

QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

25 June 2021

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List of abbreviations

ESB	External Stakeholder Board
EQB	External Quality Board
EU	European Union
FC	Feedback Committee
FOREU	Forum of European University Alliances
IC	Institutional Coordinator
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
QMP	Quality Management Plan
QMS	Quality Management System
SWP	Substantive Work Packages (WP3,4,5)
TT	Task Team
TWP	Technical Work Packages (WP1,2,6)
VRE	Vice-Rectors of Education
VRR	Vice-Rectors of Research
WP	Work Package

1. INTRODUCTION

The Aurora European University (Aurora Alliance) is a consortium of research-intensive universities deeply committed to the social impact of our activities, and with a history of engagement with the communities in which we operate. The overall vision of the Alliance is to use our academic excellence to influence societal change through our research and education. Our key priorities are to maximise the societal impact of our education, research and innovation missions, encourage diversity and inclusion, and to foster dynamic student engagement to drive innovation in teaching and learning.

The core objectives of the Aurora Alliance programme reflect this vision and are presented in Box 1. The achievement of the three main goals, collectively and individually for each participating university, constitutes the overall guiding principle for all quality management activities (see Fig. 1). The aim of the **Quality Management Plan (QMP)** is therefore to provide all involved actors in the Aurora Alliance with a guiding instrument to help them realise their vision to graduate European students who are willing and able to tackle the most challenging issues that society faces and to support the necessary institutional transformation processes which this entails (the so-called Aurora Teaching Development, termed as ‘Aurorisation’). The main objective of ‘Aurorisation’ is to enhance teaching and learning using one or more of the methods developed within Aurora to foster students’ social innovation competences and mindset to be able to address societal challenges. The long-term aim of the Aurora Alliance is to create an inclusive and diverse “inter-university campus” – a campus where students of all cycles, academics and support staff, will move freely online and physically and form an integrated community.

Box 1. Programme objectives

1. Equip a diverse student population with the skills and mindset to make them social entrepreneurs and innovators, willing and able to tackle the major challenges of our societies. *(Note: this refers to WP3 “Aurora Learning for Societal Impact”).*
2. Make collaboration with external stakeholders and students regular practice in education, research and outreach – at local, national, European and global levels. *(Note: this refers to WP4 “Engaging Communities”)*
3. Lead by example and inspire others as pioneers in sustainability, reducing the footprint of our individual and collective activities and making substantial contributions to addressing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). *(Note: this refers to WP5 “Sustainability Pioneers”)*

Thus, we will build an enduring and sustainable infrastructure to support the collaborative activities of the alliance. (Note: this refers to WP1, 2, 6 “Innovative governance and enduring infrastructure”).

Source: Aurora Alliance Proposal, p. 8 ff.

