NOVA University Lisbon

EVALUATION REPORT

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1. Introduction

This report is the result of the evaluation of NOVA University Lisbon, Portugal. The evaluation took place during two visits, the first, online, in April 2024 and the second, onsite, in June 2024.

1.1 Institutional Evaluation Programme

The Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) is an independent membership service of the European University Association (EUA) that offers evaluations to support the participating institutions in the continuing development of their strategic management and internal quality culture. IEP is a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and is listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

The distinctive features of IEP are:

- A strong emphasis on the self-evaluation phase

- A European and international perspective

- A peer-review approach

- A support for improvement

The focus of IEP is the institution as a whole and not the individual study programmes or units. It focuses upon:

- Decision-making processes and institutional structures and effectiveness of strategic management

- Relevance of internal quality processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision-making and strategic management as well as perceived gaps in these internal mechanisms.

All aspects of the evaluation are guided by four key questions, which are based on a "fitness for (and of) purpose" approach:

- What is the institution trying to do?

- How is the institution trying to do it?

- How does the institution know it works?

- How does the institution change in order to improve?

1.2 NOVA University Lisbon's profile

NOVA University Lisbon is the youngest of Lisbon's three state universities and was founded in 1973. NOVA is a decentralised university composed of nine organic units (schools and faculties) which enjoy a high level of autonomy and are geographically spread across the metropolitan area of Lisbon. Currently NOVA University Lisbon has 24.669 enrolled students and 1.760 teachers and researchers (full-time equivalent). Since 2017 it operates under the status of a public foundation, which gives a

higher level of autonomy in terms of asset and human resources management in comparison to non-foundation universities in Portugal. This means, for instance, that the university can sell real estate assets without the need for government authorisation. Administrative staff are hired under private law, and academic staff can be hired either under public[1] or private law. A key change is that it gives the university flexibility in setting salaries.

1.3 The evaluation process

The self-evaluation process was undertaken by a self-evaluation group (SEG), set up at top level, appointed by the rector and subdivided into two sub-groups: the strategic committee, composed of the rectoral team (three vice-rectors and six pro-rectors) and the nine deans of the organic units (OUs); and an operational commission, composed of one Vice-Rector for Strategic Planning and Quality Management (who coordinated the group and was also the liaison person), one faculty member, one researcher, six non-academic staff and one student.

This self-evaluation exercise followed another one from the Portuguese national accreditation agency *Agência de Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior* (A3ES) that took place during 2023. The composition of the SEG ensured input and involvement from all OUs, and the SEG members were entrusted to gather contributions from their OU and services to incorporate into the self-evaluation report (SER). Student involvement in the self-evaluation process seemed limited to the student representative on the SEG, and no survey or formal consultation with the broader student community took place specifically for this purpose. However, it should be noted that students had already been involved in the A3ES national accreditation process.

The rector followed the work of the two SEG sub-groups, and the SER final version reflects his contributions and approval.

The self-evaluation report of the NOVA University Lisbon, together with the appendices, was sent to the evaluation team in March 2024. The visit of the evaluation team to NOVA University Lisbon took place from 3 to 7 June 2024. In between the online meetings and the site visit NOVA University Lisbon provided the evaluation team with some additional documentation.

The evaluation team (hereinafter named the team) consisted of:

- Brian Norton, Professor and former President, Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland, team chair

- Melita Kovačević, Professor and former Vice-Rector for Research and Technology, University of Zagreb, Croatia

- Marta Mendel, Associate Professor and Vice-Rector for international cooperation, Warsaw University of Life Sciences, Poland

- Ondrej Havelka, student, PhD candidate, Technical University of Liberec, Czechia

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[1] See EUA, University Autonomy in Europe IV, April 2024, Country Profiles (III), Portugal, p.56

2. Governance and institutional decision-making

The governance set-up of NOVA University Lisbon reflects the attempt to create an overall institutional level approach, with the central level coordinating the organic units (OUs) that remain highly autonomous in many areas. The overall strategic plan for the institution is a good attempt to provide a common framework for the university. First attempts have been made to move towards common systems (such as for student data), but implementation remains complex.

