Institutional assessment IUC Call 2022

Quy Nhon University

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C-lever.org

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List of abbreviations

DoNRE	Department of Natural Resources and Environment
DoST	Department of Science and Technology
FDI	Foreign direct investment
HE	Higher Education
IA	Institutional Assessment
ISA	Institutional Self-Assessment
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
QNU	Quy Nhon University
T&QA	Testing and Quality Assurance
UC	University Council
VLIR UOS	the Flemish Interuniversity Council for University Development Cooperation

1. Executive summary

1.1 The institutional assessment process

This institutional assessment report is the product of a two-stage assessment process:

a) a self-assessment by QNU of its institutional capacity, conducted by a (gender and background) mixed team of university staff members in February and March 2020;

b) a joint assessment of the university's institutional capacity facilitated by two external assessors during a field visited conducted between July 22nd and July 30th, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the national assessor conducted the overall on-site visit, and the international assessor participated remotely in briefings, debriefings, some key interviews and the workshop with the self-assessment team.

The institutional assessment framework used, is based on the 5 capabilities model developed by ECDPM. For the purpose of the institutional assessment, each capability comprises several domains, in turn every domain is characterized by a set of complementary aspects.

1.2 Conclusions of the institutional assessment of the university

1. Capability to achieve coherence		
Domain	*Score*	*Conclusions*
1.1 Vision and strategy	4	The University's mission and vision statements are made available, visible and consistent. The University's strategic plan and action plans are also consistent with its defined missions and vision; they focus on two key points: an interdisciplinary approach and application-oriented research, closely linked to the local issues and communities. This is a practical and realistic strategic choice, considering the socio-economic contexts of the region and the University's resources. The University has initiated a comprehensive restructuring plan since mid-2019 to undertake substantial changes and to navigate the University to a new stage of development. Only two new faculties already developed their own strategic plans.
1.2 Principles	4	QNU has a set of principles and regulations that guide the daily operations and activities at the University; these are widely shared among and applied by QNU staff. Policies and regulations are available to govern the operations of the University, except in some areas such as the running of labs or the administration at the faculty level where specific procedures ae lacking. As all public universities, QNU maintains a modest level of autonomy, in compliance with Government's legislation. The assessors consider that the restructuration process, initiated in 2019, is significantly improving QNU's governance and operations.
1.3 Governance	4	The assessors observed that QNU management is effective and efficient, although there is still room for further improvement. QNU generally tries to maximize and leverage the opportunities allowed by the law; to improve the flexibility and effectiveness of its management and governance processes and structures. The policies and decisions of top management seem coherent and well-accepted. There are spaces for staff and stakeholders' participation, although co-responsibility and bottom up processes may be further developed.

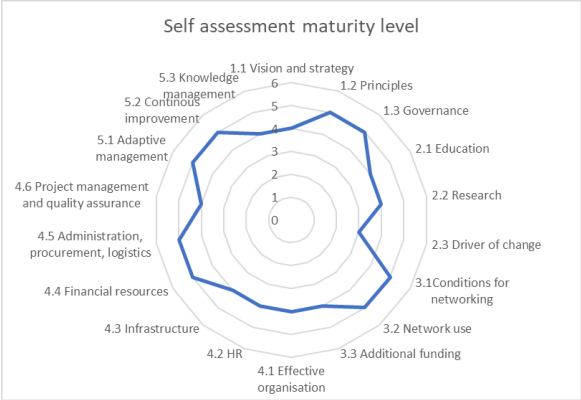
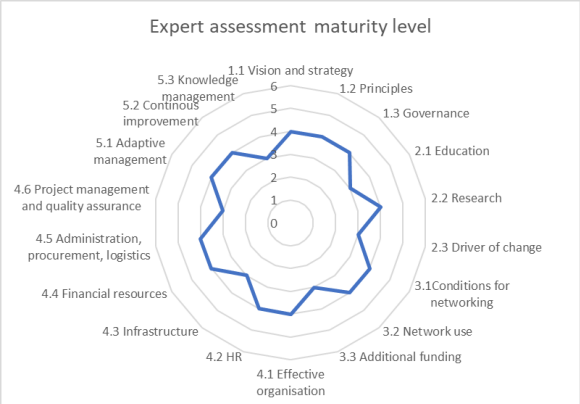
2. Capability to deliver on development relevant objectives and commitments		
Domain	*Score*	*Conclusions*
2.1 Education	3+	As initiated recently, QNU is significantly enhancing the quality of its curricula and training programs, through quality assurance and improvement of curricula development processes. The assessors acknowledge that some improvements are in process or should still be initiated. QA activities at the University are more compliance-led than improvement-driven. An internal QA vision and system have not been fully developed. Involvement of students and external stakeholders in curricula development and assessment, as well as continuously enhancing labour market relevance of the education programmes, should be strengthened and systematized.
2.2 Research	4	QNU conducts research and publishes research results mostly at a national level; but QNU is keen to develop and implement regional and international research initiatives and projects. International mobility and presence at an international level of QNU staff is highly encouraged, and partnerships are being developed with international universities (Germany, Belgium, Japan, etc.). The practice of multidisciplinary research is still recent and is actively being developed. The University has enough foundations for developing multidisciplinary research and is setting up joint research initiatives across faculties and departments. Some faculties are more active in research/publication; in particular those faculties that have more experienced and well-trained lecturers, and that exist since a long time; such as Math and Stats and Natural Sciences.
2.3 Driver of Change	3+	QNU is not yet a major agent of change at a national and international level, but the links developed with local companies, authorities and communities, as well as its specialization in applied, solution-oriented, research are expected to improve QNU's position at local, provincial and national levels. Through continued efforts and recent initiatives, QNU has transformed itself in an emerging university with increasing roles in the region. However all of this is still in an early stage of development. Within the University, the practice of reaching out varies across faculties and departments. There is still a lot for the University to do in order to fully position itself as a key university in the South-Central Coast and Central Highlands regions.
3. Capability to relate to external stakeholders		
Domain	*Score*	*Conclusions*
3.1 Conditions for networking	4	Networking and developing alliances are key aspects of QNU's Development Strategy. The range of (existing and potential) partners is large, from local actors (SMEs, local authorities) to international universities (KUL, Japanese universities) and foreign enterprises active in the region. QNU dedicates significant resources to networking and to building national and international partnerships. The assessment observed that some departments/ faculties are more committed than others in this field; many efforts are still to be made in order to establish and implement strategic and robust partnerships with strong academic and institutional actors and to mainstream participation to such partnerships across QNU. Furthermore, financial resources of QNU are still insufficient and these allow only a partial implementation of QNU's internationalization strategy.

3.2. Network use	3+	QNU's network is vast and actively used, given the University's size and age. QNU's partners range from local actors to international universities. These partnerships are used to improve many different aspects of the university. The University has engaged external stakeholders, including employers and enterprises, in the development, review and revision of curricula, even though this practice is not mainstreamed yet. External actors met during the external assessment confirmed this involvement and the good networking skills and strategies of QNU. However the dynamism of staff and their networking skills vary significantly between faculties.
3.3. Additional funding	4	QNU is awarded and manages externally funded projects, and therefore gains additional sources of funding. Obtaining and managing external project funding is a key aspect of QNU's ongoing strategy, and many academic actors are convinced that external project funding is critical for QNU development. Revenues from these external sources have increased gradually over the past ten years; but they do not meet the needs for QNU's development into a leading regional institution in both research and training. Specifically, the University need further funding to purchase more advanced lab equipment for flagship research in Physics, Chemistry and Information Technology.
4. Capability to act and commit		
Domain	*Score*	*Conclusions*
4.1 Effective organisation	4	QNU is engaged in an comprehensive organisational reform process. The new lean governance and organisational model allows the University to mobilize the strengths and resources of all disciplines, to act and respond promptly and to adequately address the issues and problems at different levels. Managers of Departments and functional units are granted certain autonomy; they demonstrate a high level of commitment to quality, responsibility and accountability. Since the model is new, its implementation shall be assessed on a longer run; acknowledging that some issues are still to be solved (in particular collaboration and allocations of tasks between some functional units).
4.2. HR	4-	The University has 727 staff members, of which 71.3% are academic staff and 28.7% are administrative and supporting staff. The academic staff turnover is really low (less than 0,5% excluding natural retirement), which ensures a significant stability of human resources. The University has appointed a team of young, highly qualified, high-performing academic staff to key positions leading faculties, departments and units. There are several complaints and remediation mechanisms for human resources related issues, that seem to be effective. Further trainings and capacity building are needed, especially to develop cutting edge research and to develop skills of staffs who don't benefit from international mobility.
4.3 Infrastructure	3	QNU has sufficient classrooms and basic campus facilities; but these need improvement in order to allow for adequate technical training and applied research. The IT infrastructure of the University is also limited and not good enough to organize online education. The University receives state funds for research and

		training, but the amounts are limited, sufficing only for purchases of small and simple equipment.
4.4 Financial management	4	The University has two main sources of income: state funding (25% to 30%) and revenues from tuition fees (approximately 50%). The University has maintained a transparent system of accounting and financial reporting in strict accordance with legal regulations on institutional accounting for all public institutions. Positive changes and modernization in research and education equipment occurred the past years, thanks to research funding from external sources, having increased in recent years. However, external funding is still low and its impact on education and research could be improved. The University still lack financial resources to modernize and upgrade some key academic infrastructure (IT facilities, labs and library) to be competitive at an international level. Thus, being adequately funded is still a challenge for QNU.
4.5 Administration, procurement, logistics	4-	QNU is currently restructuring its organization and operations, implying ongoing changes in roles and functions of all the different department and entities. The reform should result in a leaner organization and a certain level of autonomy of faculties and departments. This reform process is a positive and promising change, even if the new systems need to be assessed on a longer run. QNU has regulations, processes and procedures for its major support functions (financial management, procurement, staff recruitment, etc.), but there is a lack of procedures in specific daily operations at the departmental level. Also QNU needs an interlinked information management system that supports real-time evidence-based decision-making of leaders and managers. The digitalization of the administration system is in its pilot phase since January 2020.
4.6. Project management and quality assurance	3	The collaboration projects between QNU and its external stakeholders have yielded positive outcomes, especially regarding the collaboration with local authorities and companies; the quality of service delivery is being appreciated by such external partners. An Office of Testing and Quality Assurance, established in 2009, focuses on national accreditation processes for both institutional and program accreditation. Many improvements have been achieved in recent years. A "culture of quality"' is being developed at QNU, involving many members of academic and administrative staff. The main goal for the coming years will be to effectively and systematically use the QA information for daily and strategic decision making, as well as mainstreaming QA and national accreditation processes across all faculties and functions of the University; while also obtaining academic accreditations at regional and international levels.
5. Capability to adapt and self-renew		
Domain	*Score*	*Conclusions*
5.1 Adaptive management	4+	QNU management has a good understanding of shifting contexts and has demonstrated some significant experience in adapting to changing environments. Economic and social contexts are moving really fast in Vietnam. The recent evolutions in QNU's management and the internal restructuration process illustrate an accurate understanding of global and local challenges and of how to address them. QNU management is fully aware of the importance of understanding evolutions of the different contexts relevant for the University: the local and provincial economic and social situation and changes, as well as the national and international academic environment.

5.2 Continuous improvement	4	The formal structures of QNU are in line with national and statutory requirements applicable to public universities in Vietnam. The capacity to adapt quickly is being improved through the lean management model, being developed and implemented under the ongoing restructuration process. But the implementation of these leverages for continuous adaptation and renewal is constrained by budget limitations and by the centralized model of higher education policy in Vietnam. The specialization of QNU toward applied research and local development issues illustrates QNU's flexible approach and its relatively good capacity to adapt and renew. The leaders of QNU, at different levels, showed their willingness and engagement to adapt their management to evolution and innovation at both local level and international (academia) levels. They also demonstrate a good capacity to balance stability with innovation and renewal.
5.3 Knowledge management	3+	The assessors found that knowledge management is not developed nor explicitly mentioned in key management documents (i.e. Project on restructuring Quy Nhon University 2019). The institutional assessment team observes that knowledge sharing and learning mechanisms exists, notably through a diverse range of meetings and reports, but these mechanisms are still to be systematized. This could be done through the development of a tailor-made system dedicated to knowledge management, including a set of mechanisms to identify, gather and share knowledge; while many aspects of this already exist, they need to be connected and integrated. This system should also include specific tools to organize, store and retrieve different array of knowledge. The efforts ahead may also include management principles and orientation in order to encourage that captured and shared knowledge is effectively used, and feeds decision making at different levels.

The following figures visualise the findings of the self-assessment versus those of the externally facilitated joint institutional assessment exercises.

Self-assessment	***External institutional assessment***
	

1.3 The match of the university with the IUC concept

The external assessors believe that QNU's current situation, as well as Vietnam's social and economic context, match very well with the IUC partnership concept. The following factors justify this conclusion:

- QNU is engaged in a promising reform process, and its leadership is deeply committed to implement and benefit from the new organization and the lean management model.
- QNU is keen to specialize the University in applied, solution-oriented, research and service delivery to the community. This specialization appears as highly relevant within the local and national context and would provide a great added value for the University as well as for local communities. There is a huge need among local and national economic actors for applied research solutions and business-oriented research and education programs.
- Vietnam is one the most promising emerging economies in Asia and worldwide. It would be a great asset for the IUC programme, in terms of impact on development and knowledge production and dissemination, to include QNU in the programme. For example, food security and safety, as well as value chain in food production, are key and appealing areas for applied research in Vietnam. This matches with the strengths of Flemish universities, e.g. Ghent University being one of the global leading Universities in these fields.
- QNU has a great potential for improvement in many fields, as well as highly motivated human resources. The IUC-partnership could contribute in significantly improving the lab facilities and research equipment, for which there is a huge need at QNU.
- The assessors do not see any significant risk of dependency of QNU to the IUC program, as QNU already benefited from external support and as the internal funding (public allocation + tuition fees) is already important, compared to the envisaged additional VLIR-UOS funding.

1.4 Relevance and potential of the proposed IUC programme

The assessors consider that QNU's actual capacities and strategic views match very well with the proposed IUC programme, for the following reasons:

- Applied research and service to local communities in the Central Region and the Highlands, which are core aspects of the IUC programme, are two of the key strategic focus areas at QNU.
- Natural sciences, applied physics, chemistry, food sciences and related disciplines are among the most dynamic and developed areas at QNU.
- QNU has sufficient capacity to manage and implement the IUC programme, while its current level of development ensures that QNU can optimally benefit from the added value of an IUC-partnership; thus providing QNU with a big push forward.
- QNU has enough network capacity to conduct the IUC programme. This network includes national public bodies, local public authorities, local organizations and SMEs as well as academic partners.

The proposed programme demonstrates a high relevance and potential in the choice of domains of change. Food safety and security, environment and renewable energies are highly relevant for economic, social and environmental development in Vietnam, especially in Central Vietnam and in the Highlands.

2. Introduction

2.1 Brief history of university in region

The history of Quy Nhon University dates back to 1977, two years after the Vietnam War ended, with the establishment of a mono-disciplinary institution specializing in pedagogy and education. QNU's forerunner, named Quy Nhon University of Teacher Training, was established by the Vietnamese Government as part of a chain of tertiary institutions providing teacher training across the nation in a Government's effort to rapidly recover and reset its schooling system after the war. In 2003, the University's mission and vision were redefined, thus transforming the institution into a multi-disciplinary university, known as Quy Nhon University (QNU). On the one hand, the University remains one of the key institutions in the national education and teacher training network. On the other hand, the University created new faculties providing various programs in natural sciences, social sciences and humanities, economics and finance, engineering and technology; as to best serve the socio-economic development of the South-Central Coast and Central Highlands regions.

The University has 727 members of staff, of which over 70% are academic staff. Amongst its lecturers, the number of master degree and PhD holders accounts for 65.7% and 26%, respectively. The professors and associate professors correspond to only a very modest percentage of 0.6%.

Currently, the University has three faculties and nine academic departments, providing undergraduate programs in 46 majors to approximately 13,000 full-time students. In addition, there are more than 1,000 graduate students enrolling in its 22 master programs and three doctoral ones. The University also receives hundreds of international students coming from Laos for undergraduate, postgraduate and Vietnamese language programs. Please note that faculties are larger and multi-disciplinary academic divisions within the university, while departments refer to smaller and (mostly) mono-disciplinary academic subsets of a faculty. For example, the Faculty of Natural Sciences comprises the departments of Physics, Chemistry and Biology. As per QNU's strategy, these 3 faculties shall further develop into schools consisting of several departments, thus allowing for enhanced autonomy of the school and interdisciplinary education and research within the school.

The University has set up spearheading research groups in natural sciences, mathematics and chemistry. It has received research grants and funding for research projects from provinces and ministries. Publications, in international journals, are increasing in both quantity and quality. The ARIST (Applied Research Institute for Science and Technology) was established to promote research linkages between the University and the local community.

Since QNU's establishment 40 years ago, nearly 90,000 full-time and part-time students and more than 2,500 postgraduate students, both local and foreign, have graduated from the University. Amongst its alumni, many have held leadership positions at central and local government offices; thousands of school teachers are working in schools of all levels in eleven provinces in the region. The University has played a crucial role in training and supplying high-quality human resources to contribute to the development and modernization of the region.

Located in a region with abundant aquatic and forestry resources, but still being among the less developed regions in Vietnam, Quy Nhon University has been growing steadily as a key multi-disciplinary higher education provider with considerable potential to become an educational and technological hub of the South Central Coast and the Central Highlands regions.

2.2 Development context

Vietnam is the 3rd most populous country in the South East Asia with a population of nearly 97 million people. Geographically, this is a long and narrow country, with a very long coastal line of 3260 km from North to South. The country is divided into eight regions: Northwest, Northeast, Red River Delta, North Central Coast, South Central Coast, Central Highlands, Southeast, and Mekong River Delta. Overall, the country relies a lot on marine resources for socio-economic development; coastal regions, therefore, play a key part in the Government's strategic development.

Quy Nhon is a city of Binh Dinh Province, located in the South-Central Coast region, whose key industries include fisheries and an ocean-based economy such as aqua-culture, and domestic and international sea transport, thanks to its deep-sea ports. The region, with a population of nearly 15 million people, has huge potential for seabed petrol and gas resources and is rich in such mineral resources as placer deposits, silic dioxit, gold, and mineral water. Tourism is also identified as a key industry in the region. Obviously, the local people rely a lot on ocean-based resources in order to achieve sustainable development, economic growth, and livelihoods. Overall, Quy Nhon and the whole Binh Dinh Province remain less developed in many aspects, compared with Da Nang and Nha Trang – Khanh Hoa. Thus Quy Nhon city has many potentials to be exploited and utilized in the coming decade.

In terms of higher education development, it should be noted that the Vietnamese Government used to follow and adopt the Soviet higher education model, which was characterized by mono-disciplinary universities. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, a lot of changes have been made to the governance structure of higher education. One is the shift in university model from mono-disciplinary to multi-disciplinary institutions. Deregulation is another important change; however, universities are still under tight and close oversight of MOET. Despite lots of efforts in relaxing HE regulations and legal frameworks, institutional autonomy is still limited. The Revised Higher Education Law, effective since July 2019, does grant greater autonomy to universities; however, implementation has just got underway.

Numerous challenges lie ahead with regard to an appropriate governance model and practices at systemic and institutional levels. Amongst such, known issues are: the inherent separation between university and industries, limited research capacity and low graduate capabilities. Recent changes in the system aim to address these problems, on the one hand; while providing more favourable HE landscapes to foster radical institutional developments, on the other hand. The revised Higher Education Law is expected to bring about significant changes in the local policy contexts and offers an opportunity for growth for a regional university like QNU.

2.3 Implementation of the institutional assessment

2.3.1 Presentation of the institutional assessment approach

The institutional assessment consists of two stages: (a) a self-assessment by the university of its institutional capacity and (b) a joint assessment of the university's institutional capacity facilitated by external assessors. The same institutional assessment framework is used for both stages of the institutional assessment. The institutional assessment framework is based on the 5 capabilities model developed by ECDPM. For the purpose of the institutional assessment, each capability comprises several domains, in turn every domain is characterised by a set of complementary aspects.

The institutional assessment implies discussing, assessing and documenting every domain, including the identification and justification of its current maturity level, appreciated on a scale from 1 (absent or extremely weak) to 6 (a role model).

Each institutional assessment exercise facilitated by external assessors includes: a preparation phase, a field phase and a reporting phase. Originally, the field phase implies a 9-calendar day visit of the

candidate IUC partner university by a lead assessor (international expert) who is accompanied by a 2nd assessor, a national/regional expert. The entire institutional assessment approach is described in the methodological guide for Institutional Assessment of candidate IUC universities.

The external assessment at QNU had to be re-shaped due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The national assessor carried out all on site data collection activities for 9 days, from 22nd to 30th of July. The international assessor participated remotely in briefings, debriefings and in key interviews. The two assessors jointly prepared and facilitated the institutional workshop with the self-assessment team.

2.3.2 Institutional self-assessment process

The institutional self-assessment process comprised the following steps:

20/02/2020: Following up on the suggestion by the local IUC coordinator, the Rector of QNU chaired a meeting with the participation of the Chairman of University Council, the heads of some functional units, and the deans of some faculties/ departments. At the meeting, Prof. Vu presented the upcoming institutional assessment, according to the Methodological Guide for Institutional Assessment of candidate IUC universities. The self-assessment team was constituted at the end of this meeting, led by the Rector. This team was subsequently officially established in the Decision 361/QD-ĐHQN issued on 09/3/2020 by QNU.

24/02/2020: Eight (08) members of the self-assessment team joined the methodological assistance session, remotely facilitated by C-lever.org. After this meeting, each member of the self-assessment team was asked to conduct desk study to understand the self-assessment tools.

02/3/2020: A meeting of the self-assessment team was held to discuss the institutional self-assessment tools. After this meeting, each member was asked to individually apply the self-assessment to get familiar with the self-assessment tools.

11/3/2020: Another meeting of the self-assessment team was held to discuss the maturity levels of each aspect and domain and to determine the documents/ data to be collected to vouch for each score and each statement. By the end of this meeting, the team assigned 5 members to present the statements and score that the team suggested for each domain and aspect.

14/3/2020: The University organized a one-day workshop with the participation of the self-assessment team, the heads of the functional units, the directors of the University's institutes and centres, and the deans or vice deans of the faculties/ departments. At the workshop, the participants actively discussed each aspect, domain, and capability. In some cases, the maturity level was changed compared to what the self-assessment team had suggested before, and more documents/ data were given by the leaders of different units in the University. The workshop lasted from 8:30 am to 6:00 pm, and the minutes were written in Vietnamese.

After that, some members of the self-assessment team revised the statements, as agreed upon at the workshop; they polished the report and collected additional documents/ data from different units/ faculties/ departments. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it took quite some time to collect the documents/ data. Eventually, this self-assessment report was finalized on April 5th 2020.

2.3.3 External institutional assessment process

The external assessment had to be re-shaped and postponed several times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Originally planned in March 2020, it was conducted in July 2020. The national assessor carried out all on site data collection activities from 22 to 30 July. The international assessor participated remotely in briefings, debriefings and in key interviews. The two assessors jointly prepared and facilitated the institutional workshop with the self-assessment team. They jointly drafted the IA report. The draft report was also peer reviewed by another lead assessor of C-Lever.org.

QNU's IUC coordinator was very responsive during the process and always tried to adapt to the volatile and complicated context.

Throughout the Self-Assessment, as well as the preparation of the external assessment, QNU demonstrated a high-level commitment. There was no reluctance from QNU members in raising and discussing institutional and organisational challenges, but rather eagerness in facilitating internal and external analysis and in obtaining feedback on its strengths and challenges.

The detailed field visit schedule is provided in annexe 2 of this report.

