

## Evaluation of The Quality of University Formation According to The National Quality Assurance Criteria -a Comparative Study-

تقييم جودة التكوين الجامعي وفقاً لمعايير ضمان الجودة الوطنية -دراسة مقارنة-

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Received: 15/02/2020; Accepted: 22/10/2020

### Abstract:

The question of quality cannot be solved without evaluation mechanisms, the evaluation aims to improve quality because it is the basis of the principle of "feedback".

This study aims to highlight the effectiveness of the self-assessment process in improving the academic quality of university education according to the national quality assurance framework by performing a comparative analysis of the results of the self-evaluation process evaluation for this field between the University of Setif 1 and the University of Adrar for the 2017-2018 school year.

**Keywords:** Quality; Self Assessment; university formation; Quality Assurance.

### Résumé :

La question de la qualité ne peut être résolue sans mécanismes d'évaluation, l'évaluation vise à améliorer la qualité car elle est à la base du principe de « feed back ».

Cette étude vise à mettre en évidence l'efficacité du processus d'auto-évaluation dans l'amélioration de la qualité académique de la formation universitaire selon le référentiel national d'assurance qualité en effectuant une analyse comparative des résultats du processus d'auto-évaluation pour ce domaine entre l'Université de Sétif 1 et l'Université d'Adrar pour l'année scolaire 2017-2018.

**Mots-clés :** Qualité ; Auto-évaluation; Formation universitaire; Assurance Qualité.

ملخص:

لا يمكن حل مسألة الجودة بدون آليات التقييم، ويهدف التقييم إلى تحسين الجودة لأنها أساس مبدأ "التغذية العكسية".

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على فعالية عملية التقييم الذاتي في تحسين الجودة الأكاديمية للتكوين الجامعي وفقاً لمعايير ضمان الجودة الوطنية من خلال إجراء تحليل مقارنة لنتائج عملية التقييم الذاتي لهذا الميدان بين جامعة سطيف 1 وجامعة أدرار للعام الدراسي 2017-2018.

**الكلمات المفتاح:** الجودة؛ التقييم الذاتي؛ التكوين الجامعي؛ ضمان الجودة.

## **I- Introduction :**

Today the traditional academic mission of the University is coupled with a mission of local development related to socio-economic and cultural development through the training of executives and the transfer of technology to its environment.

But in reality the situation is quite different; its main role is limited to the dissemination of academic knowledge and the issuing of diplomas. This situation led to the total disconnection of the university from its socio-economic environment. The university must change its strategy not only to transmit knowledge but also to transmit know-how (skills and qualifications), a guarantee of an assured employability. The university must produce the necessary skills for the proper functioning of the economic and social system, in order to contribute to the improvement of employability and the exploitation of the results of research.

To concretize this strategic vision, Algerian universities have adopted a quality approach allowing them to establish and implement a self-evaluation system that compares the references of the National reference for quality, set of objectives and values defining a ideal state fixed, to the actual practices of the establishment. This article aims to highlight the effectiveness of the self-assessment process in improving the quality of university education according to the national quality assurance framework. He relies on the following problem:

**How does the process of self-evaluation of university education contribute to improving its quality and achieving the university's goals?**

To answer this problem we have adopted a comparative analysis of the results of the self-evaluation process for the training between the University of Setif 1 and the University of Adrar for the 2017-2018 school year. We split this work into three parties:

1. Quality Assurance in Higher Education
2. Self-evaluation in higher education
3. Comparative Analysis of the results of the Self Assessment process of the training between the University of Setif and the University of Adrar

## **II. Quality Assurance in Higher Education**

### **II.1 What is "Quality"?**

In all areas of activity, man has always tried to "do things right", that is, quality. The concept of "quality" is qualified as a multidimensional, complex and evolving concept. In the field of higher education, there are multiple conceptions of quality. Depending on the case, quality is defined as fitness for purpose, the fitness of purpose, excellence, threshold or minimum reference, continuous improvement, good value for money, (l'IIEP-UNESCO, 2011, p 18).

