

CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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The three major objectives to be attained by Romanian universities until 2015 (Traian Băsescu, the Romanian President):

- A three-time increase of the innovation indicator for higher education institutions related to the reference year 2009;
- A five-time increase of the scientific output related to the same reference year 2009
- At least three Romanian universities should be ranked among the top 500 world universities according to the Shanghai Jiao Tong standard.

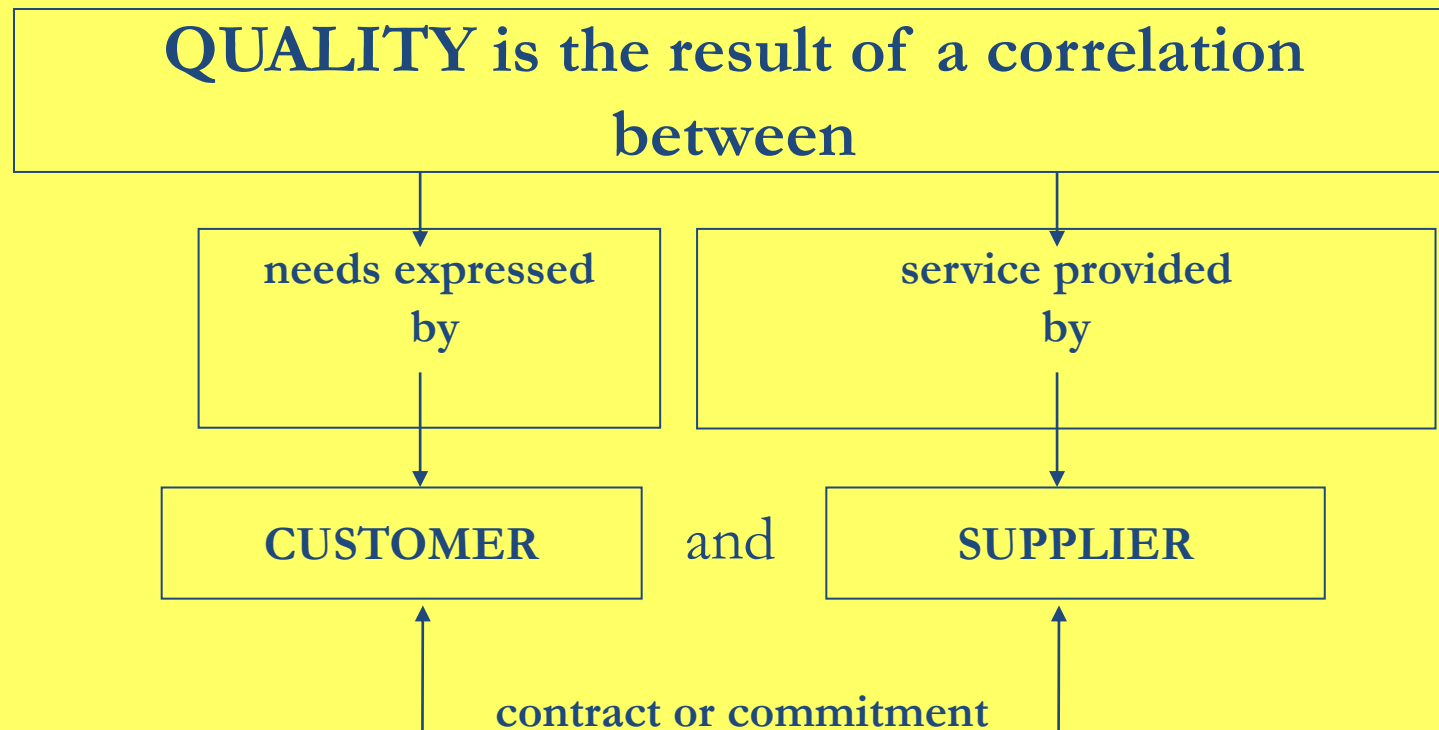


Fig.1 Quality attainment



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The customer: “any person who receives or interacts with a specific product or process” (Juran J.M.).

The student is the main **customer** of a university.

The university is the **supplier** of **educational services**.