3. Institutional assessment of the university

3.1 Capability to achieve coherence

3.1.1 There is a shared and coherent vision and strategy on university/faculty level

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4	*Selected maturity level*	4
- P1 (Level 5: *The University has a well-documented vision and mission statement which are broadly shared within the university and integrated in the external communication of the university. The vision adequately relates the university's own development to the needs of its stakeholders*). The mission and vision of Quy Nhon University (QNU) are published in writing [**D1.1.P1.1**] and are made public both inside and outside the University through its website and its admission handbook 2020 [**D1.1.P1.2**]. The vision of the University reads, "By 2030, Quy Nhon University will be a prestigious multi-disciplinary application-oriented university meeting the quality standards of Southeast Asia and have an important position in training, research, academic exchange, and cultural exchange in the country and in the world". The University's vision not only demonstrates the orientation and aspiration for development and international integration of the University, but it also meets the need for highly skilled human resources for the country's development. **- P2 (Level 4:** ***The university has a strategic plan in line with the vision and mission statement. This strategic plan is rather coherent and complete, but the feasibility of some elements could still be improved*****).** Based on the analysis of the situation of the world, Southeast Asia, the South Central Coast region and the Central Highlands and considering the mission, vision, capacity and specific		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* The University's mission and vision statements are widely available, visible and consistent on the University's website, in documentation about the University, on the banners and boards in the halls and in the auditorium/ conference rooms. (P1) The University's strategic plan and action plans are consistent with its defined missions and vision; they focus on two key points: an interdisciplinary approach and application-oriented research, closely linked to the local issues and communities. All middle-level managers and deans (and vice deans) are aware of and in agreement with to the institutional strategic plan. Faculty managers (deans and vice deans) participated in the development of the University's strategic plan and then directly developed strategic plans for their units, ensuring that the faculty level strategic plans match the strategic goals of the University. There is wide consensus of faculty and departmental managers on the strategic course of the University. Faculty leaders are aware of the strategic plans of other faculties and departments. (P2) To develop the strategic plan, the University formed a committee, consisting of key personnel (board of rectors, faculty leaders), to examine and analyse the new national HE landscapes due to the Revised HE Law, the local socio-economic contexts of the region (South Central Coastal and Highlands), and their institutional conditions and resources. This Committee then drafted the document. The draft versions of the Strategy were sent to all academic and non-academic staff for consultation and revised based on feedback collected. (P3) The University's vision is to be a key university in the region, with a leading role in research and in application of research to address local problems. This is to be realized in collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology (DoST) and Department of Natural Resources	

conditions of QNU, the University has the strategic development plan of Quy Nhon University for the period 2016-2020, with the vision to 2030 [**D1.1.P2.1**]. The University considers its vision to be a common goal which serves as the basis for identifying its specific goals of personnel, training, scientific research and technology transfer, international cooperation, facilities and equipment, and finance. However, the University's strategic development plan needs to be reviewed annually to ensure the feasibility of its activities. - **P3 (Level 5: *The University's strategic plan is based on a well-developed systemic analysis of the* *University's* *context, capacities and potential roles).*** When the University developed its strategic development plan [**D1.1.P3.1**], the socio-economic situations and the need for human resources of the world, Southeast Asia, the South Central Coast region, and Central Highlands were analyzed quite carefully and in detail. In addition, the University's capacity for training, scientific research, international cooperation, and finances were determined through a detailed assessment of its current situation in these fields. The University also clearly identified its role in Vietnam's education system and the mission of training human resources for the country, especially for the provinces in the South Central Coast region and Central Highlands. **- P4 (Level 3: *The faculties are starting to develop a proper strategy in coherence with the vision and mission statement of the university*).** The University has established the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Natural Sciences, and the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities to increase the management and operation	and Environment (DoNRE) of Binh Dinh Province. According to the representative of DoST, the Province relies on the University and sees it as a key pillar and resource in provincial science and technology developments. The University has gained trust from the local authorities in terms of research capacities to undertake research at the provincial level to address their problems. The University defines itself as an application-oriented research institution, rather than a fundamental research institution. This is a practical and realistic strategic choice, taking into consideration the socio-economic contexts of the region and the University's resources. (P3, R5) The University also chooses not to adopt the two-tire structure required to be formalised as a regional university[1]. QNU prefers to remain a one-tier institution in order to keep its organizational structure lean and manageable. As a multi-disciplinary university aiming to contribute to the development of the region, QNU has a similar governance and organizational structure as Can Tho University, which is an example of success in this approach. QNU also refers to the case of Can Tho University and its role in the South West region for lessons to be learned. As stated in the self-assessment report, only two new faculties already developed their own strategic plans (the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Natural Sciences). Nonetheless, it seems that University and faculty level managers are keen to develop strategies at faculty level in the near future. (P4) The University has initiated a comprehensive restructuring plan since mid-2019, to undertake substantial changes and to navigate the University to a new stage of development.

[1] Currently, there are two models of university in Vietnam. "Truong Dai hoc" have a two-tier model with member universities nested in an umbrella university; there are five such two-tier universities; two national universities (VNU-HN and VNU HCMC) and three regional universities (Hue, DaNang, Thai Nguyen). The other model is a one-tier institution. In Vietnamese HE system, the one-tier institutions were mostly monodisciplinary; however many of these are transforming into multi-disciplinary institutions. 'One tier' means one layer/level of management and all units being part of a single institution.
The two-tier structure is cumbersome; there are loose links between member universities and between the umbrella university (top layer of management and governance) and member universities, which are believed to limit the effectiveness and efficiency of the university operations. The successful Can Tho University (CTU), while being multi-disciplinary, choose to remain a "truong Dai hoc" to avoid these problems and has proved to operate efficiently. QNU, applying the lessons learned of CTU, also strategically chooses to remain a 'truong Dai hoc", following CTU's model.

effectiveness of the University and its faculties, in order to produce lecturers capable of delivering integrated courses and produce graduates who have adequate capacities as expected by employers [**D1.1.P4.1**]. As a result, currently only two new faculties have been established with a declaration of departmental strategies according to the University's vision and mission [**D1.1.P4.2, D1.1.P4.3**]. **- R5 (Level 4:** T***here is an acceptable level of coherence between the mission, the strategies, resources and*** *concrete* ***actions of the university and its faculties).*** The missions and strategies of the faculties are built according to the University's mission and strategic development plan, so the missions and strategies of the faculties and those of the University are consistent [**D1.1.R5.1, D1.1.R5.2, D1.1.R5.3, D1.1.R5.4**]. Similarly, the resources of the faculties (including human resources, facilities, and finance) are monitored and controlled by the University, and the operations of the faculties are in line with the University's plan, so there is always a relative unity between the faculties and the University in these areas.	
Conclusion	
The University's mission and vision statements are made available, visible and consistent. The University's strategic plan and action plans are also consistent with its defined missions and vision; they focus on two key points: an interdisciplinary approach and application-oriented research, closely linked to the local issues and communities. This is a practical and realistic strategic choice, considering the socio-economic contexts of the region and the University's resources. The University has initiated a comprehensive restructuring plan since mid-2019 to undertake substantial changes and to navigate the University to a new stage of development. Only two new faculties already developed their own strategic plans.	

3.1.2 Existence of a set of simple principles which govern the university's/faculty's operations

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	5	*Selected maturity level*	4
- **P1 (Level 5:** *The University has formulated a set of values which inspires and guides the University's operations).*		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation*	

QNU's core values include: Responsibility, Professionalism, Quality, Innovation, and Humanity [**D1.2.P1.1**] and these values are made public both inside and outside the University through its website and other documents [**D1.2.P1.2**]. These values are expressed in the University's Code of Conduct [**D1.2.P1.3**], in the regulations on academic consultation in QNU [**D1.2.P1.4**], as well as in the regulations on working time, teaching time, and research time for academic staff of QNU [**D1.2.P1.5**], in the regulations on emulation and commendation [**D1.2.P1.6**] and its recognized activities and achievements [**D1.2.P1.7, D1.2.P1.8, D1.2.P1.9, D1.2.P1.10, D1.2.P1.11].** **- P2 (Level 5:** *The University has a set of principles, processes, procedures and policies to govern its operations).* P2.a) ***Regarding research and education*** Based on the regulations by the government, ministries, especially the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), the University has a full set of principles, processes, procedures, and policies to manage its research and teaching activities. Specifically, the University manages research and teaching activities using the regulations on working time, teaching time, and research time for academic staff of QNU [**D1.2.P2.1**], the regulations on science and technology affairs. [**D1.2.P2.2**], the Regulations on Formal Undergraduate Education Using Academic Credit System [**D1.2.P2.3, D1.2.P2.4, D1.2.P2.5, D1.2.P2.6, D1.2.P2.7**] and the Regulations on Emulation and Commendation [**D1.2.P2.8**]. P2.b) ***Regarding crosscutting dimensions (gender, environmental sustainability, internationalization, integrity (financial, physical, scientific).*** In addition to the principles, processes, procedures, and policies for managing teaching and research activities, the University is interested in other areas such as gender equality [**D1.2.P2.9**], sustainable environmental development [**D1.2.P2.10, D1.2.P2.11**], internationalization [**D1.2.P2.12, D1.2.P2.13**] and the regulations to ensure financial, material and scientific integrity [**D1.2.P2.14, D1.2.P2.15, D1.2.P2.16, D1.2.P2.17, D1.2.P2.18, D1.2.P2.19, D1.2.P2.20**]. **- R3 (Level 5:** *The university has a set of simple principles, processes, procedures and policies to govern its operations which have a high level of implementation and are widely known within the university).*	The University has a set of principles and regulations that regulate the daily operations and activities at the University and the behaviour of its staff. The working spirit and values have been shared amongst its staff members. Overall, the University's staff demonstrate positive attitudes at work. The working environment is characterised by a high level of harmony. Staff members, both academic and administrative, share a high level of devotion and high sense of responsibility. They also respect each other and are highly cooperative. There are no signs of gender discrimination in staff appointment and tasks allocation. Staff are open and share their ideas. (P1) Policies and regulations are available to govern the operations of the University. However, in some areas, such as the operation of labs or the administration at the faculty level, there is a lack of procedures. Especially the tasks and processes involving multiple faculties and units have not been documented yet. (P2) The restructuration process initiated in 2019 aims at rationalizing QNU governance at each level, while improving the efficiency of processes and service delivery. The roadmap document for the restructuration shows that QNU shall improve its governance principles and operations. The University has maintained a modest level of autonomy vis-à-vis MOET and demonstrates a high level of compliance with the Government's legislation. This is in accordance with the low level of institutional autonomy that universities are granted under the prevailing laws. As a public institution, QNU must comply with the Law of Education, the Revised Law of Higher Education, the Charter on Universities, the Law on Public Investment and Expenditure, the Law on Public Asset management, the Law on Public Servants, and with many other legislative documents promulgated by different ministries other than MOET. Limited autonomy is a known systemic issue for all public universities in Vietnam. However, the Revised Law and the Decree 99/2019/ND-CP, guiding the implementation of the Law, bring opportunities for greater autonomy. QNU has participated actively in the national discussions on the implementation of the Law and the Decree. (R3)

The evidences for P2 show that the University has adequate documents to manage its activities. Teaching activities, scientific research as well as achievements in training, scientific research, international cooperation, environment and financial transparency in recent years show that the University's management principles specified and concretized in its documents have brought effectiveness to the activities of the University and its faculties/departments. The activities of the University and the faculties are summarized, evaluated and drawn lessons from in the reports publicized at the University's and faculties'/departments' annual meetings for all the staff [**D1.2.R3.1**].	
Conclusion	
QNU has a set of principles and regulations that guide the daily operations and activities at the University; these are widely shared among and applied by QNU staff. Policies and regulations are available to govern the operations of the University, except in some areas such as the running of labs or the administration at the faculty level where specific procedures ae lacking. As all public universities, QNU maintains a modest level of autonomy, in compliance with Government's legislation. The assessors consider that the restructuration process, initiated in 2019, is significantly improving QNU's governance and operations.	

3.1.3 University's/faculty's governance/management structures are effective

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	5	*Selected maturity level*	4
- P1 (Level 5: *The University has an organigram at university level and at faculty level. Staff members are aware of the existence of this organigram and understand where they are situated in the larger organization).* The organizational structure of the University is stated in Article 7 of the regulations on the organization and operation of QNU [**D1.3.P1.1**]. The University's organizational chart is hung in Meeting Room 1 [**D1.3.P1.2**] and available on the University's and faculties'/departments' websites. The name of each staff and his or her position are clearly shown in the organizational chart of his or her unit on the University's and faculties'/departments' websites [**D1.3.P1.3**].		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* The organization and governance of the University are well-documented and reflected precisely in the University's organigram. (P1) The Revised Higher Education Law specifies the composition of the University Council (UC), together with the roles and functions of the Council. QNU has recently appointed new UC Members and promulgated a set of regulations on the roles and functions of the UC, which are consistent with the Revised Law and Decree 99. These regulations are found in the University's Regulations on Organization and Operations, as issued mid-2020.	

- P2 (Level 5: *The University has a diverse and functional Board that meets quarterly (either face-to-face or virtually)***.** The members of the University Board (University Council) include the University's administrators, Union officials, Youth Union officials, and lecturers; some members are managers outside the University [**D1.3.P2.1**]. The University Council has meetings on a quarterly basis and when there is a need to discuss something, make some decision, or promptly guide the Rector [**D1.3.P2.2**]. **- P3 (Level 5:** *The University has an annual work plan linked to the strategy and budget, with measurable results, activities, timelines, responsibilities and indicators).* The University's annual summary reports always provide directions for the next school year based on an analysis of the previous school year's achievements, the University's resources (including the contemporary budget and the projected budget), the overall situation of the country, the locality, and the University's overall strategy. In the annual operational plan, specific activities that need to be done, results that need to be achieved, and the units in charge are always specified concretely and clearly, and the results are often specifically measured [**D1.3.P3.1, D1.3.P3.2**]. **- P4 (Level 5:** *The work plan has been developed collaboratively, is regularly monitored, informs decision-making and has a high level of implementation).* The University's annual operational plans are developed with ideas and suggestions from the University's staff and students [**D1.3.P4.1**]; the implementation of the operational plans is closely monitored, and the observations are recorded in the monthly trans-institutional meetings [**D1.3.P4.2**] and the University's annual staff conferences [**D1.3.P4.3, D1.3.P4.4**]. Due to the close observations during the implementation of the annual operational plans, most of the activities and targets stated in the plan have been well implemented and reported in the summary reports at the end of each school year [**D1.3.P4.5**]. **- R5 (Level 4:** *The Board provides some direction and support and assumes accountability for the organization's work).* The University Council has offered directions and support for the Rector in implementing the University's activities and is accountable to the University's staff and students, and the society	Six of the 19 members of the QN University Council are external to the University. These external members include representatives of government agencies, local authorities, professional associations and scholars (see [D1.3.P1.5]). One member, who is ex-Deputy minister of Education and Training, currently the Editor-in-chief of a local journal of science and technology, is selected and invited to join the Council on the basis of his academic records in research and his experience in leadership in higher education. One outside member is the Chairman of the Association of Young Entrepreneurs. Others are holding relevant leadership positions and are key people in the local authorities and/or hold a decision making position in science and education in the region. The assessment noticed that no UC member is non-Vietnamese. (P2, R5) As detailed in the self-assessment report, QNU has an annual operational plan, with clear targets (results to be achieved) and corresponding allocation of budget. (P3) It should be noted that the Vietnamese HE system introduced a new model of institutional governance, with the university council as the key internal governance body within universities, around ten years ago. This model has been being adjusted over time in order to operate efficiently. Recent changes are regulated by the Revised HE Law (in effect since July 2019), and all universities are in the early stage of shifting to this new model. QNU is amongst the first 18 universities that have a functional UC set up (as of July 2020). Since this governance arrangement is still new, not only to QNU but to the entire university system, it is not possible to assess the performance of QNU's UC at the moment. It should be acknowledged that QNU's responses to the new Law and new requirements, as set by MOET, are prompt and timely. Lecturers participate actively in the academic affairs such as curriculum development and staff appraisal at the departmental level. In management issues, they are consulted to seek consensus. For example, they have opportunities to express their opinions on the appointment of managerial positions at their faculties and departments and leadership positions at the institutional level, or to comment on the University's annual operational reports. (P4) Students participate only limitedly in decision making processes, even in issues related to them, such as hostel management or student services. QNU is committed in carrying out an internal strategic reform and corresponding restructuring process, ongoing since mid-2019, to improve and modernize its management and effectiveness, as well as its capacity to develop partnerships and enhance its visibility at the international level.

about the University's activities. These functions of the Board can be seen via its meetings and documents [**D1.3.R5.1, D1.3.R5.2, D1.3.R5.3, D1.3.R5.4**]. **- R6 (Level 5:** *There is an absence of conflicting visions in the management of the University).* The University's vision has been agreed upon and officially announced to the University's staff and students in the Decision on the Publication of Quy Nhon University's Mission, Vision, and Core Values [**D1.3.R6.1**] and the University's Admission Handbook 2020 [**D1.3.R6.2**] and on the University's website. The University's vision is concretized and detailed in its strategic development plans, annual action plans, and other documents [**D1.3.R6.3, D1.3.R6.4, D1.3.R6.5**]. **- R7 (Level 5:** *The University balances participatory approaches with effective decision-making).* The University always seeks suggestions from its staff and students through requests for suggestions on operational plans, internal expense regulations, appointments, etc. The University requires the faculties, departments, divisions, and institutes of the University to provide written suggestions, which are gathered for the Rector to discuss with the deans and heads of the departments and institutes before making a decision. The Rector also holds meetings with students to listen to their opinions and aspirations. The balance between opinion collection and decision making by the Rector is shown in the minutes of the monthly trans-institutional meetings [**D1.3.R7.1**]. Democracy in the University's decision-making is realized in all of the University's important activities. In particular, in the appointment of the University's managers, the University reserves one article in the first chapter of the legal document on appointment.	There is no vice rector for academic and research affairs for the moment. Two Vice Rectors retired early this year, 2020. Due to the Covid-19 disruption of operations and the re-organization, as per MOET's guidelines on the implementation of the Revised HE Law, the appointment and election of these two posts have been delayed. These two positions are to be filled very soon, by September 2020. Many university actors, met by the assessors, highlighted the coherence and the absence of conflicting policy or decisions among QNU top management, as demonstrated under the leadership of the two last rectors (a decade approximatively). (R6) There are spaces for staff and stakeholders' participation, although co-responsibility and bottom up processes may be further developed. (R7)
Conclusion	
The assessors observed that QNU management is effective and efficient, although there is still room for further improvement. QNU generally tries to maximize and leverage the opportunities allowed by the law; to improve the flexibility and effectiveness of its management and governance processes and structures. The policies and decisions of top management seem coherent and well-accepted. There are spaces for staff and stakeholders' participation, although co-responsibility and bottom up processes may be further developed.	

3.2 Capability to deliver on development relevant objectives and commitments

3.2.1 The university provides high quality, development relevant education

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4	*Selected maturity level*	3+
Justification of selected maturity level – Description of the existing situation *- P1 (Level 4: The university has adequate systems for curriculum development with due attention for learning outcomes and quality).* The University has the regulation on the construction and development of its training programs in accordance with the current national and ministerial regulations [D2.1.P1.1]. It requires academic faculties/departments within the University to upgrade training programs every two years. The curricula are updated with innovative features after consulting feedback from key stakeholders. Any modification needs to be approved by the Faculty/Department Council before obtaining acceptance by the University's Science and Education Committee. The upgraded training programs are then submitted to the Rector for promulgation. The University also clearly defines the responsibilities of each subunit in implementing training program development. In the last 5 years, the University has upgraded its training programs for formal undergraduate education applying the academic credit system twice in 2015 and 2018 [D2.1.P1.2]. However, it is not until recently that the University pays close attention to constructing and developing training programs based on learning outcomes. Therefore, more monitoring and evaluation need to be made to ensure proper procedures and quality in the construction and development of training programs. *- P2 (Level 4: The university has quality assurance standards for teaching which are not always adhered to)* Teaching and learning activities are required to comply with the regulation on formal education applying the academic credit system issued by the Rector, which governs the training pro-		*Justification of selected maturity level – Description of the existing situation* As stated in the self-assessment report, the curricula development process is governed and framed by the law and MOET regulations. This process is being reformed, providing more flexibility and leverages to consider quality standards. (P1) The quality and outcome-oriented curricula development is still at an early stage, but this approach is being implemented across the different levels and type of actors within QNU. The University was evaluated for accreditation at the institutional level against MOET's evaluation standards in 2017. It is now in its first cycle of institutional accreditation. Of its 46 bachelor programs, three have been accredited; nine others are going through the self-assessment process for accreditation. These programs account for a modest percentage. However, it should be noted that twelve of these 46 programs were newly developed in recent years; thus the development of curricula of these 12 programs already went through the same QA process, and other related quality assurance requirements are satisfied. (P2, R5) The University is heading for regional accreditation (AUN-QA accreditation in the ASEAN region at both institutional and program levels). As per the requirements set out in the accreditation standards and QA requirements stipulated by MOET, all curricula must undergo periodical review. It is recommended that the University boosts and speeds up program accreditation to assure the same level of curriculum development of all degree programs. The University complies strictly with QA regulations and requirements set out by MOET and does not promulgate its own QA standards. (P4) The Testing and QA Office administers surveys every semester to collect students' opinions on teaching; however, the results are mostly used for accreditation purposes. After collecting and analysing data, the QA Office sends the results to faculty deans, and does not conduct	

grams, the course outlines, the teaching time, and the evaluation of students' academic performance [D2.1.P2.1]. In addition, teaching and learning activities must be relevant to achieving expected learning outcomes [D2.1.P2.2]. The course outlines specify such information including expected course learning outcomes, course objectives, course contents, teaching methods, assessment methods, coursebooks, and teaching materials [D2.1.P2.3]. The academic staff must comply with the teaching plan of the University and the academic faculty/department [D2.1.P2.4] as well as the regulation on working and research time [D2.1.P2.5]. In addition, at the end of each semester, the University conducts a survey to obtain students' feedback about the quality of teaching delivered by the academic staff based on a set of specific criteria in an attempt to help the University, the faculty/department and the academic staff assess the current teaching quality [D2.1.P2.6]. Despite the University's sustained effort to obtain feedback from students on the teaching quality, the feedback has not been used effectively as expected [D2.1.P2.7]. *- P3 (Level 4-: The university evaluates curricula in terms of labour-market needs and relevance)* To meet the requirements of the society, Quy Nhon University currently has 03 doctoral programs (with 14 students), 21 master's programs (with 995 students) and 46 undergraduate programs (with 12,139 students in formal training; and 3,501 students in continuing training). Every year, the proportion of graduates who have jobs is generally high. Specifically, the number of graduates in 2017 having a job accounted for 87.1%; and those in 2018 accounted for 91.32% [D2.1.P3.1]. In 2016, when conducting self-assessment of the educational institution of Vietnam, the University carried out a survey to get feedback from alumni on the teaching quality of undergraduate curricula as well as feedback from other educational institutions about its graduates' performance to evaluate the quality of the curricula and the relevance to social needs. The results of the survey helped the University measure the relevance of the curricula to ensure that they met the requirements of society [D2.1.P3.2]. In 2017, the University was accredited at the institutional level according to the national standards [D2.1.P3.3]. In 2018, in an effort to improve the training quality of , the University undertook self-assessment of its training programs in order to apply the quality assessment standards specified by the MOET (Circular 04/2016/TT-BGDĐT) [D2.1.P3.4]. The University also provided training for the	follow-up activities to monitor how the results are used at the faculty level. The survey results are only shared with lecturers who receive negative feedback, not with all lecturers. The QA Office has not analysed the results over time; nor monitors the changes. It is recommended to: (a) standardize the questionnaires be; (b) share the results with the individual lecturers for continuous improvement purposes; (c) provide lecturers with the QA questionnaire so that they are aware of the criteria and how they are to be assessed. Students should also be surveyed on their opinions on different student services such as library, hostel and accommodation, and the services by academic and financial and accounting affairs departments. (P1, P2) The University does not have a system of periodically collecting feedback and opinions of different stakeholders, such as alumni and employers. This type of surveys is conducted only whenever a program is reviewed and revised. It is noticed that as QNU is focusing on applied research and partnership, private sector actors are regularly asked to provide feedback in specific fields (statistics, applied mathematics, engineering, etc…). However, as mentioned in the self-assessment report, the adequacy of curricula and training, in response to labour market needs, could be improved. (P3) QA activities at the University are more compliance-led than improvement-driven. An internal QA vision and system have not been fully developed yet. Processes for continuously enhancing developmental and labour market relevance of the education programmes, should be strengthened and systematized. Stakeholders might be more consulted for inputs in doing so. (R6)

heads of faculties/departments and academic staff on methods of constructing and developing curricula that could reach expected learning outcomes [D2.1.P3.5]. In order to fulfill this aim, the faculties/departments actively conducted surveys to get feedback from alumni, employers, and businesses on its expected learning outcomes and curricula to adjust them accordingly. The revision and improvement in the University's curricula reflect its commitment to delivering educational services that guarantee expected learning outcomes [D2.1.P3.6]. In 2019, the University successfully conducted the self-assessment and external assessment for 03 training programs for Mathematics Education, Chemistry Education, and Electrical Engineering to put forward innovative solutions for teaching quality improvement to ensure that its programs were relevant to social development and stakeholders' need [D2.1.P3.7]. However, obtaining external stakeholders' feedback for training programs development has not been done on a regular basis, and graduates of some programs showed a low rate of getting professionally appropriate jobs [D2.1.P3.8]. *- P4 (Level 4: The university has adequate systems for adapting curricula, teaching and learning methods to maximise developmental relevance of provided education)* In order to make appropriate adjustments to the training programs and teaching and learning methods to meet the expectations of the key stakeholders, the University has the regulations on the upgrade of training programs every 2 years [D2.1.P4.1] and on the collection of feedback from students, academic staff, alumni, and employers about teaching quality, training programs, expected learning outcomes [D2.1.P4.2]. They enable the University to upgrade the curricula, adjust teaching and learning methods as well as have proper assessment methods to ensure that students achieve expected learning outcomes. In addition, the University conducts the self-assessment of training programs every 5 years to optimize their relevance [D2.1.P4.3]. *- R5 (Level 2^{+}: Only a few of the universities educational programmes are accredited or the process of their accreditation is ongoing)* As mentioned above, in December 2019, after completing the self-assessment of the 03 training programs of the University [D2.1.R5.1], the Center for Education Accreditation – Danang University (one of five National Centers for Education Accreditation) conducted the external assessment for 03 undergraduate programs in Mathematics Education, Chemistry Education,	

and Electrical Engineering [D2.1.R5.2]. The result of the accreditation will be announced in May 2020 [D2.1.R5.3].	
Conclusion	
As initiated recently, QNU is significantly enhancing the quality of its curricula and training programs, through quality assurance and improvement of curricula development processes. The assessors acknowledge that some improvements are in process or should still be initiated. QA activities at the University are more compliance-led than improvement-driven. An internal QA vision and system have not been fully developed. Involvement of students and external stakeholders in curricula development and assessment, as well as continuously enhancing labour market relevance of the education programmes, should be strengthened and systematized.	

