and the quality of teaching and learning?

c. What do you think is **the role or importance of quality assurance** in overcoming (some of) these challenges, and more specifically, in improving the quality of the teaching and learning currently offered by HEIs in Hungary?
d. Key challenges and priorities for enhancing the quality of digital higher education in Hungary
e. Policies and practices for supporting the quality of digital higher education
f. Standards and practices for the quality assurance of digital higher education
g. Recommendations
   i. The role of external quality assurance (as carried out by MAB) to ensure quality digital higher education
   ii. The role of HEIs for monitoring and supporting the quality of their digital provision
   iii. The role played by the higher education policy field and other actors in the system to support institutions to improve the quality of their digital provision

B. Policies and practices for supporting the quality of digital higher education

a. Please consider the following areas when describing your organisation's activities

[Title of policy/practice/initiative]

What challenges do you seek to address?

[Please describe]

Which policies, activities or projects are you carrying out to tackle these challenges? What are the (expected) outcomes?

[Please describe]

What are some of the main challenges you are experiencing in relation to digital education?

[Please describe]

1. Please describe **relevant policies, practices, or actions of *other organisations*** which you are aware of (e.g., international, European, national, institutional) that you think have been important or could be helpful to improve the quality of digital higher education in Hungary going forward.
   a. Please consider the following areas when describing the organisation's activities

[Title of organisation/policy/practice/initiative for Hungary]

What challenges do they seek to address?

[Please describe]

Which policies, activities or projects are they carrying out to tackle these challenges? What are the (expected) outcomes?

[Please describe]

What are some of the main challenges they are experiencing in relation to digital education?

[Please describe]

2. What do you think are ***missing* actions, policies or initiatives** that could be implemented, supported, or strengthened to improve the quality of digital higher education in Hungary?
   a. What areas are currently not being addressed and you think are important?
   b. How do you think your organisation could contribute to addressing these gaps?

c. How do you think other organisations (e.g., government, Hungarian Accreditation Committee, sector organisations, representative bodies such as Hungarian Rectors' Conference, the National Union of Students in Hungary, the Association of Hungarian PhD, and DLA Students HEIs themselves, etc.) could contribute to addressing these gaps?

C. Standards and practices for the quality assurance of digital higher education

In this part, we would like to hear your views on how the quality assurance of higher education in Hungary takes place today, and what you see as being helpful/unhelpful processes or gaps in the standards and practices currently implemented by (1) the policy field, (2) the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) and (3) HEIs themselves for the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of digital higher education. How could they be modified in order to better assess and support the quality of digital higher education?

1. How do you think the **standards and procedures used by MAB** could be revised in order to make them "fit for purpose" to monitor and evaluate the quality of digital higher education?
   a. What do you think would be helpful (minimum) standards or criteria for MAB to adopt to monitor the quality of HEIs' digital provision? How relevant/useful are the current standards?
   b. What do you think would be relevant or helpful procedures to monitor/evaluate these minimum standards? What data would be needed? How relevant/useful are MAB's current procedures?
   c. What are the main challenges experienced by MAB for carrying out assessments of the quality of digital higher education? What additional resources or supports (e.g., funding, human resources, expertise, etc.) do you think they need to effectively carry out quality assessments?
2. How do you think the **standards and procedures used by HEIs** could be revised in order to make them "fit for purpose" to monitor and evaluate the quality of their digital provision?
   a. What do you think are key areas for HEIs to monitor/evaluate to ensure minimum standards of quality are being met? (e.g. quality of teachers, student satisfaction, graduate outcomes, …?)
   b. What do you think would be useful procedures for HEIs to monitor/evaluate the quality of their courses, programmes, or teachers? (e.g. surveys, administrative data, self-assessments, …?)
   c. What are the main challenges experienced by HEIs for carrying out assessments of the quality of their online provision? What additional resources or supports do you think they would need in order to put in place effective quality assessments and enhancement practices?
3. Going beyond external and internal quality assurance, what **other supports and incentives** do you feel are important to put in place to support HEIs to improve the quality of digital higher education?
4. How do you think the higher education policy field (Ministry) can support the common framework for quality assurance in Hungarian higher education?
5. How can the **current external and internal QA policies** be improved, what measures are missing in your view?

D. Recommendations

1. What do you think would be **helpful lines of recommendation** for the OECD to develop as part of this project to help improve the quality of digital higher education in Hungary?
2. Are there any **other questions or initiatives** which have not been covered in the interview which you would like to draw the OECD's attention to?

Virtual site visits to higher education institutions (online)

In March 2022, the OECD review team carried out virtual site visits to six HEIs in Hungary, as part of which a sample of instructors, students and administrators was interviewed in each institution. The purpose of these visits was the following:

- *Understand* in greater depth the views and experiences of HEIs regarding: (1) the **quality** of digital provision in its online and hybrid forms as it is currently being offered by HEIs in Hungary; (2) key **challenges or barriers** experienced by current government regulation, external quality assurance standards and procedures for effectively managing the quality of their digital provision; and (3) **supports or incentives** at institutional, sectoral or national level deemed relevant to support HEIs to more effectively manage and continuously improve the quality of their digital provision;
- *Collect* **feedback** on the key questions emerging from the analysis to date;
- *Identify* examples of **best practice** and **gaps** across institutions in Hungary on how the quality of digital provision can be effectively monitored and supported;
- *Identify* **gaps** across institutions in Hungary in terms of how they are currently monitoring and/or supporting the quality of their digital provision (in order to fill these gaps with relevant and targeted examples of international practice); and
- *Promote* **practice sharing and peer learning** among HEI administrators, students, and instructors on the quality of their digital provision, and how it can or should be further improved.

Table A.3 presents an overview of the six HEIs that participated in the virtual site visit programme organised by the OECD review team in March 2022. The selected sample of HEIs is based on advice provided by KIM and MAB. Table A.4 presents the total number of higher education stakeholders interviewed by the OECD review team as part of the virtual site visits.

Table A.3. Participating institutions in the virtual site visits organised by the OECD review team

Institution	Date of site visit	Status	Classification	Number of Students (2021-2022)	Location	Training Profile
Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)	16 March 2022	Public	University	31 775	Budapest	Comprehensive, research-focused
Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE)	21 March 2022	Church-owned	University	8 049	Budapest	Comprehensive, research-focused
University of Debrecen (DE)	22 March 2022	Foundation	University	29 954	Debrecen	Comprehensive, research-focused
Budapest Metropolitan University (METU)	23 March 2022	Private	University of Applied Sciences	6 378	Budapest	Specialised, applied sciences
Tomori Pál College (TPF)	24 March 2022	Private	College	443	Budapest	Specialised, applied sciences
University of Szeged (SZTE)	25 March 2022	Foundation	University	20 813	Szeged	Comprehensive, research-focused

Table A.4. Number and type of stakeholders participating in virtual site visits

Higher education institution	Administrators	Instructors	Students	Total
Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)	12	5	2	**19**
Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE)	13	6	2	**21**
University of Debrecen (DE)	7	5	6	**18**
Budapest Metropolitan University (METU)	12	5	4	**21**
Tomori Pál College (TPF)	5	4	5	**14**
University of Szeged (SZTE)	8	3	3	**14**
Total	**57**	**28**	**22**	**107**

Table A.5 presents a template with sessions which HEIs were asked to prepare for the OECD review team's virtual visit to their institution. In function of each HEI's individual context, policies, and practices, some of the sessions proposed below were removed or replaced by other sessions or focus on areas deemed to be most relevant by the institution and OECD team.

Table A.5. Agenda template for virtual site visits to HEIs

Timing	Topic
Session 1: Institutional strategy, vision, and mission for digitalisation	
09:00 – 09:40	In this session, the OECD would like the institution to give a short presentation of its vision and strategy for digitalisation, as well as highlight some of the key challenges observed in relation to the quality of teaching and learning offered in digital settings. The institution should also present the actions it is (or is planning to) undertake in order to improve the quality of its digital provision. Short presentation prepared and delivered by institution *(10-15 minutes)* Discussion with OECD *(30 minutes)* Possible stakeholders to attend: Rector, staff responsible for HEI's overall or specific digital strategy, and other relevant staff responsible for institutional or digital strategy.
09:40 – 09:45	*Break*
Session 2: Monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in online courses	
09:45 – 10:25	In this session, the OECD would like the office or administrator(s) responsible for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in the institution, and for reporting to MAB, to give a key presentation of its internal QA processes. They should highlight key challenges/barriers observed in relation to (1) the quality of teaching and learning offered in digital settings in the institution and (2) the standards and procedures to be followed by MAB for the quality assessment of digital provision. Short presentation prepared and delivered by institution *(10-15 minutes)* Discussion with OECD *(30 minutes)* Possible stakeholders to attend: Staff members of the office responsible for liaison with MAB and carrying out institutional evaluation and monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning (e.g., carrying out or analysing student, staff or course satisfaction surveys).
10:25 – 10:30	*Break*
Session 3: Technical, pedagogical and/or other supports provided by the institution	
10:30 – 11:10	In this session, the OECD would like the institution to give a short presentation of any more specific technical, pedagogical, or other supports provided to instructors and learners to ensure quality online teaching and learning, followed by a discussion on what more could or should be done in this area, and what supports they would need. Short presentation prepared and delivered by institution *(10-15 minutes)* Discussion with OECD *(30 minutes)* Possible stakeholders to attend: Staff members of HEI's teaching and learning centre (if it exists), of centres or staff providing pedagogical and/or technical support to staff, or academic, technical and/or socio-emotional support to students.
11:10 – 11:15	*Break*
Session 4: The instructors' perspective	
11:15 – 11:55	In this session, the OECD would like to meet with a sample of 3-5 instructors with (1) more and (2) less experience of teaching in digital settings. The goal is to find out more about the types of technical and/or pedagogical supports needed by instructors to support the development of quality teaching and learning in online courses. Possible stakeholders to attend: A sample of 3-5 instructors, ideally from a variety of disciplines and with experience teaching in online settings or developing fully online or hybrid courses. Representative of staff association (if it exists) could also participate in this session.
11:55 – 12:00	*Break*

Timing	Topic
Session 5: The students' perspective	
12:00 – 12:40	In this session, the OECD would like to speak with a sample of 3-5 students to hear what they see as being the key challenges to attending and successfully completing online courses, and which supports they feel would be useful to help them overcome some of these challenges. Possible stakeholders to attend: A sample of 3-5 students, as well as a representative of the university's student office or association (if it exists).
12:40 – 12:45	*End of the site visit*

Stakeholder consultation "Policy Options for Hungary to Assure the Quality of Digital Higher Education" (online)

Between 11 and 25 November 2022, the OECD review team invited a carefully selected number of higher education stakeholders (both international experts and experts from Hungary) to anonymously review and comment on an internal Consultation Document "Policy Options for Hungary to Assure the Quality of Digital Higher Education", developed by the OECD review team. The feedback received from stakeholders on this document has been used to refine the findings and recommendations included in this report. The instructions shared with the stakeholders are presented in Box A.1 below.