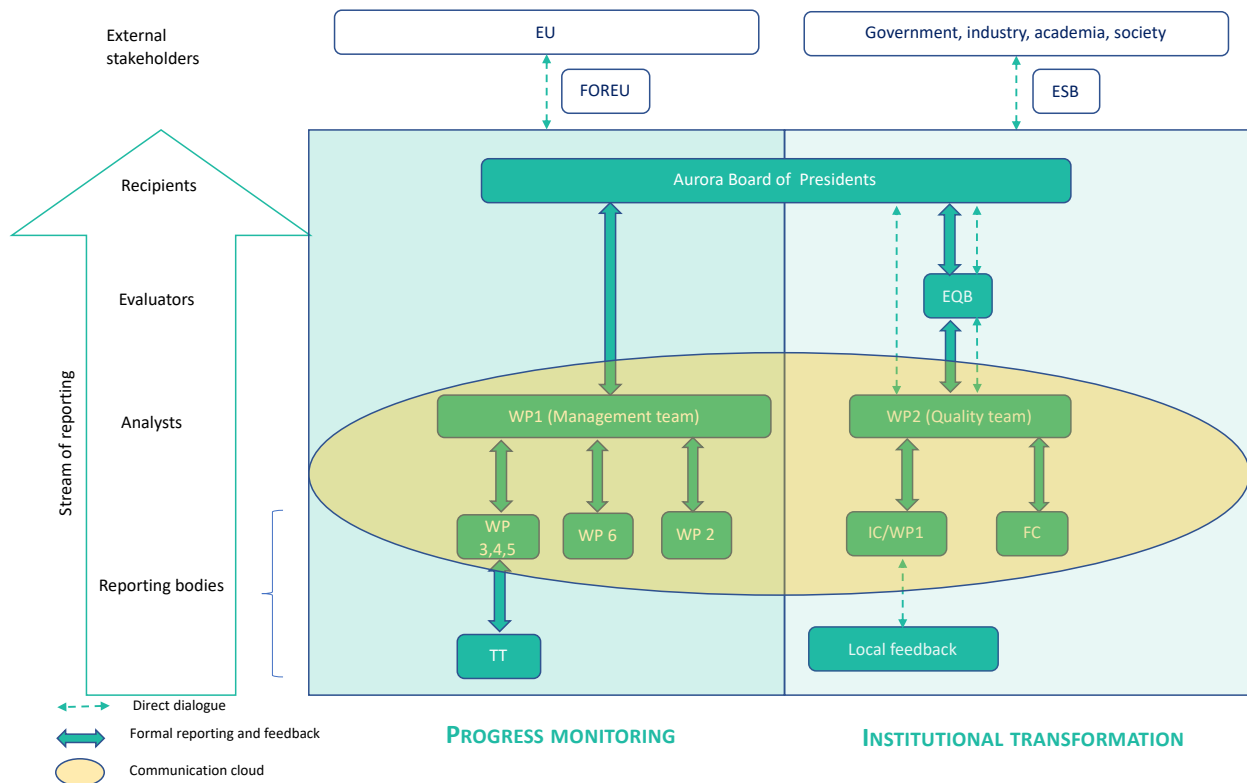


Figure 1. The Aurora Quality Management (see text in following sections for clarification). TT: Task Teams, WP: Work Packages, IC: Institutional Coordinators, FC: Feedback Committee, EQB: External Quality Board, FOREU: forum of European University Alliances, ESB: External Stakeholders Board, EU: European Union. Communication cloud indicates open communication channels between all actors within it.

1.1. Roles and Responsibilities

The Aurora Alliance programme is the shared ambition and endeavour of our students, academics, university leaders and administrators. Different actors have a role to play in assuring the quality of the Alliance. The final Aurora alliance stakeholders matched to the two different reporting streams are shown in Fig. 1 as the “EU” (FOREU formal contact body), and “Government, industry, academia and society” (ESB formal contact body), respectively.

Task Team Leaders and **Work Package Leaders** have the responsibility of delivering the planned output of their respective work plans (see D1.1 - D6.2 in the Aurora Alliance Proposal, Part B1, Section 6.1, pp. 77-112).

Institutional Coordinators help facilitate the progress and monitor and analyse the wider impact of the Alliance activities in their local context (institutional change). They play a pivotal role in assuring the achievement of strategic objectives both in the local context of their respective universities and working together as a team in enhancing the quality of the Alliance as a whole.

WP1 (Aurora Alliance Management and Coordination) assures that all Aurora governance and management bodies are operational and supported, and all decision and conflict resolution mechanisms are in place. It monitors and ensures adequate feedback on execution

of tasks and achievement of all deliverables, emphasising relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the activities. Another objective is to mitigate risks and avoid risks jeopardising the overall achievement of the Aurora Alliance proposal. All tasks in WP1 are carried out by the **Management Team** under supervision of the Aurora Alliance Board.

WP2 (Aurora Alliance Quality Management) is responsible for developing a comprehensive Quality Management System, based on the concept of Quality Culture, and which serves the triple purpose of (i) monitoring the delivery of planned output (deliverables), (ii) evaluating whether the Alliance is making progress towards realizing the programme objectives (Box 1) (institutional change), and (iii) supporting the development of a quality mindset within the Alliance of shared values, beliefs, expectations and commitment towards quality.

WP6 (Aurora Alliance Sustainability and Dissemination) is responsible for developing and maintaining a Fast Feedback Mechanism¹ (see Appendix 2) which serves the purpose of gathering a wide array of feedback and address bottlenecks that occur in the execution of the project both at institutional and central level.

Local Feedback Team is presided by the IC in each university, ideally with the addition of a representative group of participants, covering all the WPs in which the Alliance Member plays a critical role. Particularly important is the presence of a local WP2 member, whose role is to report on to WP2 with matters that are relevant to the quality of the Alliance.

The Feedback Committee is tied into the existing structure of monthly IC meetings, with representation of an IC from each institution, the Management Team, the president and secretary of the *Aurora Student Council*, and one member from WP2. It considers all bottlenecks in the programme and reports to WP1 and WP2, and others as relevant. Some aspects may influence the quality of the project and is therefore of relevance for quality assurance of the Aurora Alliance as a whole.