3.2.2 The university is a multidisciplinary institution that produces major amounts of high-quality research

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4	*Selected maturity level*	4
- P1 (Level 4+: The academic staff have the time, capacity and incentives to conduct research) According to the regulation on teaching and research time for academic staff, the University's academic staff is given reasonable amount of time to conduct research [D2.2.P1.1]. The University's academic staff are highly qualified, including 01 full professor, 35 associate professors, 148 doctors, 330 masters [D2.2.P1.2], many of whom obtained their degrees abroad [D2.2.P1.3]. To fulfill the strategic development plans regarding scientific research, the University has a mechanism to encourage the academic staff to carry out research by supporting the academic staff to participate in domestically/internationally scientific conferences and seminars; rewarding for individuals who have international publications on prestigious peer-reviewed journals; raising the wage level before the due time for individuals who have outstanding research achievements [D2.2.P1.4]. This mechanism has proved to be effective as the number of domestic and international research projects as well as publications has increased significantly year by year [D2.2.P1.5].		The University has a policy to promote high quality research and publications through a scheme of incentives for research. Specifically, there is a bonus of 10 million VND per article for researchers who published academic articles in internationally recognized peer-reviewed journals (defined as those in the ISI/Scopus list). Only international peer-reviewed journals are considered for such financial incentives; publications in local journals are not counted for the purpose of research incentives, but they are considered for annual appraisal purposes and for the appointment of professorship, according to the Government's management system of higher education. (P1) There are significant differences between the Faculties / Departments regarding research capacities and publications. Some faculties are more active in research/publication; generally they are more experienced and have well-trained lecturers; these include faculties existing since a long time, such as Math and Stats and Natural Sciences. Some of these faculties are acknowledged as leading faculties in their field, even at national level. However, other faculties, such as Teacher Training, Social Science and Humanities, and Laws, are not as strong. Also,	

However, the motivation for doing research among disciplines is quite uneven; major research projects are mainly carried out by the lecturers in Mathematics, Statistics and Natural Sciences. - P2 (Level 5: The university organizes regional and international academic conferences and seminars and is present at regional and international conferences and seminars) Quy Nhon University often cooperates with regional and international agencies to organize domestic and international academic conferences, workshops and seminars at the University such as National Conference on Theoretical Physics, Vietnam School of Physics, Astrophysics Class, National Geographic Science Conference, 7th Japan-Vietnam Conference on Commutative Algebra, International Mathematical Conference, International Conference on English Language Teaching,… [D2.2.P2.1]. In addition, according to the regulations of the University, the faculties organize academic seminars on a regular basis [D2.2.P2.2]. Besides, the University has invited many famous scholars in Vietnam and from other countries to give seminar/ talk at the University [D2.2.P2.3]. The University has also financially supported many lecturers in presenting their research results at regional and international conferences and seminars as invited speaker, oral talk or poster presentation [D2.2.P2.4]. - P3 (Level 4: The universities and faculties conduct some research in a multi-, inter or transdisciplinary approach but more multidisciplinary research is still needed) The University has conducted intensive research not only in single-disciplinary but also multi-, inter-disciplinary approach in order to be adapted to today's trend and social needs. The research focuses on producing optimal solutions to address problems by the application of information technology in medicine, culture, tourism, society, agriculture, security, management,… [D2.2.P3.1]. Besides, in order to facilitate research activities in multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary approach, the University has restructured its organization. Specifically, the four Departments of Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography were merged into the Faculty of Natural Sciences to maximize the human resources and to form stronger research groups that promote interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research in coming time [D2.2.P3.2]. - P4 (Level 4: The university has systems to prioritize research projects based on their potential to generate added societal and developmental value)	it should be noted that QNU's specialization and strategic focus towards applied-oriented research, limits the emergence of flagship in fundamental research units. (P4, R8) The Research & International Affairs Office provides technical support to researchers and research teams in developing research proposals. Workshops on research skills, grant application, and international publications have been organized; speakers are invited from foreign and local universities; etc. However, these efforts are not regular activities. At faculty level, internal workshops are organized regularly amongst academic staff within each faculty and department. (P1, P2) Research opportunities are mostly sought at the national level. Every year, QNU obtains between 7-10 research projects funded by Nafosted and other state funds while at the provincial level the number is around 1 or 2, due to the Province's limited level of research funding. State funding for research is increasing each year, but is still insufficient. QNU is conducting efforts to organize regional conferences, especially by its flagship faculties (cf. self-assessment report) and effectively encourages the participation of its academic staff in international conferences and training programs. (P2) Faculty deans are aware of the limitations of conducting research separately, so they are now initiating joint, inter-faculty research projects and they collaborate with each other in order to enhance research effectiveness and impact and deliver more research-enabled value to the local communities. The practice of multidisciplinary research is still recent and is developing. The University has sufficient foundations for developing multidisciplinary research and is setting up joint research initiatives across faculties and departments. In terms of training, some new courses and programs are provided in a multi-disciplinary approach. The University's restructuring project is an important effort to promote inter-disciplinary research collaboration within the University. (P3, P4) Different faculties and departments of the University have deployed research projects in various fields; such as public policy, food preservation and processing, water treatment for aquaculture, improving the livelihoods and living conditions of poor farmers living along the coastal line, social policies for workers in industrial zones, local dike networks, disaster prevention, medicine and health care. These projects are all closely connected with the lives of local people and the issues that the local authorities are facing. (P4)

According to the strategic development plan, the University focuses on conducting applied interdisciplinary research projects to generate added value for social development [D2.2.P4.1]. Therefore, along with the Research Affairs and International Relations Office, which manages and supports research projects, the University has also established the Applied Research Institute for Science and Technology (ARIST), a financially independent unit under Quy Nhon University, to conduct applied research and technology transfer [D2.2.P4.2]. As a financially independent institute, it is equipped with basic facilities to manage and support the implementation of commercial research projects taking advantage of human resources of QNU. - P5 (Level 5: The university has adequate systems to conduct cost-effective research) The Research Affairs and International Relations Office are in charge of managing and supporting the implementation of research projects. The Planning and Finance Office is responsible for managing project grants to ensure cost-effectiveness in accordance with the state regulations and those of funders [D2.2.P5.1]. In addition, the University has the regulation on the management of science and technology activities [D2.2.P5.2]. Annually, the University allocates funding estimates for individual institutional projects [D2.2.P5.3], and establishes committees to evaluate and approve selected projects [D2.2.P5.4]. The outcomes of most projects have been accepted because they met outcome requirements and cost-effectiveness [D2.2.P5.5]. - R6 (Level 4^{+}: The university produces an adequate number of academic publications in national peer reviewed journals and is on its way to produce an adequate number of publications in international peer- reviewed journals) In recent years, more and more publications from the results of research projects have been published in national and international peer-reviewed scientific journals [D2.2.R6.1, D2.2.R6.2]. - R7 (Level 4: The university is on its way to conducting an adequate amount of cost-effective, high quality, development relevant research) In recent years, the University has had a number of research projects, which are in line with the application orientation of the development of the University and the region. The cost-effectiveness and outputs of research could save different resources and enhance the scientific and	Some University's researchers have been awarded prizes for their research performance by governmental agencies [D2.2.P3.3]. (R6) To encourage lecturers to disseminate their research results at national and international conferences, the University has a policy to provide financial support to its lecturers. The support includes travel expenses, registration fees, and accommodations, as well as per diem; such support is applicable only if the lecturers attend as speakers or presenters. (P1, P2) The Applied Research Institute for Science and Technology (ARIST) has delivered and transferred its research results, which is a telemedicine software solution for use at hospitals, to a number of local hospitals. The product named QNUPACS, awarded with the Vietnam Innovation, Science and Technology prize in 2017, receives increasing interest in the industry given the Covid-19 circumstances requiring social distancing and isolation practices. Being a financially independent unit in the University allows the Institute to act and operate more efficiently and to respond more rapidly to the demands of local industries. (P4, P5) In recent years, the quality of research outputs has improved, since the research capacity has been enhanced with more post-grad researchers coming back to the University after doing PhD and post-doc studies abroad, especially from Western Europe countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. These staff members have been leading newly-formed research teams and academic divisions in different faculties and departments, and also are active members of the University's project task force. These evolutions allow to increase the number of good quality research projects conducted by or in partnership with QNU. The number of publication in international journals is increasing in recent years but this number is still lower than those of top Vietnamese Universities. In 2019, QNU has 81 articles on international journals; Can Tho Uni has 232 articles; top 5 universities has from 450 – 2545 articles. It should be noted that the number of academic staff in universities varies greatly. (P4, R6, R7)

technological knowledge dissemination to management agencies, thereby contributing significantly to meeting the current requirements in the era of 4.0 industrial revolution in Vietnam [D2.2.R7.1], [D2.2.R7.2]. In 2017, a professor in Quy Nhon University won the Ta Quang Buu Award conferred by the Ministry of Science and Technology to honor scientists who have outstanding research achievements [D2.2.R7.3]. In 2019, Quy Nhon University ranked 18th in the Nature Index Rankings among Vietnamese universities thanks to its publications in high-quality journals [D2.2.R7.4]. Some students' research projects have won scientific research awards for their applicability and quality [D2.2.R7.5]. - R8 (Level 4: The university does not have a number of flagship research centers) QNU has a few number of research institutes/groups for conducting research projects and disseminating their results. Among these, the ARIST, Laboratory of Computational Chemistry and Modelling, and Laboratory of Smart Grid System and Simulation are considered as flagship research centers of the University. Up to now, the Institute has carried out numerous research projects with high applicability and quality, thereby providing resolution for the development of several provinces [D2.2.R8.1, D2.2.R8.2]. Also, the mentioned-above two laboratories have produced a number of scientific publications and facilitated a number of postgraduate research projects.	
Conclusion	
QNU conducts research and publishes research results mostly at a national level; but QNU is keen to develop and implement regional and international research initiatives and projects. International mobility and presence at an international level of QNU staff is highly encouraged, and partnerships are being developed with international universities (Germany, Belgium, Japan, etc.). The practice of multidisciplinary research is still recent and is actively being developed. The University has enough foundations for developing multidisciplinary research and is setting up joint research initiatives across faculties and departments. Some faculties are more active in research/publication; in particular those faculties that have more experienced and well-trained lecturers, and that exist since a long time; such as Math and Stats and Natural Sciences.	

3.2.3 The university is perceived as a real actor and driver of Change

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4	*Selected maturity level*	3+
- P1 (Level 4+: Academic staff have the time, capacity and incentives to disseminate results) The current academic staff of Quy Nhon University are highly qualified with the proportion of staff holding a doctorate accounting for 35.5% and a master's degree for 63.7% of the total 518 academic staff **[D2.3.P1.1]**, many of whom have received master's and doctoral degrees in developed countries **[D2.3.P1.2]**. In addition, the University encourages academic staff to disseminate research results through policies such as rewarding staff with articles published in prestigious international journals; support staff to report and disseminate research results at national and international conferences and workshops **[D2.3.P1.3]**. Recently, the number of academic staff receiving awards for journal articles published in the ISI, SCI, SCIE lists has been increasing **[D2.3.P1.4]**; many academic staff members have attended national and international scientific conferences and workshops to disseminate research results **[D2.3.P1.5]**. **- P2** (**Level 4:** The university often contributes to public policy debates (local, district, national and/or international level). The University often contributes to the public policy debates at different levels through its contribution in different forums. The Rector of QNU is a member of the People's Council of Binh Dinh Province **[D2.3.P2.1]** as well as a member of the Council of Science and Technology of Binh Dinh Province **[D2.3.P2.2]**. The Director of the University's ARIST is a member of the Editorial Board of the national artificial intelligence strategy **[D2.3.P2.3].** The Dean of the Department of Economics and Accounting is a member of the Economic Advisory Council of the provincial committee of Vietnam Fatherland Front Committee of Binh Dinh Province. Thus, they can represent the University to actively and directly propose suggestions on building up provincial and national public policies. In addition, the functional units of the University have been active in the implementation of contributing ideas to the state's legal documents (via the Inspection and Legislation Office of		*Justification of selected maturity level – Description of the existing situation* Due to its limited size and recent development QNU is not yet a major agent of change at national and international level, but the institutional assessment concludes that the ongoing initiatives and reforms will allow QNU to significantly contribute to local and national development and to concrete improvements in various fields. Considering Vietnam's economic situation and evolution (now ranked as lower middle-income country and considered as one of the most dynamic and promising economies in Asia by the World Bank), there is a huge need for context specific applied research and high qualified professional education (engineers, IT specialists, skilled technicians, etc.). The close links developed between QNU and local companies, authorities and communities, as well as its specialization in applied, solution-oriented, research are expected to improve QNU's position as driver of change at local, provincial and national levels. (P4, R5, R8) The University has a policy to reward staff for high-quality publications. The University also has a number of highly qualified and competent researchers who can lead flagship research and publish on flagship journals (Q1-Q2 journals). (P1) The University has gained the trust of the local (provincial authorities at (Department of Science and Technology; Department of Natural Resources and Environment) on its research capacity; these agencies appreciate the applicability of research results provided by QNU. These local state agencies have close connections with the University in deploying research projects. Every year, the Provincial authorities fund one or two research projects led by QNU's researchers. They have kept a database of the University's academic staff by fields, so that they can approach them easily whenever they have a question or problem in their areas of expertise. These agencies would like to do more research in collaboration with the University to utilize their expertise and knowledge, however due to their limited financial resources, they can only fund one or two projects per year. Some projects funded by the Province are highly appreciated	

the University) **[D2.3.P2.4]**, policies related to the national education and training such as enrollment policies, Vietnam National Competence Framework (via the Undergraduate Training Office of the University) **[D2.3.P2.5]**. The University has also sent a document to the Standing Committee of the National Assembly to comment on the development of the most recently amended Law on Higher Education **[D2.3.P2.6]**. **- P3** (**Level 4:** The university is working on some innovative solutions (relevant for communities, private sector, etc.) According to its strategic development plan, the University focuses on conducting applied research, serving social needs, and meeting developmental requirements of the community. Through research projects at provincial and ministerial levels, the University has had innovative solutions such as IT application in the fields of medicine, smart agriculture, cultural conservation and promotion, etc. which are suitable for the community and private enterprises **[D2.3.P3.1, D2.3.P3.2]** such as developing software systems for management and exploitation of medical image data (QNUPACS – Quy Nhon University Picture Archiving and Communication System, 2014-2016), building up a liver model to detect abnormalities in the liver by tomography data (2018-2020), developing a system of modeling and management of artifacts, museums and historical relics in Dak Lak province (2017-2019), building up a facial recognition system for automatic attendance application (2016-2019).ARIST was awarded a certificate of merit by the director of the National Department of Information Technology in the "Smart Health" contest in 2018 **[D2.3.P3.3]**. Some academic staff members of the University have received certificates of Innovation in Science and Technology of Vietnam **[D2.3.P3.4]** and awards of the Engineering Innovation Contest of Binh Dinh Province **[D2.3.P3. 5]**. The University's students have won awards of "Scientific Research Student" at all levels, which belong to the Vietnam Fund for Supporting Technological Creations (VIFOTEC) **[D2.3.P3.6].** **- P4** (**Level 4-:** The university supports the dissemination of new ideas, concepts and research results) The University has a financial policy to support practical initiatives improving work efficiency and to allocate annual funding for projects at institutional level **[D2.3.P4.1].** The University uses the results of initiatives and research at all levels of the staff as the criteria for evaluating performance and considering emulation achievements and awards each year **[D2.3.P4.2]**. For	by the ministerial agencies in terms of results and outputs, and then are upgraded to ministerial projects funded by the State. (P2, P3, R5) Provincial committees of science and technology always engage academic staff of QNU in their activities. In addition, workshops on policies organized by other departments of the Province often invite QNU's relevant deans and academic staff members to participate. (P2, P3) The Rector of the University is a member of the provincial People's Committee and a member of the advisory committee on socio-economic affairs, so he has a considerable voice in the development of policies made by the local authorities. (P2) The Faculty of Natural sciences (division of Chemistry) has collaborated with Binh Dinh Medical Equipment company to do joint research on the production of purified salt for medicine. The project is funded by Binh Dinh Province. According to the company's manager, who is a QNU alumnus, the research project has yielded very good results, helping the company save a lot of money (they used to have to import purified salt for medical use) on the one hand, helping the local farmers to raise their incomes from salt production, and therefore improve their living conditions (salt of better quality is sold at a much higher price). The salt production region is located in Phu My province, 60 kms away from the city of Quy Nhon. This project is a joint effort of QNU researchers and QNU, the provincial authority, a private enterprise and the farmers. (P3, P4, R5, R8) In an effort to build the capacities of local universities, QNU initiated a project known as HR4. In this project, QNU led the joint effort, involving Da Nang University and Can Tho University in the project development, together with other universities in the ASEAN region such as Thamasat University – Thailand, and some Cambodian and Laotian universities. It should be noted that Da Nang University is one of the three regional two-tier universities in the country, which is much bigger, richer in resources and more influential than QNU in the national scale. This effort and success has opened other collaboration opportunities amongst the participating universities and made QNU known to others in the region. QNU has also been active in seeking collaboration opportunities with other universities in the sub-region (Da Lat University, Nha Trang University, and Da Nang University). (P4,R6, R8) Furthermore, QNU actively participates in national consultations of HE bodies organized by MOET, in the frame of HE reforms and policy making (R7).

research projects with high application value, the University supports the appraisal of research results in terms of financial value and copyright **[D2.3.P4.3].** The University always appreciates new concepts initiated by its staff. For example, based on new concepts from the Department of Economics and Accounting, the University has just established the Center for Economics & Accounting Training and Consulting, which provides the extension training and consultancy services to the local community. The University has supported its staff's dissemination of their research results by financing them if their articles/results are published on international journals and presented at national and international conferences and workshops **[D2.3.P4.4]**. In addition, the University has launched a start-up program for students to the year 2025. QNU has also provided financial support for its staff and students to participate in start-up contests/festivals held in different provinces and cities across the country **[D2.3.P4.5].** **- R5** (**Level 4:** Some research results are used by external stakeholders (incl. spin-offs). A number of QNU's research projects at the provincial and national level have been used by different agencies across the country. For instance, a research result is used to produce clean salt as a commercial product by Binh Dinh Salt and Food Joint Stock Company [**D2.3.R5.1]**; a research has helped to use wastes from oil factories to produce adobe bricks in Quang Ngai province **[D2.3.R5.2]**; a research has contributed to the adjustment and supplement of the master plan for tourism development of Binh Dinh province to 2020 and vision to 2030 **[D2.3.R5.3**, **D2.3.R5.4]**. **- R6** (**Level 4:** Innovative solutions that emerge from the university are often adopted and used by relevant stakeholders (uptake)) Some of the University's innovative and creative solutions in science and technology have been accepted and used by different agencies. A piece of software developed by QNU staff has been used to manage and exploit diagnostic image data in hospitals in the region such as Binh Dinh General Hospital, Phu Yen General Hospital, Becamex Binh Duong International General Hospital, An Phuoc Binh Thuan General Hospital, Binh Phuoc General Hospital, Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases Hospital in Binh Dinh Province, and An Nhon Medical Center **[D2.3.R6.1]**. Another piece of software has been used to manage artifacts, museums and historical relics in a museum in the province of Dak Lak **[D2.3.R6.2].**	With these recent initiatives, QNU transformed itself into an emerging university in the region taking on enhanced roles, even though it must be acknowledged that all this is still in an early stage of development. The ability to reach out to local partners and to act as a leader is already good in some fields and disciplines; while still weaker in other areas. The practice of actively reaching out varies across faculties and departments. There have been many positive changes, but there is still a lot to do for the University to fully position itself as a key university in the South Central Coast and Central Highlands regions. (R5, R6, R7, R8)

Realizing the need for human resources in tourism and information technology of its Japanese partners and the need for better employment opportunities of its students, the University has established the Center for Japanese Language and Culture in order to foster learners' Japanese proficiency via different language courses and cultural exchanges. Even though the center has been built up recently, it has trained many students, some of whom have been recruited by Japanese companies for internship and placement **[D2.3.R6.3]**. The University has also cooperated with large enterprises and corporations such as TMA Solutions and FPT Corporation in training and recruiting the University's students upon their graduation **[D2.3.R6.4]**. **- R7 (Level 4:** The university sometimes contributes to public policy changes (e.g. in higher education, public health, etc.) The University sometimes contributes to public policy changes in higher education. In particular, QNU has contributed a number of constructive comments to the amendment of Law on Education, which helps change the public policy on expected training quality of undergraduate programs in education and leads to the promulgation of regulations on tuition fees for pre-service teachers **[D2.3.R7.1].** **- R8** (**Level 4:** The university's research and education generate clear added societal value but there is still room for improvement) With the mission of providing high-quality human resources for the South Central Coast and Central Highlands, the University annually provides society with thousands of bachelors, engineers, masters, and doctors. A great number of Quy Nhon University's alumni currently hold important positions in different bodies and agencies such as leadership members of departments/ divisions of education and training; principals/ rectors, vice principals/ rectors, division heads and teachers of high schools in Binh Dinh province and neighboring provinces such as Gia Lai, Dak Nong, Dak Lak, Kontum, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Phu Yen, Ninh Thuan; lecturers and scientists working at universities and research institutes; leadership members and managers of different government bodies, agencies and enterprises in Vietnam **[D2.3.R8.1]**. QNU is considered to be a prestigious university in training, fostering and supplying qualified teachers, educational managers for the South Central Coast and Central Highlands. As a result, the University is fully capable of participating in the network of schools of education in Vietnam **[D2.3.R8.2]**.	

Besides, every year, the University provides training for leveling up professional titles for hundreds of teachers in many localities at different levels **[D2.3.R8.3]**, conducts training and certification on IT and foreign languages (English and Japanese), and provides training and consultancies on accounting, thereby meeting the needs of society. In recent years, the University's research activities have brought added value to society, which is reflected in research results of ARIST which are used by agencies, organizations and enterprises **[D2.3.R8.4]**; and in awards for science and technology creativity of academic staff and students **[D2.3.R8.5]**. However, the University has not had many large research projects with high applicability in other fields.	
Conclusion	
QNU is not yet a major agent of change at a national and international level, but the links developed with local companies, authorities and communities, as well as its specialization in applied, solution-oriented, research are expected to improve QNU's position at local, provincial and national levels. Through continued efforts and recent initiatives, QNU has transformed itself in an emerging university with increasing roles in the region. However all of this is still in an early stage of development. Within the University, the practice of reaching out varies across faculties and departments. There is still a lot for the University to do in order to fully position itself as a key university in the South-Central Coast and Central Highlands regions.	

