



# **UNIVERSITY OF WORLD ECONOMY AND DIPLOMACY**

## **REGULATION FOR THE EVALUATION AND VALIDATION OF PROGRAMMES**

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# Guidelines for the Evaluation of First- and Second-Cycle Programs at UWED

## Introduction

This guideline outlines the procedures for evaluating first- and second-cycle programs (undergraduate and graduate) at the **University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED)**. It is based **on the national quality assurance system for higher education and research in Uzbekistan** and aims to ensure that UWED maintains high standards of education and research. Program evaluations at UWED are conducted in accordance with national higher education standards and relevant international quality assurance practices. These evaluation regulations have been adopted to promote continuous improvement in the quality of education, research, and training at the University.

Program evaluations at UWED are conducted in accordance with:

- **National higher education standards of the Republic of Uzbekistan;**
- **UWED's strategic development goals;**
- **Relevant international guidelines and best practices in quality assurance.**

The program evaluation process at UWED is conducted in consultation with faculties, departments, students, professional organizations, and external experts. The outcomes of evaluations serve as the basis for:

- Program enhancements;
- Alignment with labor market demands;
- Overall advancement of the University's academic excellence.

The **Academic Council of UWED** (the University's highest academic governing body) is the main authority responsible for reviewing and approving all program evaluation results and related decisions.

## **I. Quality Evaluation of First- and Second-Level Degree Programs**

### **Points of Departure and Purpose**

In Uzbekistan, pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Education” and the Cabinet of Ministers’ resolution *“On measures to improve the system of organizing the educational process in higher education institutions”*, all higher education institutions must ensure a high level of quality in their educational activities.

**The State Inspectorate for Quality Control in Education** is tasked with periodically evaluating a sample of academic programs across the nation. The purpose of these external evaluations is twofold:

1. to verify that programs meet the requirements and standards set by national regulations.
2. to contribute to the enhancement of course and program quality.

These evaluations focus on the extent to which each program enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes required for their degrees.

At UWED, the responsibility for day-to-day academic quality assurance lies with the individual faculties and departments, coordinated by the University’s **Office of Academic Quality Assurance and Policy**. Ultimate oversight of program quality evaluations — including final approval of evaluation conclusions and recommended actions — rests with UWED’s **Academic Council**. This council serves as the supreme academic authority ensuring that evaluation processes and follow-up actions align with the University’s quality standards and strategic objectives.

The objectives of program evaluation at UWED are twofold:

1. **Compliance and Standards:** To ensure that all academic programs fully comply with national and international higher education standards while maintaining high quality benchmarks.
2. **Continuous Improvement:** To continuously enhance the content, structure, and outcomes of UWED’s academic programs, thereby strengthening the competitiveness of graduates in the labor market.

#### **Key Focus Areas of Evaluation:**

- Whether each program provides students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies.

- Whether the learning environment enables students to achieve the learning outcomes and qualification requirements defined by national standards and UWED's internal regulations.

## **Knowledge-Based Selection of Programs for Evaluation**

Decisions to initiate a program evaluation at UWED are evidence-based and strategic. Evaluations are planned based on accumulated knowledge from prior internal reviews, external audits, performance data, and ongoing monitoring of academic processes, as well as dialogue with academic units. A program evaluation may be launched under the following circumstances:

- **Compliance Concerns:** There are indications that a specific program may not fully meet national higher education standards or UWED's internal quality requirements.
- **Need for Insight:** Additional information is required about a program to identify challenges, opportunities for improvement, or development needs at either the institutional or national level.
- **Strategic Importance:** The program is of high social or economic importance (e.g., critical professional qualifications).

UWED's Academic Council may also decide to initiate an evaluation to

1. Gain an overall picture of a program's quality.
2. Follow up on recommendations from previous reviews.
3. Inform strategic decision-making about the University's academic program portfolio.

Evaluations can encompass one or several programs within a faculty, or even span multiple faculties, in order to provide a comprehensive overview of program quality across the institution.

### ***Exceptions:***

- A program may be exempted from evaluation if the University has already decided to discontinue that program before the evaluation begins.
- If no new students have been admitted to a program in the last two academic years, the Academic Council can waive its evaluation, provided the relevant faculty submits a formal justification for the lack of recent admissions.