WP6 is also responsible for producing the Aurora Communication Plan, through which the uptake of deliverables of the project can be followed in the participating universities.

External Quality Board, consisting of three respected independent experts, supports WP2. Its primary role is to critically monitor the Aurora Alliance programme by evaluating the quality management plan, including a quality culture plan, and by providing their recommendations on the yearly evaluations of WP2.

Board of Presidents is the decision-making organ of the Aurora Alliance to which WP1 and WP2 report on quality matters.

1.2. Quality Culture

The definition of quality culture, according to the European University Association is:

an organisational culture that intends to enhance quality permanently and is characterised by two distinct elements: on the one hand, a cultural/psychological element of shared values,

¹ Reference for Fast feedback mechanism from Aurora Alliance [TeamWorks](#) page

beliefs, expectations and commitment towards quality and on the other hand, a structural/managerial element with defined processes that enhance quality and aim at coordinating individual efforts (EUA 2006, p. 10²).

This entails that quality culture is influenced by formal quality assurance systems (quality management, strategies, and processes) and informal development of mindset (values, beliefs, commitment) (Fig. 2). These two components can't be considered separately and must be linked through clear leadership and adequate communication in order to secure active participation and build up trust. It has been proposed that the working mechanisms of quality culture comprise increased staff commitment, shared ownership, empowerment, and knowledge (Bendermacher et al. 2017³).

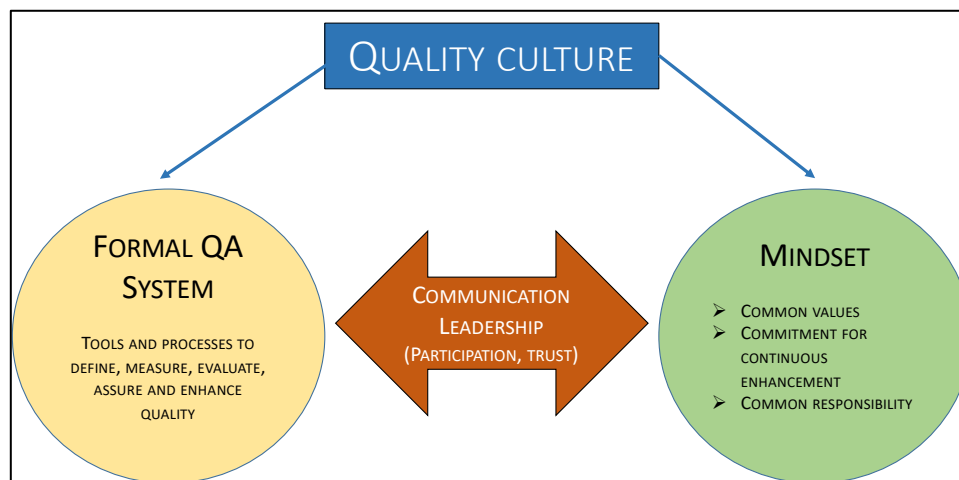


Figure 2. Elements of quality culture (adapted from Bendermacher et al. 2017; EUA 2010⁴)

The QMP therefore describes formal (quality monitoring and evaluation) and informal (quality mindset) procedures and mechanisms that assure continuous attention for quality throughout the change process by all actors, as this underpins the development of our quality culture. Quality evaluation covers the progress, process, deliverables, and impact of the programme and is based on input from individual work packages and task teams and further contextualised by Institutional Coordinators. At the same time informal procedures and mechanisms encourage the creation of a quality mindset which make sure that all participants of the Aurora Alliance:

- Are fully informed and understand their role in the quality management system
- are able and willing to enact accordingly
- feel that they are respected and taken seriously
- feel safe to take risks in the change process.

Here, the Institutional Coordinators play an important role to support institutional leadership in securing that internal communication measures help develop the institutional quality culture

² European University Association. (2006). Quality Culture in European Universities: A bottom-up approach. Report on the three rounds of the quality culture project 2002–2006. Brussels: EUA.

³ G.W.G. Bendermacher et al. (2017). Unravelling quality in higher education: a realist review. High Education 73: 39-60.

⁴ European University Association. (2010). Examining quality culture part I: Quality assurance processes in Higher Education Institutions. Brussels: EUA.

and mental change needed to realize the overarching objectives of the Aurora programme and its long-term vision as expressed in the Mission statement.