3.3 Capability to relate to external stakeholders

3.3.1 The university creates the condition for effective network development and is aware of the importance of formal institutional alliances

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4	*Selected maturity level*	4
- P1 (Level 4: The university has an external communication strategy and communicates adequately with key stakeholders government, community, private sector, funders, …). QNU has an external communication strategy with key stakeholders such as governmental agencies, community, companies, and funders to improve the education quality, expand the scale of training, and develop scientific research [**D3.1.P1.1**]. QNU has effectively used this communication strategy and created official partnerships with many stakeholders [**D3.1.P1.2**]. For example, the University has signed memoranda of understanding on training cooperation with some regional higher education institutions such as Khanh Hoa University, Dak Nong Community College, Gia Lai Vocational College, Kon Tum Community College [**D3.1.P1.3**]. It has also created contact with the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Education and Training, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of Binh Dinh province and with neighboring provinces in the region such as Phu Yen, Gia Lai, Kontum, and Dak Nong **[D3.1.P1.4]**. **- P2 (Level 4:** The university invests adequate resources in communication capacity at individual and organisational level) The University invests reasonable resources in communication capacity at both organizational and individual levels. At organizational level, the University has provided all units and staff with official emails since 2009. The University has an editorial board for the University's website [**D3.1.P2.1**]. The University also regularly invites the public media agencies to report on its activities. For effective communication, the University has a number of functional units and specialized centers for communication and connection, including Department of Research Af-		*Justification of selected maturity level – Description of the existing situation* In its Development Strategy, QNU points out that external relations and internationalization are amongst its strategic choices (and solutions) for improving (a) training and education, (b) research, as well as (c) governance and management capacity of QNU itself. (P1, P3, P4). Enhancing the linkages between the University and local industries and enterprises is also identified as one of the ways forward. Though the Strategy states that boosting existing networks with foreign partners such as VLIR-UOS and Belgian universities is a target, a clear, detailed plan of how to get to the defined destinations is not provided. The networking efforts have yielded positive outcomes in some department but modest results in others. QNU dedicates significant resources to networking and to build national and international partnership. For example, the University has adopted a strategy to exploit and extend external relations through the network of alumni in order to develop the partnership with small and medium enterprises and state agencies in the region. The cooperation and collaborations are mainly for training and career counselling purposes. The University recognises the importance of the partnership with strategic partners such as KU Leuven, and therefore provides (non-financial) support to team members who are in charge of maintaining the connection with these international partners. The University reserves a separate, fully equipped, working office for this purpose. However, financial resources of QNU are still too low to implement and develop its internationalization strategy. (P2, P3) QNU's leaders have a good connection with local officials, providing them reliable sources of information about new foreign direct investment (FDI) and about national and foreign firms and	

fairs and International Relations, which is responsible for connecting with domestic and international universities/ institutions to develop scientific research capacity and performance [**D3.1.P2.2**], Center for Student Support & Business Relations (http://hotrosinhvien.qnu.edu.vn/) with functions of contacting enterprises [**D3.1.P2.3**]. The University has recently recruited new staff for those units with the purpose of enhancing its communication capacity. At individual level, the University regularly sends staff members to attend training workshops and conferences to develop their expertise as well as their communication capability [**D3.1.P2.4**]. The University has a policy to create conditions for the staff to participate in conferences and workshops to increase opportunities for cooperation and networking and improve their professional capacity [**D3.1.P2.5**]. **- P3 (Level 4:** The university has created the conditions for effective partnership in its vision and strategy. The board and management sufficiently succeed in aligning individual performance of staff with organisational performance) The University creates good conditions for establishing effective partnerships that are consistent with the University's vision and strategic development plan by empowering the unit's/ faculty's/ department's leaders to create and strengthen partnerships with external stakeholders for performance improvement, contributing to the University's overall performance. The University is also willing to create conditions for developing those partnerships into institutional level [**D3.1.P3.1**]. The University board and management team has an adequate balance between individual motivation and organizational effectiveness. For example, the University has actively applied the FCB project, funded by Belgian Technical Cooperation, and created conditions for the staff to improve the management capacity of some selected staff. Thanks to the FCB project, 80 staff members were sent to some autonomous universities in Vietnam to observe their management activities, which created individual motivation for the forward movement of the University [**D3.1.P3.2**]. Recognizing the importance of balancing personal performance and organizational effectiveness, the University is building up Job Position Project [**D3.1.P3.3**], which will be applied throughout the University in the near future. Hopefully this project will have strong effects on the staff motivation, and then on the performance of the University.	factories coming to region. Thus, QNU is well-positioned to anticipate and build good relationships with those enterprises (potentially) investing in the region. (P4) The deans and office managers are well aware of the importance of joining national professional networks; but have not yet been very successful in this area. For example the Faculty of Teacher Training should join the ETEP program (being the national network of teacher training universities across the nation); or the Faculty of Natural Sciences should join the network of engineering and technology universities. QNU should have a clear strategy towards this goal. (P4) The University does not have a policy to encourage academic staff to participate in conferences and workshop for the purpose of networking. The current supporting policy is mostly for the purpose of disseminating research results and outputs. The Department of Maths and Stats has set up a close connection with the Vietnam Institute for Advanced Studies in Mathematics (VIASM) and Vietnamese leading mathematicians and researchers in the field such as Prof. Ngo Bao Chau. The Department has a strategy to extend the network with international mathematicians through the connections with Prof. Ngo Bao Chau. The MoU signed between the QNU and VIASM include collaborations in training and research in Maths, Statistics and Data Sciences. (P5) The University is working with three other universities in the region (Dalat University, Nha Trang University and Tay Nguyen University) to explore possibilities for collaborations and partnership in order to exploit and utilize the resources and strengths of each university. QNU has managed to set up and maintain good relationships with local authorities, state agencies and associations (such as the Farmers' Union), so is knowledgeable and well-informed of the issues and problems prevailing in the region. For example, in 2018, QNU successfully joined the FCB project facilitated by MoET. Within the scope of this project, QNU organized six training workshops and a study tour for learning purposes for their 80 staff members who were holding departmental-level managerial positions. The project ended with positive results and outcomes. (P2, R6)

- P4 (Level 4: The university has a strategy to network and relate to other relevant stakeholders (incl. on extension services to external stakeholders (extension workers, TTO, communication, etc.); on advisory and/or consultancy services to external stakeholders; on (inter-institutional) networks) which is implemented but can still be improved) The University has a strategic development plan to network and relate to the relevant stakeholders so as to deliver the education extension services, technology transfer and consultancy services [**D3.1.P4.1**]. To actualize that plan, the University has set up a number of institutes and centers such as the Center for Foreign Languages responsible for training foreign languages and issuing foreign language certificates [**D3.1.P4.2**]; the Center for Informatics responsible for offering information technology training courses and issuing certificates of information technology [**D3.1.P4.3**]; the Center for Information Technology and Communication for public communication [**D3.1.P4.4**]; the Institute of Educational Sciences [**D3.1.P4.5**] for providing services for teachers' professional development; the Center for Economics & Accounting Training and Consulting [**D3.1.P4.6**] for offering training courses and providing advisory services; the Center for Japanese Language and Culture [**D3 .1.P4.7**] for offering Japanese courses and relating to Japanese companies; and ARIST responsible for applied research and technology transfer [**D3.1.P4.8**]. **- P5 (Level 4**: The university allocates adequate resources for networking) The University has not only invested in human resources for networking as mentioned above, it has also spent annual appropriate funding on networking activities such as organizing conferences, workshops and seminars; inviting national/ international visiting scholars to deliver courses and share knowledge; sending lecturers to attend national and international conferences and workshops; receiving foreign delegations to the University for mutual understanding development; and sending staff members to other universities, institutions or organizations [**D3.1.P5.1**]. **- R6 (Level 4**: The university is knowledgeable about the work of other organisations, uses the strategies and work of other organizations and consults and collaborates with partners when planning/ implementing but there is still room for improvement.)	

The University has had a good understanding of strategies and works of other organizations through formal and informal communication between the University leaders and representatives and those of the organizations, and has used such knowledge to achieve positive results as follows: -Based on the Binh Dinh province's development strategy in tourism, the University has opened certain training programs such as Tourism Service – Tour Management and Hospitality Management [**D3.1.R6.1**]. -The University is knowledgeable about strategies of provinces in the region (Binh Dinh, Gia Lai, etc.) and enterprises (Vingroup, TMA Solutions, FPT), thus it has opened new training programs in Statistics Mathematics and Applied Data Science to provide human resources for the coming era of 4.0 industrial revolution [**D3.1.R6.2**]. - Based on the understanding of the International Center for Interdisciplinary Science and Education's strategy, the University has collaborated to organize international conferences and summer schools in science [**D3.1.R6.3**]. - The University has signed an agreement to exploit internally circulated materials from the Library of Can Tho University [**D3.1.R6.4**], and an agreement to exchange training programs with Vietnam-Germany University [**D3.1.R6.5**] - The University has paid much attention to the strategy of VLIR-UOS, KU Leuven to plan the development of research and education with their support. So far the University has been implementing two South Initiative projects and one TEAM project with the academic support from KU Leuven under the financial support of VLIR-UOS [**D3.1.R6.6**] - The University understands the strategy of Erasmus+ and partner universities to jointly build and achieve some projects funded by Erasmus+ such as EMMA, HR4ASIA, MOMA, etc. [**D3.1.R6.7**]. - A memorandum of understanding with English Council on English proficiency assessment has been signed to help English language teaching at the University [**D3.1.R6.8**]. However, the University still needs to enhance the cooperation with other stakeholders to foster institutional development.	

Conclusion
Networking and developing alliances are key aspects of QNU's Development Strategy. The range of (existing and potential) partners is large, from local actors (SMEs, local authorities) to international universities (KUL, Japanese universities) and foreign enterprises active in the region. QNU dedicates significant resources to networking and to building national and international partnerships. The assessment observed that some departments/ faculties are more committed than others in this field; many efforts are still to be made in order to establish and implement strategic and robust partnerships with strong academic and institutional actors and to mainstream participation to such partnerships across QNU. Furthermore, financial resources of QNU are still insufficient and these allow only a partial implementation of QNU's internationalization strategy.

3.3.2 The university has a vast network which is actively used

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4	*Selected maturity level*	3+
- P1 (Level 4: The university regularly organises networking activities, but the quality of the activities can still be improved**)** The University has regularly organized national and international scientific conferences [**D3.2.P1.1**], and organized job fairs with the participation of many companies, enterprises [**D3.2.P1.2**]. The University has often had meetings with universities/ organizations/ businesses to build up formal partnerships [**D3.2.P1.3, D3.2.P1.4**]. The University has sometimes invited national/ international visiting scholars to deliver courses and share knowledge, which has created opportunities for networking [**D3.2.P1.5**]. The partnerships with organizations like TMA Solutions and KU Leuven are fruitful, but many of the others have not been very effective. TMA Solutions has received students for internship and provided scholarships, while KU Leuven has been very supportive in research and education by coordinating with and participating in several projects with Quy Nhon University. **- P2** (**Level 4+**: The habit of networking is adopted by some academic staff of the university) Some academic staff members of the University have adopted the habit of networking with colleagues from other domestic and international universities/ research institutes, thus leading to collaboration in conducting better quality research [**D3.2.P2.1**]. Some lecturers often pay		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* QNU's network is vast and actively used, given the University's size and age. QNU's partners range from local actors (SMEs, local authorities), over national partners to international partners, including several universities (KUL, Limoges University, Sookmyung Women's University in Korea). These partnerships contribute to improving many aspects of the university (trainer training, management skills, digitalization, research projects, lab equipment, …). (R5) QNU developed network activities with small businesses in the central region (MoU with 29 companies). The University has exploited its network of alumni to connect with external stakeholders. There are evidence and outcomes of such relationship (e.g.: the collaboration with Binh Dinh Medical Facilities Company). However, a strategy to fully mobilize the alumni network to establish ties with external stakeholders is not yet available. (P1) Networking efforts have relied on some key persons holding leadership and management positions such as deans and departmental heads. Networking has been a habit adopted by some staff members and a skill that they possess, but not all staff are actively involved. QNU is recommended to adopt a concrete networking policy and to mainstream networking activities widely amongst all its faculty members. (P2)	

short-term visits abroad (KU Leuven University in Belgium, Evora University in Portugal, University of Limoges in France, Sookmyung Women's University in Korea) and to research institutes such as Vietnam Institute for Advanced Study in Mathematics in Hanoi [**D3.2.P2.2**]. Some academic staff members have been invited to be visiting lecturers and to join scientific committees at other universities. Some lecturers have collaborated with colleagues from other universities/ institutes in writing books, doing scientific research, and supervising post-graduate students. **- P3** (**Level 4+:** The university regularly/systematically involves external stakeholders when curricula or courses are developed). The University has required the consultation of external stakeholders in the process of developing training programs through surveys and workshops [**D3.2.P3.1**]. As a result, programs have been developed with the consultation from employers, external experts, and alumni [**D3.2.P3.2**]. New training programs have always been evaluated by an evaluation board of external experts and business representatives [**D3.2.P3.3**]. Recently, the University has made a report on analysing the feedback from high school principals and the University's alumni on the training programs of education [**D3.2.P3.4**]. **- P4** (**Level 4-:** The university has (some) adequately trained personnel to do networking and communication.) The staff of the Research Affairs and International Relations Office, the Center for Information Technology and Communication, the Center for Student Support and Business Relations, the Center for Japanese Language and Culture, and the Institute of Educational Sciences have been adequately trained and regularly participated in training workshops [**D3.2.P4.1**]. **- R5 (Level 4:** The university has extensive networks with a) Private stakeholders b) Bi- and multilateral donors, foundations, etc. c) Political stakeholders d) Actors within civil society e) Policy makers f) Alumni g) Universities/faculties and training institutes/research institutions in different countries h) Other relevant stakeholders in private/public sector i) Employers (to know their needs) The University has good partnerships with: Private domestic and international companies [**D3.2.R5.1**]; Funders: National Foundation for Science and Technology Development, Science and Technology Fund of Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Dak Lak provinces, and Vingroup [**D3.2.R5.2**]; Political organizations: Binh Dinh Political School; Actors within civil society: Labour Union,	While accreditation is ongoing, at both institutional and program levels, the University has engaged external stakeholders, including employers and enterprises, in the development, review and revision of curricula. However, since many programs are not yet accredited, the involvement of external stakeholders in curriculum development is still to be mainstreamed to all programs. (P3) The University has assigned international networking tasks to selected staff members who are mostly overseas graduates, supposed to be competent and to have a considerably wide network of foreign scholars in their fields. Many other academic staffs, in both hard sciences and social sciences, have an active and well-developed network within local communities, and with provincial and regional actors. (P4) External stakeholders such as employers/ entrepreneurs are consulted when new programs are developed and some existing curricula are reviewed and revised. However, this process is not administered systematically and widely for all curricula and programs at all levels. (P3, R5) External actors, met during the field visit for the external assessment, confirmed QNU's involvement and the good networking strategies, skills and practices of QNU. (R5, R7) However, as already mentioned, the dynamism of academic staff and their networking skills varies significantly from one faculty to another. Beyond the top faculties and departments, networks are largely still to be developed and/or appropriately used. The modest size and reputation of QNU, as well as the presence of larger universities in the central region of Vietnam (Danang University, Dalat University) also limit the potential and perspectives of networking at QNU. QNU leadership and top management are aware of these challenges and are keen to develop collaboration and alliances with other regional and national universities. (R6, R7)

Farmers' Association, Binh Dinh Young Entrepreneurs Association; Policy makers: Minister of the MOET, who is one of the members of parliament representing Binh Dinh province, is an effective bridge between QNU and MOET; the Rector of the University is a member of the People's Council of Binh Dinh Province, then acting as a significant bridge between the University and the local authorities; the University Council has some policy makers as members including (1) the Director of Department of Science and Technology, (2) the Director of Department of Education and Training belonging to Binh Dinh Province, and (3) the Deputy Director of Department of Science, Technology and Environment belonging to MOET [**D3.2.R5.3**]; The University has an Alumni Association [**D3.2.R5.4**], but its performance has not yet been effective. The University has had collaboration with many international universities/ faculties/ research institutes: KU Leuven (Belgium), University of Limoges, Université Paris 13, Aix-Marseille Université (France), Universidade de Évora (Portugal), University of Siena (Italy), Sookmyung Woman's University (Korea), and National Chiao Tung University (Taiwan) [**D3.2.R5.5**]. The University has partnerships with many employers to learn about their needs and to get them involved in program development and training activities. The University has joined some networks: Vietnam Association of Universities and Colleges (http://avnuc.vn/) [**D3.2.R5.6**], ASEAN University's AUN-HRM Network on human resources management [**D3.2.R5.7**], Member of a consortium of 7 universities in the field of molecular and materials science (https://momavietnam.com/), and Member of Vietnam Library Association [**D3.2.R5.8**]. The University has good relationships with some other networks, for example the International Center for Interdisciplinary Science and Education (ICISE), which has a network of prestigious scientists in the world [**D3.2.R5.9**] and the Young Entrepreneurs Association in Binh Dinh Province [**D3.2.R5.10**]. Even so, the University needs to participate in and develop wider networks at the national and regional levels. **- R6** (**Level 4:** The university uses its network to provide extension services (as intermediary), advisory and/or consultancy services but the implementation can still be improved) The University has used its networks such as the network of the departments of education and training of regional provinces to implement teacher professional development services, foster high school teachers in school counselling work, and enhance English teaching capability of school teachers [**D3.2.R6.1, D3.2.R6.2**].	

The University has used the business network to provide services of training and consultancy in economics and accounting, to provide tour guide training service, to seek internship positions and job opportunities for students [**D3.2.R6.3**]. **- R7 (Level 4**: The university is well known and is viewed as a constructive and empowering presence by the community). The University is known by most local people, agencies and companies in the region of South-Central Coast and Central Highlands because it has provided the majority of high-quality human resources for the region in many fields. The University is also known by colleagues from universities and research institutes both inside and outside Vietnam through constructive academic collaborations and achievements. QNU has been ranked by Webometrics as the 21st among the Vietnamese universities based on the presence, impact, openness and excellence in 2020 (http://www.webometrics.info/en/Asia/Vietnam, assessed on 14 March 2020). QNU has appeared on this ranking list in the recent years. The University has received many certificates of merit from the provinces in the region (Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa, Dak Nong, Kon tum, Gia Lai, Quang Ngai, and Dak Lak), from the Ministry of Education and Training, and the Ministry of Health, and received the Vietnam-Laos Friendship Medal of the Lao People's Democratic Republic [**D3.2.R7.1**] for its contribution to providing high-quality human resources and thus significantly contributing to the socio-economic development of the provinces, indicating that QNU has been viewed as a constructive and empowering presence by the community.	
Conclusion	
QNU's network is vast and actively used, given the University's size and age. QNU's partners range from local actors to international universities. These partnerships are used to improve many different aspects of the university. The University has engaged external stakeholders, including employers and enterprises, in the development, review and revision of curricula, even though this practice is not mainstreamed yet. External actors met during the external assessment confirmed this involvement and the good networking skills and strategies of QNU. However the dynamism of staff and their networking skills vary significantly between faculties.	

3.3.3 The university obtains additional project funding

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	5-	*Selected maturity level*	4
- P1 (Level 4: The University has adequate strategies for internationalisation, understands the local and international funding environment and has a resource mobilization strategy the implementation of which can still be improved) The University has identified its vision to 2030 to meet education quality standards of the South-east Asia [**D3.3.P1.1**]. Accordingly, the University defined a strategy for international cooperation activities [**D3.3.P1.2**] and strategies for resource mobilization [**D3.3.P1.3**]. The fact that more and more staff members have graduated from international higher education institutions suggests the internationalization strategy of the University works well [**D3.3.P1.4**].Thanks to extensive partnerships with external stakeholders and the competence of staff of the Research Affairs and International Relations Office, the University has a good understanding of the national funding environment [**D3.3.P1.5**] and international one [**D3.3.P1.6**, **D3.3.P1.7**]. The University and internationally graduated academic staff have tried to be updated with news about local and international funds, evidenced by more and more projects having been funded. The University has encouraged the staff to keep in touch with their academic supervisors and the institutions where they have graduated. **- P2 (Level 5:** The University staff is supported in raising and managing external funds (proposal writing, grant management, etc.) To support the staff in raising external funds, the University always proactively informs funding programs and open calls to the units/ faculties/ departments and the staff via emails and official documents. Besides, the academic staff members are quite active in looking for external funds. The University effectively assists staff in writing research proposals through the proposal writing teams coordinated by the Research Affairs and International Relations Office [**D3.3.P2.1**]. Moreover, the functional units always support enthusiastically and responsible for administration affairs, the rector always supports in raising external funds through signing mandates and commitments to implement projects successfully. The effective assistance is evidenced by the successful applications for projects funded by KIST (Korea), TWAS, and Vingroup [**D3.3.P2.2**].		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* The public funding of universities in Vietnam is still low in comparison with standards from high income countries, but is increasing each year and is better than many other (middle and low income) countries. QNU is awarded and manages externally funded projects, and therefore gains additional sources of funding. Such project funding is still insufficient to develop top research infrastructure or conduct major experimental research; but these projects already significantly improve the quality of some labs and services. The labs are equipped just enough to meet the requirements of students' practice and basic research. For advanced tests and sophisticated analysis, the University's researchers and PhD students have to send samples to other universities in Vietnam or foreign institutions in Korea for instance. This is costly and time-consuming. The University's leaders and intermediate managers are aware of the importance of the diversification of funding for their long-term sustainable development and therefore are actively seeking external sources of funding, both regional, national and international. Obtaining and managing external project funding is a key aspect of QNU's ongoing strategy, as detailed in the restructuration process. (P1) The University's academic staff and research teams are knowledgeable about the national funding foundations and state and private funds for research and have been able to utilize these sources relatively efficiently. The Research Affairs and International Relations Office effectively inform and support research teams in looking for and developing proposals. The assessors noted that the (human) resources of the office are limited and could be strengthened with additional human resources and skills. (P2) Every year during the past 5 years, the University receives national funding for around five to ten research projects led by different research teams in different departments and faculties; such funding is obtained from the National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (Nafosted), the biggest national research funding organization in Vietnam. The total value of Nafosted funded projects is around four to five billion VND per year (equivalent to around	

To assist the staff in managing grants, the University has regulations on the management of international projects [**D3.3.P2.3**] and projects funded by domestic funders [**D3.3.P2.4**]. The functional units, e.g. Research Affairs and International Relations Office and Planning and Finance Office, have specialized staff to support management in terms of administration and finance. For the international projects, the University always builds project steering committees to manage and monitor the implementation to ensure the success of the projects [**D3.3.P2.5**]. **- P3** (**Level 5:** The University actively monitors externally funded projects (both administratively and content-wise) With clear regulations on managing external funded projects and a deep understanding of the local and international funding environment, the University is always proactive in monitoring project implementation progress. Regarding the content and finance of projects, scientific committees can be established to assess their content. The Research Affairs and International Relations Office and/ or project steering committees have the responsibility to monitor the progress of projects and report to the University Rector monthly/annually and to the funders based on mutual agreements [**D3.3.P3.1**]. **- R4** (**Level 5^{-}:** The University raises (significant) external funds on a regular basis) The University has received some grants for capacity building and scientific research projects from international organizations such as the European Commission and VLIR-UOS, World Academy of Sciences (TWAS), Belgian Development Cooperation Agency (Enabel), Korea Academy of Science and Technology (KIST), FHI360 (United States) [**D3.3.R4.1**]. The University has successfully raised funds for research and development projects from domestic funders such as Nafosted and Vingroup [**D3.3.R4.2**]. In addition, it is also successful in raising funds for student's scholarships and student's start-up projects [**D3.3.R4.3**]. **- R5 (Level 5^{+}**: The university delivers on the results agreed upon in the funding agreements) In the last 5 years, the University has always delivered on the results as agreed upon in the funding agreements. In some cases, excellent achievements have been obtained [**D3.3.R5.1**].	200,000 Euro). This a modest amount but helps the Uni to maintain their research activities. As Nafosted requires publications on international peer-reviewed journals as project outputs, the funding has helped local universities to reach and maintain international standards in research. Beyond Nafosted, the University has also quickly approached other funding foundations such as VinIF (by Vingroup, the biggest private corporation). In 2019 and 2020, one project to develop and open a new degree program in Data Science and another to conduct research in data science awarded to QNU, were amongst the very first projects funded by Vingroup. (R4) Research teams in the University receiving funding from different foundations have delivered satisfactory outputs as agreed between the two parties. For example Nafosted-funded projects, require research teams to register the number of articles on certain journals as outputs of the project and they have met both the quality and quantitative requirements and the deadlines. (R5) The University has occasionally organized seminar and workshop to provide training on project management, fund-raising. However, these courses are not organized regularly due to limited resources. Instead, QNU's staff actively attend free online courses on Edx for example. The courses to be listed: Introduction to Project Management, International Project Management, Theory of Change for Development, etc. (P2) In addition to the state funding and revenues from tuition, revenues from external sources have increased gradually over the past ten years. But such funding does not met the needs for QNU's development into a leading regional institution in both research and training. Specifically, the University needs further funding to purchase more advanced lab equipment for flagship research in Physics, Chemistry and Information Technology. (R4)

Conclusion
QNU is awarded and manages externally funded projects, and therefore gains additional sources of funding. Obtaining and managing external project funding is a key aspect of QNU's ongoing strategy, and many academic actors are convinced that external project funding is critical for QNU development. Revenues from these external sources have increased gradually over the past ten years; but they do not meet the needs for QNU's development into a leading regional institution in both research and training. Specifically, the University need further funding to purchase more advanced lab equipment for flagship research in Physics, Chemistry and Information Technology.