## Quality-Enhancing Evaluation Approach

UWED is committed to conducting program evaluations that not only ensure compliance with regulations but also actively enhance academic quality. Evaluations are directed toward those programs and areas of study where the need for improvement is greatest and where the potential benefit to students, faculty, and society is most significant. Before each evaluation cycle, the process and focus are **tailored** to address the specific challenges and needs of the program(s) under review. This ensures that each evaluation is fit for purpose, context-sensitive, and oriented toward meaningful improvement.

Every evaluation at UWED is designed to be relevant and aligned with the University's mission and strategic goals, as well as with the requirements of the [Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation](#). Program evaluations complement UWED's internal quality assurance processes. They are carried out in a resource-efficient manner and guided by clearly defined criteria and questions. This approach allows **faculties** and **departments** to demonstrate the strengths of their programs openly, while also identifying areas that require development.

Key principles of UWED's evaluation methodology include:

- **Relevance:** Every evaluation aligns with UWED's mission, strategic goals, and the requirements of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation.
- **Resource Efficiency:** Evaluations complement internal quality assurance processes and are conducted efficiently, guided by clearly defined criteria and evaluation questions.
- **Collaboration and Dialogue:** Evaluation is a shared effort, not a top-down inspection. Stakeholders participate in:
  - Determining which programs should be evaluated and why.
  - Adapting evaluation scope and methods to the program's context.
  - Exchanging knowledge, experience, and best practices across departments and leadership.

Program evaluations are intended to create tangible added value for the University's academic community by:

1. **Strengthening Teaching and Learning:** Improving the effectiveness of teaching methods and student learning outcomes.
2. **Encouraging Innovation:** Promoting innovation in curriculum design, pedagogy, and assessment methods.

3. **Aligning with Demand:** Ensuring stronger alignment between educational offerings, labor market needs, and research priorities.

Ultimately, ongoing program development is the common objective and long-term result of the evaluation process at UWED. In other words, the evaluation process itself serves as a catalyst for continuous improvement and the pursuit of academic excellence.

## II. Pilot Study and Adaptation

### 2.1 Pilot Study

Before launching a formal program evaluation, UWED conducts a **pilot study** to build a comprehensive knowledge base about the program under review. The pilot study is a preparatory analysis designed to equip the evaluators (and program leadership) with a clear picture of the program's current performance, its challenges, and opportunities for improvement. This ensures the subsequent evaluation is well-informed and aligned with both institutional and external quality standards.

At UWED, the pilot study phase is organized and overseen by the [Office of Academic Quality Assurance and Policy \(Quality Assurance Office\)](#). The purpose of this initial phase is to collect preliminary data, identify any existing issues, and lay the groundwork for an effective evaluation. As part of the pilot study, the Office gathers and analyzes information in several key areas:

1. **Feedback Collection:** Structured feedback is collected from students, alumni, faculty members, employers, and external stakeholders. This helps identify the program's perceived strengths and weaknesses from multiple perspectives, ensuring the evaluation reflects both internal viewpoints and external expectations.
2. **Statistical Overview:** Relevant program data and performance indicators are compiled and analyzed. This includes metrics such as applicants per available place, enrollment figures, student retention and completion rates, degrees conferred annually, and graduates' employment or further study outcomes. Where applicable, data on faculty qualifications, teaching loads, and related research activities to the program are also reviewed.
3. **Review of Previous Analyses:** Findings from earlier assessments are examined, including internal self-assessment reports, prior accreditation results, supervisory or regulatory reports, and any directives from educational authorities. Recommendations from external audits or

national review reports (*if available*) are incorporated to ensure past insights are considered.

4. **Current Trends and Needs:** The study identifies emerging academic, industry, or societal trends relevant to the program. It also examines how the program aligns with UWED's current strategic goals and policy directions set by the [Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation](#).

Following data collection and analysis, the Quality Assurance Office compiles the pilot study findings into a report and submits it to the Academic Council. Sharing this report ensures the formal evaluation proceed on **a transparent, objective, and evidence-based footing**. In addition, the preliminary findings are typically communicated to the program's faculty and leadership (and occasionally to student and alumni representatives) to promote broad understanding and buy-in.

**Purpose and Use of the Pilot Study:** The pilot study serves several important functions in UWED's evaluation process:

- It provides a baseline **“health check”** report on the program to guide the focus of the full evaluation.
- It highlights any special circumstances or contextual factors about the program that should be considered during the formal assessment.
- Preliminary results are shared with the evaluation team, relevant departments, student representatives, alumni, and industry partners, ensuring transparency and inclusiveness from the outset.
- Findings are measured against national educational standards and UWED's internal quality benchmarks, to verify alignment external requirements and the University's strategic priorities.