1.3. Our Guiding Principles for Quality Assurance (QA)

The following principles and values are the foundations of our Quality Management Plan:

1. **Ownership of the QA** of the Aurora Alliance programme. It is only through the actions and practices of the participating universities themselves that the quality of their operations, aimed at maximizing the societal impact of their education, research and innovation, encouraging diversity and inclusion, and ensuring student engagement to drive innovation in teaching and learning, can be assured and enhanced. The primary purpose of the QMP is to support the autonomous universities in meeting the programme objectives and thus realizing their vision of moving towards a more integrated European inter-university campus through the management of their QA yet at the same time respecting the diversity of individual partners.
2. **Continuous enhancement** of all Aurora Alliance activities through direct interaction between all relevant actors and active feedback.
3. **Involvement of students.** In realizing our vision to graduate European students who are willing and able to tackle the most challenging issues that society faces, students must be involved as active partners in the quality assurance and enhancement of their learning.
4. **Independence and partnership.** Actors responsible for quality monitoring (WP1) and evaluation (WP2) must be seen as fully independent in executing their tasks, being accountable only to the Aurora Alliance Board of Presidents who are in turn committed to fulfilling the European Universities Initiative call as stated in Mission statement of Aurora alliance. Yet it is important that the various internal and external stakeholders work in active partnership within the Quality Management System.

We base our quality evaluation on the quality cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act) (Fig. 3) where:

- **Plan:** Programme objectives and targets of the system according to the proposal, p. 8 and pp. 26-31, and identifies and addresses risks and opportunities;
- **Do:** implement what was planned according to the proposal (deliverables), pp. 77-112 (D1.1 - D6.2);
- **Check:** monitor and (where applicable) measure processes and the resulting outcome through evaluations, reporting and surveys, according to the proposal and measures for institutional change;
- **Act:** take actions to improve performance, as necessary, based on evaluations, surveys, etc.

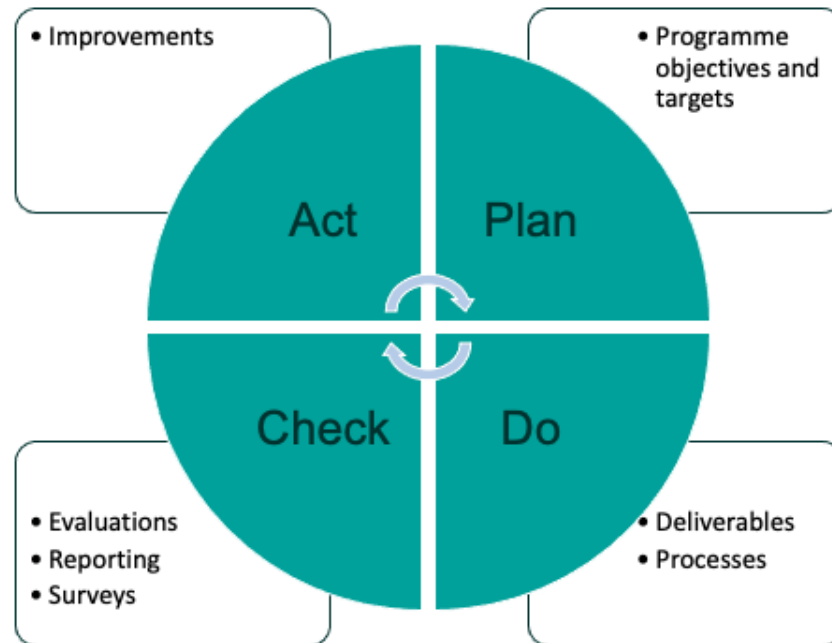


Figure 3 Aurora European Universities Alliance: PDCA Cycle.

All work package teams are responsible for implementing the tasks specified in the work proposal and delivering outputs in a timely manner. It is the responsibility of WP1 (Management Team) to check whether all work packages are meeting the requirements of the European Commission and raise flags to the Aurora Board of Presidents if needed (see Section 2.1 and Section 4.1).