Box A.1. Instructions for stakeholder consultation

Invited stakeholders were given the following instructions for their review of the internal Consultation Document "Policy Options for Ensuring Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary":

Purpose and focus of your review

The document shared with you presents draft final recommendations and policy options for Hungary to assure the quality of digital higher education and **should not be shared with third parti**es. They are based on the presentations and feedback received from stakeholders during a workshop (see "Lectures for 2022" on MAB's website) organised on 4 October 2022 in Budapest, Hungary, as well as various stakeholder consultation activities, national and international desk research carried out as part of the project over the past year. The purpose of your review is to ensure that the OECD's recommendations meet the challenges and needs of the higher education sector and will help to build the capacity of HEIs in Hungary to effectively manage the quality of fully online and hybrid study programmes. You are invited to read the document by highlighting:

- Any factual inaccuracies or errors that you believe need to be corrected by the OECD;
- Any important additional (quality) considerations which you believe are important to reflect; and
- Which recommendations are the most urgent/important for Hungary to implement or support?

Timing for submitting your review

Please return the document with your feedback (in track changes and comments) no later than **Friday 25 November 2022** to François Staring (Francois.Staring@oecd.org). Please note that any feedback or comments you submit will be treated **fully confidentially by the OECD** team and not be shared with others.

Peer learning events and activities

Launch event "Supporting Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary: Key Findings and What's Next?"

On 18 November 2022, the OECD review team supported KIM to organise an online webinar to conclude the project "Supporting the Digital Transformation of Higher Education in Hungary", which took place between July 2020 and October 2021, and introduce the new project "Ensuring quality digital higher education in Hungary". The event aimed to:

- Share the findings and recommendations of the digital transformation project;
- Outline the objectives and methods of the quality assurance for digital higher education project;
- Present the perspectives and current efforts of higher education stakeholders to support the digitalisation of Hungarian higher education.

Table A.6 presents the agenda for the event, which was organised via Zoom videoconference.

Table A.6. Agenda launch event (18 November 2022)

Timing	Topic and speakers
9:00 – 9:15	**Welcome and purpose of meeting** • Dr. Balázs Hankó, Deputy State Secretary for Higher Education, Hungarian Ministry for Innovation and Technology (MIT) • Ágota Kovács, Policy Officer, Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support, European Commission • Paulo Santiago, Head of the Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
9:15 – 9:55	**Session 1: International projects on digital higher education in Hungary**
9:15 – 9:30	*Presentations* Supporting the digital transformation of higher education in Hungary: findings and recommendations • Patricia Mangeol, Analyst, Higher Education Policy, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD Ensuring quality digital higher education in Hungary: objectives, key milestones and methods • François Staring, Analyst, Higher Education Policy, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
9:30 – 9:55	*Discussion and Q&A* • Moderation: Thomas Weko, Head of the Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
9:55 – 10:00	*Break*
10:00 – 10:55	**Session 2: National initiatives on digital higher education in Hungary**
10:00 – 10:40	*Presentations* Supporting the digital transformation of higher education in Hungary • Dr. János Setényi, expert on behalf of the Digital Higher Education Competence Centre, Digital Success Nonprofit Ltd. • Viktória Lilla Pató, Vice-president of international affairs, Association of Hungarian PhD and DLA Candidates Ensuring the quality of digital higher education • Péter Levente Lakatos, Deputy Director, Secretariat, Hungarian Accreditation Committee • Dr. Péter Ekler, Associate Professor, Department of Automation and Applied Informatics, Budapest University of Technology and Economics
10:40 – 10:55	*Discussion and Q&A* • Moderation: Paulo Santiago, Head of the Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD

Timing	Topic and speakers
10:55 – 11:00	**Closing** • Dr. Laura Sinóros-Szabó, Head of Department for Strategy and Institutional Development in Higher Education, Hungarian Ministry for Innovation and Technology • Thomas Weko, Head of the Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD

National roundtable "Best Practices and New Policies for Digital Higher Education in Hungary" (online)

On 31 May 2022, the OECD team supported KIM to organise a public roundtable event on "Best Practices and New Policies for Digital Higher Education in Hungary". The purpose of this event was to provide HEIs and key stakeholder organisations in Hungary with an opportunity to share and discuss:

- best practices of higher education institutions with respect to managing and supporting quality digital higher education; and
- how public policies and external quality assurance can support the offer of quality digital higher education by Hungarian higher education institutions.

Table A.7 presents the agenda for the national roundtable event, which was organised via Zoom videoconference and attended by 48 stakeholders from 21 different organisations.

Table A.7. Agenda national roundtable event (31 May 2022)

Timing	Topic and speakers
09:30 – 09:40	**Welcome and introduction** • Dr. Balázs Hankó, State Secretary for Innovation and Higher Education, Hungarian Ministry for Culture and Innovation (KIM) • **Prof Dr Valéria Csépe**, President, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) • **Ms Ágota Kovács**, Policy Officer, European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support • **Mr Paulo Santiago**, Head of the Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
09:40 – 09:45	**Project overview and purpose of the event** • **Mr François Staring**, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
Session 1 – PLENARY DISCUSSIONS: What are higher education institutions in Hungary doing to ensure the quality of digital higher education?	
09:45 – 10:15	**Presentations: Institutional vision, mission and measuring digitalisation** Representatives from two HEIs in Hungary will share their vision, mission and approach to measuring the quality of digital higher education as part of their overall internal quality assurance system. • **Dr István Vilmos Kovács**, Vice-Rector for International Academic Relations, E-Learning Strategy and Internal Quality Assurance at the Budapest Metropolitan University of Applied Sciences • **Dr Elek Bartha**, Vice-Rector for Educational Affairs, Internal Quality Assurance at Debrecen University Moderation: **Mr François Staring**, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
10:15 – 10:45	**Presentations: Internal quality assurance and support for digital teaching and learning** Representatives from two HEIs in Hungary will share their approach to supporting students and teachers for digital higher education as part of internal quality assurance strategies. • **Dr Ida Dringó-Horváth**, Associate Professor and Head of ICT Research Centre, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church (KRE), ICT, Teaching and Learning Centres in Hungary and Activities of KRE's ICT Research Centre • **Dr Péter Balkany**, Senior Lecturer, Corvinus University, Internal Quality Assurance for Digital Higher Education at Corvinus University of Budapest and Activities of the Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement and Methodology Moderation: **Mr François Staring**, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
10:45 – 11:15	**Discussion: External evaluation and accreditation of digital higher education**

Timing	Topic and speakers
	Representatives from three HEIs in Hungary will reflect on how MAB could revise or adapt its current standards and procedures for institutional and programme accreditation to support institutions in expanding and improving the quality of their digital education offer. • **Mr Péter Szakál**, Director of Academic Affairs, University of Szeged • **Dr Péter Baldy**, Deputy-Director of Academic Affairs, Eötvös Loránd University • **Dr Levente Kiss**, Director of Centre for Educational Development, Methodology and Organisation, Semmelweis University Moderation: **Mr Thomas Weko**, Head of the Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
11:15 – 11:30	*Break*
Session 2 – BREAKOUT GROUPS: What should higher education institutions and MAB do to ensure quality digital higher education?	
11:30 – 12:00	**Purpose of the breakout discussions** Participants are invited to join breakout groups, to discuss the questions put to them, and to prepare an answer to be shared with the plenary session. • **Groups 1 and 2:** What are 3-4 ways that the accreditation standards and methods implemented by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) may be revised to support the wider offer of high-quality digital study programmes? • **Groups 3, 4, and 5:** What are 4-5 useful indicators of quality that higher education institutions should use to monitor and evaluate the quality of their digital study programmes?
	Group 1: Higher education leadership • Moderation: **Mr Simon Roy**, Policy Analyst, Higher Education Policy Team, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
	Group 2: Staff responsible for institutional quality assurance, monitoring, and evaluation • Moderation: **Mr Thomas Weko**, Head of the Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
	Group 3: Staff responsible for supporting students and teachers • Moderation: **Mr François Staring**, Policy Analyst, Higher Education Policy Team, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
	Group 4: Instructors • Moderation: **Ms Andrea-Rosalinde Hofer**, Policy Analyst, Higher Education Policy Team, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
	Group 5: Students • Moderation: **Dr Gillian Golden**, Policy Analyst, Higher Education Policy Team, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
Session 3 – PLENARY REPORTING: Key take-aways from the group discussions	
12:00 – 12:15	**Key lessons learned by OECD moderators from breakout groups** • Presenters: OECD moderators of breakout groups Moderation: **Mr Paulo Santiago**, Head of the Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
Session 4 – LOOKING AHEAD: Supporting the quality of digital higher education in Hungary	
12:15 – 12:45	**Reflections from national-level higher education stakeholders** National-level higher education stakeholders in Hungary will be invited to share what they are doing to support the quality of digital higher education in Hungary, and their reflections on the national roundtable. • **Prof. Dr Valéria Csépe**, President, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) • **Dr Péter Levente Lakatos**, Deputy Director, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) • **Dr Gábor Mészáros**, Senior Counsellor, Higher Education Training Department, Ministry for Innovation and Technology • **László Murai**, President, National Union of Students (HOÖK) • **Dr Zoltán Dubéczi**, Secretary General, Hungarian Rectors' Conference (MRK) Moderation: **Mr Paulo Santiago**, Head of the Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
12:45 – 12:50	**Closing and next steps** **Dr Laura Sinóros-Szabó**, Head of Department for Strategy and Institutional Development, Hungarian Ministry for Culture and Innovation (KIM)

International conference "International Quality Assurance Standards, Practices and Supports for Digital Higher Education" (online)

On 14 June 2022, the OECD team organised an online conference on "International Quality Assurance Standards, Practices and Supports for Digital Higher Education". The event was aimed at:

- sharing international examples of best practice for the quality assurance of digital higher education with higher education stakeholders in Hungary; and
- providing an opportunity to delegates from the OECD's Group of National Experts for Higher Education (GNE-HE) to attend as observers and learn more about the quality assurance of digital higher education.

Table A.8 provides presents the agenda for the international event, which was organised via Zoom videoconference.

