



QUALITY ASSESSMENT BY EU PARTNERS (PARTNER P2: UNIVERSITY OF SALZBURG)

Revised course 3: “Natural Resources Management”

| QUALITY ASSESSMENT  |
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| <p>Quality criteria 1: Number of credit units for lectures, practical sessions and self-learning are appropriate to the contents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <p>The number of credits allocated to lectures, practical sessions and self-learning is appropriate. A high ratio of the course credits is devoted to practical sessions and self-learning, as well as to in-class discussions, role-play games and quizzes. Only 30 of the 150 hours of workload are used for presentations by the lecturer. This is of high relevance so as to ensuring the training of highly capacitated and critical thinking professionals, and, as such, highly valued.</p> <p>On the one hand, the acquisition of practical knowledge complementing and enhancing the theoretical knowledge gained is crucial in the field of natural resources management, in order to prepare professionals not only knowledgeable of the concepts, tools, strategies, etc. available, but, most importantly, able to apply these concepts, tools, strategies, etc. in practice. Practical knowledge is especially important in master's degrees, where students specialise in a particular subject area and need to receive practical skills that allow them to use the concepts and tools learnt in their future professional careers.</p> <p>On the other hand, a reflexive way of thinking is crucial for the attainment of a sustainable management of resources, which is much better developed through the participation in discussions, etc. than the passive involvement in theoretical lectures. The organisation of in-class discussions, together with quizzes, moreover, brings dynamism to the sessions, which might increase the motivation of students on the topic and the course, and give students a chance to express themselves and better integrate their already existent knowledge with the new concepts taught. These are the reasons why the high ratio of ECTS attributed to discussions, practical sessions, etc. is very positively valued. The structure and organisation of the course proposed lead us to believe that highly capacitated and critical thinking professionals are trained.</p> </li> <li> <p><i>Strategies for improvement</i></p> <p>Everything is deemed correct. Only some particular aspects might need improvement, even though the extent to which this is true remains unknown for us, as they concern aspects that are not clearly described in the syllabus. Therefore, it might be the case that the suggestions for improvement that we make here are not relevant. This should, in any case, be further clarified in the syllabus. The aspects that need to be cleared up the most urgently are, thus, also highlighted in this document.</p> <p>First, we would suggest including tasks involving the usage of the tools taught in the course for the resolution of practical cases of study, as part of the proposed assignments. This might include the usage of GIS. The provision of knowledge on GIS and remote sensing tools for the assessment and monitoring of natural resources is targeted in the course, but no details are provided in the syllabus on the attention that is paid to these tools during the theoretical and practical sessions. This should be cleared up.</p> <p>Second, it might also be interesting to give the chance to students to work with local actors during the fulfilment of the assignments. This might encompass work with both local leaders/managers and the community. Since it is intended that students prepare a communication package for local leaders and communities and gain understanding on the different perspectives of different stakeholders, this becomes particularly relevant. This would additionally potentially translate into better skilled future professionals. This is connected, however, to a necessary reduction in the scale of interest in assignments 1 and 2, as underscored under quality criteria 4.</p> <p>In any case, it is highly recommended that the assignments are described in more detail in the syllabus, in order to be able to provide more precise recommendations. The available descriptions seem, for instance, to suggest that “assignment 1” consists of a mixture of in-class debates and theoretical presentations provided by the lecturer, which might entail that it can actually not be classified as an assignment. The way theory and practice are interlinked throughout the course should be made more explicit in the syllabus. It is highly recommended that this information</p> </li> </ul> |

