UNIVERSITATEA BABEȘ-BOLYAI
BABEȘ-BOLYAI TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM
BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITÄT
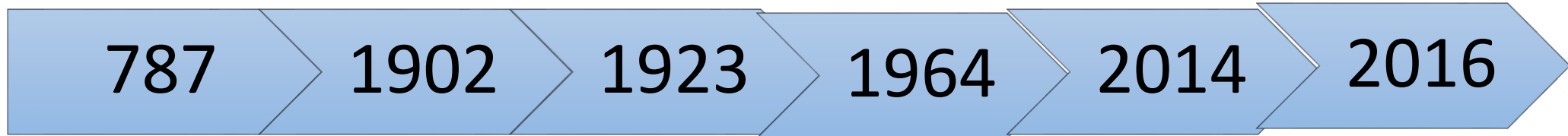TRADITIO ET EXCELLENTIA

Eaquals
Excellence in Language Education

Implementing a QA system for language teaching in a state university

Or
How to start an [organised] revolution. A practical guide

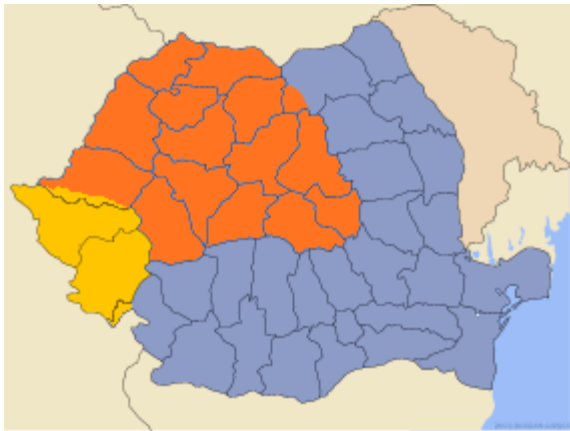# An apparently irrelevant piece of information

The Pan Orthodox Council – A time line

787 > 1902 > 1923 > 1964 > 2014 > 2016

The context

KEEP
CALM
AND
CARRY
ON

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The context

Sounds familiar?

At BA level:
- 22,771 in Romanian
- 4,211 in Hungarian
- 1,020 in German
- 463 in English
- 45 in French

Master's level
- 6,811 Romanian,
- 840 in Hungarian
- 688 in English
- 163 in German
- 49 students in French.

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From multilingualism to plurilingualism

L1 Mother tongue	L2 Foreign language (widely spoken)	L3 Foreign language (regional language or another fl)
Romanian Hungarian German	English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Russian	Hungarian, German, Romanian or another foreign language

Staff. Four categories

- LSAP teachers
- Subject teachers in native language
- Subject teachers in target language
- University policy makers

Some additional challenges

First challenge: academic status

"I WAS A UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR, I COULD TALK ON AND ON AND ON. GIVE ME A PODIUM AND YOU HAVE TO DRAG ME OFF WITH A HOOK."

KATHY REICHS

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Second challenge: teaching skills.

"Those who can't do teach." So what happens to those who can't teach?

"They can't replace Kermit the frog. He has tenure."

Third challenge: priorities.

"Surely you were aware when you accepted the position, Professor, that it was publish or perish."