Table A.8. Agenda international conference (14 June 2022)

Timing	Topic and speakers
13:00 – 13:15	**Welcome and introduction** • **Ms Ágota Kovács**, Policy Officer, European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) • **Prof. Dr Valéria Csépe**, President, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) Moderation: **Mr Paulo Santiago**, Head of the Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
Session 1 – How are quality assurance agencies evaluating and supporting the quality of digital higher education?	
13:15 – 13:30	*Setting the scene: **Professor Mark Brown**, Director, National Institute for Digital Learning (NIDL), Dublin City University (Ireland)*
13:30 – 14:10	**A closer look at the approach of three European quality assurance agencies** • **Mr Walter Balfe**, Head of the Quality Assurance Unit, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), *Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (2018)* • **Dr Liia Lauri**, Assessment Director, Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (EKKA), *E-Learning Guidelines and E-Learning Quality Label* • **Dr Ailsa Crum**, Director of Membership, Quality Enhancement & Standards, The UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (United Kingdom), *Digitalisation Advice and Guidance for UK Higher Education Providers*
14:10 – 14:30	**Reflections from Hungary and Q&A with audience** Interlocutor: **Dr Péter Levente Lakatos**, Deputy Director, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) Moderator: **Mr Paulo Santiago**, Head of the Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
14:30 – 14:45	*Break*
Session 2 – How are higher education institutions managing the quality of their digital courses and programmes?	
14:45 – 15:00	*Setting the scene: **Dr Paul Bacsich**, CEO, Dualversity (United Kingdom)*
15:00 – 15:30	**A closer look at the approach of two European higher education institutions** • **Dr Panayiotis Angelides**, Vice Rector for Academic Affairs and Professor of Inclusion for School Improvement (University of Nicosia) and **Prof Christina Hadjisoteriou**, Associate Professor School of Education (University of Nicosia), *Quality Assurance at the University of Nicosia*, Cyprus • **Dr Martin Stabauer,** Deputy Head of the Institute for Digital Business, (Johannes Kepler University Linz), *Internal Quality Assurance at Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria*
15:30 – 15:50	**Reflections from Hungary and Q&A with audience** Interlocutor: **Dr Eszter Lukács**, Vice-Rector for International Affairs, Széchenyi István University of Győr, Hungary Moderation: **Mr Thomas Weko**, Head of the Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
15:50 – 16:00	*Break*
Session 3 – How to support higher education institutions to deliver high-quality digital education?	
16:00 – 16:10	*Setting the scene: **Professor Mark Brown**, Director, National Institute for Digital Learning (NIDL), Dublin City University (Ireland)*
16:10 – 16:45	**Presentations: Supporting higher education institutions to deliver high-quality digital education**

Timing	Topic and speakers
	• **Ms Ivana Juraga**, Policy Officer, European Commission (DG EAC), *Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027)* • **Ms Johanna de Groot**, Programme Manager, SURF (Netherlands), *Acceleration Plan and Digitalisation Impulse for Higher Education Institutions in the Netherlands* • **Dr Bethany Simunich**, Director of Research and Innovation, Quality Matters (United States), *Quality Matters Rubrics for Programme and Course Evaluation*
16:45 – 17:00	**Reflections from Hungary and Q&A with audience** Interlocutor: **Dr Laura Sinóros-Szabó**, Head of Department, Hungarian Ministry for Culture and Innovation (KIM) Moderator: **Mr Paulo Santiago**, Head of the Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
17:00	**Thanking participants and closing of the conference** • **Mr Paulo Santiago**, Head of the Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD

National roundtable "Policy Options for Hungary to Assure the Quality of Digital Higher Education" (Budapest, Hungary)

On 4 October 2022, the OECD supported the Hungarian Deputy State Secretariat for Higher Education at the Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM) and the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) in organising a one-day national roundtable. The roundtable event was hosted by Hungarian University of Sports Science. The purpose of this event was to:

- present an initial diagnosis and discuss preliminary recommendations with key stakeholders from the higher education sector in Hungary about revisions to external QA standards, institutional quality management practices, and supports.
- provide Hungarian HEIs and other stakeholders the opportunity to test, debate, validate or contest the OECD review team's initial findings and diagnosis, and to provide expert feedback on the preliminary recommendations.

Table A.9 presents the agenda for the national roundtable event, which was organised in person in Budapest, Hungary and was attended by 51 stakeholders from 27 different organisations.

Table A.9. Agenda national roundtable event (4 October 2022)

Timing	Topic and speakers
09:30 – 10:00	*Welcome coffee*
10:00 – 10:15	**Welcome and introduction** • **Dr Balázs Hankó,** Deputy State Secretary for Higher Education, Hungarian Ministry of Culture, and Innovation (KIM) • **Prof Dr Valéria Csépe**, President, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) • **Ágota Kovács**, Policy Officer, European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) • **Prof Dr Tamás Sterbenz**, Rector, Hungarian University of Sports Science
Session 1 – External quality assurance: Policy options for adapting the Hungarian external quality assurance framework for higher education to digital education	
10:15 – 10:35 [20 minutes]	**External quality assurance of digital higher education – International practices and policy options for Hungary** Presentation of OECD's initial findings from its analysis of external quality assurance practices for digital higher education internationally, and policy options Hungary might consider. • Presentation: **François Staring**, Policy Analyst, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
10:35 – 11:15 [40 minutes]	**Discussion with stakeholders** Stakeholders are invited to react to the OECD's presentation. • Invited reaction [5 minutes]: **Dr Péter Levente Lakatos** (MAB), Director of International Affairs, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) • Moderated discussion [35 minutes]: **Thomas Weko**, Team Leader, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD

Timing	Topic and speakers
11:15 – 11:30	*Comfort break*
Session 2 – INTERNAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT: Policy options to support greater HEI responsibility for the internal quality management of digital education	
11:30 – 11:50	**Internal quality management of digital higher education – International practices and policy options for Hungary** Presentation of the OECD's initial findings from its analysis of internal quality management practices for digital higher education internationally, and policy options Hungary might consider supporting greater institutional responsibility. • Presentation: **François Staring**, Policy Analyst, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
11:50 – 12:30	**Discussion with stakeholders** Stakeholders are invited to react to the OECD's presentation. • Moderated discussion [40 minutes]: **Thomas Weko**, Team Leader, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
12:30 – 13:30	*Lunch break*
Session 3 – INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT: Policy options to support Hungarian HEIs in enhancing the quality of their digital higher education offer	
13:30 – 13:45	**Supporting institutions to enhance the quality of digital teaching and learning – International practices and policy options for Hungary** Presentation of OECD's initial findings from its analysis of institutional supports for digital higher education internationally, and policy options Hungary might consider. • Presentation: **François Staring**, Policy Analyst, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
13:45 – 14:15	**Discussion with stakeholders** Stakeholders are invited to react to the presentation. • Invited reactions [5 minutes]: **Dr Laura Sinóros-Szabó**, Head of Department for Strategy and Institutional Development, Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM) • Moderated discussion [25 minutes]: **Thomas Weko**, Team Leader, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
14:15 – 14:30	*Comfort break*
Session 4 – POTENTIAL STANDARDS AND INDICATORS: Potential standards and associated indicators for the quality assurance of digital higher education in Hungary	
14:30 – 14:50	**Presentation of potential standards and associated indicators for the quality assurance of digital higher education in Hungary** Presentation of a list of potential standards and associated indicators for the quality assurance of digital higher education in Hungary. • Presentation [15 minutes]: **Prof Mark Brown**, Director, National Institute for Digital Learning (NIDL), Dublin City University (Ireland)
14:50 – 15:20	**Discussion with stakeholders** Stakeholders are invited to react to the presentation. • Presentation [10 minutes]: **Prof Dr Valéria Csépe**, President, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) • Moderated discussion [20 minutes]: **Thomas Weko**, Team Leader, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
15:20 – 15:30	**Closing of the event and next steps** **Dr Laura Sinóros-Szabó**, Head of Department for Strategy and Institutional Development, Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM)

Final conference "Ensuring Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary" (Györ, Hungary)

On 29 March 2023, the OECD team organised a final project conference in Györ (Hungary), hosted by Széchenyi István University (SZE), and organised in cooperation with KIM and MAB. The purpose of the conference was to:

- share the findings and recommendations of the project with the higher education sector in Hungary;
- discuss concrete steps on how to implement the project recommendations in Hungary.

Table A.10 presents the agenda for the final conference, as agreed between KIM and MAB in February 2023.

Table A.10. Agenda final conference (29 March 2023)

Timing	Topic and speakers
09:30 – 10:00	*Welcome coffee*
10:00 – 10:20	**Welcome and introduction** • **Prof Dr László Palkovics**, Chair of Board of Trustees, Széchenyi István University • **Dr Balázs Hankó**, State Secretary for Higher Education and Innovation, Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM) • **Ágota Kovács**, Policy Officer, European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) • **Andreas Schleicher**, Director, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
Session 1 – GLOBAL AND EUROPEAN TRENDS: Global and European Trends in Higher Education Quality Assurance	
10:20 – 10:35	**Presentation** International expert presentation on global trends affecting the quality assurance of higher education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). • **Elena Cirlan**, Senior Policy and Project Coordinator, European Association of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
10:35 – 11 05	**Panel discussion** Moderated panel discussion on global trends affecting the quality assurance of higher education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). • **Dr Esther Huertas Hidalgo**, Head of Quality Assurance Department, AQU Catalunya, Spain • **Diane Freiberger**, Managing Director, Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA), Germany • **Elena Cirlan**, Senior Policy and Project Coordinator, European Association of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
11:05 – 11:15	**Questions from audience**
Session 2 – QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HUNGARY: Policy Options for Ensuring Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary	
11:15 – 11:35	**Presentation** Launch of the OECD publication Ensuring Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary and presentation of key findings and recommendations. • **François Staring**, Analyst, Higher Education Policy Team, Policy Advice and Implementation Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
11:35 – 11:50	**Reflections from the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB)** Reflections from MAB on the findings and recommendations presented by the OECD and plans for the modernisation of higher education quality assurance in Hungary. • **Prof Dr Valéria Csépe**, President, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB)
11:50 – 12:00	**Questions from audience**
12:00 – 13:00	*Lunch break*
Session 3 – SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL REFORM: Institutional Practices and Supports for the Effective Quality Management of Digital Higher Education	
13:00 – 13:15	**Presentation** International expert presentation on key challenges and inspiring practices for the development of digitally enhanced learning and teaching in higher education. • **Michael Gaebel**, Director of Higher Education Policy, European University Association (EUA)
13:15 – 13:45	**Panel discussion** Moderated panel discussion on institutional quality management and support for the development of high-quality digital higher education. • **Prof Dr Petra Aczél**, Full Professor of Communication and Rhetoric Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME), Hungary • **Prof Dr Levente Kovács**, Rector and Professor at John von Neumann Faculty of Informatics, Obuda University (OE), Hungary • **Michael Gaebel**, Director of Higher Education Policy, European University Association (EUA)
13:45 – 14:00	**Questions from audience**
Session 4 – REFLECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE: Emergence of Alternative Credentials in Higher Education and Quality Assurance	
14:00 – 14:20	**Presentation** International expert presentation on the emergence of alternative credentials in higher education, and key considerations for quality assurance. • **Professor Mark Brown**, Director of the National Institute for Digital Learning (NIDL), Dublin City University (DCU), Ireland • **Professor Josep M. Duart**, President of EDEN Digital Learning Europe and Full Professor at the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences of the Open University of Catalunya (UOC), Spain