3.4 Capability to act and commit

3.4.1 The university is able to make and implement decisions

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4	*Selected maturity level*	4
- P1 (Level 5: There is a delegation of responsibilities: persons with a hierarchic role are empowered to make decisions and are able to implement decisions in time.) QNU has had the regulations on delegating responsibilities to different functional units/faculties/departments [D4.1.P1.1] and the regulations on delegating responsibilities to different leadership levels in order to empower them to make decisions and implement the decisions in time [D4.1.P1.2, D4.1.P1.3]. The University has completed its mission in training and research [D4.1.P1.4], which is clear evidence for the effectiveness of its delegation of responsibilities. **- P2 (Level 3⁺:** The University has effective systems, structures and processes (with a proper legal basis) to engage and commit in a timely manner. However, the systems, structures and processes can still be improved.) QNU has had effective systems and structures (with a proper legal basis) to engage and commit all activities promptly [D4.1.P2.1, D4.1.P2.2]**.** Moreover, the University has had processes for different domains of all activities in terms of training, research, finance and communication, etc. **[D4.1.P.2.3].** In order to ensure the smooth operation of these processes, the University has organized monthly meetings to evaluate the results of assigned tasks and deploy new		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* Since mid-2019, QNU is engaged in a comprehensive restructuration process. Restructuring the University involves the adoption of a new governance and organisational model with a certain level of autonomy for academic faculties, departments and divisions; further structured in functional units and centres. (P1) This reform comprised the merging of multiple departments to form three faculties,. These 3 faculties - the Faculty of Natural Sciences, the Faculty of Social sciences and Humanities, and the Faculty of Teacher Training – have a strategic plan to further develop into "schools" within the University. The strategy is well received and absorbed by the faculty deans and vice deans. The changes also involve the rearrangement of other functional units. This lean governance and organisational model allows the University to mobilize the strengths and resources of all disciplines, to act and respond promptly and to adequately address the issues and problems at different levels. The rearrangements entail new definitions of functions and roles of faculties, departments and functional units. (P2) Since the model is new, there are some issues, for example in the collaboration and allocations of tasks between some functional units. However, the heads of functional units are actively	

ones [D4.1.P2.4, D4.1.P2.5, D4.1.P2.6]**.** Moreover, the University has held annual staff conferences to not only evaluate the performance of the previous year but also propose the plans for the University's activities in the coming year [D4.1.P2.7, D4.1.P2.8, D4.1.P2.9]**.** However, the existing processes to engage and commit in a timely manner are only highly effective at the organizational level and still need to be improved at the individual level. **- R3 (Level 4:** The leadership of the University is often effective in timely and appropriate decision-making) The leadership of QNU has often been effective in making appropriate and timely decisions. Over the past 40 years, the University has quickly changed all of its aspects to adapt to the rapid change of society. Realizing the inadequacy of its current organizational structure and the significant change in the higher education environment, the University has implemented the project on restructuring the organization of QNU for the period 2019-2022, with the vision to 2030 in line with the University's strategic development plan and changes in the market and social demands. This has paved the way to reform the structure, human resource management and operations to ensure effectiveness **[D4. 1.R3.1].** In particular, the University has been aware of the urgent need for creating new training courses in line with the trends of social development **[D4.1.R3.2, D4.1.R3.3, D4.1.R3.4, D4.1.R3.5, D4.1.R3.6, D4.1.R3.7]**. QNU is also one of the universities in the country that have received national accreditation at institutional level **[D4.1.R3.8].** Furthermore, realizing the importance of training program accreditation, QNU successfully conducted the self-assessment for 03 training programs in Mathematics Education, Chemistry Education, and Electrical Engineering before conducting the external assessment by the Nation Center for Education Accreditation – the University of Danang **[D4.1.R3.9]**.	working together with the Rector and Vice rectors to gradually fix them. The working atmosphere is harmonious, showing a good level of solidarity and consensus amongst the managers. Mid-2020, the University issued its new Charter on organization and operations, defining processes and procedures at the institutional level in key areas such as the appointment of leadership and management positions, the management of human resources and finance, facilities and equipment. However, there is a lack of procedures of specific daily operational activities, especially at unit and departmental levels, for example procedures to manage and run the labs (to monitor working status of facilities, to assure the normal functioning of facilities and equipment) or procedures for communication amongst departments and units within the University. (P2) The University has promulgated the definitions of functions and roles of units and departments, however, there is a lack of a document to legalize the collaboration mechanisms between units and departments. This causes issues in the division of tasks and potential conflicts between units and departments. The external reviewer suggests this document be issued in due course to assure smooth operations in all activities at the University. (P2) Managers of Departments and functional units are granted certain autonomy and show a high level of commitment to quality and high levels of responsibility and accountability. In terms of organization and structure, faculty and department deans have to get approval from the Board of Rectors to set up a new academic division or to abolish one. With regard to academic affairs, they have delegated decision making powers related to curriculum, materials, testing and assessment, and so on. As far as finance and accounting are concerned, all accounting practices at the University must comply with the Government's regulations and Laws. However, the Deans have absolute freedom in making decisions on how to spend the annual operational fund given to each faculty and department in the form of block grants. That is, they can save the amount that has not been used and transfer the remaining funds from one financial year to another. They also have the right to spend revenues from sponsors and donors that they can raise for the faculty or department. In terms of human resources, Deans, heads of divisions and research team leaders have the right to choose the personnel for their research projects. (R3)
Conclusion	

QNU is engaged in an comprehensive organisational reform process. The new lean governance and organisational model allows the University to mobilize the strengths and resources of all disciplines, to act and respond promptly and to adequately address the issues and problems at different levels. Managers of Departments and functional units are granted certain autonomy; they demonstrate a high level of commitment to quality, responsibility and accountability. Since the model is new, its implementation shall be assessed on a longer run; acknowledging that some issues are still to be solved (in particular collaboration and allocations of tasks between some functional units).

3.4.2 The university has adequate and well managed Human Resources

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4	*Selected maturity level*	4-
- P1 (Level 4: The University's hiring process is inclusive across gender, race and religion) The hiring process at QNU provides equal opportunities for all candidates **[D4.2.P1.1, D4.2.P1.2]**. However, QNU's staff members are currently not diverse in race and religion since QNU is located in an unfavorable region for attracting people with a wide range of race and religion. **- P2 (Level 4:** The University has adequately trained personnel for conducting educational programs (BA, MA and PhD) using state-of the-art pedagogic approaches) QNU has adequate academic staff who are qualified (01 full professor, 35 associate professors, and 148 doctors) **[D4.4.P2.1]** and trained for professional development **[D4.2.P2.2, D4.2.P2.3, D4.2.P2.4, D4.2.P2.5, D4.2.P2.6]**. Therefore, these trained personnel have been able to adopt state-of-the-art pedagogical approaches for delivering 46 bachelor, 21 master and 3 doctoral training programs**.** **- P3 (Level 5:** The University has adequately trained personnel for doing state-of-the-art research) QNU has adequately trained academic staff, many of whom were graduated from high-ranking universities, for carrying out state-of-the-art research **[D4.2.P3.1, D4.2.P3.2].** The academic staff members have been implementing 115 institutional level projects, 5 provincial level projects, 16 ministerial level projects and 33 national level projects **[D4.2.P3.3]** and other research		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* The University has 727 staff members, of which 71.3% are academic staff and 28.7% are administrative and supporting staff. It is a common practice in Vietnam that the Communist Party system guides HR planning of public institutions; appraisal, promotion and appointment mechanisms favour CP members in the selection for key leadership and management positions. In most cases, leadership and management positions in public institutions must be held by a member of the CP. However, some of the managerial positions at QNU are occupied by staff who are not CP members. In other words, QNU has some leeway to appoint staff members to leadership and management positions on the basis of their capabilities, even if they are not a CP member. Thus QNU has been able to integrate competent people of different political views and to draw on their capabilities for the development of the University. (P1) With the restructuring process, started mid-2019, the University has appointed a team of young, highly-qualified, high-performing academic staff to key leading positions in charge of faculties, departments or units. Of the 73 managerial posts, including unit heads and deputies, deans and vice deans of academic departments, approximately 25% are PhD graduates from foreign universities, including many PhD graduates of western European countries. With the average age of 40 years, this is a new management generation that will be leading the University in the next 10 years. (P2)	

projects funded by other external funding since 2017. It is worth noting that the results of the research performed by QNU staff have been published in many high-quality national and international journals **[D4.2.P3.4, D4.2.P3.5]** as clear evidence for the staff's research capacity. - **P4 (Level 4:** Further training for local staff to strengthen competencies in terms of education and research are available (incl. proposal writing, research management, curriculum development, laboratory maintenance, etc.) QNU has been offering training courses for local staff to strengthen their competencies in terms of education and research. For example, the University delivered training courses for professional development to 853 preschool teachers, 2087 primary teachers, 1603 secondary school teachers, 963 high school teachers and 147 lecturers in 2019 **[D4.2.P4.1].** Thanks to the National Foreign Language Project, the University helped 80 local secondary school teachers foster their foreign language skills and teaching methods in 2014 **[D4.2.P4.2]**. **- P5 (Level 4⁺:** There is sufficient administrative staff in relation to University's needs) QNU has had a proper ratio of the number of academic staff (518) and students (14,000) to that of administrative staff (224). The administrative staff members **[D4.2.P5.1]** have adequate professional qualifications to meet the needs of the University. The positive results of the survey on the lecturers' satisfaction with the performance of administrative staff indicated that most of the academic staff have been satisfied with the friendly and responsible attitude of the majority of administrative staff in handling and resolving the administrative issues **[D4.2.P5.2, D4.2.P5.3].** **- P6 (Level 4:** The University has a system for staff development, staff promotion, mobility, performance reviews, etc. which can still be improved) In order to ensure the objectivity, publicity, transparency, lawfulness, and effectiveness of the University's operation and guarantee the stability, inheritance, and development of the staff, QNU has been making the greatest effort in assuring and optimizing its systems for staff development, staff promotion, mobility **[D4.2.P6.1, D4.2.P6.2]** and performance reviews **[D4.2.P6.3, D4.2.P6.4].** **- P7 (Level 5:** The University has effective mechanisms for conflict resolution, complaint management, etc.)	The University has prepared a list of personnel eligible for management positions (heads and deputies) of faculties, departments, functional units, centres and institutes, and for higher leadership positions to be filled in the next 5 years. Some of those in the list did not participate in FCB seminars, so have not received training on governance and management. This document is circulated amongst top leadership and management positions, and not made available to all staff members; only key persons are informed. This indicates that the University is paying adequate attention to the development of the next generations of management and leadership. However the University has not yet planned the capacity enhancement in governance and management for this group of staff. (P6) The level of internal staff mobility at the University is high. Most of the staff working at functional units and heads of units, deans and vice deans of faculties and departments have been appointed to and worked in different positions in different sections and units. They are happy with the job allocations and think that they have used their qualifications effectively. (P4) In the past five years QNU has organized some courses for the purpose of staff capacity enhancement, for example on pedagogy, curriculum development, student learning outcomes development, etc.; but these events do not happen on a regular basis. Speakers at these workshops were invited from other universities in the country. There has been limited training on proposal writing, research management and laboratory maintenance. The Department of Research Affairs provides support to academic staff in writing research proposals; there was once such as workshop organized some years ago. (P3, P4, P6) Through the FCB project, the middle level management staffs (80 people) received training on staff recruitment, staff development, performance-based staff appraisal, administration and HR management, and policy change. Most of the participants now hold management positions. Amongst the current management team, there are some new staff members who recently returned from overseas study and so have not been coached on management and leadership skills. Additionally, the local and international HE landscapes are changing very fast. Consequently, constant updates and continuous training and coaching are critical. (P6) The University has maintained a high level of stability in its team of academic staff with a low rate of academic staff turnover. In the past ten years, only 20 lecturers (of the total over 500) left the University (excluding normal retirement). Most of the lecturers sent abroad for doctoral

QNU has two functional units for resolving conflicts and managing complaints [**D4.2.P7.1**]: (1) Inspection and Legislation Office is responsible for receiving and resolving written complaints and denunciations from individuals and units within the University in accordance with the law **[D4.2.P7.2, D4.2.P7.3]**; (2) People's Inspection Board is in charge of receiving complaints and denunciations via different channels and collecting information, documents, evidence in order to propose to the University's authorities for resolving the problems promptly **[D4.2.P7.4].** **- R8 (Level 4:** The University is working on gender balance at all levels of the University) Although the University has had a higher proportion of females than males in its staff, the proportion of females involved in different levels of the leadership is lower than that of males **[D4.2.R8.1].** Therefore, QNU is making the greatest effort to achieve gender balance at all levels of the University. **- R9 (Level 4:** The University succeeds in attracting and retaining motivated and skilled staff) QNU has succeeded in attracting and retaining motivated and skilled staff since the majority of QNU academic staff has returned to continue working after graduating from prestigious international universities **[D4.2.R9.1]**. QNU has also succeeded in attracting high-quality human resources from other organizations in the region [**D4.2.R9.2]**.	studies return to the University. This is a good indicator of HR management given the fact that brain drain has been a serious problem for many top public universities. (P6, R9) The University has a number of channels to collect complaints from staff and students: (1) by mail/post; (2) by email to the University's Office and rector; (3) Q&A day, where the Rector invests a day for open dialogues with staff and students; (4) annual meeting between the University and students. Furthermore, staff can always email to the Rector or arrange a meeting with him for any complaints or issues. Amongst these channels, the third and fourth are most effective; students said their requests and comments in these meetings were addressed adequately and timely. The first two are not frequently used. In general, staff, both academic and administrative, show a good level of a job satisfaction. (P7) In order to spot, report and resolve potential conflicts or issues to address, the University has set up two units of inspection. One is the Office of Inspection and Legal Services, whose head is appointed by the Board of Rectors; another is called the "People's Inspection", whose managers are elected by all staff members. The People's Inspection Office, working under the direction of the Trade Union, independently from the Board of Rectors, is a mechanism of democracy within the University. The Office of Inspection and Legal Services works as a management supporting unit that is at the service of the Board of Rectors. The head of the People's Inspection Office is elected by all staff members while the head of the Office of Inspection and Legal Services is appointed by the Rector, similarly to other management positions. (P7) Staff working at QA Office and Library need to have further training on technical skills and updates about recent developments in related fields. (P6) The practices in staff appraisal and promotion and performance review are basically in accordance with the Government's law and state regulations. The University does not have a set of criteria and performance indicators of its own, nor specific schemes of appraisal and promotion that are suitable and appropriate with its own university contexts. However, the University is defining the job descriptions of each position and developing a system of tailored KPIs, to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation process. (P6) There is no discrimination in terms of gender in the allocation of tasks and work assignment to staff members. Male and female staff members are treated equally in practice. However, the University does not have a policy to support female staff members to undertake more roles and tasks, especially those involving travelling or requiring extra time and effort, in order to

	encourage female staff to participate more actively in University's activities. Female staff represent around 25% of faculty-level management positions (deans and vice deans). (P1, R8)

Conclusion
The University has 727 staff members, of which 71.3% are academic staff and 28.7% are administrative and supporting staff. The academic staff turnover is really low (less than 0,5% excluding natural retirement), which ensures a significant stability of human resources. The University has appointed a team of young, highly qualified, high-performing academic staff to key positions leading faculties, departments and units. There are several complaints and remediation mechanisms for human resources related issues, that seem to be effective. Further trainings and capacity building are needed, especially to develop cutting edge research and to develop skills of staffs who don't benefit from international mobility.

3.4.3 The university has an adequate infrastructure

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4	*Selected maturity level*	3
- P1 (Level 5: Availability of flexible research funds): Quy Nhon University pays special attention not only to training but also to research. Thus, the University always makes great effort to have adequate budget for research activities and laboratory practices. Annually, QNU spends an adequate budget on research activities and technology transfer, such as organizing workshops, conducting projects at the institutional level, managing projects at provincial, ministerial and national levels **[D4.3.P1.1]** and investing adequate financial resources on equipment procurement to maintain regular activities and equipment **[D4.3.P1.2]**. **- R2 (Level 3:** The university has insufficient ICT systems and services (e.g. access to internet for its staff and students, IT systems support for the core processes of the university - (e.g. student administration, library services, etc.) - functional distance education systems) which can still be improved: In recent years, the application of information technology in management, training and communication has become an urgent requirement. In order to fulfil this requirement, QNU has		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* The infrastructure of QNU for general education is good but needs improvement in order to develop technical training and applied research. (R3) The University receives state funds for research and training, but the amounts are limited. The current funding suffices only for purchasing small and simple equipment, samples and chemicals for Chemistry and Bio labs, etc.. Since many of the academic staff are graduates from overseas (e.g. Belgian or Dutch) universities, they are experienced with advanced lab systems. They are capable of conducting more sophisticated research than the lab systems at QNU currently allow. To limit the costs, lecturers at the Faculty of Natural Sciences have assembled some machines and equipment by themselves; as to enhance the practical teaching and learning in Physics and Chemistry. (P1, R2, R5, R6) The University has sufficient (plenty) area for teaching and learning activities, spacious room for labs and library as well as sports facilities such as football pitches. However, the facilities and equipment at the lecture halls, reading rooms, library and labs only meet the fundamental requirements and basic demands of lecturers and students. Lecture halls are equipped with	

established the Center for Information Technology and Communication **[D4.3.R2.1]**. QNU has also invested in setting up the internet system in the lecture halls, dormitories, and office buildings to serve its academic staff and students **[D4.3.R2.2]**. However, the internet system and ICT system are not good enough for student administration, digitalized library services, and distance learning. **- R3 (Level 3:** Technological facilities are insufficiently available for staff and students (e.g. technology to collect data, data analysis, libraries, specialised software, communication platform, intranet, etc.,): QNU has basic facilities for teaching and learning activities. For instance, the lecture halls are equipped with basic teaching equipment, and the internet system is available at some lecture halls, office buildings and dormitories, etc. Although the University has installed basic software for training, human resources management, student administration, financial management, and online surveys, they are not synchronous **[D4.3.R3.1]**. Moreover, the University has not yet adequately invested in software for better effectiveness in information management and retrieval, library management, and distance learning. **- R4 (Level 5:** Availability of adequate and accessible space (classrooms, labs, etc.) to conduct research and deliver classes): QNU has an adequate system of facilities including 144 classrooms with an area of 25,748 m^2, 54 laboratories with an area of 5,130 m^2, 20 rooms for IT and foreign language learning with an area of 2,294 m^2, 04 rooms for teaching practices with an area of 380 m^2, 01 sports centre with an area of 6,622 m^2, 01 library with an area of 3,339 m^2, and 55 office rooms with an area of 9,371 m^2 **[D4.3.R4.1]**. Many of the classrooms, laboratories, practice rooms, and office rooms have adequate equipment, including desks, chairs, file cabinets, computers, printers, lighting systems, ventilation system, and alarm system, etc. and are easily accessible for training and research activities. **- R5 (Level 3:** The laboratories at the university are insufficient to conduct research but can still be improved): QNU has invested in a number of laboratories for state-of-the-art research such as Laboratory of Intelligent Grid System and Simulation Calculations with an investment of 30 billion VND,	projectors but lecturers have to bring their own laptops for teaching. Internet connections at lecture halls are very weak. Online library resources are limited, so they do not meet the needs of students in some majors such as Teacher Training and Social Works. That is why students of some majors do not go to libraries. (R2, R3, R4) In some faculties and departments (Maths and Stats, Natural Sciences), lecturers are provided their own work station and a desk space at the faculty's office, so they can stay at the University to work, to do research, to mentor students, and so on. It is a common practice that lecturers in local universities only go to the university when they have classes; they do not have a desk or an office and are not required to be present at the university. Even though it is simply a desk space in a shared office equipped with a printer and internet connection, applying a bring your own laptop concept, the lecturers of these departments are happy with such work space facilities as these allow them to discharge their job duties more effectively. The number of staff in these two faculties, having access to such facilities, accounts for approximately 25% of QNU's academic staff. (R4) The IT infrastructure of the University is also limited. QNU would need to overcome lots of difficulties to apply online learning. Therefore, during the Covid-19, the University stopped completely all teaching and learning activities. (R2) The labs are better equipped with some sophisticated machines and facilities thanks to funds from research projects (funded by a VLIR, and Erasmus+ program funded by the EU). The lab facilities have met the demands for conducting research of academic staff at a certain level. The University's research teams however need more advanced machines and equipment to conduct more sophisticated analysis and research to better meet the local requirements and solve the local problems. (R3, R5, R6)

Laboratory of Computational Chemistry and Modelling with an investment of more than 10 billion VND **[D4.3.R5.1].** However, there are only a few modern laboratories; therefore, they cannot satisfy all the academic staff' demands in scientific research. **- R6 (Level 3+:** Infrastructure and equipment are insufficient with regard to staff's technical expertise and can be improved): QNU has invested in the infrastructure and technical equipment for the academic staff such as office rooms **[D4.3.R6.1, D4.3 .R6.2]**, practicum rooms **[D4.3.R6.3],** and laboratories **[D4.3.R6.4]**. However, the infrastructure is still insufficient for the demands of the academic staff. For example, there are no private offices for any academic staff, even professors.	
Conclusion	
QNU has sufficient classrooms and basic campus facilities; but these need improvement in order to allow for adequate technical training and applied research. The IT infrastructure of the University is also limited and not good enough to organize online education. The University receives state funds for research and training, but the amounts are limited, sufficing only for purchases of small and simple equipment.	