WP2 is responsible for evaluating, based on evidence, whether the results achieved by the different task teams within the substantive work packages (WPs 3, 4, 5) are making a difference and moving us in the right direction towards the overarching goals of the Alliance (see Section 2.2 and Section 4.2). Here, Institutional Coordinators play a pivotal role in assuring the achievement of strategic objectives both in the local context of their respective universities and working together as a team in enhancing the quality of the Alliance as a whole. Based on its summary of the progress reports of the ICs the WP2 highlights issues where improvements are necessary to fulfil the desirable outcome. WP2 carries out a dialogue with leaders of work packages and task teams (see Section 3) and raises flags with the Aurora Alliance Board of Presidents as required. Through regular coordination and communication with WP2, the External Quality Board carries out critical independent quality analyses and reflects on the overall success of the action, communicating directly to the Aurora Alliance Board as needed.

2. FORMAL REPORTING PROCESS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

Formal reporting serves a double purpose: monitoring of the execution of tasks and deliverables every six months (Section 2.1) and seeking evidence of institutional change once a year (Section 2.2). Reporting by TTs, WPs, ICs and FC is followed by compilation and analyses by WP1 (Section 4.1) and WP2 (Section 4.2) to be delivered to the EQB for further recommendation. The reporting process is aligned with and precedes the biannual Aurora

Alliance Board meetings and follows a template provided by the Management Team (on-line link) (Fig. 4).

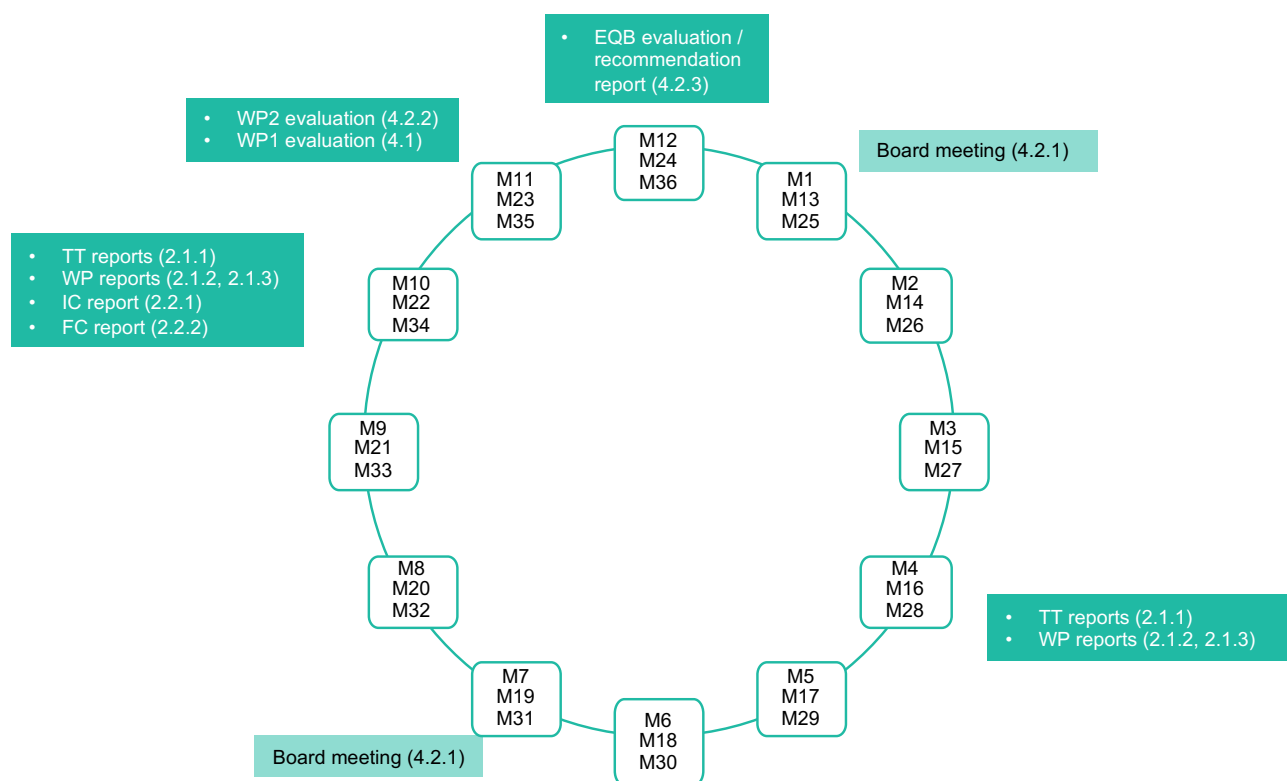


Figure 4. Yearly quality reporting cycle⁵. Numbers in brackets refer to sections in this document. (M: month (starting on M1 of the project which was Nov 1st 2020), EQB: External Quality Board, FC: Feedback Committee, IC: Institutional Coordinator, WP: Work Packages, TT: Task Team).