Timing	Topic and speakers
14:20 – 14:30	**Reflections from the Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM)** Reflections from KIM on the international expert presentation and plans to support the quality enhancement of digital higher education in Hungary. • **Dr Laura Sinóros-Szabó**, Head of Department for Strategy and Institutional Development, Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM)
14:30 – 14:40	**Questions from audience**
14:40 – 14:45	**Closing** • **Dr Balázs Hankó,** State Secretary for Higher Education and Innovation, Hungarian Ministry of Culture and Innovation (KIM)

Annex B. Assessment frameworks for external quality assurance in Hungary

Overview of procedures, standards and indicators implemented by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB)

Annex B provides a detailed overview of the procedures for which the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) bears responsibility to assure the quality of higher education in Hungary, including an overview of the number of procedures carried out between 2018 and 2021. It also presents a detailed overview and analysis of the standards and indicators included in the assessment frameworks used by MAB for the accreditation of higher education institutions and doctoral schools in five-year cycles, the standards and indicators used for the *ex ante* accreditation of bachelor's, and master's programmes, as well as standards and indicators used for the cyclical review of medical training programmes.

The analysis of the standards and indicators covers four dimensions:

- ***Number of indicators***. For each procedure, the total number of indicators for which institutions are required to provide evidence is presented;
- ***Level and focus of indicators***. For each indicator, an assessment is made as to whether it focuses on requirements at the institution, programme, course, or individual student/instructor level, as well as whether it focusses on the inputs, processes or outputs of education, and includes any specific considerations or requirements for digital education;
- ***Evidence***. For each indicator, an assessment is made as to whether it requires HEIs to provide quantitative or qualitative evidence, or both; and
- ***Assessment***: For each indicator, the tables specify whether they are a mandatory or optional requirement for higher education institutions to meet.

Analysis of procedures for the external quality assurance of higher education in Hungary

Table B.1. Overview of MAB procedures

Level	Initiated by	Evaluated by	Procedure	Length of validity of accreditation	Specific standards or criteria for digital education?	Stage
A. Within scope of the National Act on Higher Education (2011) and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015)						
Institution level						
1. Initial accreditation of new institutions (incl. initial programmes)	Educational Authority	MAB Disciplinary Committee Educational Authority	MAB expert opinion Operating authorisation by Educational Authority	Up to 5 years	No	Ex ante
2. Accreditation of institutions in five-year cycles	Educational Authority	MAB site visit committees	Institutional self-evaluation report MAB site visit MAB evaluation report Operating authorisation by Educational Authority	Up to 5 years	Yes (but minor: e.g., digitalisation standards under ESG 1.8: Public information)	Ex post
Programme level						
3. Initial accreditation of new doctoral schools	Educational Authority	MAB Disciplinary Committee MAB Standing Committee on University Professor and Doctoral School Applications Educational Authority	Doctoral school self-evaluation report MAB site visit MAB evaluation report Registration by the Educational Authority	Up to 5 years	Yes (but minor: e.g. digitalisation standards under ESG 1.8: Public information)	Ex ante
4. Accreditation of doctoral schools in five-year cycles	Educational Authority	MAB Disciplinary Committee MAB Standing Committee on University Professor and Doctoral School Applications MAB Site Visit Teams Educational Authority	Doctoral school self-evaluation report MAB site visit MAB evaluation report Registration by the Educational Authority	Up to 5 years	Yes (but minor: e.g. digitalisation standards under ESG 1.8: Public information)	Ex post
5. Initial evaluation of education and learning outcome framework requirements of new higher VET, bachelor's, and master's programmes	HEI or Minister	Hungarian Rectors Conference (MRK) Higher Education Planning Board (HEPB) MAB Disciplinary Committee	MRK, HEPB and MAB issue expert opinion Registration by the Educational Authority	No time limit (KKK law reviewed by MRK every five years)	No	Ex ante

Level	Initiated by	Evaluated by	Procedure	Length of validity of accreditation	Specific standards or criteria for digital education?	Stage
		Educational Authority				
6. Initial accreditation of new higher VET, bachelor's, and master's programmes	HEI or Minister	MAB Disciplinary Committees Educational Authority	MAB expert opinion Registration issued by the Educational Authority	No time limit (KKK law reviewed by MRK every five years)	Yes (for distance education programmes)	Ex ante
[Between 2017 and 2019: Accreditation of bachelor's and master's programmes in disciplinary clusters]	HEI or Minister	Disciplinary committees	MAB expert opinion Registration by the Educational Authority	Ad hoc (there are plans to integrate in institutional accreditation review cycle)	Yes (for distance education programmes)	Ex post
B. Within scope of the National Act on Higher Education (2011) and Global Standards of the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) and for the accreditation of foreign residencies and work experiences, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA)						
Programme level						
7. Medical training accreditation	HEI	MAB Disciplinary Committee Educational Authority	Institutional self-evaluation report MAB site visit MAB evaluation report Operating authorisation by Educational Authority	Up to 8 years	Yes (but only for criterion 8.2.2: medical school maintains various **IT support systems** in order to support administrative activities)	Ex post
8. Accreditation of sites for foreign residencies and work experiences for medical students	HEI	MAB Disciplinary Committee	Institutional self-evaluation report MAB site visit MAB evaluation report MAB decision	Up to 5 years	No	Ex ante
C. Within scope of the National Act on Higher Education (2011)						
Individual level						
9. University professor applications	HEI	MAB Disciplinary committee MAB Standing Committee on university professor and doctoral school applications Ministry of Culture and Innovation	MAB Application documents for University Professor title MAB evaluation report Ministry of Culture and Innovation notification	No time limit	No	Ex ante

Source: Adapted from Szlamka et al. (2015[1]), *Referencing and Self-certification Report of the Hungarian Qualifications Framework to the EQF and to the QF-EHEA*, Hungarian Education Authority (Oktatási Hivatal), Budapest https://www.oktatas.hu/pub_bin/dload/LLL/HuQF/HuQF_referencing_report.pdf; MAB (2022a[2]), *MAB Procedures*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/en/procedures/

Table B.2. Number of MAB procedures carried out between 2018 and 2021

Level and type of procedure	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
1. Accreditation of institutions in five-year cycles					
Approved	6	10	21	8	45
Rejected	0	0	1	0	1
Total	6	10	22	8	46
2. Accreditation of doctoral schools and in five-year cycles					
Approved	9	93	14	26	142
Rejected	5	7	3	1	16
Total	14	100	17	27	158
3. Initial evaluation of education and learning outcome framework requirements of new higher VET, bachelor's, and master's programmes					
Approved	11	12	7	3	33
Rejected	10	11	11	4	36
Total	21	23	18	7	69
4. Initial accreditation for the launch of higher VET, bachelor's, and master's programmes					
Approved	68	81	22	66	237
Rejected	52	67	58	45	222
Total	120	148	80	111	459
5. Accreditation of bachelor's and master's programmes in disciplinary clusters					
Approved	30	3	N/A	N/A	33
Rejected	11	0	N/A	N/A	11
Total	41	3	N/A	N/A	44
6. Medical training accreditation					
Approved	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2
Rejected	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2
7. University professor applications					
Approved	116	122	107	86	431
Rejected	13	18	20	11	62
Total	129	140	127	97	493

Source: Based on information provided to the OECD review team by MAB as well as MAB (2022b[3]), *MAB Decisions*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/en/decisions/

Table B.3. MAB standards and indicators for the accreditation of institutions in five-year cycles

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Accredited / Accredited with monitoring / Not accredited
Part I: The general situation of the institution, its management, and the actions taken following the previous institutional accreditation								
1. Describe how the self-evaluation was prepared: preparation, the process of self-evaluation, which bodies gave their opinion and approval.	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Institutional context	Pass/fail
2. Describe the general situation of the institution at the time of preparing the institutional report.	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A		
3. Participation in the management of the institution, including student and doctoral student representative bodies, the conditions provided for the operation and tasks of the student, student and faculty representatives, e.g., funding, infrastructure, staff.	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A		
4. Provide evidence of management commitment to quality and excellence. Also describe the specific tools (management and analysis of indicators) used in the management processes.	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A		
5. Summarise the main features, principles, and indicators of the institution's management. Describe the trends in changes in external and internal resources	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A		
6. Describe the quality improvement measures taken according to the ESG 2015 standards based on the recommendations of the previous institutional accreditation report and their impact. /Can be in tabular form, institutional measures can be listed if they are explained in the institutional report for the given standard. In this case, please provide the reference here. If the measure does not appear in the rest of the report, please provide more details here.	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A		
TOTAL for PART I	**0**	**6**	**0**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
2. Part II: Compliance with Part I of the ESG (2015) pass/fail								
ESG 1.1: Policy for quality assurance Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.								
1. Describe the quality assurance system of the institution, and its main actors (powers, responsibilities).	0	0	0	0	1	0	Institutional policy for quality assurance	Pass/fail

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Accredited / Accredited with monitoring / Not accredited
2. Briefly summarise the institution's quality policy and quality strategy quality objectives, how are they supported by the mission statement and strategic documents and strategic objectives? Specify the quality policy, quality strategy, quality objectives document(s) containing the quality objectives and targets.	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
3. How (according to processes and procedures) are strategic and quality policy documents developed, approved, and reviewed throughout the institution? System (both educational and non-educational), and internal stakeholders (students, faculty, non-teaching staff)?	0	1	0	0	1	1		Pass/fail
4. How are the above processes (drafting, approval, review) involving external stakeholders - in particular apprenticeships, dual training partners, employers, and any other users relevant to student outcomes?	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
5. How does the institutional quality assurance system monitor the application of the quality policy for all actors?	0	1	0	0	1	1		Pass/fail
6. If the specificities of a training area justify the definition of specific quality criteria, please present a document containing them and explain any additional quality criteria other than the procedures laid out in point 3, in a maximum of 1000 characters.	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
7. How can you describe and share good practices, which help to fulfil and implement the quality policy? How do you disseminate good practice in the various training areas and departments? Describe this through examples! (max. 5 examples)	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
8. Give three strategic objectives that have been achieved and 3 strategic examples of good practice in the last 5 years 3 strategic objectives that have not been fully met. Describe in detail the achievement of each, the process, and the results.	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
9. Give two of the strategic objectives and quality targets for quality development over the last 5 years that have been met or not fully met. Describe in detail both cases, as well as the process and results of the follow-up of the achievement or non-achievement.	0	1	0	1	1	1		Pass/fail
10. The role of non-teaching staff and students in quality assurance (developing quality awareness).	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
11. Describe how quality assurance policies support academic integrity and freedom.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
12. Describe the procedures in place that ensure that staff and students are protected against all forms of intolerant and discriminatory behaviour.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.1	**0**	**11**	**0**	**5**	**8**	**3**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.2 & 1.9: Design and approval of programmes & Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes								