Complex governance set-up with unclear feedback loops and monitoring

The governance set-up and institutional decision-making of NOVA Lisbon University as a decentralised institution is rather complex. The university provided an overview of the governance structure in the annex of the SER as well as a response to the request for additional information. The governance set-up is composed of the following bodies:

A General Council at institutional level is composed of 27 elected members (with candidates' lists organised at OU level) including four students and eight external members. The General Council is the highest body of the university, and the rector reports to the General Council. The main tasks of the General Council are to elect the rector, decide on the university budget and approve tuition fees for master's and doctoral programmes (bachelor's and integrated master's programmes fees are regulated).[2] External members are appointed upon proposal by another General Council member and with support of at least five General Council members. There is no formal induction for new members of the General Council.

A Board of Deans composed of the deans of all nine OUs, chaired by the rector and involving vice-rectors (without voting rights) as well as pro-rectors when the subject discussed is related to their portfolio (without voting rights). There is no student representation in the Board of Deans. All other councils: the Education Council, the Quality Council, the Strategic Research Council, as well as the Value Creation Council are chaired by members of the rectoral team and include representatives from all OUs, appointed by the respective dean. The Board of Deans is a body of consultation and support to the rector in the management of NOVA University Lisbon, ensuring a permanent link between the central government and the government of the university's units. However, all strategic decisions and oversight of NOVA University Lisbon is ultimately dependant on approval by the General Council.

The Quality Council is composed of the vice-deans of each OU and provides recommendations to the rector on the activities' quality monitoring, namely data to collect and to analyse, procedures and the implementation of improvement actions. Students may be invited to the sessions if deemed relevant.

The Education Council is composed of the vice-deans for learning and teaching of each OU. The Education Council discusses learning and teaching matters and practices as well as the articulation of courses between OUs. It takes non-binding decisions and reports directly to the rector. The Strategic Research Council is composed of the vice-deans for research of each OU (or a representative). The Strategic Research Council reports directly to the rector. It discusses all topics related to research, including research careers and research ethics.

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[2] See EUA, University Autonomy in Europe IV, April 2024, Country Profiles (III), Portugal, p.55

The Value Creation Council is composed of representatives from all OUs with recognised expertise in innovation, value creation and entrepreneurship. The Value Creation Council reports directly to the rector on issues related to the social and economic knowledge valorisation in the context of innovation and entrepreneurship activities, referred to as the university's third mission.

The Student Council is the advisory body of NOVA on matters that directly concern the students' lives. The Student Council is composed of the rector, who chairs, a vice-rector or a pro-rector appointed by the rector, the presidents of the student unions of the academic units of NOVA, the university administrator and the executive administrator of NOVA's Welfare Services (SASNOVA).

The Social Welfare Council is chaired by the rector and comprises the SASNOVA Administrator and two students, one of whom is a scholarship holder, nominated by the Student Council. The Social Welfare Council is responsible for defining and guiding the support to be given to students.

The organisational set-up seems made for co-ordinational autonomy, where the central level coordinates the autonomy of the nine OUs. There are a rather small number of people involved in what the university does as a whole. An informal network at senior level has been created across the institution as people have alternated between roles at faculty and institutional levels. Implementation procedures for decisions taken at central level by the different councils and committees do not seem to be laid out clearly. There is no clear monitoring in place to objectively know whether a decision has been implemented and how. Indeed, there is a lack of clarity about (i) what constitutes a central level decision and (ii) to what extent such a decision is binding for the OUs (e.g., the new Learning and Teaching Strategy developed at institutional level, was revised again at faculty level). Besides the General Council, the Student Council and the Social Welfare Council students are only formally represented at faculty level.