3.4.4 The university has adequate and well managed financial resources

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	5	*Selected maturity level*	Availability of funding : 3 Management of funding : 4+
- P1 (Level 5: The university has performant financial management systems, with sufficient checks and balances): QNU has a Planning and Finance Office, which does the task of financial management in accordance with the regulations of the Ministry of Finance and the related ministries. In order for financial activities to comply with the national regulations that apply specifically to the University, QNU has issued the internal expense regulations **[D4.4.P1.1]**. The internal expense regulations are updated on a regular basis to adapt to changes **[D4.4.P1.2, D4.4.P1.3, D4.4.P1.4]**.		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* The University has two main sources of income: state funding (ranging from 25% to 30% in the past three years) and revenues from tuition fees (approximately 50% on average). Funding for research from external sources has increased in recent years, but still accounts for a modest percentage of about 6%. The rest 15% to 17% comes from different sources, such as fees for short courses, hostel and cafeteria services and donations. (R2) Despite the budget constraints, the University allocates basic funding to support research quality, for example through purchases of standard machines, basic equipment and supplies of	

In order to control the financial procedures, QNU has established a financial and accounting self-inspection team to conduct internal audit **[D4.4.P1.5]**. In addition, QNU is periodically audited by the state audit agency. **- R2 (Level 4:** Availability of adequate financial resources at department/faculty level and at university level): Basically, QNU appropriately allocates financial resources to cover regular activities such as salary payment, stationery purchases, student scholarships, laboratory equipment purchases, research activities, and training activities. According to the annual reports, the financial resources of the University are adequate to ensure all regular activities. This is clearly shown in the financial statements at the University's Annual Staff Conferences **[D4.4.R2.1].** However, due to the government's financial regulations, academic faculties/departments are not allowed to be financially autonomous. **- R3 (Level 5:** The university is appreciated for its management of external funding): Annually, many of national, ministerial and provincial projects conducted by QNU's academic staff are approved. The University has an effective mechanism for project financial management through circulars from relevant ministries and the University's internal expense regulations. The management of the external funds is excellent as seen in the final account reports of research projects **[D4.4.R3.1]** and judged to be good by the state audit agency **[D4.4.R3.2].** **- R4 (Level 5:** The university is financially compliant with statutory and legal regulation): QNU's financial resources are always managed in compliance with the law. The total annual operational spending of QNU comes from the state budget (about one-third of the total budget) and the amount earned from service delivery. The management of these funds is carried out according to a strict process, e.g., the spending process must go through different stages at the Planning and Finance Office with the approval of the Rector; the transfer of money in QNU's accounts must be through the State Treasury, and there must be annual reports to the MOET on procurement and repair activities **[D4.4.R4.1].**	chemicals, etc. for University labs. The lab machines and equipment purchased with the funding from sponsored projects are labelled with the project name, for example 'VLIR-UOS" or 'MOMA VIETNAM' or 'Erasmus+'. The revenue from external research funding has helped the University to, partly and gradually, address the shortage of advanced lab equipment. The University still seeks more funding from external sources for research, as well as additional support from external partners in order to modernize its labs equipment; for example as to meet the requirements for flagship research. (P1, R2) Regulations on institutional accounting are strict for all public institutions, and the accounting practice at universities is inspected at least twice per year, by MoET's Dept of Inspection and by the State Auditing Agency. The annual audits show that QNU has observed the statutory and legal regulations in financial management. The University has maintained a transparent system of accounting and financial reporting. There are no complaints or conflicts in financial management in the University. (P1, R4) The University promulgates a set of regulations on internal expenditure, signed by the Chairman of the University Council. This is the regulatory document that guides how the state funding as well as revenues from other sources can be spent on the University's daily operations and activities. This document provides guidelines to assure that spending and expenditures comply with the Government's laws and legislations on institutional financial management, and help the University to better utilize its limited financial resources. QNU's financial management is compliant with these regulations (P1, R4) It should also be highlighted that the University has a policy to provide academic departments with flexible funding in the form of block grants. This allows deans to have freedom in spending the fund that best serves the objectives and goals of each faculty. (R2) The University still lacks financial resources to modernize and upgrade its physical infrastructure and services including IT, labs and library in order to facilitate any shifts in delivery mode of education, for instance to e-learning. Teaching and learning conditions in general need to be upgraded to improve educational effectiveness. (R2) As mentioned above, several mechanisms concur to ensure that the management of financial resources, be it state budget or external funding, is in compliance with the state regulations and laws on financial management and accounting principles. (R4)

QNU has periodically been inspected by the State Audit Agency on financial management and spending. The audit results have shown good evaluations on the financial management of the University **[D4.4.R4.2]**.	
Conclusion	
The University has two main sources of income: state funding (25% to 30%) and revenues from tuition fees (approximately 50%). The University has maintained a transparent system of accounting and financial reporting in strict accordance with legal regulations on institutional accounting for all public institutions. Positive changes and modernization in research and education equipment occurred the past years, thanks to research funding from external sources, having increased in recent years. However, external funding is still low and its impact on education and research could be improved. The University still lack financial resources to modernize and upgrade some key academic infrastructure (IT facilities, labs and library) to be competitive at an international level. Thus, being adequately funded is still a challenge for QNU.	

3.4.5 The university has effective systems and processes for administration and procurement and logistics

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	5	*Selected maturity level*	4-
- P1 (Level 5: The university has effective administrative systems, structures and processes): QNU has issued the Regulations on the Organization and Operation of QNU **[D4.5.P1.1]**. The regulations have clear definitions on functions, duties, and rights; organization and management; finance and properties; and relationships of the university units. This is a legal document on which the system, structure, and governance process of the University are based on. Based on the regulations on organization and operation, QNU has issued a number of regulations to perform tasks according to the functions and duties such as the regulations on the management and use of public property to manage infrastructure and equipment **[D4.5.P1.2]**; regulations on working time, teaching time and research time for the academic staff **[D4.5.P1.3]**; regulations on end-term examinations **[D4.5.P1.4].** **- P2 (Level 5:** The university has effective systems, structures and processes for procurement and logistics):		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* As already mentioned, restructuring the organization and operations of the University entails the rearrangement of the organization and its internal units, leading to changes in the roles and functions. One of the key objectives of this restructuring process is to set up and implement a lean administration and management model, that is in accordance with QNU's specific mission and vision, and that facilitates the development of the University. The institutional assessment concludes that this reform process is a positive and promising change. The assessors especially highlight the efforts for rationalizing services and entities, and the greater autonomy granted to faculties & departments. The University has issued the new definitions of roles and functions of these units. However, the new system needs to be assessed on a longer run. During this early stage of implementation, there are still flaws and bottlenecks here and there. The unit and departmental heads are working together to fix the hurdles and assure smooth operations. (P1, R3)	

QNU has the procedures for property procurement and logistics, according to which the functions and duties of the relevant units such as the Planning and Finance Office, Facilities Office, and Administration Office are clearly defined **[D4.5.P2.1].** Over the years, the University's procurement and logistics performance has been effective and legal. This is clearly shown in the conclusion of the state audit agency **[D4.5.P2.2].** **- R3 (Level 5:** The administration of the university is effective with regard to its mission and strategy): Based on the strategic development plan **[D4.5.R3.1]**, QNU has issued the regulations on the institutional organization and operation **[D4.5.R3.2]** to establish an appropriate management system including regulations on the organizational management structure; the structure of the functional units and academic faculties/departments; and the structure of University advisory councils. Based on the regulations on organization and operation, the University has issued regulations on functions and duties of units in accordance with the University's strategic development plan. On its way, QNU has actively changed its management system to be suitable to the strategic development plan. In 2019, the University reformed and reorganized its units and personnel to ensure the effectiveness in relation to its strategic development plan and market changes **[D4.5.R3.3].** **- R4 (Level 5:** The organisation of procurement and logistics by the university is effective) QNU's property procurement is performed through different stages, e.g., approval of procurement plans, selection of procurement methods (best value for money, tendering procedure, national legislation), and selection of the supplier **[D4.5.R4.1, D4.5.R4.2].** Thanks to the systematic implementation, the property procurement often brings about quite high effectiveness. This is reflected in the University's reports to the MOET on procurement and use of facilities **[D4.5.R4.3]**, and in conclusions of the State Audit Agency **[D4.5.R4.4]**.	The University has issued regulations on processes and procedures of major support functions such as financial management, procurement, staff recruitment, leadership and managerial position appointment. But, as mentioned above, there is a lack of procedures on specific daily operations at the departmental level. (P2) QNU also lacks an interlinked information management system that can support the real-time evidence-based decision-making by leaders and managers. Currently, functional units and institutes are using different software solutions for management purposes. The most common application used is MS Excel, but not linked and shared across departments. These databases are updated periodically. The ARIST uses its own solution for management. (P1) The IT and Media Centre is developing a shared solution for administration called E-Office. Pilot testing of the application is ongoing, while its broader implementation is to be launched soon. In January 2020, the University also issued an action plan for implementing IT and ICT-based solutions in the period from 2020 to 2025. This action plan aims a development of IT infrastructure: to ensure smooth connections and cyber security in the University; to apply IT in management and teaching and learning in support of pedagogic functions; to provide better online services to staff and students; and to assure constant 24/7 operations of all online services. The scope of tasks includes the upgrading of LAN, WAN and Wifi connections, the development of an Information Management system for shared use amongst all departments, units and offices within the University, the development of a Data Centre containing digitalized data, e-lesson plans, online test banks, and so on. Furthermore this should facilitate e-learning, as well as the development of e-portals for management and administration of academic affairs and other students' services. The funding for this Action Plan is expected to come from two sources: (1) the state fund for daily operations; and (2) external sources for investments. (P1, P2, R3) Similar to other aspects, the development of an ICT-based tool for management and administration has just been commenced. The University is aware of the importance of such an instrument for effective management and has defined a clear, detailed plan of what to do, to achieve the set goals. (P1) Procurement and logistics process and procedures are regulated by the Law on Public Procurement. The University assigns this duty to the Office of Physical Facilities. The Office of

	Finance and Planning undertakes the jobs of cross checking and supervision of the procurement process to assure the conformity to the laws. (P2, R4)
Conclusion	
QNU is currently restructuring its organization and operations, implying ongoing changes in roles and functions of all the different department and entities. The reform should result in a leaner organization and a certain level of autonomy of faculties and departments. This reform process is a positive and promising change, even if the new systems need to be assessed on a longer run. QNU has regulations, processes and procedures for its major support functions (financial management, procurement, staff recruitment, etc.), but there is a lack of procedures in specific daily operations at the departmental level. Also QNU needs an interlinked information management system that supports real-time evidence-based decision-making of leaders and managers. The digitalization of the administration system is in its pilot phase since January 2020.	

3.4.6 The university has effective systems and processes for project management and quality assurance

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4	*Selected maturity level*	3
- P1 (Level 5: The University has effective systems, structures and processes for project management) QNU has had effective systems, structures and processes for project management with the Research Affairs and International Relations Office responsible for monitoring the project progress, the Planning and Finance Office for effectively managing the finance of the project, and the Facilities Office for project equipment procurement **[D4.6.P1.1]**. The implementation of projects has followed the University's regulations on science and technology affairs **[D4.6.P1.2]** and the regulations on the management and spending of national projects **[D4.6.P1.3]** and non-governmental aids **[D4.6.P1.4, D4.6.P1.5].** Moreover**,** the University has established project steering committees to effectively manage the projects funded by international organizations **[D4.6.P1.6, D4.6.P1.7, D4.6.P1.8, D4.6.P1.9, D4.6.P1.10].** **- P2 (Level 4:** The University has quality standards and expectations for service delivery)		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* QNU does not have a comprehensive set of dedicated procedures for project management. To manage external-funded projects, it is a common practice at QNU to create a task force, for each project, at the stage of project development. During the stage of implementation, the University issues a decision, formally establishing a project team to manage the project activities and to assure the quality of its deliverables. Some staff members who join project teams have proactively attended online courses on project management to enhance their project management skills. (P1) The collaboration projects between the University and other external stakeholders have yielded positive outcomes. The University has maintained good relationship with local authorities and enterprises and gained their trust. They are all satisfied with the cooperative initiatives with the University. (R4, R5)	

QNU has had quality standards and expectations for service delivery. In terms of research activities, there is a shared set of quality standards for all projects to control the quality of the projects' outcomes **[D4.6.P2.1, D4.6.P2.2, D4.6.P2.3]**. To monitor the quality of education, along with the regulations on teaching and learning activities **[D4.6.P2.4]**, organizing examinations **[D4.6.P2.5]**, constructing and developing training programs **[D4.6.P2.6]**, the University has conducted the assessment at the institutional level and program level according to the national accreditation standards **[D4.6.P2.7,D4.6.P2.8]**. Moreover, the University has carried out surveys of key stakeholders on teaching activities and training programs on a regular basis to get feedback for quality improvement. **- P3(Level 5:** Quality standards and quality performance are communicated to the stakeholders involved and to the public at large) Quality standards and quality performance of QNU have been communicated to the stakeholders involved and to the public at large via numerous channels such as websites, written documents, and announcements. Particularly, the University's quality assurance conditions have been made public on the University's website **[D4.6.P3.1]**. Annual reports on the University's activities have been sent to the MOET and made available at the portal of the MOET [**D4.6.P3.2]**. **- R4 (Level 4:** The University can still improve the efficient use of its resources as to maximize the achievement of its outputs and results) With the purpose of serving as a basis for the Rector to assign, arrange, use, improve the quality and labor efficiency of the staff, QNU has had the regulations on teaching and research time for its academic staff **[D4.6.R4.1]**. As a result, in the period between 2017 and 2019, QNU staff successfully implemented many scientific research projects at the institutional level (108), ministerial-level (4) and national level (1) using the University's resources **[D4.6.R4.2, D4.6.R4.3]**. The University has efficiently used its resources to strengthen competencies of local staff in terms of education and research through offering short-term training courses **[D4.6.R4.4].** The University has also optimized its resources in order to achieve the best results which are demonstrated in the number of the annual publications; the number of books and lecture notes published each year by QNU's staff. It is expected that the implementation of the Job Position Project will allow the University to use its resources more effectively in order to maximize the level of achievement of its outputs and results.	QNU established the Office of Testing and Quality Assurance (T&QA) in 2009. This Office has six staff members, including one lecturer (head of Office). The Deputy Head is a technical staff, who holds a master degree in Evaluation and Assessment and who has participated in short courses and workshops on accreditation, organized by national and ASEAN accrediting agencies. The Office has a few other technical and administrative staff members. (P2) The T&QA Office is in charge of conducting the self-assessment and preparing self-assessment reports for accreditation. This duty involves the provision of training, coaching and technical support to staff members at other units and departments on the set of standards and how to evaluate programs and institutions against the standards defined by MoET. The participation rate in such training and workshops is very high. (P2, P3) In the first years of its establishment, this office mainly focussed on testing and assessment. In recent years, the work load of QA activities has increased. However, most QA activities are for accreditation purposes; essentially they are conducted to observe the QA requirements set by MoET and the evaluation standards. The institutional assessment thus observed that QNU's QA activities are mainly compliance-led; rather than geared towards continuous improvement. This weakness seems to be common across Vietnamese universities, both public and private, even among top public universities. Shortcomings in QA expertise, observed at QNU also seem to be common amongst Vietnamese universities. International cooperation between QNU and foreign partners has not yet focused on QA. Since QA activities focus mainly on accreditation, whose approach is top-down, QNU's QA can be said to adopt a top-down approach as well. However, it is widely agreeable amongst QA scholars and experts that QA activities, at the institutional level, are more effective if they are based on bottom-up efforts, embedded within teams and units. (P3, R4) As stated above, the quality assurance at QNU mainly focuses on national accreditation processes (developed by MOET) for both institutional and program accreditation. However, QNU has a strategic goal to become a member of AUN-QA, an international QA network in the ASEAN region. Nonetheless the existing QA and accreditation activities have raised the awareness of staff members and leaders at QNU on quality issues. Many improvements are being achieved in the recent years. A "culture of quality"' is being developed at QNU, involving many academic and administrative staff. Some staff members and managers show a good sense of quality and quality assurance. There are signs of bottom-up QA efforts, initiated by individuals. The Dept

- R5 (Level 4: The quality of the internal and external service delivery of the University is adequate) QNU has the Center for Economics and Accounting Training and Consulting [D4.6.R5.1]**,** the Institute of Educational Sciences [D4.6.R5.2] the Center for Japanese Language and Culture [D4.6.R5.3]; the Center for Foreign Languages [D4.6.R5.4]; Center for Informatics [D4.6.R5.5]; and the Applied Research Institute for Science and Technology [D4.6.R5.6] which facilitate the service delivery to internal and external stakeholders. The quality of other services such as canteen, dormitories [D4.6.R5.7], convenient store **[D4.6.R5.8]** and parking [D4.6.R5.9] has been also adequate.	of T&QA should take advantage of these phenomena to promote a quality culture, further mainstreamed across the University. (P3, R5). There are still quite a number of programs that have not been assessed and accredited. They have not undergone the QA processes required by the accreditation mechanism. QNU may strengthen its mechanisms to ensure the efficient use of its resources across all functions. (R4, R5) The University does not have its own set of standards and criteria in all aspects. It relies mainly on those set by MoET. (P2)
Conclusion	
The collaboration projects between QNU and its external stakeholders have yielded positive outcomes, especially regarding the collaboration with local authorities and companies; the quality of service delivery is being appreciated by such external partners. An Office of Testing and Quality Assurance, established in 2009, focuses on national accreditation processes for both institutional and program accreditation. Many improvements have been achieved in recent years. A "culture of quality"' is being developed at QNU, involving many members of academic and administrative staff. The main goal for the coming years will be to effectively and systematically use the QA information for daily and strategic decision making, as well as mainstreaming QA and national accreditation processes across all faculties and functions of the University; while also obtaining academic accreditations at regional and international levels.	

3.5 Capability to adapt and self-renew

3.5.1 Effective management in shifting contexts

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	5	*Selected maturity level*	4+
- P1 (Level 5: The leadership of the University has an understanding of shifting contexts). Understanding the shifts in education policies, market needs, and the advancement of science and technology, which is clearly identified in the context analysis of Quy Nhon University's		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation*	

Strategic Development Plan **[D5.1.P1.1]**, the University's leadership has implemented the Project on Restructuring the Organization of QNU **[D5.1.P1.2]**. The application orientation in its mission, vision, and strategic development plan are shown through the opening of new training programs in line with market and society's demands **[D5.1.P1.3]** and the linking between training and research activities with the development of the locality. International cooperation activities are also promoted to keep abreast of the modern educational systems of developed countries **[D5.1.P1.4]**. **- P2 (Level 5:** The University's leadership has experience in adapting to changed contexts) The University's leadership has a lot of experience in adapting to the dynamic and shifting working environment in Vietnam. This was evidenced by 3 major changes in QNU: (i) the conversion from a university of education to a multidisciplinary university in 2003; (ii) the change in the training form from a curriculum-fixed training system to a credit training system **[D5.1.P2.1]**; (iii) the restructuring of its organization for more effective operation in accordance with the Law on Amendments and Supplementations to a Number of Articles of The Education Law (Decree No. 99/NĐ-CP in 2019) [**D5.1.P2.2]** with an orientation to autonomy and accountability for stakeholders. **- P3 (Level 4:** The University's leadership has experience in facilitating change processes. However, it is necessary to enable its units to take the initiative in change processes.) QNU's leadership always facilitates its units in change processes, which is evidenced by the Regulations on the Organization and Operation of Quy Nhon University **[D5.1.P3.1]**; the regulations show that QNU's financially-independent units have certain autonomy in their activities and their heads are responsible for all the operations of the whole unit. However, QNU should have mechanisms and regulations to help its units take the initiative in change processes. **- P4 (Level 4-:** The University and its academic faculties/departments have developed scenarios for risk mitigation and insuring resilience in case of major setbacks. However, Quy Nhon University and its academic faculties/departments have not forecasted risks and actively developed risk mitigation scenarios.) QNU and its academic faculties/departments have developed risk mitigation scenarios, such as implementing the Project on Restructuring the Organization of Quy Nhon University and	Economic and social contexts are moving really fast in Vietnam. The central region of Vietnam, which was less developed than major urban areas, is now experiencing uninterrupted economic growth. QNU management has a good understanding of such shifting contexts and has demonstrated some significant experience in adapting to changing environments. (P1, P2) First of all, the recent evolutions **in management** staffing (cf. Capability 1) and the internal restructuration process (especially the formulation of the vision, mission and strategy) illustrate an accurate understanding of global and local challenges. In this process, QNU aims at taking advantage of increased opportunities for autonomy and flexibility, as allowed by the recent legal reform of HE (Decree No. 99/NĐ-CP in 2019) and is trying to mitigate the legal constraints and limitations. (P3, P4) The way QNU managed recent and ongoing evolutions **regarding education and research**, also illustrate QNU's capacity to take into account shifting contexts. The recent specialization of QNU toward applied research and education seems to be well-adapted to recent evolutions of the environment and appropriate for developing the specific added value of QNU. In the same approach, the assessors noted pertinent developments in teacher education and foreign language training programs. (P1, P3) QNU management is also keen to develop international academic partnerships in order to deal with academic competition at a global level and improve its international credibility. QNU is not yet a major player within Vietnamese academic actors, but the recent and ongoing reform would certainly tremendously improve its position at a national and continental level. (R5) Since approximately 2000, QNU demonstrates its ability to conduct and achieve internal change processes with an incremental approach. It seems that this capacity has significantly improved under the leadership of the current and the former rector, especially regarding internal participation. (P4) However, the assessors note that the limited financial leverage of QNU is restraining its capacity to develop and implement change processes. The limited management skills of middle level managers at the central and department/faculty levels may also hinder the effectiveness of change processes. (R5)

opening new training programs in line with market and society's demands **[D5.1.P4.1]**. However, the building-up of these scenarios is still passive, which is only carried out when risks arise. There has not been long-term plans and strategies for risk prevention and mitigation. **- R5 (Level 5⁻:** The University has adequately assessed trends and changes, anticipated and adapted to major changes, though such activities are not much effective.) QNU's leadership has adequately assessed the trends and changes through its regular upgradation, namely the trend of multidisciplinary and multi-sector training **[D5.1.R5.1]**; the trend of integrated and interdisciplinary training **[D5.1.R5.2]**; the changing demands for training fields **[D5.1.R5.3]**; the effective transformation from a curriculum-fixed training system into a credit training system; QNU is one of the universities that have received quality accreditation at both the institutional level and program level, which is quite sooner compared to a number of other universities in Vietnam after the availability of regulations on the accreditation of university training quality **[D5.1.R5.4, D5.1.R5.5, D5.1.R5.6]**.	
Conclusion	
QNU management has a good understanding of shifting contexts and has demonstrated some significant experience in adapting to changing environments. Economic and social contexts are moving really fast in Vietnam. The recent evolutions in QNU's management and the internal restructuration process illustrate an accurate understanding of global and local challenges and of how to address them. QNU management is fully aware of the importance of understanding evolutions of the different contexts relevant for the University: the local and provincial economic and social situation and changes, as well as the national and international academic environment.	