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Accredited / Accredited with monitoring / Not accredited
ESG 1.2: Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. **ESG 1.9:** Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.								
1. Number of courses per semester or per study cycle.	1	0	0	1	0	0	Design, approval, and monitoring of programmes	Pass/fail
2. Information on institutional regulations regarding: a. Establishment of courses b. The processes and criteria for re-evaluating existing courses c. Administrative supports for students (on choosing, registering and de-registering from modules) d. The allocation of credits to modules	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
3. During the latest strategic review of the HEI, was the number and provision of courses examined? If yes, which courses?	1	0	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
4. Procedures (incl. stakeholders consulted) to determine the establishment or re-evaluation of courses.		1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
5. Please describe the use of graduate tracking, student enrolment and employer feedback data for the establishment and re-evaluation of courses.	0	1	0	0	0	1		Pass/fail
6. Please describe the ways in which the practical training opportunities are provided for all courses where this is relevant.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
7. Provide examples of scientific results leading to changes in the course content.	0	1	0	0	0	1		Pass/fail
8. Is there a HEI-level, formalised system for collecting student feedback about courses? If yes, how does it work?	0	1	0	0	0	1		Pass/fail
9 Ways in which students are involved in the development of course content.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
10. Provide examples of student skills development and the way in which these skills are linked to the subject studied.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
11. Recognition of previous “informal experiences” of students	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.2 & 1.9	**2**	**9**	**0**	**3**	**5**	**3**	**Programme**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.3: Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment								

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Accredited / Accredited with monitoring / Not accredited
Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.								
1. Number of courses per semester per study cycle.	0	0	0	0	0	0	Teaching, learning and assessment practices	Pass/fail
2. Information on institutional regulations regarding: a. Measuring competence (where this is done systematically, in a systematic way as per laid down in the regulations) b. Methods and formats of knowledge transfer c. Procedures for student redress and complaint handling d. Any other factors considered to be relevant for the implementation of the standards and guidelines in the functioning of the institution	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
3. What other complaints procedures exist in the HEI?	0	1	0	1	0			Pass/fail
4. Please describe the procedures used by the HEI to implement and monitor the standards set out above.	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
5. In cases where the HEI uses non-standard, discipline-specific implementation procedures, please describe these here	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
6. Describe special provisions made for disabled, foreign, athlete, exceptionally talented students, as well as students from disadvantaged background.	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
7. Describe the formal complaints and appeals procedures of the HEI. Statistics regarding formal complaints and appeals by students in the last 5 years.	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
8. Procedures to evaluate and monitor student feedback. Changes made to educational content or practices as a result of these feedback procedures.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
9. Describe how student assessment results (means, standard deviation) and trends in these indicators are analysed.	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
10. Please summarise the characteristics of compliance with the standards and guidelines set out in ESG 1.8 in your institution. (max. 2500 characters).	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.3	**0**	**9**	**0**	**8**	**1**	**0**	**Course**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.4: Student admission, progression, recognition, and certification								
Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g., student admission, progression, recognition, and certification.								
1. Regulations concerning the execution of the HEI's legally defined teaching and research activities e.g., academic registration, course validating, thesis regulations, etc.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Students (admission, progression,	Pass/fail

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Accredited / Accredited with monitoring / Not accredited
2. What are the processes by which the institution's quality assurance system collects and evaluates the experiences of users (students, teachers, administrators, administrators)?	0	1	0	0	1	0	recognition, and certification)	Pass/fail
3. Examples of instances when student feedback led to a change in procedures.	0	1	0	0	0	1		Pass/fail
4. Describe whether the institution applies course-specific requirements in the admission procedure. What are these tests (medical fitness, career aptitude, etc.)?	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
5. Describe how the institution ensures the objectivity and impartiality of its own selection procedures.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
6. What procedures and tools does the institution use to collect information on the progress of students and at what intervals? How does the institution support the progress of students at an appropriate pace, according to the model curriculum?	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
7. How and to what e1tent are students provided with the opportunity to study their subjects in a foreign language?	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
8. Procedures to monitor that all advertised core courses are offered every semester.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
9. Is it possible to do voluntary activities instead of elective modules?	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
10. Procedures to determine assessment and grading criteria. Procedures to make these criteria publicly accessible?	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
11. What procedures does the institution have in place to examine the methods used to establish 75% content equivalence of credit recognition and their compliance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention?	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
12. Procedures to calculate credit values in line with the Lisbon recognition agreement.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
13. In what way and with what regularity does the institution assess whether the competences of graduates attain the standards set out in the CCI? Does it compare this with the competency measurements at entry? How do you use the results of these assessments?	0	1	0	0	0	1		Pass/fail
14. How do instructors, tutors and persons involved in academic administration ensure that the policies on academic progress, assessment and recognition, including the correct use of the uniform system of study, are known and consistently enforced? How does the institution assess compliance with this?	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
15. Procedures to monitor that teaching staff consistently apply standardised teaching and grading norms.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Accredited / Accredited with monitoring / Not accredited
16. Procedures to monitor the application of special support measures relating to admission, course progression, recognition of studies, and the awarding of qualifications?	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
17. Please briefly describe the specific rules applicable to international joint courses (if any), admission, progression, recognition of studies, award of qualifications.	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
18. Please summarise the characteristics of compliance with the standards and guidelines set out in ESG 1.8 in your institution. (ma1. 2500 characters). If certain disciplines require specific measures, please describe them here.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.4	**0**	**18**	**0**	**4**	**12**	**2**	**Individual**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.5: Teaching staff Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.								
1. Procedures for hiring and employing teaching staff (including selection criteria and codes of conduct)	0	1	0	0	1	0	Teaching staff (hiring and professional development)	Pass/fail
2. Models and criteria for professional development of teaching staff	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.5	**0**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**Individual**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.6: Learning resources and student support Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.								
1. Procedures/resources to facilitate the acquisition of foreign language skills	0	1	0	0	1	0	Students (support and social activities)	Pass/fail
2. Scholarships, including application and selection criteria for scholarships	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
3. Procedure for accessing academic or social support systems at the HEI	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
4. Additional, paid-for services for students	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
5. Regulations governing TDK and study circle admission and participation	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
6. Regulation regarding student-organised events	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.6	**0**	**6**	**0**	**4**	**2**	**0**	**Individual**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.7: Information management Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse, and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.								
1. What data do the institution's global and departmental units use systematically to inform decisions at the departmental level?	0	1	0	0	0	1	Methods and processes for data collection, analysis, and use	Pass/fail
2. What indicators does the institution use to assess its quality objectives? Based on the analyses and evaluations, what improvements has the institution initiated?	0	1	0	1	0	0		Pass/fail

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Accredited / Accredited with monitoring / Not accredited
3. How does the institution manage - collect, analyse, and use the following information: enrolment and completion data; curriculum progression data; drop-out data; DPR data; OMHV data; student and graduate student satisfaction data (from the training and assessment of the data on training programmes and student services); TDK, talent management outcome data?	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
4. How does the institution involve e1ternal and internal stakeholders in the collection, analysis, and subsequent action planning of data?	0	1	0	0	1	0		
5. What are the specific tools and features of the institution's internal information system?	0	1	1	1	0	0		Pass/fail
6. What does the institution do to ensure data and information security?	0	1	1	1	0	0		Pass/fail
7. What is the interface for data and analyses that are not available on the public website and who has access to this interface?	0	1	1	1	0	0		Pass/fail
8. Summarise the specificities of the institution's compliance with the standards and guidelines set out in ESG 1.7 (max. 2 500 characters) If specific solutions are justified for certain fields of education/disciplines, please describe the main points per field max. 1 000 characters per field of specialisation.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.7	**0**	**8**	**3**	**4**	**3**	**1**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.8: Public information Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.								
1. What are the processes for updating web content? What are institutional regulations about the standards to which web content must conform?	0	1	1	0	1	0	(Online) public information on institutional policies, processes, and programmes	Pass/fail
2. What procedures does the institution follow to check that the websites of the various departments of the institution comply with the above rules? Procedures to assess that the institution's websites provide relevant information and useful contact details for users?	0	1	1	0	1	0		Pass/fail
3. Do you display the date of the most recent update on web sites? If yes, in what percentage of web sites?	0	1	1	0	1	0		Pass/fail
4. How and where can different stakeholders consult key internal document of the HEI (such as internal codes of conduct, regulations, senate, and management board meetings, etc.)? Where does the HEI communicate changes in these documents?	0	1	1	0	1	0		Pass/fail
5. Provide hyperlinks to display publicly accessible performance indicators (including indicators based on previous standards). Please describe the ways in which these are communicated to students.	0	1	1	0	1	0		Pass/fail

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Accredited / Accredited with monitoring / Not accredited
6. Where can prospective students find information (on admission procedures, admission requirements, fees, qualifications, e1pected qualifications, learning outcomes and diploma requirements)? Is it available somewhere in an e1tract/simplified language?	0	1	1	0	1	0		Pass/fail
7. Is there publicly available information on achievement indicators for each course or subject, as well as information on the placement of graduates, and the results of student satisfaction/education evaluation surveys?	0	1	1	0	1	0		Pass/fail
8. Does the institution use other (e.g., paid) channels to publicise its activities, in particular to recruit applicants? If so, please give a brief description.	0	1	1	0	1	0		Pass/fail
9. Please describe the availability and up-to-datedness of the HEI's course offering (curricula, pre-study schemes, subject programmes/requirements) on the institution's website.	0	1	1	0	1	0		Pass/fail
10 How does the institution ensure the public dissemination of information on the compositions, meetings, and decisions of its governing bodies?	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
11. Please provide the contact details of the institution's brochure and briefly describe the process of by which this brochure was produced.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
12. How and to what e1tent does the management of the institution inform the e1ternal and internal public about their institutional accreditation process with MAB or other accreditation agencies? How and to what e1tent does the management inform the e1ternal and internal public about the development and outcomes of these processes?	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
13. Please summarise the characteristics of compliance with the standards and guidelines set out in ESG 1.8 in your institution. (ma1. 2500 characters). If certain disciplines require specific measures, please describe them here.	0	1	0	0	1	0		Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.8	**0**	**13**	**9**	**0**	**13**	**0**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.10: Cyclical external quality assurance Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.								
1. What other external quality assurance procedures are used in the institution and what organisational level, programme? Briefly describe the procedure, its frequency, its results, and the actions taken as a result	0	1	0	0	1	0	Other external quality assurance procedures	Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.10	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
Part III: The academic, scientific, and educational activities of the HEI								