Quality is always relative, located in a particular time and space, and therefore, there is not, and cannot be, an absolute definition of quality, (Tempus, 2009, p 38).

### **II.2 What is "Quality in Higher Education"?:**

Traditionally, the term "quality of higher education" refers to the ability of institutions to achieve the objectives set in terms of their teaching mission, research and community service. The quality of higher education also depends on the capacity of institutions to carry out research activities that have repercussions on society as a whole and on the advancement of knowledge, (Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, 2012, p 16).

### **II.3 What is "quality assurance"?:**

The term "quality assurance" refers to the strategies, procedures, actions, and attitudes needed to maintain and improve quality (Woodhouse, 1999, p 10).

A "quality assurance system" is a means put in place by an institution to allow it to conform to itself and others that the necessary conditions have been put in place so that students can reach the standards. That the institution had set (Lazar VLASCEANU, 2004, pp 48-49).

#### **II.4 Types of quality assurance systems:**

There are usually two types of quality assurance linked to higher education:

##### **II.4.1 Internal Quality Assurance (IQA):**

Internal quality assurance is the set of policies and mechanisms that each program or institution adopts to ensure that it meets its own objectives and meets the standards of higher education in general, or a profession. or discipline in particular.

The implementation of an internal quality assurance system requires:

##### ➤ **Quality management:**

Before evaluating the quality, it must first exist at least in the intentions. The quality-conscious establishment must be able to manage it (plan, organize, direct and control). To do this, the guides to good practice or the guidelines of a regulatory or evaluation body can be of great benefit.

##### ➤ **the development of a quality assurance reference**

The reference of quality assurance set up by the institution allows identifying the guidelines, objectives to achieve (references). This repository covers all the fields of activity that the university institution conducts.

##### ➤ **The Self Assessment:**

Is a tool that offers the opportunity to locate the level of quality achieved by the establishment and to work on continuous quality improvement. It is an essential part of the internal quality management and assurance system, as well as the starting point for external quality assurance.

##### **II.4.2 External Quality Assurance (EQA)**

Refers to the actions of an external body, usually a quality assurance agency, that evaluates the operation or programs of an institution, to determine whether it is in compliance with recognized standards.

The steps of the quality assurance procedure are (LERARI, 2016, p 06):

- ✓ self-assessment;
- ✓ Evaluation by experts;
- ✓ Decision-making and public report.

#### **III. Self-evaluation in higher education:**

Before defining self-assessment, it is necessary to remember that self-assessment is an essential element of internal quality assurance and the starting point for external quality assurance.

##### **III.1 Definition of self-assessment:**

Self-evaluation is a process that occurs periodically to measure the results produced by the different activities of a higher education institution, whether in the area of research and formation or the organization (governance) or the student life. It is decided and conducted by the staff of the institution and is used to submit a report necessary for its evaluation by an external body that will be requested during the accreditation phase (Abdelkrim, 2016, p 02).

The self-assessment exercise is conducted by an ad hoc committee that the institution creates for this purpose. The chairman and the members of the committee are appointed by decision of the head of the institution. The latter chairs the committee's installation ceremony to mark the importance given to the operation (LERARI, 2016, p 04).

The results of the self-assessment are used for the purpose of improving quality. However, it is interesting to look at the relevance of the self-assessment results. It is widely recognized that it is not always possible or realistic to expect institutions to carry out a detailed and self-critical evaluation in an unbiased and objective manner. This calls for integrating self-assessment into the

process of external quality assurance through the adoption of the references (standards) established by an external institution on the one hand and the submission of the self-assessment (self-assessment report) at the discretion of the latter.

The reasons given are (Nabil BOUZID, 2012, p 24):

- The absence of a "culture of evaluation" entails the risk that the self-evaluation lacks critical thinking. It would, therefore, be useful to request a self-evaluation report, but agencies and external evaluators know that in most systems its value is limited;
- The importance of the issues in the case, for example, where the quality assurance procedure leads to sanctions, or when it is a decision that determines the continued operation of a sector or an establishment makes the expectation of a critical self-analysis unrealistic;
- The choice of agencies, when operating at the international level, to request only data and to carry out the evaluation themselves.