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| <p>is included in the course schedule, so that it becomes clear when and how in-class discussions, practical sessions and presentations by the lecturer take place. All this will enable us to provide a more accurate evaluation and suggestions for improvement.</p>  |
| <p><b>Quality criteria 2: Total number of credit units in the course is correct and appropriate</b></p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Evaluation</i></li> </ul> <p>The total number of credit units awarded is correct and appropriate, given the number of hours devoted to the course (150 hours, including lectures, practical sessions and self-learning) and the fact that 1 ECTS equates to 20 hours in Bhutan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Strategies for improvement</i></li> </ul> <p>None. Everything is deemed correct.</p>  |
| <p><b>Quality criteria 3: Positioning of the courses in Curricula is appropriate based on the progressive level of difficulty</b></p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Evaluation</i></li> </ul> <p>The course is appropriately positioned in the curricula. Its positioning in the first year of MSc students in Natural Resources Management is deemed as appropriate and essential. The theme of the course constitutes the backbone of the master's: knowledge is provided on basic concepts, strategies and tools for the management of natural resources. Most specialised courses building on the contents of this course can thus afterwards be provided during the following semesters, in order to more deeply deal with specific topics related to the management of natural resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Strategies for improvement</i></li> </ul> <p>None. Everything is deemed correct.</p>  |
| <p><b>Quality criteria 4: Tests are suitable and appropriate to support transferable skills</b></p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Evaluation</i></li> </ul> <p>The grading system is appropriate to support transferable skills in practice. This is reflected by the fact that the grade awarded to students is entirely derived through the evaluation of the quality of practical assignments and self-learning activities. Especially remarkable is the range of practical/ self-learning tasks considered in the evaluation, going from the active participation in in-class discussions to written assignments to individual oral presentations and team work. The existent interrelation among the 3 assignments defined (each builds on the previous ones) is also very positively valued, along with the chance that they offer to students to reflect and analyse both the prevailing issues and possible strategies for their resolution. The assignments, thus, are not limited to an analysis of the current status and issues in the management of resources, but, very importantly, invite students to reflect on strategies for the resolution of these issues.</p> <p>During the course, thus, not only the acquisition of theoretical knowledge by students is evaluated, but, most importantly, the ability of students to reflect about and utilise the learnt concepts in practice in order to give an answer to real situations. The formation of a reflexive way of thinking and acquisition of practice-oriented knowledge constitute the main elements of evaluation. The latter (acquisition of practice-oriented knowledge) include the development of skills not exclusively needed in the resource management field but of relevance in the professional world, such as the capability to communicate results in front of an audience. This is very positively valued by the reviewers, as a very good procedure to make the skills acquired transferable in practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Strategies for improvement</i></li> </ul> <p>Everything is deemed correct. We would only suggest slightly increasing the weight that the participation in in-class discussions and seminar group assignments receive when calculating the final grade of the students, given the importance of such activities besides the successful completion of the suggested 3 assignments. Additionally, the scale of analysis in assignments 1 and 2 might be reduced from an Asian and global scale to the scale of Bhutan or a certain area within the country. This might enable to better interrelate assignments 1 and 2 with assignment 3 and go deeper into the issues and possible strategies found, which should be related by students to the dynamics observed at an Asian and global scale during the theoretical lectures and discussions. As pointed out under quality criteria 1, however, more details should be provided in the syllabus on the suggested assignments, so as to being able to give you more precise suggestions. For example, it remains unclear to us, what the seminar group assignments are and whether they are connected or not to the 3 assignments that you describe at the end of the syllabus.</p> |



**COURSES REVISED AND NEWLY CREATED BY  
PARTNER P9 (ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF BHUTAN)**

**Work Package 2**



Quality criteria 5: TLM and assessment strategy support students in undertaking the course i.e. prerequisites are helpful and relevant, assessments helps gauge students understanding etc.

- *Evaluation*

The introductory character of the course to the master's degree in Natural Resources Management justifies the absence of prerequisites for attendance. The prerequisites for attending the master's apply. On the other hand, since we do not have access to the e-learning materials, no evaluation can be made about them from our side.

- *Strategies for improvement*

We do not have access to the e-learning materials. Therefore, we do not know whether the suggestions that we make here can be useful. It might be the case that some of the suggestions mentioned have already been adopted. Our first suggestion concerns the desirability of providing the slides and videos of the theoretical sessions in the e-learning platform, so as to enabling students to re-listen and review the learnt contents anytime and as many times as desired. This might allow a better understanding and encourage self-working at home. Second, an online chat might be created, which would make it possible to easily interact and discuss with the professors and other students on any topics of relevance for the course, both content-related and organisation-related. Third, additional literature as well as interactive online practical exercises might be furnished, potentially making the learning experience more attractive and allowing all students interested in the topic to learn more on it.

Quality criteria 6: Theory/Practice-oriented components are sufficient to cater the learning outcomes and skills development

- *Evaluation*

Theory/Practice-oriented components are sufficient to cater the learning outcomes and skills development. Through both theoretical and practical sessions all relevant theoretical and practical themes are covered for the acquisition of the promised learning outcomes and skills.

- *Strategies for improvement*

Everything is deemed correct. However, further clarifications should be offered in the syllabus in order to be able to provide a more accurate evaluation (see suggestions under quality criteria 1).