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Accredited / Accredited with monitoring / Not accredited
1. The way in which the HEI's research and teaching activities contribute to achieving the institution's strategic objectives?	0	1	0	0	0	1	Organisation and support for research activities	Pass/fail
2. The organisational structure of the institution, which coordinates the scientific and research activities of the institution and how those are linked to the institution's quality assurance system.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
3. The procedures for developing, approving, and monitoring of research programmes.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
4. Indicators and measures to monitor and support artistic workshops, applications to tenders and inter-institutional collaboration	0	1	0	1	1	0		
5. Procedures to identify and support particularly talented students and incentivise their participation in scientific activities	0	1	0	0	1	0		
6. Recognition of student work in TDKs and study circles.[4]	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for PART III	**0**	**6**	**0**	**2**	**4**	**1**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**

Source: MAB (2021a[4]), *Önértékelési útmutató (Institutional accreditation)*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/OnertUtmut_Intakkr2021.pdf

Table B.4. MAB standards and indicators for the accreditation of doctoral schools in five-year cycles

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Accredited / Accredited with monitoring / Not accredited
1. Profile, management, and brief history of the doctoral school								
1.1 In which institution, for how long and with what degree of autonomy does the doctoral school operate? What is its brief history?	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Institution	Pass/fail
1.2 What are the characteristics and main strengths of the doctoral school?	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A		Pass/fail
1.3 Place the school in the landscape of doctoral schools in Hungary: in what ways does it offer more, better, or different than other doctoral schools with a similar profile, especially in terms of international competitiveness?	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A		Pass/fail
TOTAL for Part I.1	**0**	**3**	**0**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
2. Profile, management, and brief history of the doctoral school								
2.1 Who prepared the self-assessment, through what process, what division of labour and through what series of steps?	0	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Institution	Pass/Fail
TOTAL for Part I.2	**0**	**1**	**0**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
2. Part II: Compliance with Part I of the ESG (2015)	***6***	***2***	***1***	***9***	***15***	***4***	***Institution***	***Overall assessment***
ESG 1.1: Policy for quality assurance Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.								
1. Presentation and evaluation of the **actions taken on the basis of the recommendations** made during the previous accreditation procedure of the doctoral school	0	1	0	0	1	0	Institutional policy for quality assurance	Pass/fail
2. The doctoral school has defined its **mission and vision**	0	1	0	1	0	0		
3. The doctoral school has a **quality evaluation system** that effectively supports the continuation and further development of its teaching and research/academic activities, the professional development of its staff and doctoral students, and the appropriate level of participation in international academic/academic life.	0	1	0	0	1	0		

4. Broader environmental, social, and societal changes affecting the doctoral school	0	1	0	0	1	0		
5. The doctoral school has an officially approved, regularly reviewed, and systematically documented **quality assurance subsystem**, developed with the involvement of external and internal stakeholders, within the institution's quality assurance system, and is an integral part of it.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
6. The implementation of quality assurance policies is an effective in protecting the **integrity and freedom of higher education and academic life**, and combatting fraud, intolerance, and discrimination.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for ESG 1.1	**0**	**6**	**0**	**1**	**5**	**0**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.2 & 1.9: Design and approval of programmes & Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes								
ESG 1.2: Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. ***ESG 1.9***: Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.								
1. The training programme of the doctoral school is in line with the national and international research directions of its discipline, the objectives and strategy of the parent institution, thereby allowing the parent institution to adequately support the realisation of the mission and vision of the doctoral school.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Design, approval, and monitoring of programmes	Pass/fail
2. The training programme will be developed, adopted, regularly reviewed, and improved on the basis of appropriate analyses (labour market, enrolment, graduate outcomes, academic impact), with the inclusion of relevant external and internal stakeholders (current and previous students, academics, research institutions, employers, etc.), in a transparent process.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for ESG 1.2 & 1.9	**0**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**Programme**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.3: Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment								
Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.								
1. The **content and structure of the training**, whether the teaching and learning support methods used are up to date, whether the HEI meets professional expectations and whether the HEI is able to achieve the set learning outcomes.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Course delivery (teaching, learning and assessment practices)	Pass/fail
2. Whether the intensity of **contact between supervisors and doctoral students** is adequate. Whether the training process is suitable for doctoral students to master the application of scientific and artistic methods, to achieve and demonstrate an appreciable scientific or artistic result.	0	1	0	0	1	0		

3. The doctoral school's **assessment policies and procedures** are suitable for monitoring students' progress, and the impartiality of the assessment is ensured.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
4. The doctoral school promotes the **teaching/research orientation, employability, and active citizenship** of doctoral students.	0	1	0	0	0	1		
TOTAL for ESG 1.3	**0**	**4**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**Course**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.4: Student admission, progression, recognition, and certification								
Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student life cycle, e.g., student admission, progression, recognition, and certification.								
1. The admission procedure and admission requirements are clearly set out.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Students (admission, progression, recognition, and certification)	Pass/fail
2. The procedures of the doctoral school ensure that sufficient information on the progress of students is available to both the student and the supervisor.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
3. The involvement of doctoral students in teaching activities is clearly set out in the institutional regulations.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
4. The HEI provides credit for PhD students' research activities abroad, participation in part-time training or other forms of international mobility.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for ESG 1.4	**0**	**4**	**0**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**Individual**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.5: Teaching staff								
Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.								
1. The doctoral school has the appropriate **number of regular members** as required by the relevant legislation). The core members shall hold a scientific/academic degree relevant to the doctoral school and have an active, continuous, documented record of achievement in the field of training/research/academic activity of the doctoral school.	1	0	0	1	0	0	Teaching staff (number and professional development)	Pass/fail
2. The **number of lecturers, subject supervisors and subject tutors** is adequate. Their professional requirements are clearly defined. The relevance and quality of their professional activities and their workload ensure adequate support for the scientific/artistic activities of doctoral students.	1	0	0	1	0	0		
3. Support for effective **teaching and the professional development** of academics.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for ESG 1.5	**2**	**1**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**Individual**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.6: Learning resources and student support								
Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.								
The quantity, quality and accessibility of the **infrastructure required for doctoral training** (research/artistic activities, teaching and learning facilities, literature, library, databases, laboratories, instruments, IT systems) are adequate.	1	1	1	1	0	0	Students (infrastructure and support)	Pass/fail
Students can rely on a **sufficient administrative body** to facilitate their effective research and development	1	1	0	1	0	0		
Doctoral students have the **opportunity to participate in international academic life.**	0	1	0	0	1	0		

The **availability of academic and social support** that is tailored to students needs and facilitates equal opportunities for all.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for ESG 1.6	**2**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.7: Information management Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse, and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.								
1.The degree **attainment rate** of enrolled doctoral students reaches the level set in the quality objectives of the doctoral school.	1	0	0	0	0	1	Methods and processes for data collection, analysis, and use	Pass/fail
2. The **dissertation and publication/scholarly activities** of doctoral students reach the level set out in the quality objectives of the doctoral school.	1	0	0	0	0	1		
3. The **career path** of the graduates is in line with the mission of the school.	0	1	0	0	0	1		
TOTAL for ESG 1.7	**2**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.8: Public information Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.								
1. All relevant information about the doctoral school (regulations, procedures, decisions, reimbursements, examinations, topic descriptions, theses) is public, up-to-date and can be easily found on the doctoral school's website.	0	1	0	1	0	0	(Online) public information on institutional policies, processes, and programmes	Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.8	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
ESG 1.10: Cyclical external quality assurance Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.								
1. Accreditations by international and foreign QA bodies.	0	1	0	0	1	0	QA by foreign QA agency	Pass/fail
TOTAL for ESG 1.10	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**Institution**	**Pass/fail**
3. Part III: Miscellaneous information								
1. List of members of the Doctoral School, certified by the Rector	1	0	0	1	0	0	Miscellaneous Information	Pass/fail
2. Declaration by the person exercising the rights of the employer on the employment of the head of the doctoral school	0	1	0	1	0	0		
3. Information on study abroad schemes and scholarships	0	1	0	1	0	0		
4. (For Hungarian language courses) Information on any foreign-language modules	1	0	0	1	0	0		
5. List of guest teachers	1	0	0	1	0	0		
6. (For existing Doctoral Schools) Statistical information on completion and degree award rates from the last 14 academic years.	1	0	0	0	0	1		
TOTAL for Part III	**4**	**2**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**1**	**Institution**	**Overall assessment**

Source: MAB (2021b[5]), *Doktori akkreditációs útmutató: Önértékelési szempontrendszer (Doctoral accreditation guide: self-evaluation criteria)*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/eljarasok/

Standards and indicators for the ex ante accreditation of bachelor's programmes

Table B.5. MAB standards and indicators for the *ex ante* accreditation of bachelor's programmes

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level			
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution	Programme	Course	Individual
Part I: Programme Content	**0**	**8**	**0**	**5**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**5**	**3**	**0**
1. Educational plan										
1.1 All core elements of the discipline are present in the programme plans compulsory modules	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
1.2 The educational plan allows for the acquisition of core competences	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2. Core/Discipline-specific subjects and competences										
2.1 Presence of core subjects in the educational plan	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2.2 The proposed teaching plan allows for the acquisition of core competencies and subject knowledge	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
3 Pedagogical methodologies										
3.1 Effective and varied institutional teaching practices	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
3.2 Provision of high-quality practical teaching even during external practical learning elements (e.g., internships)	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
3.3 Suitable student evaluation practices	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
4. Foreign language teaching provisions										
4.1 Equivalence between quality and content between Hungarian and Foreign language modules/components	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Part II: Personnel responsible for the programme	**2**	**5**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**4**
1. Academic tutors in charge of the discipline and sub-disciplines										
1.1 Professional requirements and regulations for Programme Heads	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1.2. Regulations for maximum student numbers and course delivery	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2. Teaching personnel										
2.1 Regulations for maximum student numbers and course delivery per teaching staff	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
3. Personal and professional information of the teaching personnel										
3.1 Professional requirements and regulations for teaching staff	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
4. Components delivered in a foreign language										