### III.2 Steps of self-evaluation:

The steps of the self-assessment process can be summarized as follows (Nabil BOUZID, 2012, pp 19-21):

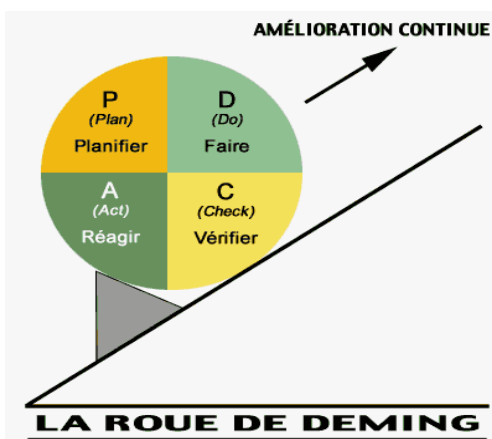
- ✓ The first step is the production of basic data and information for each standard or criterion;
- ✓ The second step is analysis and evaluation;
- ✓ The third step, which concerns what should be done, is the report on the degree of compliance with standards and criteria.

### III.3 Purposes of the self-assessment:

Self-assessment is considered the pillar of the quality assurance process:

- It allows taking stock of available information (evidence or indicators).
- It makes it possible to measure the gap between the actual situation and the ideal sought by the reference (the objective to be attained); the interpretation of this difference constitutes the heart of the evaluation activities.
- It allows you to take stock of the relevance of the references (and then improve the repository).
- Self-evaluation is a step in a PDCA continuous improvement process:

Figure (1): DEMING's Wheel



- \* **Plan:** What are we trying to do?
- \* **Do:** How do we do it?
- \* **Check:** How do we know that we are achieving our goals?
- \* **Act:** How do we change in order to do better?

The Source : (Abdelkrim, 2016, p03).

## IV. Comparative analysis of the outcomes of the process of self-evaluation of the training between the University of Setif 1 and the University of Adrar

The anchoring of the university in its socio-economic environment cannot succeed without the reorientation of the training and research activities towards respectively a more professional training (approach by skills) and useful applied research.

Our comparative analysis of the results of the process of Auto Evaluation of the formation will be carried out between two universities (the University of Setif 1 and the University of Adrar).

#### **IV.1 The process of self-evaluation of the formation at Ferhat ABBAS University (Setif 1):**

In answering our problem concerning the effectiveness of the process of Self-evaluation in the improvement of the quality of the university education, we will present in this part The diagnosis of the formation at Ferhat ABBAS University that was realized by the cell quality assurance of the establishment according to two methods:

- ✓ Global analysis (SWOT) [(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats);
- ✓ A detailed analysis using the national reference "quality assurance".

##### **IV.1.1 SWOT global analysis of the formation:**

This method is a strategic analysis tool. It combines the study of the strengths and weaknesses of the university with that of the opportunities and threats of its environment. We recall that the strengths and weaknesses are internal, that is to say university-specific; whereas the opportunities and risks are external, they come from the environment.

The values obtained by this analysis for the four axes (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threat) are summarized as follows:

**1. Strengths:** Human resources: note 4, Material resources: note 3, Strategy: note 3, Research themes and themes: note 2.

**2. Weaknesses:** Pedagogy: Grade 4, Teachers Grade: 4, Students: Grade 3, Course Offerings: Grade 2, Organization Grade: 1.

**3. Opportunities:** Productive sector: note 4, Opening: note 4, Regulations note 3.

**4. Threats:** Remedies: Note 5, Background: Note 4, Zone Premium: Note 3, Unfair Competition: Note 1.

##### **IV.1.2 Analysis of formation field according to the National reference of Quality Assurance.**

This analysis was carried out according to the national reference of quality assurance, we recall that this reference is composed of 7 domains which are: formation, research, governance, university life, infrastructures, relations with the environment, international cooperation. Each domain consists of a number of fields, while each field is composed of references. A reference contains several criteria and a criterion contains evidence. The following table provides an overview of the contents of the repository.