Lack of common systems: example of student enrolment and student data management

Student enrolment is dealt with individually by the nine OUs, each having their own system as students do not apply to the university at central level, but to the programmes provided at OU level. There has been an attempt to establish an integrated platform aggregating data from each academic management system of each OU, but technical issues have delayed the implementation. The planned use of that integrated platform does not include enrolment. However, we should consider whether establishing a common system for enrolment would provide efficiency gains, coherent institutional oversight and an equitable student service, and simplify enrolment on cross-university programmes.

Opportunities of foundation status not fully used

The foundation status allows for recruiting staff under private law contracts, which also means that the university is not bound by public salary bands for such contracts. While this would in principle allow the institution to attract international researchers, the possibility still seems to be rarely used, not least because of the concern of creating inequalities between staff that is still under public contracts bound by salary bands. For operating real estate and investments the university uses the advantages of the foundation status.

Recommendations

Based on the above evidence, the evaluation team advises the university to consider the establishment of a single university-wide operational plan including agreed roles and targets for each OU whose achievement is formally audited/monitored and reported on. Also, the establishment of common systems (e.g., for student enrolment, student data management) would contribute to greater effectiveness and efficiency.

Furthermore, the review of all quality processes regarding effectiveness and fitness for purpose could be beneficial. This should include ensuring effective routine internal audits of compliance with quality processes whose outcomes are openly available and acted upon. Also, conducting a formal risk analysis and the establishment and maintenance of a risk register could be useful for strategic management and development of the institution.

With regard to the university internal governance set-up, the institution may consider turning the Board of Deans into an Executive Council and amend its membership, ensuring it has a unified university-wide perspective (e.g., by giving vice-rectors full voting rights) and reflects the effectiveness of its role. Furthermore, student representation should be strengthened across the central bodies (such as the Quality Council, Education Council, Strategic Research Council, Value Creation Council). Also, the establishment of an advisory board of external stakeholders at central university level might be beneficial to ensure more strategic and coherent involvement of stakeholders in university activities. A formal induction/on-boarding should be instituted for all new members of the General Council (including the student members) to enable active and informed participation and engagement. Effective communication of information to internal and external stakeholders about institutional activities and possibilities of engagement needs to be ensured.

With regard to staffing and human resource development, the university should consider making greater use of the foundation status and the possibility of drawing up contracts under private law for new appointments. This could attract more international talent, enabling the university to achieve its ambitions of becoming a world-class research-intensive university. Furthermore, the development and implementation of a programme/measures for professional development of support staff might be useful.

3. Quality culture

NOVA University Lisbon has a very comprehensive quality handbook laying down the general processes, complemented by a recently introduced quality management system and a Quality Council at institutional level that gives recommendations to the Board of Deans where the nine OUs are represented.

Unequal procedures leading to unequal treatment in some cases

It is not clear to what extent there is a common quality culture across the institution and how far these general processes are followed at the level of the nine OUs. The Quality Council at institutional level gives recommendations to the rector on the quality data to collect and analyse, but it is not clear how far these are taken up, because there are no clear reporting lines. There does not seem to be a system

to monitor to what extent the OUs follow the general principles and processes. This leads to unclear procedures and unequal treatment of students with regard to the administration fees for seeing exam results. These exist in some OUs, but not in all of them, even though there is a common standard regulation for administrative fees that applies to all units.

Low student participation

The student participation in feedback surveys is rather low. Some students who were interviewed by the evaluation team would prefer more customised surveys for the different courses they are taking. Student feedback is mainly given through student participation in local pedagogical councils at OU level. In some OUs (e.g., the Medical School and the School of Social Sciences and Humanities) students report direct contact with academics as a way to solve basic problems. For student complaints, there is an ombudsperson at central level, who must be a professor at one of the nine OUs and is appointed by the rector after consultation with the Student Council. While students can choose whether to submit a complaint via email or have a personal meeting with the ombudsperson, no anonymous complaint is possible. This could potentially be a barrier for students to file a complaint. Anonymous complaints are only possible via the internal whistleblower system.