4.1 Language competency requirements for teaching staff delivering courses in a foreign language	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Part III: Infrastructure	**1**	**4**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**0**
1. Sufficient material conditions e.g. a. Classrooms b. Laboratories c. Study spaces	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2. Adequate numbers of teaching and administrative personnel	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
3. Presence of practical training facilities/opportunities	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
4. Guaranteed access to necessary study materials e.g., all the titles on compulsory reading lists	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
5. All the following conditions are also guaranteed for all offered foreign-language courses/versions of courses	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Part IV: Capacity and Student Caps	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**
1. Programme teaching capacity evidence of sufficient teaching staff numbers and material resources	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Part V: Teaching Activities Outside of Hungary	**1**	**3**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
1. At least 50% of teachers must also be (able to) teach at the main campus.	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
2. Local campuses must employ a number of locally based teaching staff. They must also have a designated contact person who is authorised to make decisions in academic and administrative matters locally.	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
3. The material conditions provided on the local campuses must be sufficient to student's needs. The material conditions at local campuses must satisfy the same baseline criteria as those in the HEIs main campus in Hungary.	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Part VI: Special Provisions for Distance learning	**0**	**10**	**10**	**7**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**10**	**0**	**0**
1. Clearly defined and adapted academic model, including key study outcomes and allotted study timeframes.	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
2. Guaranteed access to sufficient teaching resources (printed or electronic).	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
3. Clearly defined regulations on grading and student evaluation.	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
4. Opportunities to consult with teaching and academic staff.	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
5. A FT or PT employee dedicated to overseeing course content	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
6. A manager of tutors to oversee the activities of participating teaching staff. This person must have at least 5 years' experience with distance learning.	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
7. Tutors must not be responsible for 1) more than 50 students or 2) more than 3 subjects per semester.	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0

8. A clear distance-education framework plan is in place for the infrastructure	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
9. Conditions for methodological development of infrastructure	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
10. Local consultation centres must provide access to IT, study materials and practical teaching facilities.	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0

Source: MAB (2017a[6]), *SZAKMAI BÍRÁLATI SZEMPONTJAI (SzBSz) alapképzési szak/szakirány indításának véleményezésében (COMMITTEE OF EXAMINERS OF PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION (CEAS) for the opinion on the opening of a bachelor's degree course/sub-discipline)*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/wp-content/uploads/BA_I_b%C3%ADr%C3%A1lati-szempontok.pdf

Standards and indicators for the ex ante accreditation of master's programmes

Table B.6. MAB standards and indicators for the *ex ante* accreditation of master's programmes

STANDARDS AND INDICATORS	Evidence		Focus				Level			
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution	Programme	Course	Individual
Part I: Programme Content	**0**	**8**	**0**	**5**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**5**	**3**	**0**
1. Educational plan										
1.1 All core elements of the discipline are present in the programme plan's compulsory modules	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
1.2 The educational plan allows for the acquisition of core competences	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2. Core/Discipline-specific subjects and competences										
2.1 Presence of core subjects it the educational plan	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2.2 The proposed teaching plan allows for the acquisition of core competencies and subject knowledge	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
3. Pedagogical methodologies										
3.1 Effective and varied institutional teaching practices	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
3.2 Provision of high-quality practical teaching even during external practical learning elements (e.g., internships)	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
3.3 Suitable student evaluation practices	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
4. Foreign language teaching provisions										
4.1 Equivalence between quality and content between Hungarian and foreign language modules/components	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Part II: Personnel responsible for the programme	**2**	**5**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**4**
1. Academic tutors in charge of the discipline and sub-disciplines										

1.1 Professional requirements and regulations for Programme Heads	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1.2. Regulations for maximum student numbers and course delivery	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2. Teaching personnel										
2.1 Regulations for maximum student numbers and course delivery per teaching staff	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
3. Personal and professional information of the teaching personnel										
3.1 Professional requirements and regulations for teaching staff	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
4. Components delivered in a foreign language										
4.1 Language competency requirements for teaching staff delivering courses in a foreign language	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Part III: Sufficient scientific expertise to enable the programme	**1**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**
1. Are there at least 2 nationally and internationally recognised research groups/ateliers in Hungary?	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2. The proposed teaching stuff must regularly publish in the discipline of the programme or present evidence of other recognised scientific or artistic activity.	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Part IV: Infrastructure	**1**	**4**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**5**	**0**	**0**
1. Sufficient material conditions e.g. a. Classrooms b. Laboratories c. Study spaces	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2. Adequate numbers of teaching and administrative personnel	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
3. Presence of practical training facilities/opportunities	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
4. Guaranteed access to necessary study materials e.g., all the titles on compulsory reading lists	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
5. All the following conditions are also guaranteed for all offered foreign-language courses/versions of courses	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Part V: Capacity and Student Caps	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**
1. Programme teaching capacity – evidence of sufficient teaching staff numbers and material resources	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Part VI: Teaching Activities outside of Hungary	**1**	**3**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**2**
1. At least 50% of teachers must also be (able to) teach at the main campus.	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
2. Local campuses must employ a number of locally based teaching staff. They must also have a designated local contact person who is authorised to make decisions in academic and administrative matters locally.	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

3. The material conditions provided on the local campuses must be sufficient to students' needs. The material conditions at local campuses must satisfy the same baseline criteria as those in the HEI's main campus in Hungary.	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Part VII: Special Provisions for Distance Learning	**0**	**10**	**10**	**7**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**10**	**0**	**0**
1. Clearly defined and adapted academic model, including key study outcomes and allotted study timeframes.	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
2. Guaranteed access to sufficient teaching resources (printed or electronic).	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
3. Clearly defined regulations on grading and student evaluation.	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
4. Opportunities to consult with teaching and academic staff.	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
5. A FT or PT employee dedicated to overseeing course content	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
6. A manager of tutors to oversee the activities of participating teaching staff. This person has to have at least 5 years' experience with distance learning.	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
7. Tutors must not be responsible for 1) more than 50 students or 2) more than 3 subjects per semester.	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
8. A clear distance-education framework plan is in place for the infrastructure	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
9. Conditions for methodological development of infrastructure	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
10. Local consultation centres must provide access to IT, study materials and practical teaching facilities.	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0

Source: MAB (2017b[7]), *SZAKMAI BÍRÁLATI SZEMPONTJAI (SzBSz) (osztott és osztatlan) mesterképzési szak / szakirány*, tanárszak indításának véleményezésében (PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT POINTS in the assessment of the start of a Master's degree programme (split and undivided))*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), Budapest, https://www.mab.hu/eljarasok/

Standards and indicators for the accreditation of medical training programmes

Table B.7. MAB standards and indicators for the accreditation medical training in eight-year cycles

STANDARDS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA	Scope		Type				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Compliant Partially compliant Non-compliant
	0	**64**	**1**	**27**	**31**	**8**	**Mix**	**N/A**
1. MISSION STATEMENT The medical school has a public mission statement that sets out its values and goals.								
1.1. The medical school has a publicly available and up-to-date **mission statement**.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Institutional mission statement	One of these may be 'partially compliant'
1.2. The mission statement **aligns with the mission statement of the higher education institution** that the medical school is part of, and its content meets the requirements set out above in the explanatory section.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
1.3. The mission statement has been developed with the **involvement of a wide range of stakeholders**.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
1.4. The content of the mission statement is taken into account by the medical school in **developing and reviewing its educational programme**.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
1.5. The goals and values set out in the mission statement are reflected in the **quality assurance processes** (planning, measurement, evaluation).	0	1	0	0	1	0		
1.6. The goals and values set out in the mission statement are reflected in the **operational processes** of the medical school.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for 1:	**0**	**6**	**0**	**2**	**4**	**0**	**Institution**	**Overall assessment**
2.1 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME The medical school has a publicly available educational programme (also known as 'model curriculum') that is in line with its programme and outcome requirements and its mission statement.								
2.1.1. The medical school has a publicly available educational programme.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Programme content and learning outcome requirements	Full compliance on all indicators is required
2.1.2. The educational programme of the medical school is responsive to the needs of the region.	0	1	0	0	0	1		

STANDARDS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA	Scope		Type				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Compliant Partially compliant Non-compliant
2.1.3. Disciplines of study (biomedical sciences, clinical sciences and skills and behavioural and social sciences) are clearly included in the educational programme.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
2.1.4. The educational programme enables the acquisition of clinical and professional skills.	0	1	0	0	0	1		
TOTAL for 2.1	**0**	**4**	**0**	**4**	**0**	**2**	**Programme**	**Overall assessment**
2.2 DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME								
The medical school has a publicly available educational programme (also known as 'model curriculum') that is in line with its programme and outcome requirements and its mission statement.								
2.2.1. The medical school has clear **processes for adopting, reviewing, and monitoring** the educational programme.	0	1	0	0	1	0	Design and review of programmes	One of these may be 'partially compliant'
2.2.2. The educational programme is **reviewed on a regular basis**, and the review criteria are clear.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
2.2.3. The **development and review of the educational programme** are carried out by considering advances in science and feedback from students and the labour market.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
2.2.4. The **360 credit points** required to obtain a professional qualification are distributed among mandatory courses, courses chosen on a mandatory basis and freely chosen courses in a proportional manner and in line with the outcome requirements.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
TOTAL for 2.2	**0**	**4**	**0**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**Programme**	**Overall assessment**
2.3 EDUCATIONAL METHODS USED TO DELIVER THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME								
The medical school employs a range of educational methods to ensure the acquisition of the competences defined in the programme and outcome requirements and the achievement of the learning outcomes set out in the educational programme.								
2.3.1. The medical school applies a range of different **educational methods** (as proven by examples).	0	1	0	0	1	0	Course delivery	Multiple indicators may be classified as 'partially compliant' as long as the majority of indicators are compliant
2.3.2. The medical school has a clear process for the **selection of teaching and pedagogical methods**.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
2.3.3. The medical school has processes in place for the **review of the educational methods** applied.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
TOTAL for 2.3	**0**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**Course**	**Overall assessment**
3.1 SYSTEM OF ASSESSMENT								