2.1. Execution of tasks and deliverables (Responsibility: WP1)

Reporting actors (TTs, WPs) are, in addition to reporting on progress, asked to reflect on core quality questions as listed in Box 2. These have been roughly adapted to the Aurora Alliance objectives from a [chain model](#)⁶ developed by OECD where six dimensions provide a different perspective on our alliance, its implementation and results, namely Relevance – Coherence – Effectiveness – Efficiency – Impact - Sustainability. The original questions have been contextualised and covered according to the needs of our own programme, which we are evaluating, and the stakeholders involved. **It is important that different actors therefore approach the questions from a standpoint relevant to their role and specific goals within the overall project.**

⁵ Note that the model was adopted in M7 (May 1, 2021) and thus the first 6 months of the project so far do not adhere to the model.

⁶ See “Better Criteria for Better Evaluation - Revised Evaluation Criteria/Definitions and Principles for Use”, OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>

Box 2. Core quality questions adapted to the Aurora Alliance for all reporting actors to consider:

1. *Are we doing the right things? Are we producing what we said we would?*
2. *How well do these things fit with each other? How well do they fit with what is already done within our universities?*
3. *Are we doing that in the smart way? Are we doing them the way we should do them?*
4. *How do we know that we are on the right track? Can we see that others think so to?*
5. *Are these things actually being used? And will they continue to be used?*
6. *How can we enhance our activities even further in the long run?*

2.1.1. Task Team Leaders

The Task Team report serves the double purpose of meeting the administrative requirements of the European Commission and optimising qualitative monitoring and support on the task teams' contribution towards the overall objectives of the Aurora Alliance programme. Task teams report on progress towards their specific goals according to the on-line reporting format provided by the Aurora Office. Task team reports will provide the respective WP leaders with material for the WP reports.

They are asked to:

1. Give general remarks on progress towards the goals during the last 6 months
2. Provide information on achievements (deliverables, milestones, indicators, meetings, other)
3. Rate engagement of the team
4. Identify risks and red flags

Task team leaders are also asked to give a short description of the activities of their team for the current reporting period, giving some thought to our core quality questions (see Box 2) (max. 300 words in response to all questions as relevant) and focusing on progress and/or changes observed in the previous 6 months.

Finally, there is an option to target questions and/or recommendations to the respective Work Package team, to the Aurora Alliance Board, or to the Management Team, or articulate it more generally.

2.1.2. Substantive Work Package Leaders

The substantive work package leaders (WP3, 4 and 5) give a short summary (max. 800 words) of the activities within their respective work packages and assess the overall quality of their relevant task teams' results and deliverables, based on their reports and the programme objectives.

They give evidence-supported answers (e.g. from relevant stakeholders) concerning the core quality questions (max. 300 words each) (see Box 2) as is relevant (each WP leader is not expected to provide answers to all questions in each reporting period), and focusing on progress and/or changes observed in the previous 6 months.

Finally, there is an option to target questions and/or recommendations (max. 200 words) to the Aurora Alliance Board, or to the Management Team, or articulate it more generally.

2.1.3. Technical Work Package Leaders

Work package leaders report on the level of their own deliverables and objectives and provide information on the following:

1. Risks and red flags
2. Achievements (milestones, deliverables (including selected KPIs), other)
3. Engagement of the team

They are also asked to give a short description of the activities of their team for the current reporting period, giving some thought to the core quality questions (see Box 2) (max. 300 words in response to all questions as relevant).

Finally, there is an option to target questions and/or recommendations (max. 200 words) to the Aurora Alliance Board, or to the Management Team, or articulate it more generally.

2.2. Evidence for institutional change (Responsibility: WP2)

Once a year (M9, M21, M33) Institutional Coordinators deliver a self-review report (described in 2.2.1.) to the WP2 relating to the progress of implementing the overarching objectives of the Aurora Alliance programme. These reports, together with reports delivered by WP1 to the Aurora Alliance Board every six months (see Section 4.1), regular reports from the Feedback Committee and the informal interaction and dialogue (see Section 3), form the basis of the quality evaluation and subsequent recommendations of the WP2 (see Section 4.2).