Before
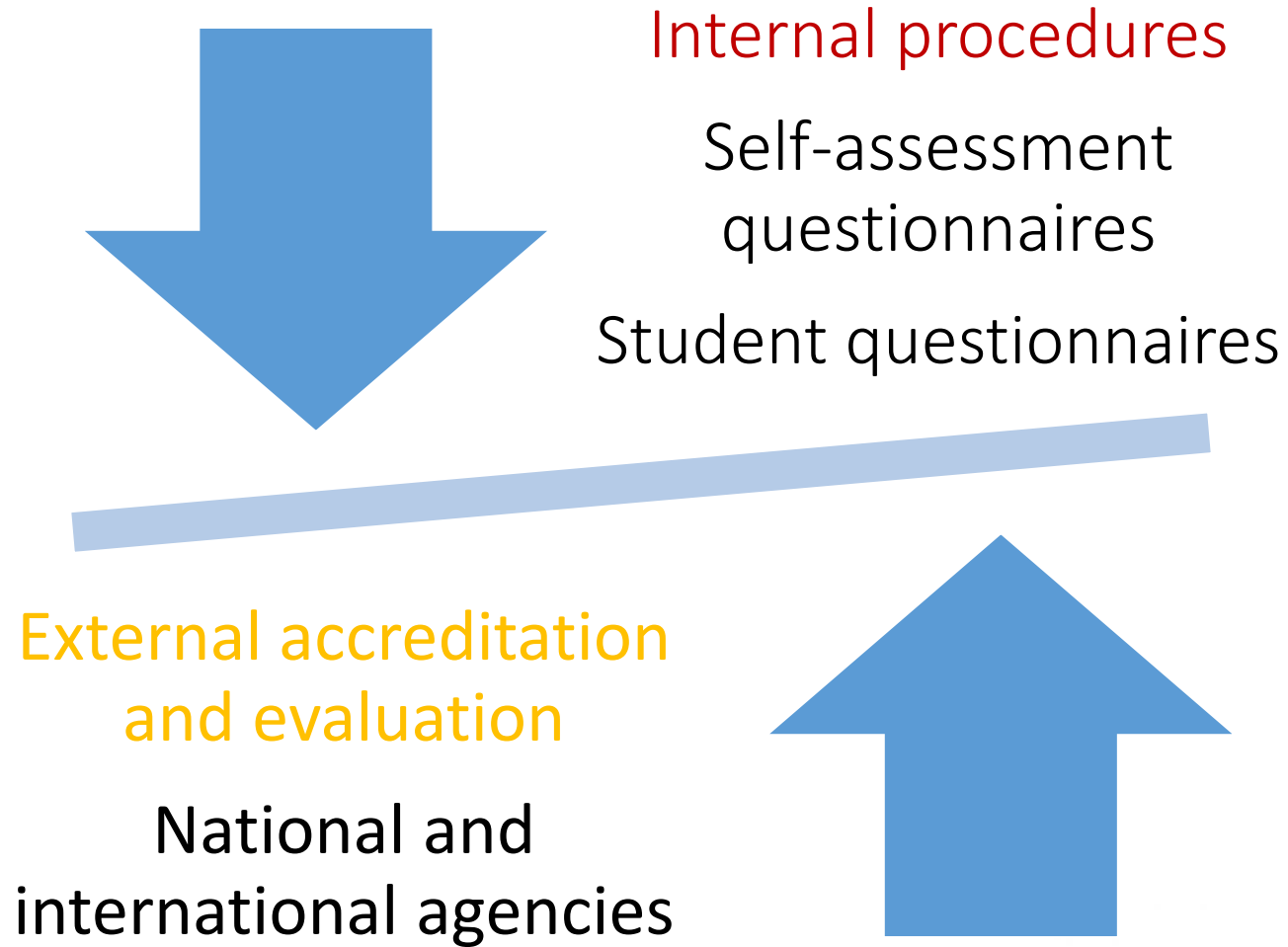
Internal procedures

Self-assessment questionnaires

Student questionnaires

External accreditation and evaluation

National and international agencies

Why change?