Students from OUs (ITQB and IHMT) without a student union are not represented at the Student Council.

No clear link yet between strategic management and internal QA system

The relationship between the internal quality assurance (QA) system and strategic management is not yet clearly established. The strategic plan developed at institutional level and related indicators are rather recent.

Recommendations

Based on the above evidence, the evaluation team would recommend that the university take steps to improve the level of awareness and ownership of quality culture, ensure there is efficient, timely and effective feedback between the QA system and strategic management, and review how more general learnings can be drawn from matters dealt with by the ombudsperson. For example, it can make sure that evidence from individual cases that may point to structural issues is fed back into the system, so that such issues can then be addressed). Furthermore, with regard to the specific issue of unequal procedures leading to unequal treatment of students, a transparent common approach and university-wide policy on learning, teaching and assessment can ensure that feedback is an integral part of the process, which does not entail additional costs (such as the administrative fee) for the student (see recommendation in the teaching chapter, page 10).

4. Teaching and learning

Common approach to teaching and learning

As stated in the SER, as a public higher education institution, NOVA University Lisbon "bears the responsibility of designing degrees grounded in advanced knowledge of research, innovation, sustainability and entrepreneurship", aiming at preparing "students for active citizenship, personal

development, and enhances their employability."[3] While the rector oversees the policy framework for learning and teaching derived from the strategic plan, the nine OUs translate these policies into their programmes.

NOVA University Lisbon is trying to establish a common approach to teaching and learning innovation through a new "Teaching and Learning Innovation Policies" document (Annex 10 of the SER) that has been developed at institutional level. The document was subsequently revised at the level of each OU. Each OU implements it by selectively pursuing prioritised goals it has prioritised. Some OUs use the support of an external expert for this. Such differences in priorities and pace of change at OU level seems natural given their diverse starting points. However, to deliver a set of common expected student experiences, commonly agreed goals at central level should be linked to tangible action at OU level. According to the SER, a Teaching and Learning Division has been established at the rectorate level with the aim of supporting and promoting pedagogical innovation. From the discussions at the site visit it did not become clear to what extent this support is used by teaching staff at OU level. The team found evidence at some OUs (e.g., School of Social Sciences and Humanities) that a curriculum reform is underway with a greater focus on digital skills and joint study programmes.

There is also a bottom-up initiative involving some OUs in a national project led by the social science and humanities faculty involving also other Portuguese universities on learning and teaching innovation. Beyond this, no structured peer learning or identification and exchange of good practices in teaching, learning and assessment seems to take place across the university.

Over-teaching as an issue

In some schools, students have very high in-class contact hours. Such over-teaching seems to be a legacy of the previous staff allocation model that provided staff positions based on the overall number of teaching hours. That allocation model incentivised high class-contact teaching hours in order to maintain the largest possible number of teaching staff. That staffing allocation system has been abolished recently. However, its effects remain visible as students in some OUs continue to have a high number of contact hours. This leaves students little remaining time for self-study and may have negative effects on student mental health.

Student services and housing

While across the university there seems to be a good coverage for mental health support, it varies across the units, with some having their own local service and staff (such as psychologists) and other units referring their students to the central service. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a common mental health system with staff employed centrally, who can be dispatched to meet local needs. This would have efficiency gains, and ensure equal access to consistent services for students across the institution.

The access to student housing is an issue for some students, and the organic units' dormitories are not available on all sites. Most students either live with their family if they are from Lisbon, or seek

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[3] SER, page 15.

private housing and flat sharing. Depending on the area where the campus of the respective OU is located, it is generally difficult for students to find affordable places to live.

Information flows

Information flows seem to be a general issue between central level and the level of OUs. Several units report the challenges of reaching students as traditional tools such as emails do not seem to be very effective anymore.