**Table 1:** Components of the National Reference for Quality Assurance

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Fields</b>	<b>References</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Proofs</b>
Formation	7	23	49	108
research Scientific	3	17	32	55
Governance	5	27	53	181
University Life at	4	14	25	71
Infrastructure	5	17	19	38

the environment Relationship with	3	11	19	40
Cooperation	4	14	22	70
Total	31	123	219	563

The Source: (Supérieur, 2016, pp 2-41)

According to the national standard of quality assurance, the field of formation consists of 7 fields:

- **Field F1:** The definition of the formation offer and its management;
- **Field F2:** Accompaniment of the student in his formation;
- **Field F3:** Evaluation and revision of teaching;
- **Field F4:** Controlling the knowledge and learning of students;
- **Field F5:** Career orientation and integration;
- **Field F6 :** Doctoral formation;
- **Field F7:** Continuing education (throughout life).

#### IV.1.2.1 Analysis of the formation by field and by reference:

The following table summarizes the rate of the calculated scores of the references (4 categories) and the number of criteria and proofs not applied for each reference. This table tells us about the urgency and the priority of the actions to be undertaken according to the references.

**Table 2:** Priority of actions to be undertaken according to references

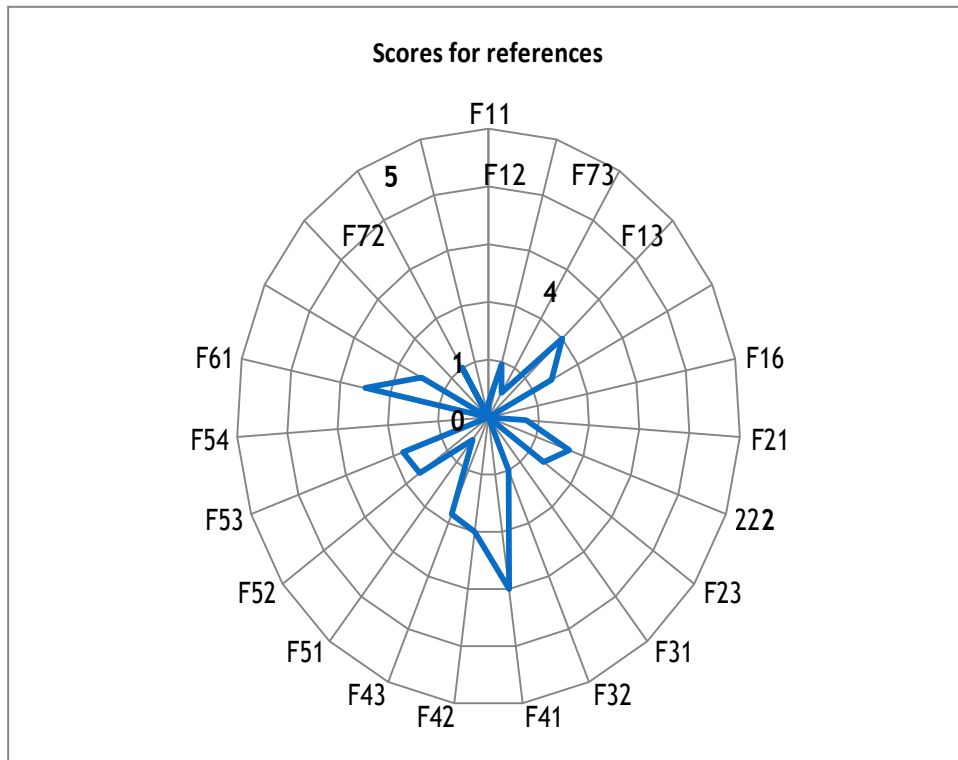
Domain	Field	Calculated points for references				Nbr of unapplied criteria	Nbr of unapplied proofs
		cN<1	1<cN <2	2<cN <3	3<cN <4		
Formation	F1	4	2	0	0	4	12
		67%	33%	0%	0%		
	F2	1	2	0	0	4	13
		33%	67%	0%	0%		
	F3	2	0	0	0	2	7
		100%	0%	0%	0%		
	F4	0	2	1	0	0	1
		0%	67%	33%	0%		
	F5	2	2	0	0	3	4
		50%	50%	0%	0%		
	F6	0	1	1	0	0	0
		0%	50%	50%	0%		
	F7	3	0	0	0	3	9
		100%	0%	0%	0%		
		12	9	2	0	16	46