2.2.1. Institutional coordinators

Given the central role the Institutional Coordinators play within their institutions, they are ideally placed to assess the activities of the alliance holistically and in a broader context, take into account also the legal frameworks, cultures and systems in which the alliance activities are being carried out at the different universities. However, it is necessary for the coordinators to involve other relevant administrative staff at their institution and the Aurora central office and/or TTs/WP2 where relevant to collect data and provide further background information necessary for interpreting and analysing the data.

In addition, to be able to carry out a more comprehensive assessment of institutional impact and outreach, the Institutional coordinators will also assess the level of awareness and support for the Aurora Alliance activities using evidence and data gathered at the Institutional level and as part of Aurora deliverables. Finally, to assess level of engagement and outreach, Institutional Coordinators will also report on communication indicators in their institution and reflect on any observed trends in the past 12 months to analyse effectiveness of communication within the university. Below is an overview of the key questions included in the reporting with further definitions and a description of the methodology to be included in the reporting template itself.

An institutional report⁷ will collect replies on a yearly basis to the following provisional qualitative questions:

⁷ Definitions of indicators and data collecting methodology will be further specified in the institutional reporting template.

1. Has your university introduced any new policies or actions that support the activities of a particular Task Team and its development?
2. Are there any organisational structures or policies in your university that have hindered the implementation of activities or programme objectives in the last 12 months?
 - What action has your university taken or plans to take in order to address these barriers, if any?
3. Are there any barriers to achieving the programme objectives in your university which are linked to national policies or regulations?
 - What action has your university taken or plans to take to address these barriers, if any?
4. Any other information deemed relevant in the institutional context, e.g. in terms of best practices related to management (including change management), monitoring, communication and dissemination of the work of the alliance?
5. Please reflect on the level of support, engagement and satisfaction with the Aurora programme in University with references to the Aurora indicators used to underpin your analyses.
6. Please reflect on the main trends observed in your university in terms of Aurora communication indicators and indicate which plans (if any) your institution is considering to improve the effectiveness of local communication efforts.

In addition, the yearly institutional report will include information on the following quantitative questions which constitute our key performance indicators:

1. The number and % of faculties/departments participating in the alliance activities at your university.
 - Please provide a short analysis on observed trends in the level of participation.
2. The number and % of academic staff at participating in the alliance activities at your university.
 - Please provide a short analysis on observed trends in the level of participation.
3. The number of students engaged in the alliance activities at your university.
 - Please provide a short analysis on observed trends in the level of participation.
4. The number of physical, blended and virtual student mobilities at institutional level.
 - Please provide a short analysis on observed trends in the level of participation in physical and blended student mobilities with an emphasis on progress towards the 50% student mobility objective.
5. The % of students that received full and automatic mutual recognition of ECTS credits earned for their physical, blended or virtual mobility.

2.2.2. Feedback Committee

The *Feedback Committee*⁸ provides a short report to WP2 including a written qualitative assessment of any resolved and unresolved feedback over the previous year with an emphasis on quality enhancement.

⁸ See Appendix 2

3. DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITY MINDSET

Our targets in building up a quality culture within the Aurora Alliance are that:

- internal stakeholders (e.g. students and staff) and external stakeholders are aware of the objectives of the Aurora Alliance and share these
- internal stakeholders and external stakeholders feel engaged and invited to give their input
- all teams and team members understand their role in quality management and are willing and able to play that role.

3.1. Direct dialogue among all actors in the Aurora Alliance

Aim: To stimulate information flow across the different actors in the Alliance and allow for fast feedback pertaining to the sustainability and quality assurance of the Aurora Alliance as a whole, thus underpinning the integrated formal evaluation of the overall success, quality and relevance of the project (see Section 4 for further details).

3.1.1. Communication between WP1 and leaders of Substantive Work Packages

The Management Team organises joint meetings with the leaders of WPs 3, 4 and 5 so they will be able to discuss progress and align their specific objectives with the overall objectives of the project.

3.1.2. Communication between the Technical Work Packages

Members of WPs 1, 2 and 6 meet once a month to align their activities and exchange information as needed.

3.1.3. A dialogue between the WP2 and Substantive Work Packages

The WP2 organizes a round of short informal meetings with the task/work package leaders as required at the end of each six-month reporting period in order to generate evaluative information in parallel to the formal reporting system. This discussion is organized in focus groups that best suits the structure of each Work Package and core questions will be developed and presented to all focus groups to have the same information base in order to obtain a fuller understanding of the actual progress towards the overarching goals of the project and how they underpin their views with evidence of responses from their stakeholders, and eventual pitfalls. This allows the WP2 to obtain constructive feedback on the implementation of their activities and give recommendations as required.