<u>Recommendations</u>

Based on the above evidence, the evaluation team recommends that the university strengthens university-wide pedagogic training and support for academic staff, and establishes a policy on class contact to avoid student overload.This will mitigate related mental health risks and ensure adequate time for individual deep learning outside classes. Furthermore, a common timetabling system across the university would enable the objective assessment, deployment and management of resources. Also, a single coherent university-wide approach to teaching, learning and assessment will ensure that all students have equal access to support, resources and facilities for student life such as cultural activities, sports, welfare and mental health.

A university-wide approach to learning and teaching will also ensure that transparently documented and delivered policies and procedures for teaching, learning and assessment are in place. This must include transparency and proactive communication in providing prompt feedback on how assessments are marked, and on the procedures for review and appeal by students. Feedback on, review of, and appeals by students on their completed assessments should be an integral part of the assessment process that incurs no additional (or administrative) cost (see issue regarding administrative fees for accessing exam results mentioned under the quality culture chapter, page 7).

5. Research

According to the SER, NOVA University Lisbon "has the mission to serve society through knowledge, locally and globally, by developing teaching and research of excellence that creates significant social and economic value."[4] Research activities are crucial for the university's vision of becoming a global research-intensive and civic university, promoting interdisciplinarity and addressing societal needs.

One of the strategic goals of the university's research policy[5] is to attract, retain and promote best talent at national and international level. The foundation status in principle provides the possibility of offering contracts under private law with greater flexibility on salaries, but this is only used to a limited extent currently.

NOVA University Lisbon is the leading institution in Portugal when it comes to attracting EU research funding. There are some joint research activities across OUs, and there is evidence of world-class

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[4] SER page 18
[5] Annex 12 of the SER

individual research excellence showing, for example, in the number of European Research Council (ERC) grants. However, this excellence is not pervasive across the institution.

While the SER and discussions at the site visit set out the aspiration of strategic profiling with regard to certain research fields (e.g., AI), the evaluation team could not find evidence yet that this translates into strategic recruitment in practice. The number of research positions has been increasing, but not all OUs make use of the possibility nor of greater flexibility of contracts under private law, which the university is allowed to offer under the foundation status.

Doctoral education

Completion time and high drop-out rates are a major issue for doctoral education in some OUs and programmes, and there seems to be a problem with numbers (e.g., if doctoral candidates suspend their studies, they are counted twice; discrepancies exist between the data provided in the SER and the individual reports by deans from OUs during the interviews). There seem to be too many doctoral programmes and not enough supervisors. Selection of doctoral candidates is dealt with at the level of OUs and in different ways. Often doctoral candidates are accepted to start without yet having a supervisor, project, or funding, and they use the first year or more for orientation. Due to scarce national funding, doctoral candidates often fail at the first application attempt. The university offers some support to some candidates upon successful application. PhD candidates at some schools can teach or work on other research projects to get financial support, but this leaves them less time for their actual doctoral project. Generally, the uncertainty in which many doctoral candidates start their studies is not conducive to finishing in the officially foreseen time. While the OUs have set official target durations for their doctoral programmes, it seems widely accepted that these targets are not met. High dropout rates in some schools (e.g., law) seem to be accepted or rationalised on the basis that candidates who do not complete their doctoral studies still gained experience useful in finding suitable employment.

There are big differences with regard to supervision of doctoral candidates among the OUs, the criteria for being a supervisor varying between the units. While some require prior experience such as co-supervision, others are not as strict and only require a doctoral degree. Moreover, there is no maximum number of doctoral candidates (and other students) who can qualify as supervisors, leading in some cases to an overload of supervisors and reduced supervision activity.

While the NOVA doctoral school provides some training in supervision at central level, this is not mandatory, and only a small number of supervisors interviewed during the site visit wereaware of the possibility or took advantage of it.

The responsibility for doctoral studies belongs to each OU. At the rectorate level, the vice-rector for research and innovation and the vice-rector for learning and teaching and international development share responsibility for the strategy development and implementation of doctoral studies. It might be helpful to review this approach to ensure clear ownership, responsibility and accountability.