<b>Total</b>	7	50%	38%	12%	0%		
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**The Source:** Developed by researchers according to the report of the quality assurance cell

The result of the evaluation shows that the number of criteria not applied in the field of formation is 16 (32.65%) out of 48 the total number of criteria, and 46 (43.39%) non-applied proofs out of 106 proofs.

**Figure 2:** The Radar representation of the calculated scores for the references (formation)



**The Source:** Developed by researchers according to the report of the quality assurance cell

Reading this radar shows that all reference points are below average. Therefore, this situation must be remedied as soon as possible.

#### **IV.2 The process of self-evaluation of the formation at University of Adrar:**

##### **IV.2.1 SWOT global analysis of formation:**

The values obtained by this analysis for the four axes (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threat) are summarized as follows:

**1. Strengths:** Human resources: note3, Material resources: note 4, Strategy: note2, Research themes and themes: note 2.

**2. Weaknesses:** Pedagogy: Grade3, Teachers Grade:3, Students: Grade4, Course Offerings: Grade1, Organization Grade:2.

**3. Opportunities:** Productive sector: note 3, Opening: note 4, Regulations note 2.

**4. Threats:** Remedies: Note 4, Background: Note 5, Zone Premium: Note 3, Unfair Competition: Note2.

##### **IV.2.2 Analysis of the formation by field and by reference:**

The following table summarizes the rate of the calculated scores of the references (4 categories) and the number of criteria and proofs not applied for each reference.

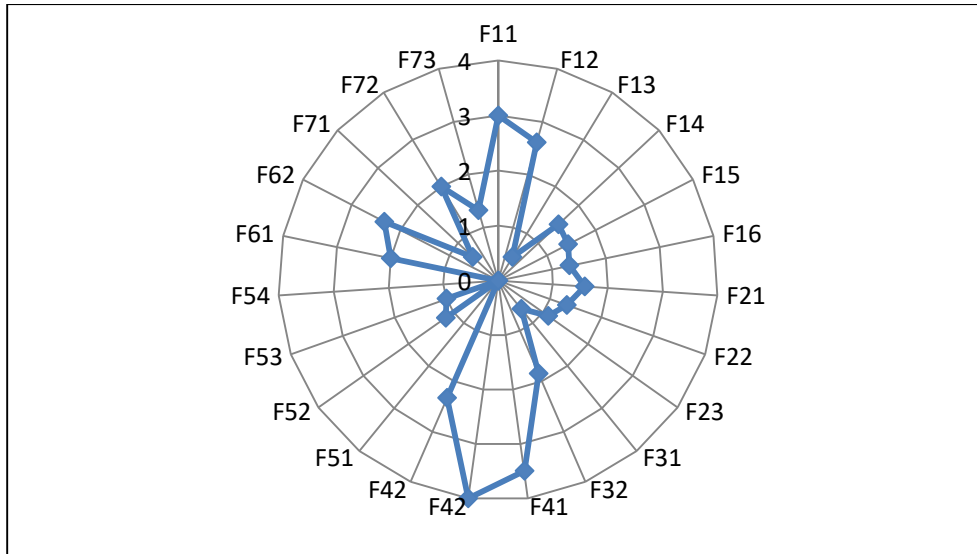
**Table 3:** Identification of priority actions in the field of formation  
**The Source:** Developed by researchers according to the report of the quality assurance cell