By conducting this pilot phase, UWED ensures the subsequent program evaluation is evidence-based, participatory, and closely tied to the University's ongoing quality improvement efforts.

## 2.2 Adaptation of the Evaluation Plan

After the pilot study is completed, UWED undertakes an **adaptation** step to tailor the upcoming evaluation to the program's specific needs and developmental priorities. The purpose of this phase is to ensure that the evaluation design is fit for purpose, context-sensitive, and improvement-oriented, rather than one-size-fits-all.

A key activity in this stage is the review of pilot study findings by UWED's **Methodological Council** – a collegial body of senior academic staff and administrators that focuses on educational and curricular matters. This council (which typically includes figures such as vice-rectors, deans, department heads, and experienced professors) analyzes the pilot study report in relation to the program's stated objectives, quality targets, and compliance with national higher education standards. Through structured discussions, the council uses the pilot findings to refine the focus of the upcoming evaluation.

During these adaptation discussions, the **Methodological Council** addresses questions such as:

- **Prioritizing Objectives:** Which specific program objectives or intended learning outcomes should receive the most attention, and why? (For example, the council might decide to prioritize graduate employability, if the pilot study indicated weak outcomes in that area.)
- **Identifying Challenges:** What particular areas of concern or noted challenges (e.g. low research output, student feedback on curriculum gaps.) need focused scrutiny during the evaluation process?
- **Additional Evidence:** What additional information or evidence should be gathered to support the evaluation? This might include documentation beyond the standard self-evaluation report and student survey — for example, a benchmarking study with similar programs at other universities, or an employer satisfaction survey, if these would provide valuable insights.

If the pilot study reveals common issues that extend beyond the program in question (*for example, a challenge present in multiple departments or faculties*), the council may recommend broader initiatives. This can include organizing joint workshops, round-table discussions, or training sessions involving faculty from different programs. Such collaborative activities encourage the exchange of experience, best practices, and solutions across UWED, and ensuring the evaluation process contributes to institutional learning as well as improvements in the specific program.

By the end of the adaptation phase, UWED refines the evaluation plan — defining the key focus areas, custom questions, and any adjusted procedures for the formal evaluation. This adapted plan ensures the evaluation effectively addresses the most pressing needs of the program under review. In essence, the adaptation step transforms the pilot study's insights into a targeted evaluation strategy, ensuring that the evaluation process not only strengthens

the individual program but also contributes to overall educational quality improvements and knowledge-sharing within the University.

### **III. Implementation of the Evaluation Program Validation and Approval Process**

The **implementation** stage of program quality assurance at UWED includes the formal validation and approval of new academic programs. UWED is responsible for both external accreditation and internal validation of all new taught programs. At the initial stage of a program's lifecycle, the University ensures quality and standards through a structured program validation procedure. The development and introduction of any new program at UWED strictly follow regulations and guidelines established by the [Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan](#). This compliance ensures proposed programs align with national educational standards, advance UWED's strategic goals, address labor market needs, and meet state educational requirements.

At UWED, the program validation process follows a multi-stage approval framework designed to be transparent, rigorous, and efficient. The process encourages innovation in program design while upholding all regulatory requirements.

The stages of new program development and validation are as follows:

**Stage 1 – Departmental Development:** New academic programs are first conceptualized and developed at the department level. Faculty members and subject matter experts collaborate to design the curriculum, drawing on current disciplinary trends, international best practices, industry demands, and student needs. During this stage, teaching staff in the relevant department play a pivotal role in shaping the program's content, structure, and learning outcomes.

**Stage 2 – Faculty Advisory Board Review:** Once a department has formulated a draft program, it is submitted to the Faculty's Advisory Board for review. This board typically consists of seasoned academics, key administrative personnel, and when appropriate, external stakeholders or field experts. The Faculty Advisory Board evaluates the draft program for academic coherence (does the curriculum make pedagogical sense and maintain academic standards?), practical relevance, (does it equip graduates with skills needed in their field?), and alignment with future employment or societal trends. Feedback from this board is used to refine the program proposal.

**Stage 3 – Academic Affairs Oversight:** After passing the faculty-level review, the program proposal is forwarded to the University's central academic administration (e.g. the [Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs](#) under the [First Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs](#)). This stage involves a comprehensive review to ensure the program aligns with UWED's overall academic strategy and quality assurance criteria. The Academic Affairs office examines whether the program meets internal standards and policies, fits into the university's educational portfolio, and has necessary resources (qualified faculty, facilities, etc.) in place. This oversight helps verify the program is feasible and maintains high quality before final approval.