The NOVA doctoral school provides training in transversal skills for doctoral candidates as well as supervisors, generally perceived as positive by those interviewed during the site visit. Some reported difficulties in accessing the courses due to a lack of places or because many courses switched back to

requiring physical presence after the end of the Covid-19 pandemic, while others were able to access the courses without problems.

Recommendations

Based on the above evidence, the evaluation team advises a root-and-branch review of doctoral studies across the institution, leading to a university-wide set of expectations, policies and procedures (on supervision, selection, admission, project definition, planning and funding). The university should consider enhancing the remit and responsibilities of the NOVA doctoral school, whether or not the remit of the doctoral school changes. Evidence indicates that a common NOVA system should be established, pervasive across all OUs, ensuring quality and coherence of doctoral studies (including selection/admission, monitoring progression, supervisor training)

Furthermore, the team advises the university to ensure better representation of doctoral candidates at central level, such as in the Student Council, and establish a university-wide forum for doctoral candidates.

To further strengthen the university's research profile, strategic recruitment of international talent should be considered. To achieve this, the university's foundation status can be used to make staff contracts under private law, which could increase its international attractiveness.

6. Service to society

Service to society is incorporated in the university's strategic plan as value creation in the form of knowledge-based innovation, with impact on and direct collaboration with society.[6]

The team found rich evidence of engagement with society at all OUs that were visited, such as through projects, open days and collaboration with municipalities, schools, local communities and citizens. These initiatives seem to emerge bottom-up at OU level as they are very tied to the specific disciplinary portfolio and activities of each OU.

The medical school, for instance, has a dedicated vice-dean position for community engagement and several activities such as: a summer school on disease prevention, promoting healthy lifestyles for children from the age of six years to higher education level; the respiratory function assessment for early detection of respiratory diseases; and nutrition consultation for the assessment of nutritional status and body composition. Other examples include the Lifelong Learning Centre of the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, where people can obtain continuous education in social sciences.

OUs have also established contacts with companies and organisations providing internship positions to students, which are, in some cases, also involved in advising on curriculum development on an informal and ad hoc basis.

At the institutional level, societal stakeholders (such as employers, municipalities, etc.) are represented as external members in the General Council.

Recommendations

The university may consider developing a more overall coherent strategy towards engagement with society. In this regard, a common university-level board of external stakeholders could be pertinent.

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[6] SER page 20

7. Internationalisation

NOVA University Lisbon aims at being a global civic university guided by its Internationalisation Policy approved in 2018,[7] focusing on three geographic areas: Europe, South Atlantic and the Mediterranean. This has been translated into several key strategic projects led by the rectorate, with different levels of involvement of OUs, including both education and research activities. These projects are notably: the NOVA campus in Cairo, Egypt; the engagement in the EUTOPIA European University alliance; and in-depth cooperation through joint programmes with universities in Brazil and Cap Verde. Beyond this, the university is also exploring new cooperation possibilities in Japan with Osaka University.

Student mobility is an important part of the internationalisation activities, such as through the EU's Erasmus+ programme. The management of internationalisation activities, notably student mobility, is mainly dealt with at OU level. Each OU has a number of protocols established with partner universities abroad.

The team found evidence that at some OUs, students have been allowed to take a semester abroad even without prior acceptance of a learning agreement and clarification of which courses/credits will be recognised afterwards. The level of information and support provided to students who wish to be internationally mobile differs significantly across the university. Very pro-active students are able to get their OU to establish a protocol with an institution with which there was no prior cooperation, whilst others reported receiving little support to ensure their credits would be recognised.

International students seem to be well integrated at NOVA University Lisbon in the different OUs, notably because most academic staff and other students communicate in English with them, while communication with other staff and the local population might be more difficult.