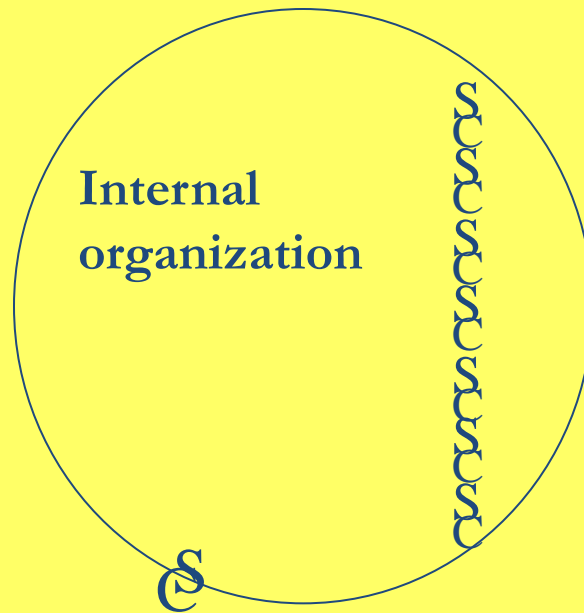
The student and the university share a **partnership relation**.



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**External organization
(Society)**

Fig.2 Quality chain

The evolution of the concept of quality:

- **ISO 8402-95: Quality – the totality of properties and characteristics of an entity, which confers the ability to satisfy the necessities expressed and implied**
- **ISO 9000-2000: Quality – the degree to which some implied characteristics satisfy the requirements**
- **ISO 9000-2006: Quality – the degree to which some intrinsic characteristics satisfy the requirements.**

Educational quality - the degree a particular set of inherent characteristics of a study program is able to meet the requirements (quality standards).

The quality state in Higher Education Report (2009):

- poor quality of the educational process**

The major goal of QA is the accomplishment of quality of the educational process thus focused on continuous improvement.



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The principle of quality management - a process-focused approach requires:

- Systematic definition of the activities included in the educational process in view of attaining the desired result;**
- Assigning clear and precise responsibility and accountability for the management of major activities (lecture, seminar, laboratory, etc.);**
- Analysis and measurement of the capability of major activities;**



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- **Identifying the interfaces of major activities within and among the organizational functions;**
- **Focusing on such factors as: resources, methods and materials, meant to improve the major activities of the organization;**
- **Assessment of risks as well as their consequences and impact on customers, suppliers and other stakeholders.**



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The stages in the assessment process of study programs:

- **authorization – focused on the quality of process input**
- **accreditation – focused on the output and its represents the quality validation of the process input as well as the quality of the educational process.**



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The distinction among ISO 9000 and ARACIS standards:

- **ISO 9000** - related quality standards which mainly rely on constraints in view of standardized processes and activities
- **ARACIS** - related standards of excellence thoroughly founded on a complex quality culture.



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Quality of Study Programs:

The fundamental goal of any study program:
to provide the key competencies and
abilities for an academic training.

- Key discipline;
- Key laboratory.



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The key discipline can be defined as any discipline included in the academic curriculum for a specific study program and which meets the following requirements:

- **compulsory discipline in the curriculum of the specific study program**



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- **discipline coordinator is a key professor:**
 - **full professor who has acquired an international scientific reputation and who is also a doctoral advisor;**
 - **member of international and national professional associations;**
 - **member of scientific committees / editorial board of renown international journals indexed in International Databases;**



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- member of organizing / scientific committees of international conferences with ISI-indexed proceedings;**
- chairman of international scientific conferences;**
- recipient of national and international awards;**
- participation in national and international research contracts as a project director;**



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- director of a research centre in the area of expertise, etc.**
 - fundamental discipline in the curriculum of the specific study program,**
 - the syllabus meets the requirements for training competences and abilities,**
 - discipline resorting to modern methods of teaching and learning,**
 - discipline that involves a significant number of students in research undertakings.**



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Key laboratory is particularly aimed for the activities related to a key discipline and which meets the following requirements:

- laboratory where research activities represent at least 50% of overall activities
- high level of technical endowment with state-of-the-art technology and cutting-edge research equipment and specialized software



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- **participation in research laboratory networks**
- **RENAR laboratory accreditation**
- **number of researchers and students involved in research contracts and projects**
- **laboratory equipment funding from own resources obtained by the research team coordinated by the key professor.**



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Nr. of key disciplines

+

Nr. of key laboratories



Key study programs



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Concluding Remarks:

- Educational quality - the most important goal of universities
- The student is the main customer of higher education institutions, and has a dual character:
 - internal customer involved in the educational process
 - external customer due to the quality of beneficiary from the result or the educational process and an integral part of society.



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- **The student and educational supplier share a partnership relation.**
- **The key study program is defined by the number of key disciplines and key laboratories.**
- **Society is responsible for the quality of university graduates and universities play a major role in this respect.**



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THANK YOU!