Domain	Field	Calculated points of References				Nbr of unapplied criteria	Nbr of unapplied proofs	
		$cN \leq 1$	$1 < cN \leq 2$	$2 < cN \leq 3$	$3 < cN \leq 4$			
Formation	F1	1	3	1	1	1	5	
		16.66%	50%	16.66%	16.66%	8.33%	19.23%	
	F2	0	3	0	0	4	15	
		0%	100%	0%	0%	40%	53.57%	
	F3	1	1	0	0	1 of 4	4 of 12	
		50%	50%	0%	0%	25%	33.33%	
	F4	0	0	1	2	1	3	
		0%	0%	33.33%	66.66%	16.66%	27.27%	
	F5	3	1	0	0	5	11	
		75%	25%	0%	0%	62.5%	73.33%	
	F6	0	1	1	0	0	1	
		0%	50%	50%	0%	0%	16.66%	
	F7	1	4	1	0	1	1	
		16.66%	66.66%	16.66%	0%	20%	10%	
	<b>Total</b>		6 sur 23	13	4	3	13 of 48	40 of 106
			26.08%	56.52%	17.39%	13.04	27.08%	37.73%

The result of the evaluation shows that the number of criteria not applied in the field of formation is 13 (27.08%) out of 48 the total number of criteria, and 40 (37.73%) non-applied proofs out of 106 proofs.

**Figure 3:** Result of the self-evaluation of the field of formation (Analysis by reference)





**Source:** Developed by researchers according to the report of the quality assurance cell  
Reading this radar shows that most of the reference points are below average.

#### IV 3) Comparative Analysis of Self-Assessment Process Results between the Two Universities:

- ✓ Analysis of the notes from the domain of formation at the University of Setif 1 demonstrated that the strengths are the field F6 which addresses the doctoral formation and the field F4 which addresses the control of the knowledge and the learning of the students.
- ✓ The same result for the analysis of the grades of this field at the University of Adrar: the strengths are the field F4 which addresses the control of the knowledge and the learning of the students and the field F6 approaches the doctoral formation.
- ✓ The analysis of the scores calculated in the formation domain (Table 2) showed that the F7 field that deals with continuous formation (throughout life) is the lowest and is between  $0 < N_c \leq 1$ . While F1 field: The definition of the formation offer and its piloting, the field F2: The accompaniment of the student in his formation, the field F3: The evaluation and the revision of the lessons and the field and the field F5: the orientation and professional insertion are between the value  $1 < N_c \leq 2$ .
- ✓ On the other hand, the analysis of the grades calculated in the field of formation at the University of Adrar has shown that the Field: F5 which deals with orientation and professional insertion is the weakest and is between  $0 < N_c \leq 1$ . While field F1: The definition of the formation offer and its piloting, the field F2: The accompaniment of the student in his formation, the field F3: The evaluation and the revision of the lessons and the field F7: The continuing education are between 1 and 4.
- ✓ For the number of criteria and the number of non-applied proofs in the field of formation, the result of the evaluation shows that they are weaker at the University of Adrar the university compared to the University Setif 1.

#### V. Conclusion:

The comparative analysis of the results of the process of self-evaluation of the formation for the two universities (University of Setif 1 and the University of Adrar) showed the effectiveness of

the process of self-evaluation in the evaluation of the dynamic progress of activities (formation) taking into account the specificities and the environment of each university.

For this, the self-assessment process should not be reduced to a mere mechanical check of the criteria including through indicators and surveys. The self-assessment report must provide analyzes to assess in all its dimensions the progress of the various achievements of the institution.

In what follows, we will present the main actions that must be implemented to significantly improve formation activities. According to the diagnosis made for both universities:

- Gather the right conditions to guarantee the evolution of teachers in their careers (habilitation and professorship);
- Encourage teachers to follow the formation provided locally by distance learning;
- Organize seminars related to the pedagogical aspect;
- The involvement of doctoral students in educational activities according to their statutes;
- Encourage the setting up of specific formation offers (L, M, D);
- Develop the various framework agreements signed with the socio-economic sector;
- Exploit distance education for the benefit of the socio-economic sector via TIC;
- Encourage any initiative that can lead to improved formation;
- Encourage collaborative work in the framework of end-of-study projects and doctoral theses;
- Involve socio-economic actors in setting up formation offers;
- Make formation more visible by clearly presenting the course of the formation and its objectives.

## **VI- Referrals and references:**

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