3.5.2 The university is continuously adapting and renewing

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	5-	*Selected maturity level*	4
- P1 (Level 4: The University has limited levels of hierarchy for quickly adapting to changes.) In 2019, QNU restructured its organization, reducing the number of in-the-middle units: from 16 academic departments to 3 faculties and 9 departments, via which the number of divisions also decreased significantly (from 63 to 46); and 11 functional/administrative units decreased to 10. The reduction in the number of academic departments and functional units facilitates		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* The formal structures of QNU are in line with national and statutory requirements, applicable to public universities in Vietnam. These structures do imply several levels of organizational hierarchy in the decision making and implementation. The assessors found however evidence of some smooth consultative and participation mechanisms for staff, students and stakeholders	

change processes and collaboration in opening new training programs and in designing and carrying out multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary research **[D5.2.P1.1]**. **- P2 (Level 5:** The University has a healthy feedback culture which allows to learn out of past mistakes and successes.) QNU collects feedback of all staff for all major changes or for its annual plans and collects suggestions of stakeholders, i.e., employers, alumni, students, etc., in the development and renewal of its training programs and related activities **[D5.2.P2.1, D5.2.P2.2, D5.2.P2.3, D5.2.P2.4, D5.2.P2.5, D5.2.P2.6]**. **- P3 (Level 4:** The University has an incentive system which fosters innovation, creativity and change through regulations on emulation and commendation at all levels.) QNU has regulations on emulation and commendation, in which Articles 9 and 10 state that individuals are considered to be awarded the "Model Worker" title at institutional and ministerial levels when they have innovations, technical solutions, management solutions, operational solutions, applications of advanced technology, etc. and at the same time have successfully accomplished their assigned tasks **[D5.2.P3.1]**. There is a mechanism for rewarding academic staff who have internationally published articles **[D5.2.P3.2]**). However, regulations related to encouraging innovations are still insufficient to promote the University's effectiveness, so the number of its innovations is still limited. **- P4 (Level 5:** The University has a training protocol and a HR development plan which encourages learning and exchange.) QNU's personnel development plan is clearly reflected in the strategic development plan of the University for the period 2016-2020, with the vision to 2030 **[D5.2.P4.1]**. The University regularly organizes training courses and provides domestic and international training visits to other universities/institutions for its staff members **[D5.2.P4.2].** Those who have obtained the titles of Senior Lecturer, Senior Administrative Staff, and Doctor (with higher teaching coefficient) have a higher income, which encourages the staff to continuously study and develop their expertise. **- P5 (Level 4:** The University has adequate processes in place to incorporate new research findings on a continuous basis into curricula or courses through the constant revision of training	that adequately balance the official hierarchic model of governance. Nonetheless, the culture of systematic feedback (from students and external stakeholders) should still be improved. The capacity to adapt quickly is already being improved through the lean management model being developed and implemented in the frame of the ongoing restructuration process. Staff training (on multidisciplinary research methods, QA processes, etc.) is encouraged by the leadership and the managers of QNU. But the implementation of these leverages is constrained by budget limitations. (P1, P2, P5) The development of strategic plans at the faculty level is still in process. However, before the merging and establishment of new faculties and departments, the deans and deputies prepared project proposals for their own faculties and departments; and such documents contained faculty-level development strategies and directions. These proposals also include an analysis of the local and international contexts, as well as their resources, strengths and weaknesses. Leveraging and enhancing faculty-level strategic planning and steering capacity would allow to improve significantly the capacity to tailor QNU overall strategies to specific fields/disciplines and related issues and changes. Though the University has just restructured faculties, departments and functional units, the leaders are proactively observing the operations of these new arrangements in order to spot the drawbacks and potential issues so that they can quickly introduces the adjustments that might be required in the (near) future. For example, they are aware that the organization of the Faculty of Teacher Training, the Department of Primary and Preschool Education, and the Faculty of Social Sciences (with the Division of Psychology nested in this Faculty) is not an optimal arrangement; but they accept this as a transitional option and prepare to be able to a more appropriate model later. (P2) As explained in the self-assessment report and above (cf. capability 4), QNU has some HR development processes and incentive mechanisms fostering innovation, creativity and change by its staff. However these are still limited and need to be enhanced. (P3, P4) As discussed above, the periodic and ongoing curricula and course review processes partly ensure that new research findings are being incorporated on a continuous basis into the courses and educational programs. But the existing good practices (e.g. self assessment report) need to be further enhanced and mainstreamed. (P5)

programs. However, it is necessary to examine and monitor the updating of new research results.) QNU has a process of upgrading its training programs every 2 years according to the Decision No. 3421/QĐ-ĐHQN on the promulgation of the Regulations on Training Program Construction and Development, and a process of opening new bachelor training courses (Clause 2, Article 9 of the Decision No. 3421/QĐ-ĐHQN **[D5.2.P5.1]**). In particular, training courses are supplemented with new research findings, while out-of-date courses are excluded from the training programs, giving place to more appropriate courses **[D5.2.P5.2]**. **- P6 (Level 5:** The University's research processes allow easy accommodation of external research requests.) According to the University's regulation on research affairs and technology transfer **[D5.2.P6.1]**, the process of implementing research projects at provincial and ministerial levels is as follows: as QNU is the host institution for research projects; the University facilitates its research team in conducting research and meeting the external research requirements. Besides, according to this regulation, academic staff individuals and groups are allowed to participate in the implementation of all projects funded by external sponsors. **- R7 (Level 5:** The University effectively balances stability with innovation and renewal.) In the process of innovation and renewal, QNU's leadership always pays close attention to stability so as not to cause shocks to its staff during the process. For instance, in the project on restructuring the organization of QNU in 2019, the University retains on-growing academic departments and only restructures academic departments that need interdisciplinary cooperation and development to increase the effectiveness of interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary cooperation. The project on restructuring the organization of Quy Nhon University for the period 2019-2022, with the vision to 2030 has already completed its first phase. Since then, the plans for interdisciplinary research and education have been rapidly built **[D5.2.R7.1]**.	While some faculties/ teams demonstrate strengths in easy accommodation of external research requests, the related good practices in responsiveness and proactiveness are still to be mainstreamed across the University. (R6) The reform process, discussed several times above, and the overall approach to gradual improvement and change, demonstrate the capacity of QNU's leadership to effectively balances stability with innovation and renewal. (R7)

Conclusion
The formal structures of QNU are in line with national and statutory requirements applicable to public universities in Vietnam. The capacity to adapt quickly is being improved through the lean management model, being developed and implemented under the ongoing restructuration process. But the implementation of these leverages for continuous adaptation and renewal is constrained by budget limitations and by the centralized model of higher education policy in Vietnam. The specialization of QNU toward applied research and local development issues illustrates QNU's flexible approach and its relatively good capacity to adapt and renew. The leaders of QNU, at different levels, showed their willingness and engagement to adapt their management to evolution and innovation at both local level and international (academia) levels. They also demonstrate a good capacity to balance stability with innovation and renewal.

3.5.3 The university has an adequate knowledge management system

Findings of the self-assessment		Findings of external assessment	
Selected maturity level	4+	*Selected maturity level*	3+
- P1 (Level 5: The University has an active knowledge management system to learn from past mistakes and successes.) Meetings and workshops have been actively carried out to point out the strengths and weaknesses and to suggest solutions, which have been recorded in the faculty and department and University's monthly meetings and their annual summary reports. Self-assessment and external assessment at the program and institutional level have been performed for the purpose of knowledge management **[D5.3.P1.1]**). **- P2 (Level 5:** Knowledge exchange is valued and a range of appropriate mechanisms exist and are used for knowledge exchange.) All the University's meetings, external assessments, and self-assessments are the channels for exchanging knowledge and their outputs are communicated to all the staff members afterwards **[D5.3.P2.1]**. Academic faculties/departments have also regularly organized meetings and seminars to evaluate and to draw lessons from experience for their operation **[D5.3.P2.2**,		*Justification of selected maturity level - Description of the existing situation* The university has many processes that allow and support knowledge management; however, improvement are still required. Many actors are responsible and contribute to knowledge management. The strengths of the existing and developing management system, described above for domain 5.2, contribute to knowledge sharing and learning. As reported in the self-assessment report, QNU has various mechanisms to promote and support knowledge exchange. The self-assessment report mentions the different external assessments and range of meetings at different levels as tools that organise and enhance knowledge sharing and organisational learning. Periodic evaluation conducted at QNU also contributes to learning. Educational programs are evaluated and improved through the curriculum review process. This process allows incorporating the contribution from different sources of feedbacks (staff, students, and external stakeholders). However, collecting and using feedback form students and external bodies is yet to be improved and good practices are to be mainstreamed. (P1 & P2) The University consults its alumni for the development of new programs and during periodic reviews of curricula. The comments from alumni and employers are taken into account for the revision of curricula. (P2)	

D5.3.P2.3]. At the same time, the staff also have had the opportunity to have domestic/ international study and training visits **[D5.3.P2.4]**. These activities are specified in the University's Regulations on the Organization and Operation [**D5.3.P2.5**]. **- P3 (Level 4:** The University has a repository and system to capture, document, and disseminate knowledge for program improvement and organizational learning. However, the repository and system have not been shared with external stakeholders.) Each unit in the University has its archive system and the University has a library with conference proceedings and scientific journals. However, the archives contain only hard copy documents, and the sharing with external stakeholders is still limited. **- R4 (Level 5-:** The University's staff generate, learn, share, and use relevant knowledge for the benefit of individuals, units and the organization) Teaching materials are stored at the library. Some academic faculties and departments have their own libraries with academic books. Besides, the academic faculties and departments organize seminars annually to share knowledge **[D5.3.R4.1]**. **- R5 (Level 4:** Evaluation contributes to organizational learning: Programs are evaluated and evaluation findings are discussed, disseminated and inform organizational learning. However, the evaluation results have not been fully grasped by and not been continuously disseminated to the University's staff to effectively inform the organizational learning.) The University assessment/evaluation is conducted in accordance with the MOET's regulations, and QNU also considers it as an opportunity to improve the training programs. In addition, the assessment/evaluation results are disseminated to every single unit and staff member. The University also has an improvement plan after each assessment/evaluation. Assessment/evaluation results are widely disseminated to its stakeholders, which has motivated the	However, the knowledge management system is still to be improved in order to take into account all aspects of the University and to be used systematically. This system should better cover the following aspects: discovering, mining, capturing, creating, organizing, storing, retrieving and sharing knowledge resources. (P1, P3) The University has a repository and system to capture, document, and disseminate knowledge. However, QNU actors acknowledged that improvement in digitalization and IT system is necessary to improve knowledge management (especially in organizing, storing, retrieving and sharing knowledges sources). This process is in development within the IT component of the ongoing QNU reform. (P3) The assessors acknowledge the progress that is being made with respect to installing a knowledge exchange and bottom-up participation practices. A culture of participation is gaining root, encouraged by policy principles and QNU leadership. As stated in the self-assessment report, this may be further extended to external stakeholders. (R4) The process of systematic evaluation of educational programmes and research projects and ensuring that such evaluations contribute to organisational and participative learning are still in their infancy and need to be enhanced. (R5)

University to continue learning to improve its training programs (**[D5.3.R5.1**, **[D5.3.R5.2, D5.3.R5.3]**.	
Conclusion	
The assessors found that knowledge management is not developed nor explicitly mentioned in key management documents (i.e. Project on restructuring Quy Nhon University 2019). The institutional assessment team observes that knowledge sharing and learning mechanisms exists, notably through a diverse range of meetings and reports, but these mechanisms are still to be systematized. This could be done through the development of a tailor-made system dedicated to knowledge management, including a set of mechanisms to identify, gather and share knowledge; while many aspects of this already exist, they need to be connected and integrated. This system should also include specific tools to organize, store and retrieve different array of knowledge. The efforts ahead may also include management principles and orientation in order to encourage that captured and shared knowledge is effectively used, and feeds decision making at different levels.	

4. Assessment of the match of the university with the IUC concept

Expected characteristics	Observations
4.1 Institutional characteristics	
Track record or potential of playing a role as driver for change in its surrounding environment, national sub-region and country.	QNU already plays a positive role as driver of change and development, at local and provincial levels as well as for the South-Central Coast and Central Highlands regions. The University is keen to initiate and develop complementary partnerships with other HE bodies, local authorities, private sector and NGOs, in order to become a major player for economic and social development. Vietnam's constant economic and demographic development, implies a huge need for specialized training and experimental and private sector-oriented research; research-based solutions are needed in areas as: food security, agro-farming models, i.t. solutions, engineering, etc. The strategic focus of QNU on application-oriented research is particularly relevant. The assessors consider that QNU has a very high potential of playing a key role as driver of change and development at local, provincial, regional and national levels.
Partner institutions are expected to pursue an active policy of cultural, ethnic, social and philosophical non-discrimination.	Non-discrimination policies at QNU follow the national institutional regulations. There are many ethnic minorities in the South-Central Coast and Central Highlands regions. The assessors noted that QNU leaders appeared sensitive to ethnic minorities' situation and issues and are keen to develop specific research initiatives that may benefit ethnic minorities in particular (in both rural development/farming and social sciences).
Preference is given to those universities that are active in south-south networking such that possible outputs and results may be spread and/or shared with a wider group of institutions in the partner country or in the Global South.	South – South networking and partnership are quite developed at QNU. There are collaborations with other Vietnamese universities, and QNU is developing its network and visibility among the South East Asian academic community. It seems that QNU is privileging partnership with western universities, and the assessors consider that QNU could invest more in expanding its south-south networking capacity in the coming years.

Expected characteristics	Observations
4.2 A basic institutional capacity is required *VLIR-UOS is not a funding agency. Therefore, an IUC partner programme based on academic collaboration, does not cater for: (a) major investments in terms of facilities and infrastructure, (b) institutional funding (salaries or other recurrent costs), and (c) basic institutional functioning.*	
An IUC partner university is expected to be able to function adequately at all levels and be able to direct its own institutional destiny in a coherent manner. This assumes an adequate level of institutional planning and management, and an institutional environment that is transparent.	As observed during the external assessment and documented in the analysis of the five capabilities, QNU is significantly improving its governance capacity. The reform process initiated in 2019, setting up a lean management system and providing more autonomy (managerial leeway) to departments and entities, appears as very promising. QNU management practices usually include concertation, consensus, and incremental change processes. Obviously, QNU leaders still have many challenges to address at all levels. They mostly acknowledge such challenges and demonstrate potential, willingness and high dynamism for improvement. The external assessment concludes that the strengths and ongoing ambitions, as described in the above paragraphs, match well with the requirements of a successful IUC partnership.
A sufficient exposure to research as well as the availability of trained human resources: there is need for institutional stability, and a minimum of own financial means.	The assessment considers that the stability at QNU is very high: the social and economic environment is very promising, and the development perspectives at QNU are appealing. As mentioned in the report, the staff turnover is very low and the human resources are skilled, even if capacity building and specialization are still needed. The own financial means at QNU are not sufficient to conduct cutting edge research. But they do provide an adequate and secured institutional foundation; thus allowing a comprehensive and longer term institutional support program, such as the envisaged IUC partnership, to generate important positive impact.
A readiness to engage in a process of change management.	QNU is already engaged in a large-scale institutional and managerial change process (the ongoing restructuration process). The assessors consider that the approach of QNU leaders in this ongoing reform was relevant and appropriate. QNU leaders (at different levels) showed commitment and readiness to engage in changes and are fully aware of challenges and weaknesses of their institution. The practice of change management at QNU draws inspiration from models that were successful in other Vietnamese universities (i.e. Can Tho University) and applies incremental change concepts. This approach seems to be adapted to the academic environment and to Vietnam's institutional context. The ambition to develop and reform QNU seems to be shared among the different types of actors met during the external assessment, from top management to academic departments and support services. During the institutional self-assessment exercise, and the workshop organized during the external assessment, QNU staff and leaders acknowledged that there is still significant room for improvements.

Expected characteristics	Observations
An IUC partner university is expected to have or work on a gender policy, as well as an integrity policy.	QNU doesn't have a proper comprehensive gender nor integrity policy, it is making efforts to achieve gender balance at all levels of the University. Although the University has a higher proportion of females than males in its staff, the proportion of females involved in different levels of leadership is lower than that of males. Some important decisions have been taken by QNU's management, such as the Decision on the Establishment of Quy Nhon University's Committee for the Advancement of Women. Scientific integrity and anti-corruption measures are included in QNU's financial and administrative management processes and procedures.
English is the IUC working language. Consequently, potential IUC partner universities will be required to demonstrate a sufficient ability to use English as a working language. However, at the level of local programme implementation, other languages can be used (e.g. French in DR Congo, Spanish in Latin America, …).	Vietnamese is the main language for education and administration at QNU. Staff and leaders are fully aware that developing English capacities is a key and unavoidable milestone for its development. The IUC coordinator and most of the self-assessment team members are fluent in English. Nonetheless, the capacity to use English is still to be mainstreamed across the University. Significant efforts are being made to improve the use of English, for research and educational purposes. For instance, some academic and administrative staff have at least a working knowledge of English and some are also taking English language classes. In order to develop English capacities, international mobility for QNU staff is critical. Most academic staff who studied abroad are proficient in English. It shall be noted that many stakeholders consider the use of English for the IUC partnership as an opportunity for the University. Professors and researchers having studied abroad are proficient in English, and some of them already publish and teach in English. The assessors consider that QNU will be able to manage a program like IUC in English and that the IUC partnership would also progressively improve QNU's capacity in this area.

Expected characteristics	Observations
4.3 Institutional characteristics *Irrespective of size and development stage, a fixed annual budget is availed to IUC partner universities through the VLIR-UOS IUC programme. At the same time a situation of over-funding (risk of over-dependence) or under-funding (no impact) has to be avoided.*	
'Reasonable but meaningful': Preference to collaboration with partner universities whereby VLIR-UOS is one of the more important donors ensuring impact and a genuine institutional dialogue, but where on the other hand funding is not disproportionate with the absorption capacity and thus where the IUC funding will not create a single donor-dependency that could jeopardize sustainability.	The assessors consider that QNU matches very well this expected characteristic, due to the following factors: • QNU has a limited sized, regarding number of students, staffs, and geographical area of influence. • QNU is not yet a leading University in Vietnam, its research and training facilities are still limited and will significantly benefit from external support. • QNU is engaged in a process of internal reform. Obtaining a significant and long term institutional support will allow additional contributions to the implementation of the reform and increase the capacity for institutional improvement, and therefore tremendously contribute to the success of this process. • The level of additional external funding at QNU is still low, comparing to other Vietnamese universities. So IUC would have a real and important added value for QNU development in the coming decade. Nonetheless, the assessors consider that further efforts towards ensuring the success, cost-effectiveness and accountability of externally funded projects should be made. Further capacity building and guidance in planning and managing large and institutionally embedded external funding would be relevant and could be included in IUC preparation and start-up phases.
4.4 History of cooperation	
Preference might be given to a partnership that could build up on existing links with one or more Flemish universities and university colleges, but only if it adds on to the quality of the proposal.	So far, the University has been implementing two South Initiative projects and one TEAM project with the academic support from KU Leuven under the financial support of VLIR-UOS. Also, some academic staff of QNU have been or are currently working on joint research projects or calls with Flemish Universities, and some have been trained or benefited from mobility experiences at KU Leuven and/or other Flemish Universities.

Expected characteristics	Observations
4.4 Partnership and ownership	
In order to achieve institutional impact at level of a partner programme should be sufficiently broad based and provide multi-disciplinary opportunities, i.e. not be limited to one department or be very discipline specific. IUC partner programmes have a need for and generate interdisciplinary cooperation. At the level of the selected partner universities this could imply a preference for so-called 'complete' universities. However, exceptions can occur (e.g. in countries where universities are organised by discipline) taking into account the extent to which the concerned partner university is meeting other criteria or considerations.	With 16 Faculties and departments in exact, experimental and social sciences, QNU is a complete University. With a strategy to deliver services and enhance local actors and communities, QNU aims to support comprehensive and sustainable development in the South-Central Coast and Central Highlands regions. As a provincial and limited size university, it appears that QNU is quite advanced in developing multi-disciplinary research and education initiatives and programs. QNU's ongoing institutional and organisational reform process will certainly enhance this dimension.

Conclusion on the match with the IUC-concept

The external assessors believe that QNU's current situation, as well as Vietnam's social and economic context match very well with the IUC partnership concept. The following factors justify this conclusion:

- QNU is engaged in a promising reform process, and its leadership is deeply committed to implement and benefit from the new organization and the lean management model.
- QNU is keen to specialize the University in applied, solution-oriented, research and service delivery to the community. Such specialization appears as highly relevant within the local and national context and would provide a great added value for the University as well as for local communities.
- There is a huge need, among economic actors at local and national levels, for applied research solutions and business-oriented research and education programs. Vietnam is one of the most promising emerging economies in Asia and worldwide. It would be a great asset for the IUC programme, in terms of impact on development and knowledge production and dissemination, to include QNU in the programme. For example, food security and safety, including value chains in food production, is a key and appealing area for applied research in Vietnam; while Flemish universities would also benefit from collaboration in these areas (e.g. Ghent University being one of the global leading universities in these fields).
- QNU has a great potential for improvement in many fields, as well as highly motivated human resources. The IUC support could for example contribute to much needed improvements of QNU lab facilities and research equipment.
- The assessors do not see any significant risk of dependency of QNU to the IUC program, as QNU already benefited from external support and as the internal funding (public allocation + tuition fees) is already important, compared to the envisaged additional VLIR_UOS funding.

5. Relevance and potential of the proposed IUC programme

What is the match between the university's actual capacities and strategic views and the proposed IUC programme?
Based on the IA, does the proposed programme demonstrate relevance and potential in the choice of domains of change?

The IUC programme proposed by QNU is "Improving livelihoods and living conditions by the sustainable development of the South-Central Coast and Central Highlands of Vietnam through enhancing the capacity of Quy Nhon University". This programme shall contribute to sustainable development of the region by boosting the livelihoods of local farmers and living conditions of local residents. The academic area of the IUC programme focuses on applied research in the fields of food science, environment and renewable energies.

The following strategies will be implemented:

At *research and external stakeholder* level

(i) improving flood early warning and climate change adaptation capabilities;

(ii) enhancing the efficiency of solar energy and biogas production used in farming by employing novel nanomaterials;

(iii) increasing the value of regional fruits by using natural-based post-harvest processes; and

(iv) maximizing local farmers' benefits by consulting and instructing them about risk assessment and risk mitigation through applying research-based insights and innovation embedded in a safe agricultural supply chain concept.

At the *QNU institutional* level,

(i) establishing an effective and efficient waste management system for the entire university;

(ii) modernizing and digitalizing university student services including implementing an e-mail system, e-learning, and an e-library.

The assessors consider that the match between (a) QNU's actual capacities and strategic views and (b) the proposed IUC programme is very high. The following findings and observations support such a conclusion:

- Applied research and service to local communities in the Central Region and the Highlands, which are core aspects of the IUC programme, are two of QNU's key strategic specialization targets, as stated in the Chapter 3.
- Natural sciences, applied physics and chemistry, food sciences and related disciplines are among the most dynamic at QNU.
- As mentioned below, QNU has sufficient capacity to manage and implement the IUC programme, while the current level of development of QNU is adequate for fully benefitting from IUS-support. Thus the IUC-partnership would provide a great added value for QNU and contribute to a big push forward in the University's institutional development. The IUC programme would also be particularly timely as QNU is engaged, since 2019, in a comprehensive internal reform process, and as national HE policies recently changed with the aim to support the further development of Vietnamese universities.

- As developed in Chapter 3 / domain 3, QNU has sufficient networking capacity to conduct the IUC programme in a multi-partnership set-up. This network includes national public bodies (MOET, Ministry of Sciences and Technology), local public authorities (Bind Dinh People's Committee, other local people's committees), local organizations and SMEs, as well as national and international enterprises. At an academic and international level, QNU's network includes VLIR-UOS, UNESCO, Korea Institute of Science and Technology, Université de Limoges, etc.)

The proposed programme demonstrates a high relevance and potential in the choice of domains of change; food safety and security, environment and renewable energies are highly relevant in Vietnam, especially in Central Vietnam and Highlands.

Food safety linked to economic competitiveness and development

Vietnam is striving to become a main food producer and exporter. However, there is a technology gap that hinders this development: still few Vietnamese companies are compliant with food safety regulations and norms imposed by Europe. Many Vietnamese agri-food products were banned from the EU because of exceeding mycotoxins content. This requires improving local and national technology in food safety and quality management, specially focusing on food industry, and on ensuring food quality and safety along production and distribution. So far, in Vietnam this discipline had not been widely trained and educated, even though it was already getting special attention of government and society. Training and education on advanced technology and quality assurance in the field of bio-food tech-management is thus highly needed in Vietnam.

As previously mentioned, Vietnam is a middle-income country. This implies changes in economic activities and perspectives. Vietnam used to export primary goods (agricultural produce such as coffee, tea, rice, etc.) that were transformed abroad, with limited added value generated in Vietnam. Since a couple of years, Vietnam is increasing its industrial capacity. Many industries, both Vietnamese and international companies, produce (exportable) manufactured goods in Vietnam. Support to the development of the food processing industry is a national policy priority. Thus, Vietnam needs a wide range of highly qualified human resources that are lacking now (technicians, engineers, quality managers and controllers). To support this development, universities shall improve the training of students and professionals in these fields, as well as related applied research initiatives and solutions.

Environment, biodiversity and climate change

Environment is also a major issue in Vietnam; soil, water and air pollution, as well as related risks, are among the worst in the world. The current challenges are due to specific factors as (i) the effects of the Vietnam War and (ii) the rapid and uncontrolled industrialization starting in late 1980s. According to the State of the Environment 2001, published by the government, the main issues are: land degradation, forest degradation, loss of biodiversity, water pollution, air pollution and solid waste management. More recently, climate change was added as a major concern; considering that Vietnam is one of the country's most seriously impacted by climate change, according to a World Bank study in 2007. The air pollution in Vietnam is also one of the highest in the world and is increasing rapidly.

These issues dramatically affect and threaten the bio diversity in Vietnam, which is still one of the richest in the world. Vietnam is within the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot (IBBH). The country is ranked as the 16th most biodiversity rich country in the world. This means that environmental issues affect Vietnam for sure, but also the bio diversity at a global scale.

Food quality and environmental issues impacting public health

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that Vietnam loses VND 340 billion (USD 15.96 million) from food poisoning annually. Environmental issues affected people's health, including through food. Some major sanitary disasters have been reported in the past few years . According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Vietnam has one of the highest rates of cancer in the world. In Vietnam

“agents from unsafe food take the lead among the carcinogenic factors - accounting for about 35% of cases, while genetic factors account for only 5-10%” reported Dr. Nguyen Ba Duc in 2016, Deputy Chairman of the Vietnam Cancer Association.