Raise standards

Standardise pedagogical approach

Improve quality of teaching

Increase international cooperation
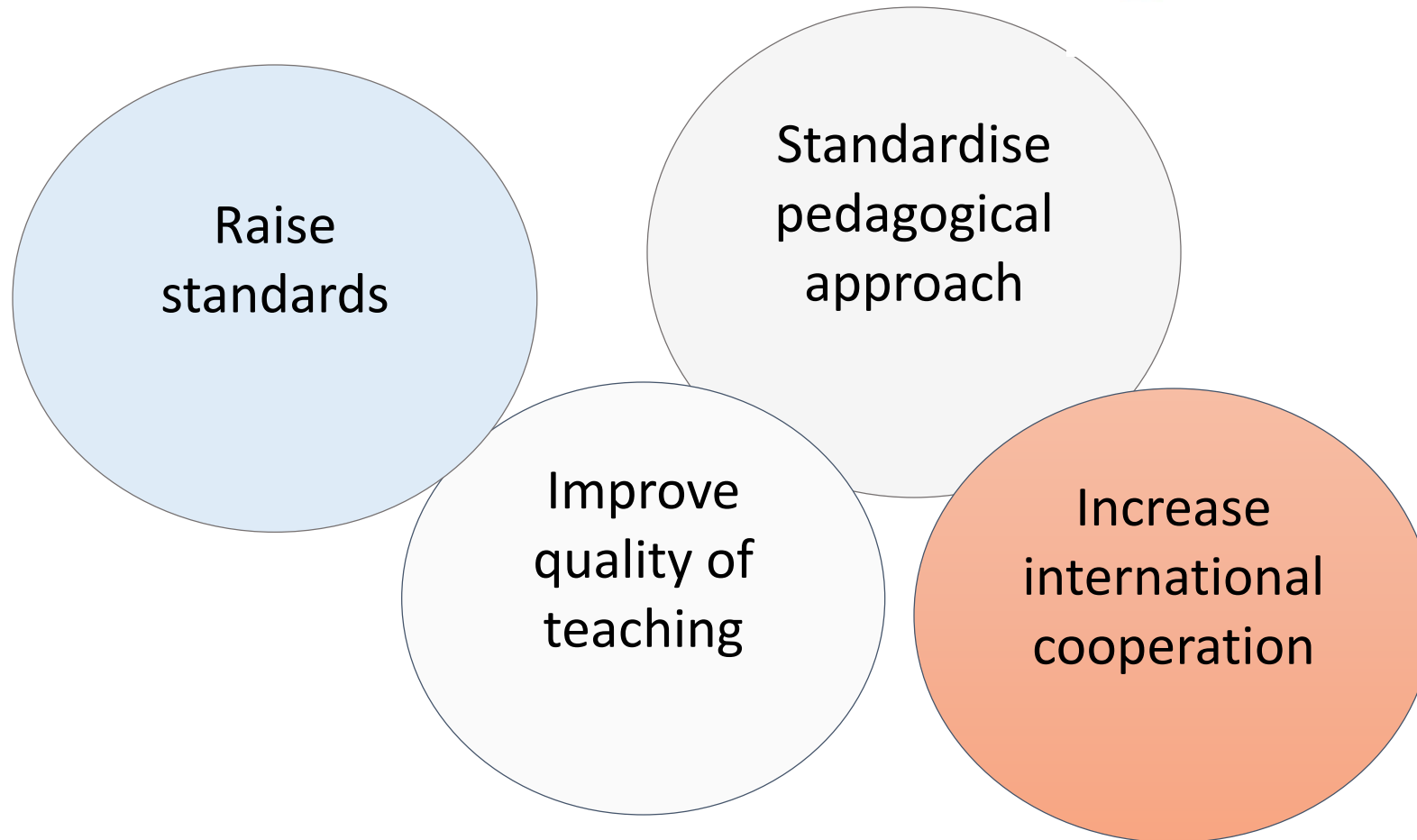
We all agreed that "revision" was necessary, provided that we don't change anything....

Who? Three university departments:

- The Department of Specialised Foreign Languages (LSAP and LAP)

- The Department of Romanian as a Foreign Language

- Alpha Language Centre

You can't answer a question?
Call a friend!

EAQUALS

ALTE

QUEST

How? External frameworks

Internal assessment

- EAQUALS self-assessment handbook

External assessment:

- Quest pre-inspection and final inspection
- EAQUALS advisory visit
- EAQUALS final inspection
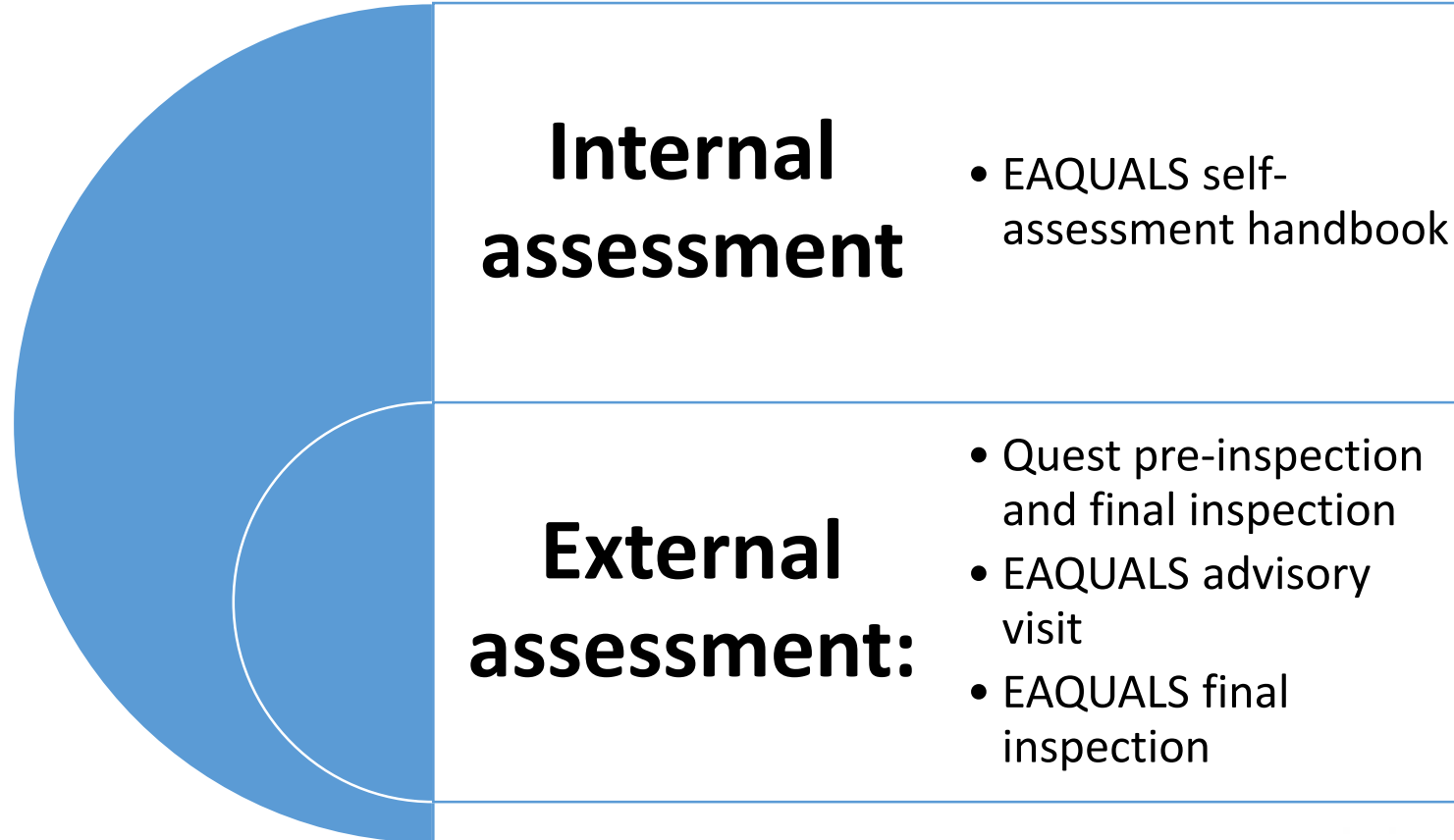
Steps taken:

1. Performing a thorough needs analysis.

2. Revising the language policy.

3. Building and implementing a QA system.

4. Joining professional associations (QUEST, ALTE, EAQUALS).

1. Needs analysis

- Questionnaires

- Focus group with teaching staff

- Interviews with
  - LSP teachers
  - Subject teachers in native language
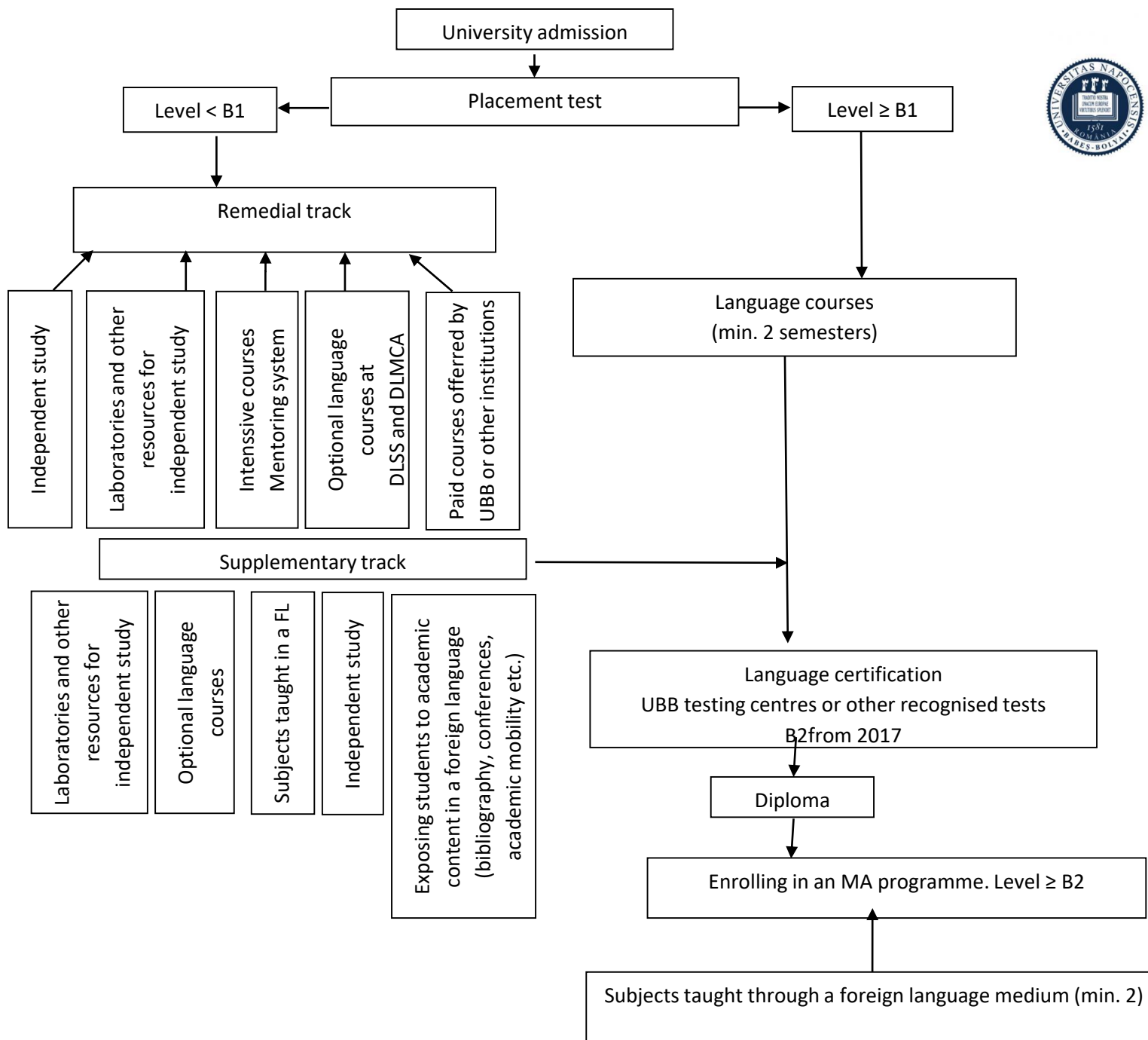 - Subject teachers in target language

2. Language Policy

University admission

↓

Placement test

Level < B1 ← Placement test → Level ≥ B1

Level < B1 branch:

Remedial track

- Independent study
- Laboratories and other resources for independent study
- Intensive courses Mentoring system
- Optional language courses at DLSS and DLMCA
- Paid courses offerred by UBB or other institutions

Supplementary track

- Laboratories and other resources for independent study
- Optional language courses
- Subjects taught in a FL
- Independent study
- Exposing students to academic content in a foreign language (bibliography, conferences, academic mobility etc.)

Level ≥ B1 branch:

Language courses
(min. 2 semesters)

↓

Language certification
UBB testing centres or other recognised tests
B2 from 2017

↓

Diploma

↓

Enrolling in an MA programme. Level ≥ B2

↑

Subjects taught through a foreign language medium (min. 2)

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3. Implementing a QA system. Before:

"In a University we just assume that the academics are good professionals and are very well prepared for the job."

"When I started working for the University I literally felt abandoned."

And after…

improved recruitment procedures

induction procedure

internal organisational structure at the level of the university departments

professional development

Academic coordination

- appointed "DOSs";
- syllabus review;
- schemes of work;
- mentoring system;
- QA observation, peer observation;
- focus group meetings with students.

What we expected	What really happened
❑ Opposition ❑ Resentment ❑ Complaints ❑ Mutiny	❑ It improved cooperation among departments. ❑ It encouraged exchange of best practice among academics. ❑ It improved the quality of teaching.

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4. Accreditation. Almost there…

"Dance first. Think later.
It's the natural order. "
– Samuel Beckett