**Stage 4 – Institutional Approval:** In the final stage, the proposed program is presented to UWED's Academic Council for institutional approval. The [Academic Council](#) conducts a final round of scrutiny and discussion, verifying that the program adheres to all state education standards and regulatory requirements (e.g. consistency with the [National Program for Personnel Training](#) and other government directives), and aligns with UWED's mission and development priorities. The Council discusses any remaining questions of curriculum, staffing, or resources. If approved, the program is formally as part of UWED's offerings, authorized to launch and enroll students.

This rigorous, multi-level validation and approval process reflects UWED's strong commitment to quality assurance and continuous enhancement of academic offerings. At each stage, broad stakeholder engagement and adherence to academic standards are emphasized. By the time a new program reaches final approval, it has been carefully vetted for quality, relevance, and compliance, ensuring new programs introduced at UWED are both innovative and aligned with the University's high standards and strategic goals.

*(Note: Beyond new program validation, the "implementation of the evaluation" for existing programs involves carrying out evaluation activities according to the adapted plan, as prepared in the earlier phases. This includes assembling evaluation committees or review panels, conducting self-evaluations and site visits (if applicable), gathering additional evidence, and compiling evaluation reports. The results are then reviewed and approved by the Academic Council, similar to the process for new programs. Through this implementation, UWED integrates evaluation findings into decision-making and planning, thereby closing the quality assurance loop with concrete actions such as curriculum updates, faculty development, or resource allocation changes. [This procedural note can be adjusted or expanded based on UWED's specific practices for conducting program evaluations.])*

#### **IV. Exchange of Experience and Further Development**

Program evaluations at UWED are designed not only as assessment mechanisms, but also as opportunities for **exchange of experience** and catalysts for ongoing development. All stakeholders involved in the evaluation process — including **faculty, department heads, students, and representatives from employer or professional organizations** — are encouraged to share their perspectives and best practices during and after evaluations. In this way, evaluations become a two-way learning process, benefiting both the programs being evaluated and the evaluation participants.

In cases where an evaluation encompasses multiple programs or an entire faculty, UWED may organize special workshops or dialogue sessions focused on key themes **before** the formal evaluation takes place. These pre-evaluation discussions often target priority areas or common concerns that were identified (*for example, through the pilot study or through strategic planning*). The aim is to surface shared challenges and potential improvements in an open forum. It is important to note these discussions are **informal and preparatory** — they are not part of the formal assessment and do not directly affect the evaluation outcomes. Instead, they serve to build awareness, capacity, and mutual understanding among stakeholders.

During initial dialogue meetings, participants might identify focus areas that merit attention. For example:

- **Structural Challenges:** e.g. a shortage of internship opportunities for students, or insufficient numbers of qualified teaching staff in certain subjects.
- **Teaching and Learning Improvements:** e.g. adopting more student-centered learning approaches, introduce innovative teaching methodologies, or improve assessment techniques.
- **Modernization and Innovation:** e.g. expanding distance learning options, promoting curriculum internationalization, or incorporating digital technologies into courses.
- **Institutional Priorities:** e.g. ensuring adherence to broader university commitments such as gender equality, inclusivity, academic integrity, and other aspects of UWED's mission.

These focus-area discussions allow stakeholders to exchange ideas and successful practices in a collegial setting. They help departments learn from each other's experiences and can inform the strategies they use to meet upcoming evaluation criteria.

After an evaluation is completed, UWED continues to emphasize the exchange of experience. Post-evaluation workshops or seminars are organized in collaboration with evaluation teams and relevant stakeholders (faculty, students, employers, etc.), especially when results reveal issues or recommendations that cut across multiple programs. *For example, if several programs were found to have similar challenges in student research skills, a post-evaluation workshop might be held to address this topic collectively. In these sessions, participants review evaluation findings, share what was learned, and develop joint action plans or best-practice guidelines to address the highlighted issues.*

This emphasis on sharing and collaboration ensures program evaluations have a broad impact. The knowledge gained does not remain siloed within one program, but is disseminated throughout the University, contributing to institutional learning.

In summary, the systematic exchange of experience and focus on collaborative follow-up actions ensure evaluations at UWED serve not only as quality control mechanisms, but also as platforms for professional dialogue, organizational learning, and strategic improvement. By treating evaluations as learning opportunities, UWED strengthens a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in its academic programs, ultimately benefiting students, faculty, and the wider academic community.