Recommendations

Based on the above evidence, the evaluation team recommends that the university ensures effective university-wide operational management of internationalisation activities (e.g., clarification of the role of a university-wide Erasmus coordinator). To further enhance the international profile of the university, more consideration may be given to internationalisation of curricula and programme content (e.g., in quality enhancement processes through checklists for new programme initiation and re-accreditation). Furthermore, the university should consider providing Portuguese language classes to international students to facilitate their local integration in and beyond the university.

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[7] SER page 21.

8. Conclusion

There are instances of excellent world-class practices across NOVA University Lisbon, but those best practices are not pervasive. In order to change this and build on the existing good examples and foundations, the institution should devise mechanisms that identify best practices and adopt them across the university. For this it needs to demonstrate that common services and processes have benefits that do not undermine the autonomy and academic freedom of the operational units, while countering aversions to change and overstated or unwarranted disciplinary exceptionalism.

Summary of recommendations

Governance and management

1. Make a single university-wide operational plan for all activities, including agreed roles/targets for each OU whose achievement is formally audited/monitored and reported on.
2. Review whether all quality processes are effective and fit-for-purpose.
3. Ensure effective routine internal audits of compliance with quality processes whose outcomes are openly available and acted upon.
4. Conduct formal risk analyses and maintain a risk register.
5. Consider establishing an advisory board of stakeholders.
6. Consider making greater use of the foundation status in making new appointments.
7. Ensure there is effective communication of information about institutional activities to internal and external stakeholders.
8. Develop and implement a programme of professional development for support staff.
9. Board of Deans:
    a. Rename as Executive Council (or similar) to reflect its role.
    b. Amend its membership to ensure it has a unified university-wide perspective (e.g., with vice-rectors as full voting members).
10. Consider inclusion of student representatives on (but not only): Quality Council, Education Council, Strategic Research Council, Value Creation Council.

11. Institute a formal induction/on-boarding for all new members of the General Council (including students).

Student experience

1. Introduce a policy on class contact (currently too high, resulting in inadequate time for deep learning, risk of mental health pressure).
2. Have a common timetabling system that would enable the objective assessment, deployment and management of resources.
3. Use a single coherent approach that ensures all students can access similar (or the same?) resources and facilities that support student life (cultural activities, sport, welfare mental health).
4. Have students from all OUs represented on the Student Council (including doctoral candidates).

Transparency in feedback to students

1. Ensure that transparently documented and delivered policies and procedures for teaching, learning and assessment are in place.

2. Ensure, in particular, that there is transparency and proactive communication in providing prompt feedback on how assessments are marked and on procedures for review and appeal by students.
3. Ensure fair treatment of students by promptly providing feedback on how assessments have been marked.
4. Make feedback on, review of, and appeals by students on their completed assessments an integral part of the assessment process that incurs no additional (or administrative) cost.

Doctoral education

1. Make a root-and-branch review leading to a university-wide set of expectations, policies and procedures, on:
2. supervisor capacity, training, experience;
3. selection/admission;
4. project funding, definition and planning.
5. Have the doctoral school take responsibility for a common NOVA system for:
   a. proactive intervention to maintain coherent goals and quality;
   b. supervisor training;
   c. selection/admission to PhD programmes and monitoring progression.
6. Establish a university-wide forum for doctoral candidates.
7. Have doctoral candidates represented on the Student Council.

Quality culture

1. Ensure there is efficient, timely and effective feedback between quality assurance system and strategic management.
2. Take steps to improve level of awareness/ownership of quality culture.
3. Review how more general learnings can be drawn from matters dealt with by the ombudsperson.
4. Consider strengthening university-wide pedagogic training and offering support for academic staff.

Internationalisation

1. Ensure that there is effective university-wide operational management of internationalisation activities.
2. Give more consideration to internationalisation of curriculum/programme content in quality enhancement processes, e.g., in checklists for new programme initiation and for re-accreditation.
3. Clarify the role of the university-wide Erasmus coordinator.
4. Consider the provision of Portuguese classes to foster (even better) local integration of international students