Improving local livelihood and minority’s development

Except main cities such as Danang, Hue and Dalat, the Central Vietnam and Highlands have long been apart from Vietnam’s rapid economic development. The situation is changing since a few years; a lot of economic and social challenges must be addressed to ensure that everyone, including the most disenfranchised populations, may benefit from economic development. The geographic situation of the highlands implies that some communities, including minorities, are isolated. Therefore, economic development must be apprehended as an opportunity but also as a risk for these communities (in terms of social cohesion, local culture, etc.). It is critical now for Vietnam to develop, and experience with, appropriate models for sustainable development of local communities.

6. Overall conclusions

The learnings of the institutional assessment process

The self-assessment exercise has been conducted in a very consistent and thorough manner by a well-selected group of 15 key staff, appropriately representing different components the University, including top management leaders. The self-assessment report is well-developed, complete and detailed (covering the different aspects for each of the 5 capabilities and their domains). The assessors consider that most of the information provided in the self-assessment report is trustworthy. Also, the selection of maturity levels was rather realistic, even if the assessors proposed some lower scores for several domains. It shows that QNU leaders and staff are rather-well aware of the strengths, weaknesses and challenges of their University. The Self-Assessment process and outcomes, as well as the very well-organized preparation of the external assessment exercise, demonstrate the high level commitment of QNU.

The external assessment had to be re-shaped and postponed several times due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Originally planned in March 2020, it was organised in July 2020. The national assessor carried out all on site data collection activities from 22nd to 30th of July. The international assessor participated remotely in briefings, debriefings and in key interviews. The two assessors jointly prepared and facilitated the institutional workshop with the self-assessment team. There was no reluctance from QNU members in raising and discussing institutional and organisational challenges, but rather eagerness in getting external feedback on QNU' strengths and challenges.

Relevance and potential of QNU for the IUC program cooperation

As explained in chapter 4, QNU appropriately meets the expected characteristics of an IUC partner. QNU is an emerging and proactive regional University committed to develop and benefit from its full potential. QNU already developed an ambitious, yet realistic, strategy that matches well with the IUC programme concepts and ambitions. An IUC partnership, providing continued support for over 10 years, would be crucial in the implementation of QNU reforms and strategies.

In addition to being able to contribute to QNU development, developing a structural partnership with QNU will also provide opportunities for Flemish universities and their teams and individual scholars to extend their research portfolio into key research and development questions and challenges for Vietnam, but also at a global level (i.e. in biodiversity). The proposed program appears to provide good potential for a real win-win partnership for both QNU and Flemish Universities, also benefitting the communities and sustainable development at local, provincial and regional levels.

7. Annexures

7.1 Checklist collection of additional data and documentation

Name of the university	**Quy Nhon University**
Status – date:	**29/ 07/ 2020**

Data	**Available**	**Partially available**	**Not available**	**Where to find** (institutional factsheet, self-assessment report, other,)
Overview of all educational programmes	x			University's website, Admissions Handbook 2020 [D1.1.P1.2]
Number of students enrolled for each educational programme and for each level (Bachelor, master, PhD)	x			Institutional factsheet, (Databases provided by the Office of Undergraduate Training and Office of Postgraduate Training)
Employment data of graduates		x		Institutional factsheet, (Databases provided by the Center for Student Support and Business Relations)
Overview of academic research production per relevant unit (faculty, department, other)	x			Institutional factsheet, (Databases provided by the Office of Research Affairs and International Relations
Overview of recent external funding	x			Institutional factsheet, (Databases provided by the Office of Planning and Finance)
Data on e-learning use, use of libraries, IT support systems, etc.		x		Self- assessment report (Domain 4.3R2) and documents therein (D4.3.R2.3, D4.3.R2.4)

Data	Available	Partially available	Not available	**Where to find** (institutional factsheet, self-assessment report, other,)
Total annual budget	x			Institutional factsheet, Financial situation in the school year 2018-2019 [**D1.2.R3.1]** (Databases provided by the Office of Planning and Finance)
% of annual budget government funded	x			Institutional factsheet (Databases provided by the Office of Planning and Finance)
% of annual budget from tuition fees	x			Institutional factsheet (Databases provided by the Office of Planning and Finance)
Total number of staff (M/F[2])	x			Institutional factsheet (Databases provided by the Office of HR)
Total number of academic staff (M/F)	x			Institutional factsheet (Databases provided by the Office of HR)
Number of Master degree holders in academic staff (M/F)	x			Institutional factsheet, Self-assessment report (Databases provided by the Office of HR);
Number of PhD holders in academic staff (M/F)	x			Institutional factsheet, Self-assessment report (Databases provided by the Office of HR);
Teaching load (percentage of time of academic staff spent on teaching)	x			Institutional factsheet, (Databases provided by the Office of HR)
Academic staff / student ratio	x			Institutional factsheet (Databases provided by the Office of Undergraduate Training, Postgraduate Training, and HR)

[2] MF: please disaggregate data (numbers) by gender (males / females)

7.2 Overview of key additional data collected

Data field	Data 2018	Data 2019	Data 2020	Comment (if any)
Total number of students enrolled	14,335	13,460	NA	Data for 2020 is not given because the data for fall semester are not available yet.
• Bachelor - female	8,733	8,387	NA	
• Bachelor - male	4,609	4,036	NA	
• Master - female	582	552	NA	
• Master – male	391	467	NA	
• PhD - female	9	10	NA	
• PhD - male	11	8	NA	
• Bachelor, master, PhD – female	9,324	8,949	NA	
% of graduates employed within 12 months after graduation	87,01%	87,10%	91,32%	
% of graduates employed within 24 months after graduation	This survey has not been done yet.			
Total annual budget (amount in million VND)	211,987.21	298,045.61	257,100.45	
% of annual budget government funded	65,008.60 (30.67%)	74,317.00 (24.93%)	65,420.00 (25.45%)	
% of annual budget from tuition fees	111,104.00 (52,41%)	138,035.30 (46.31%)	128,740.00 (50.07%)	
% of annual budget from external funding (including research funding and income from services)	35,784.61 (16,92%)	85,693.31 (28.76%)	62,940.45 (24.48%)	
Total number of staff		747	734	
• # female staff		409	401	
• # male staff		338	333	
Total number of academic staff		523	511	
• # female academic staff		258	256	
• # male academic staff		265	255	

Data field	Data 2018	Data 2019	Data 2020	Comment (if any)
Number of Master degree holders in academic staff		335	321	
• # female of Master degree holders in academic staff		193	188	
• # male of Master degree holders in academic staff		142	133	
Number of PhD holders in academic staff		152	187	
• # female of PhD holders in academic staff		54	66	
• # male of PhD holders in academic staff		98	121	
Teaching load (percentage of time of academic staff spent on teaching)		At least 15%	At least 15%	
Academic staff / student ratio		1/25.7	1/26.1	

7.3 Overview of internal and external stakeholders met by the external assessment team

Date	Type of meeting	Stakeholders met
22/07/2020	Independent meetings	Head of Testing and Quality Assurance Office – Mr. NGUYEN Huu Tien Head of Research Affairs and International Relations Office – Assoc. Prof. NGUYEN Tien Trung Head of Center for Student Support & Business Relations – Mr. NGUYEN Khac Khanh
23/07/2020	Focus group interviews	Group 1 (directors of institutes, centers of the university) Director of Library – Mr. LE Thanh Hai Director of Center for Information Technology and Communication – Dr. NGUYEN Thanh Dat Director of Applied Research Institute for Science and Technology (ARIST) – Dr. LE Thi Kim Nga Director of Institute of Educational Sciences – Assoc. Prof. NGUYEN Phi Hung Group 2 (heads of functional units of the university) Head of Administration Office – Dr. MAI Xuan Mien Head of Facilities Office – Dr. DOAN Duc Tung Head of Undergraduate Training Office – Dr. Le Xuan Vinh Deputy Head of Postgraduate Training Office – Dr. NGUYEN Huu Xuan Head of Human Resource Office – Dr. HA Thanh Hai Head of Planning and Finance Office – Mr. PHAN Vu Hanh
24/07/2020	Collective meetings with a sample of non-academic staffs	Group 1: 03 administration staffs of Faculty of Natural Sciences Ms. PHAM Thi Minh Tam Ms. UNG Thi Hue Ms. DANG Thi Ngoc Thanh Group 2: 05 staffs from central administration Ms. NGUYEN Thi Kieu Thu Ms. PHAN Thuy Nga Mr. TRAN The Hung Ms. PHAM Thi Dieu Quyen Mr. TRAN Quoc Cuong Group 3: 03 staffs from another services (library, lab, …) Ms. NGUYEN Thi Ha Ms. DOAN Thi Suong Mr. NGUYEN Thanh Tung
13:00–17:00 pm	Focus group interviews	14 Deans / vice deans / head of departments Dr. NGUYEN Le Tuan – Dean, Faculty of Natural Sciences Dr. NGO Anh Tu – Vice Dean, Faculty of Natural Sciences Dr. DINH Anh Tuan – Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanity Dr. NGUYEN Doan Thuan – Vice Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanity Assoc. Dr. NGUYEN Thi Viet Nga – Vice Dean, Faculty of Teacher Education Assoc. Prof. LE Cong Trinh – Head, Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Date	Type of meeting	Stakeholders met
		Dr. NGUYEN Thanh Binh – Vice Head, Department of Information Technology Dr. HO Thi Minh Phuong – Vice Head, Department of Political Science - Law and State Management Dr. NGUYEN Sy Duc – Head, Department of Physical and National Defence Education Dr. TRAN Thi Giang – Head, Department of Primary and Preschool Teacher Education Assoc. Prof. TRAN Thi Cam Thanh – Head, Department of Economics and Accounting Assoc. Prof. HUYNH Duc Hoan – Head, Department of Engineering and Technology Assoc. Prof. NGUYEN Thi Thu Hien – Head, Department of Foreign Languages Dr. PHAM Thi Bich Duyen – Head, Department of Finance, Banking and Business Administration
27/07/2020	Focus group interviews	Group 1: a sample of undergraduate students: Mr. TRAN Dinh Thinh – Chemistry Teacher Education Ms. HUYNH Ngoc Huong Hoa – Mathematics Teacher Education Mr. NGUYEN Thi Thanh Tuyen – Community Service Ms. DOAN Thi Truc My – Primary Teacher Education Ms. HA Thi Thu Mo – English Language Mr. NGUYEN Nhat Nam - Applied Mathematics Mr. TRAN Van Trung – Electronics and Telecommunication Ms. DO Thi Thanh Vi – Accounting Ms. Y Blô Niê – Finance and Banking Ms. TRAN Thi Tu Quyen – Business Administration Mr. Nguyen Huu Dang – Physical Teacher Education Mr. LE Van Loi – Information Technology Mr. NGUYEN Trung Luan – State Management Ms. BUI Li Nhan – Chemical Engineering

Date	Type of meeting	Stakeholders met
		Group 2: a sample of PhD candidates and few Master students: Ms. PHAN Dang Cam Tu – PhD candidate – Theoretical and Physical Chemistry Ms. NGUYEN Thi Lan – PhD candidate – Theoretical and Physical Chemistry Mr. NGUYEN Ngoc Tri – PhD candidate – Theoretical and Physical Chemistry Mr. NGUYEN Long Phi – Master student – Primary Mathematics Method Mr. NGUYEN Tien Dung – Master student – Economic Management Mr. BUI Tuan Kiet – Master student – Economic Management Mr. NGUYEN Tien Dung – Master student – Economic Management Ms. TRAN Thi My Hoa – Master student – Education Management Mr. NGO Van Tam – Master student – Telecommunications Engineering Mr. HUYNH Xuan Tan – Master student – Natural Geography Mr. NGUYEN Chi Thanh – Master student – Computer Science Mr. NGUYEN Hoang Vu – Master student – Business Administration Mr. NGUYEN Tien Dung – Master student – Economic Management Mr. DUONG Quoc Tram – Master student – Economic Management Mr. LUONG Dinh Tien – Master student – Politics Ms. DINH Thi Huyen – Master student – Experimental Biology
		Group 3: a sample of academic staff Dr. NGO Anh Tu, Department of Geology – Resource and Environment Management Dr. PHAN Thanh Nam, Department of Mathematics and Statistics Dr. PHAN Thanh Hai, Department of Physics and Materials Sciences Dr. HOANG Duc An, Department of Chemical Engineering and Food Technology Dr. HUYNH Thi Thanh Tra, Department of Applied Biology and Agriculture Dr. NGUYEN Thanh Binh, Department of Information Technology Dr. TRUONG Thi Thanh Phuong, Department of Economics and Accounting
28/08/2020	Independent meeting	Vice Director of Provincial Farmer Union of Binh Dinh province – Mr. DO Thien Che
	Group meeting	With representative of some external stakeholders: Director of Quality Control Office, Binh Dinh Pharmaceutical and Medical Equipment Joint Stock Company (Bidiphar) – Mr. TRAN Dinh Khai Vice Director of Department of Science and Technology of Binh Dinh province – Mr. NGUYEN Huu Ha Director of Department of Enviromental Protection – Dr. NGUYEN Viet Cuong Representative of the Climate Change Coordination Office of Binh Dinh Province – Mr. NGUYEN Vo Anh Tuan
	Group meeting	With some members of the top management of the University, including Chancellor, Chairman of the University Council - Assoc. Prof. NGUYEN Quang Ngoan Rector - Assoc. Prof. DO Ngoc My) Vice rector - Assoc. Prof. NGUYEN Dinh Hien

7.4 Detailed scoring card – maturity levels per domain and aspect

Capability – Domain - Aspect	*Score*
1. Capability to achieve coherence	
Domain 1.1 There is a shared and coherent vision and strategy on university/faculty level	**4**
P1 - The university has a clear written vision and a mission statement which are widely known.	4+
P2 - The university has a clearly written strategic plan in line with the vision and mission statement which guides work and is reviewed annually.	4
P3 - The University's strategic plan is based on a systemic analysis of the university's context, capacities and potential roles.	5
P4 - The faculties have developed a faculty-level strategy in coherence with the vision and mission statement of the university.	4
R5 - There is coherence between the mission, the strategies, resources, processes, concrete actions and results of the university.	4
Domain 1.2. Existence of a set of simple principles which govern the university's/faculty's operations	**4**
P1 - Existence of a set of clear values shared among board/ management, staff and students of the university	4+
P2 - Existence of a set of policies and processes/procedures which govern the university's operations and are widely known in the university	3+
R3 - The university and faculty's operations benefit from principle-based governance.	4
Domain 1.3. University's/faculty's governance/management structures are effective	**4**
P1 - Existence of an organigram at university/faculty level	5
P2 - Board composition and functioning: the university has a diverse and functional Board that meets quarterly (either face-to-face or virtually)	4
P3 - The university has an annual work plan linked to the strategy and budget, with measurable results, activities, timelines, responsibilities and indicators	4
P4 - The work plan has been developed collaboratively, is monitored and informs decision-making	4
R5 - The strategic direction, support and accountability of the Board contributes to the university's performance and reputation	4
R6 - There is coherence, thus absence of conflicting visions, in the management, which contributes to the university's performance and reputation	5
R7 - The university adequately balances participatory approaches with effective decision-making	3
2. Capability to deliver on development relevant objectives and commitments	
Domain 2.1. The university provides high quality, development relevant education	**3+**
P1 - The university has adequate systems for curriculum development with due attention for learning outcomes and quality	3+
P2 - The university has clear quality assurance standards for teaching which are adhered to	3+
P3 - The university makes clear efforts to evaluate curricula in terms of labour-market needs and relevance	4
P4 - The university has adequate systems for adapting curricula, teaching and learning methods to maximise developmental relevance of provided education	4
R5 - The university's educational programmes are accredited	3+
R6 - The education provided by the university is perceived by key stakeholders to be of high quality and relevant for development	3+

Capability – Domain - Aspect	*Score*
Domain 2.2 The university is a multidisciplinary institution that produces cost-effective significant amounts of high-quality research	**4**
P1 - Academic staff have the time, capacity and incentives to conduct research	4
P2 - The university organises academic conferences and seminars and/or is sufficiently represented at external conferences and seminars.	3+
P3 - University's/faculty's research is conducted in a multi-, inter or transdisciplinary approach	4
P4 - The university has adequate systems to prioritise research projects based on their potential to generate added societal and developmental value	4
P5 - The university has adequate systems to assure cost-effectiveness of its research	4
R6 - The university has produced an adequate number of high-quality and appreciated academic publications.	4
R7 - The research conducted by the university provides cost-effective research outcomes that are relevant for development.	4+
R8 - The university has and uses a number of flagship research centers	4
Domain 2.3 The university is perceived as a real actor and driver of Change	**3+**
P1 - Academic staff have the time, capacity and incentives to disseminate results of their research	3
P2 - The university actively contributes to public policy debates (local, district, national and/or international level)	4
P3 - The university's research and education processes facilitate the emergence of innovative solutions (relevant for communities, private sector, etc.)	3+
P4 - The university supports the dissemination of new ideas, concepts and research results (by setting up processes, extension service, by incl. it in staff performance reviews, etc.)	3
R5 - Research results are used by external stakeholders (incl. spin-offs)	4
R6 - Innovative solutions that emerge from the university are adopted and used by relevant stakeholders (uptake)	4
R7 - The university is effective in contributing to public policy changes (e.g. in higher education, public health, etc.)	4
R8 - The university's research and education generates clear added societal value	3+
3. Capability to relate to external stakeholders	
Domain 3.1. The university creates the condition for effective network development and is aware of the importance of formal institutional alliances	**4**
P1 - An external communication strategy exists and is used to communicate effectively with key stakeholders (government, community, private sector, funders, …)	3
P2 - The university invests in communication capacity at individual and organisational level	3+
P3 – The university creates the conditions for effective partnerships in its vision and strategy. The board and management is able to balance individual incentives with organisational performance	4
P4 - The university has a strategy to network and relate to other relevant stakeholders (incl. on extension services to external stakeholders (extension workers, TTO, communication, etc.); on advisory and/or consultancy services to external stakeholders; on (inter-institutional) networks)	4+
P5 - The university allocates adequate resources for networking	4
R6 - The university is knowledgeable about and adequately uses the strategies and work of other organizations; consults and collaborates with partners when planning/ implementing	4+
Domain 3.2. The university has a vast network which is actively used	**3+**
P1 - Networking activities are of good quality (e.g. frequency & depth of contacts)	3+
P2 - Habit of networking is adopted by academic staff of the university	3+

Capability – Domain - Aspect	*Score*
P3 - The university systematically involves external stakeholders when curricula or courses are developed	3+
P4 - The university possesses adequately trained personnel to do networking and communication	3
R5 - The university has extensive and effective networks with a) Private stakeholders b) Bi- and multilateral donors, foundations, etc. c) Political stakeholders d) Actors within civil society e) Policy makers f) Alumni g) Universities/faculties and training institutes/research institutions in different countries h) Other relevant stakeholders in private/public sector i) Employers (to know their needs)	4
R6 - The university uses its network to provide extension services (as intermediary), advisory and/or consultancy services	4
R7 - The university is well known and viewed as a constructive and empowering presence by the community	4+
Domain 3.3 The university obtains additional project funding	**4**
P1 - The university has strategies for internationalisation, understands the local and international funding environment and has a resource mobilization strategy	4
P2 - The university staff are adequately supported in raising and managing external funds (proposal writing, grant management, etc.)	3+
P3 - The university actively monitors externally funded projects (both administratively and content-wise)	4+
R4 - The university successfully raises significant and diverse external funds on a regular basis	4
R5 - The university delivers on the results agreed upon in the funding agreements	4+
4. Capability to act and commit	
Domain 4.1. The university is able to make and implement decisions	**4**
P1 - Delegation of responsibilities: persons with a hierarchic role are empowered to make decisions and are able to implement decisions in time.	4
P2 - The university has effective systems, structures and processes (with a proper legal basis) to engage and commit in a timely manner	3+
R3 - The leadership of the university is effective in timely and appropriate decision-making	4+
Domain 4.2. The university has adequate and well managed Human Resources	**4-**
P1 - The university's hiring process is inclusive across gender, race and religion	3+
P2 - The university possesses enough adequately trained personnel for conducting educational programmes (BA, MA and PhD) using state-of the-art pedagogic approaches	3+
P3 - The university possesses enough adequately trained personnel for doing state-of-the-art research.	4
P4 - Further training for local staff to strengthen competencies in terms of education and research are available (incl. proposal writing, research management, curriculum development, laboratory maintenance, etc.)	3+
P5 - There is sufficient administrative staff in relation to university's needs	4+
P6 - The university has a clear, transparent system for staff development, staff promotion, mobility, performance reviews, etc.	4
P7 - The university has mechanisms for conflict resolution, complaint management, etc.	4+
R8 - There is a relative gender balance at all levels of the university	3+
R9 - The university succeeds in attracting and retaining motivated and skilled staff	4+
Domain 4.3 The university has an adequate infrastructure	**3**
P1 - Availability of flexible research funds (e.g. for setting up small experiments)	3+
R2 - The university has well performing ICT systems and services (e.g. access to internet for its staff and students, IT systems support for the core processes of the university - (e.g. student administration, library services, etc.) - functional distance education systems).	3

Capability – Domain - Aspect	*Score*
R3 - Technological facilities are available to staff and students (e.g. technology to collect data, data analysis, libraries, specialised software, communication platform, intranet, etc,)	3
R4 - Availability of adequate and accessible space (classrooms, labs, etc.) to conduct research and deliver classes	3+
R5 - The laboratories at the university are adequate to conduct state-of-the art research	3
R6 - Infrastructure and equipment is adequate with regard to staff's technical expertise	3
Domain 4.4 The university has adequate and well managed financial resources	**Availability: 3 Manage-ment 4+**
P1 - The university has performant, smooth financial management systems, with sufficient checks and balances	4+
R2 - Availability of adequate financial resources at department /faculty level and at university level	3-
R3 - The university is appreciated for its management of external funding	3+
R4 - The university is financially compliant to statutory and legal regulation	4+
Domain 4.5. The university has effective systems and processes for administration; and procurement and logistics	**4-**
P1 - The university has effective administrative systems, structures and processes	3+
P2 – The university has effective systems, structures and processes for procurement and logistics	4-
R3 – The administration of the university is adequate with regard to its mission and strategy	4+
R4 – The university effectively organises procurement and logistics	4
Domain 4.6 The university has effective systems and processes for project manage-ment and quality assurance	**3**
P1 - The university has adequate systems, structures and processes for project management	3
P2 - Clear quality standards and expectations are formulated for service delivery	3
P3 - Quality standards and quality performance are communicated to the stakeholders involved and to the public at large	3
R4 - The university ensures the efficient use of its resources to maximize the achievement of its outputs and results	3+
R5 - The internal and external service delivery of the university is of high quality	3+
5. Capability to adapt and self-renew	
Domain 5.1. effective management in shifting contexts	**4+**
P1 - The management has an understanding of shifting contexts.	5
P2 - The management has experience in adapting to changed contexts	4
P3 - The management has experience in facilitating change	3+
P4 - The university and the faculties have developed scenarios for risk mitigation and insuring resilience in case of major setbacks	3
R5 - The university adequately assesses trends or changes and effectively anticipates or adapts to major changes.	4+
Domain 5.2. The university is continuously adapting and renewing	**4**
P1 - The university has limited levels of hierarchy (too many levels of hierarchy as a possible constraint to adopt changes quickly)	4-
P2 - The university has a healthy feedback culture which allows to learn out of past mistakes and successes.	4-
P3 - The university has an incentive system which fosters innovation, creativity and change	4-
P4 - The university has a training protocol and a HR development plan which encourages learning and exchange.	4

Capability – Domain - Aspect	*Score*
P5 - The university has adequate processes in place to incorporate new research findings on a continuous basis into curricula or courses.	4-
P6 - The university's research processes allow easy accommodation of external research requests.	4-
R7 - The university effectively balances stability with innovation and renewal	5
Domain 5.3 The university has an adequate knowledge management system	**3+**
P1 - The university has an active knowledge management system to learn from past mistakes and successes	3
P2 - Knowledge exchange is valued and a range of appropriate mechanisms exist and are used for knowledge exchange	4
P3 - The university has a repository and system to capture, document, and disseminate knowledge for program improvement, organizational learning and sharing with external stakeholders (shared folders, library and publication outlets-print, electronic or face-to- face- workshops, seminars etc.).	3
R4 - Staff generate, learn, share, and use relevant knowledge for the benefit of individuals, units and the organization.	4
R5 - Evaluation contributes to organizational learning: Programs are evaluated and evaluation findings are discussed, disseminated and inform organizational learning	3+

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