STANDARDS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA	Scope		Type				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Compliant Partially compliant Non-compliant
The medical school defines and publishes its student assessment principles, methods, practices, and requirements. It maintains a system of requirements and assessment that allows for the provision of regular feedback to students regarding the effectiveness of the learning process. The assessment system used by the medical school is based on uniform principles that ensure that only suitable students will obtain a professional qualification.								
3.1.1. The medical school has **publicly available, up-to-date assessment requirements** (policies and other documents).	0	1	0	1	0	0	Course delivery and review	Multiple indicators may be classified as 'partially compliant' as long as the majority of indicators are compliant
3.1.2. The medical school has clear **processes for developing and reviewing assessment requirements**.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
3.1.3. The assessment methods applied by the medical school are **distributed in a balanced manner** over the entire period of the educational programme.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
3.1.4. There is a clear relationship between the assessment methods and the expected **learning outcomes**.	0	1	0	0	1	1		
3.1.5. The medical school has **transparent processes for the selection of assessment methods** and for the development of arrangements governing assessment (responsibilities, processes).	0	1	0	0	1	0		
3.1.6. The final examination, as an assessment system, is suitable for measuring the professional competences acquired during the programme and **guarantees the quality of output**.	0	1	0	0	0	1		
TOTAL for 3.1	**0**	**6**	**0**	**2**	**3**	**2**	**Course**	**Overall assessment**
3.2 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF ASSESSMENT The medical school has processes in place to provide feedback on the effectiveness of assessment methods and procedures and other academic requirements. Assessment data are fed back to those concerned (students, academic staff, other stakeholders).								
3.2.1. The review of the assessment system is ensured in the medical school. The **review criteria are defined** and known for those involved in assessment.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Course assessment	One of these may be 'partially compliant'
3.2.2. The medical school regularly **collects feedback on assessment procedures**, which is then fed back to those concerned.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
3.2.3. Concrete interventions and **improvements are made on the basis of the feedback received** on assessment processes.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for 3.2	**0**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**Course**	**Overall assessment**

STANDARDS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA	Scope		Type				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Compliant Partially compliant Non-compliant
4.1 ADMISSION AND SELECTION OF STUDENTS The medical school has a clear and publicly available policy that sets out the process for the selection and admission of students, as well as the criteria for admission.								
4.1.1. **The admission requirements and policies** applying to medical education are accessible and kept up to date. .	0	1	0	1	0	0	Students	Full compliance on all indicators is required
4.1.2. All **policies and documents relating to the admission process** are made available to foreign students in foreign languages.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
4.1.3. The medical school has **clear rules for deferred entry and for transfer** from other schools or programmes, and these rules are kept up to date and accessible.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
4.1.4. The medical school ensures that its **prospective students are informed** about the admission process as extensively as possible	0	1	0	1	0	0		
TOTAL for 4.1	**0**	**4**	**0**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**Individual**	**Overall assessment**
4.2 STUDENT SUPPORT SYSTEM The medical school has in place means of human, social and financial support that facilitate the achievement of learning outcomes and career planning for students and contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing of students.								
4.2.1. The medical school has a complex **system of human, social and financial support** that covers the entire student life cycle.	0	1	0	0	1	0	Students	Multiple indicators may be classified as 'partially compliant' as long as the majority of indicators are compliant
4.2.2. Students' access to this complex support system is governed by unambiguous, clear, and **publicly available regulatory and other documents**.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
4.2.3. Organisations representing **student interests are actively involved** in the development of the system and criteria of access and in the management and review of the means of support offered.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
4.2.4. **Feedback** on the services and means of support relating to this standard is collected, analysed, and evaluated on a regular basis by the medical school.	0	1	0	0	0	1		
TOTAL for 4.2	**0**	**8**	**0**	**2**	**4**	**2**	**Individual**	**Overall assessment**
5.1 SELECTION OF ACADEMIC STAFF The medical school has the number and range of competent academic staff required to implement its mission statement and to deliver the educational programme to the intended number of students, and it has in place clear and transparent processes for the recruitment and selection of academic staff.								

STANDARDS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA	Scope		Type				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Compliant Partially compliant Non-compliant
5.1.1. The medical school **determines the composition of academic staff** in such a way that is in line with its mission statement and educational programme.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Academic staff	Full compliance on all indicators is required
5.1.2. The academic staff involved in the delivery of the educational programme is **capable of ensuring that students acquire the competences defined** in the programme and outcome requirements.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
5.1.3. The medical school **regularly monitors the adequacy of the composition** of academic staff in the light of the educational programme and the number of students.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
5.1.4. The medical school regularly monitors **whether the number of academic staff is sufficient** to deliver the educational programme to the given number of students.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
5.1.5. It has in place clear and unambiguous **rules regarding the selection, recruitment, and responsibilities** of academic staff.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
TOTAL for 5.1	**0**	**5**	**0**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**Individual**	**Overall assessment**
5.2 PERFORMANCE, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF The medical school sets clear and unambiguous requirements for its academic staff regarding their teaching, research and other activities and conduct in the implementation of the educational programme. The medical school ensures the continuous training and development of its academics								
5.2.1. The medical school clearly **defines the tasks and responsibilities of academic staff** in relation to the teaching, research and other activities of the higher education institution.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Academic staff	Multiple indicators may be classified as 'partially compliant' as long as the majority of indicators are compliant
5.2.2. It has a **code of ethics** that lays down the medical school's requirements regarding the conduct expected from academic staff. These requirements (for performance, responsibilities and conduct) are published and awareness of them is ensured.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
5.2.3. The medical school has in place **a system for the evaluation of academic staff performance**, the criteria of which are developed and reviewed with the involvement of academic staff.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
5.2.4. The medical school **prepares academic staff and supervisors** in clinical settings for the delivery of the outcomes required under the educational programme.	0	1	0	0	1	0		

STANDARDS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA	Scope		Type				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Compliant Partially compliant Non-compliant
5.2.5. In addition, it ensures that academic staff **develop their skills**.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for 5.2	**0**	**5**	**0**	2	**3**	**0**	**Individual**	**Overall assessment**
6.1 EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE The medical school has the infrastructure required for the fulfilment of the programme and outcome requirements.								
6.1.1. The medical school has the **infrastructure required for the successful delivery** of the educational programme (classrooms, seminar rooms, computer-equipped examination rooms and the related technical and social rooms and facilities).	0	1	0	1	0	0	Infrastructure	Full compliance on all indicators is required
6.1.2. There are **tools available to support different methods of teaching and learning**.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
6.1.3. The medical school offers adequate lib**rary services to support the implementation of the educational programme**.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
6.1.4. The medical school regularly **measures and evaluates the adequacy of infrastructure** (in terms of its condition, functionality, modernity, and efficiency).	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for 6.1	**0**	**4**	**0**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**Institution**	**Overall assessment**
6.2 CLINICAL TRAINING RESOURCES The medical school has the resources, facilities and staff required to ensure that students acquire the necessary clinical experience.								
6.2.1. The medical school has a **system of clinical training sites** that adequately supports the delivery of the educational programme and the acquisition of a professional qualification.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Clinical training resources	Full compliance on all indicators is required
6.2.2. Students receive adequate **information and support from the medical school** for the completion of their clinical practice.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
6.2.3. The medical school ensures the **acquisition of clinical skills** (by ensuring the necessary professional, human and infrastructural conditions).	0	1	0	1	0	0		
TOTAL for 6.2	**0**	**3**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**Institution**	**Overall assessment**
7. QUALITY ASSURANCE The medical school has a quality assurance organisation and quality assurance processes and documents that support the implementation of its educational programme.								
7.1. The medical school has its own **independent organisation and processes for quality assurance**, which fit into the structure of	0	1	0	0	1	0	Quality assurance	One of these may be 'partially

STANDARDS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA	Scope		Type				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Compliant Partially compliant Non-compliant
the quality assurance system maintained by the higher education institution that the medical school is part of.							processes	compliant'
7.2. The **documents relating to the quality assurance activities** of the medical school are clear and kept up to date. The quality document and quality assurance policy of the school are publicly available.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
7.3. The medical school sets **quality objectives on an annual basis**. It monitors the achievement of quality objectives, and keeps stakeholders informed.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
7.4. The medical school has **extensive quality assurance processes** that address the activities covered by standards 1 to 6 relating to the implementation of the educational programme.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
7.5. The medical school **performs quality assurance activities in a systematic and regular manner**, using a PDCA approach.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
7.6. The **results of the quality assurance activity are made accessible** to external and internal stakeholders.	0	1	0	0	0	1		
TOTAL for 7	**0**	**6**	**0**	**2**	**3**	**1**	**Institution**	**Overall assessment**
8.1 STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION The medical school has transparent organisational frameworks. The organisational framework ensures that decision-making processes relating to education, academic activities and management are transparent for all external and internal stakeholders. The organisational framework of the medical school ensures the stability of its operation, as well as the active participation of students and faculty in decision-making processes. The institution has an internal control system that monitors on a regular basis the regularity and effectiveness of operation and management and is capable of identifying and managing risks.								
8.1.1. The medical school has a **management structure that is transparent** in terms of decision-making levels and processes and ensures the involvement of student and faculty in decision-making.	0	1	0	1	0	0	Management structure and organisation	Full compliance on all indicators is required
8.1.2. The **documents and regulations** on the operation and organisation of the medical school are up-to-date and publicly available.	0	1	0	1	0	0		
8.1.3. The management structure and management practices of the medical school are **clear and regulated**.	0	1	0	1	0	0		

STANDARDS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA	Scope		Type				Level	Assessment
	Quantity	Quality	Digital	Input	Process	Output	Institution Programme Course Individual	Compliant Partially compliant Non-compliant
8.1.4. The medical school has an **internal control system** that is suitable to monitor the regularity of decision-making and to assess and manage operational risks.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for 8.1	**0**	**4**	**0**	**3**	**1**	**0**	**Institution**	**Overall assessment**
8.2 ORGANISATIONAL UNITS SUPPORTING THE OPERATION OF EDUCATIONAL AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES The medical school has administrative units that ensure the stability of its operation and of its educational and research activities and support the achievement of its educational objectives. The medical school has the number of highly qualified administrative staff required to implement its educational objectives and to ensure the operation of the medical school.								
8.2.1. The medical school ensures **administrative support** in the fields of operation, management, and teaching.	0	1	0	0	1	0	Administrative and IT support	Full compliance on all indicators is required
8.2.2. The medical school maintains various **IT support systems** in order to support administrative activities.	0	1	1	0	1	0		
8.2.3. The medical school ensures the **training and development of administrative staff** in an organised manner.	0	1	0	0	1	0		
TOTAL for 8.2	**0**	**3**	**1**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**Institution**	**Overall assessment**

Source: MAB (2021b[8]), *Az orvosképzés akkreditációs eljárásainak dokumentumai - Értékelő lap (Documents on accreditation procedures for medical training - Evaluation sheet)*, Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), https://www.mab.hu/eljarasok/

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Higher Education

Ensuring Quality Digital Higher Education in Hungary

The emergence of fully online, hybrid and blended forms of higher education has led governments, quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions (HEIs) across the OECD to reflect on how to ensure that digital education provides learners with opportunities to reach learning and employment outcomes similar to those achieved through traditional in person instruction. Building on stakeholder engagement and comparative analysis, this report offers an assessment of Hungary's quality assurance system for higher education and, more specifically, its strengths and weaknesses for assuring the quality of digital higher education. It offers recommendations and policy options to support the ongoing reform of Hungary's higher education accreditation system as well as a list of potential digital education indicators to be integrated in the assessment frameworks used by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) for the accreditation of higher education institutions.

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