3.1.4. Local Feedback Team

The local IC organises regular meetings among those within each institution that carry special responsibilities in the Alliance (WP or team leads/co-leads) together with the WP2 representative at the institution. This activity contributes to the Fast Feedback Mechanism (see Section 1.1).

3.1.5. Regular IC meetings

Institutional Coordinators meet once a month with the Management Team and discuss all relevant topics relating to the execution of the project. Regular IC meetings provide an overview of ongoing activities and are a necessary forum for coordination between Aurora partner institutions and the management team.

3.2. Awareness raising events

3.2.1. Local Aurora Alliance Events

Events are organised locally on the Aurora Alliance campuses as needed in collaboration between the respective Institutional Coordinator and WP2 member. The aim of these events is to introduce the Aurora Alliance activities to academics, students and other relevant stakeholders and to encourage them to take part as relevant.

3.2.2. During Aurora Biannuals

The WP2 organises a workshop during Aurora Biannuals in order to enhance the creation of quality culture among all participants for a successful implementation of the Aurora Alliance University.

3.3. Participatory events for consultation with stakeholders

Participatory hearings will be organised locally among stakeholders in order to acquire informal explorations of their perceptions and impressions. This will be carried out in collaboration between the respective Institutional Coordinator and WP2 member and/or at the initiative of the WP2. The aim is to gather information through an active dialogue with the local community.

4. QUALITY ANALYSES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Reporting on progress monitoring (Responsibility: WP1)

Through the six-monthly reporting mechanisms (Section 2.1) and direct communication between different actors (Section 3.1), WP1 carries out a qualitative analysis, with input from WP2 and WP6 as needed, to be included in the six-monthly report to the Aurora Alliance Board. The aim is to obtain an integrated reflection of the overall success, quality and relevance of the project and provide recommendations for improvement.

4.2. Evaluation on institutional transformation (Responsibility: WP2)

4.2.1. Aurora Alliance Board

The Aurora Alliance Board serves as the highest body assessing and reviewing feedback on the overall success and quality of the project. During their six months' regular meetings (M1, M7) representatives of the WP2 have the opportunity to observe and share with them their perspectives and reflections to the implementation of the project. Further, they can make recommendations based on issues earlier resolved by Local Feedback Teams and the Feedback Committee (WP6.1).

The Board and Board Committee can also arbitrate in case of sensitive concerns regarding the Aurora Alliance sustainability, aimed at either central or institutional management.

The Student Council will be represented in these Aurora Alliance Board meetings, further ensuring the voice of students in the feedback mechanism.

4.2.2. Internal quality evaluation by the WP2

Once a year (M11, M23, M35) WP2 completes an internal report based on information obtained from reports obtained from ICs and the Feedback Committee (Section 2.2), from the development of quality mindset (Section 3), and information gathered from the Aurora Alliance Board (Section 4.2.1). The analysis will be supported by deliverables from WP6 (D6.1), their monitoring of sustainability of the Auroral Alliance as a lasting European institution, and buy-in of students, staff and leadership, and external stakeholders. All tasks, processes and deliverables are assessed whether they meet the following targets:

- *The deliverables of the Aurora Alliance are relevant, coherent with other activities, use resources effectively, reach the intended impact, and are sustainable.*
- *Where appropriate, deliverables are embedded in the rules and procedures of the participating universities.*
- *The deliverables are embraced by students, staff and external stakeholders.*
- *Structural resource allocation is suited to maintain the deliverables and their use.*

4.2.3. External quality monitoring by EQB

The external quality board provides a critical external review by analysing the internal quality reports produced by WP2 and delivers their recommendations (M12, M24, M36), with a special focus on appraising the change of attitude, mindset and behaviour of the Aurora Alliance stakeholders towards creating the Aurora European University as a lasting institution within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

4.2.4. Quality enhancement

Based on their internal quality analyses and the recommendations from the external quality board, WP2 carries out a dialogue with leaders of work packages and task teams (M13, M25, and a final wrap-up dialogue at the end of the project). Similarly, WP2 discusses its recommendations with the Aurora Alliance Board of Presidents at its regular meetings as required.

At their request and/or that of the Aurora Alliance Board of Presidents, the external quality board can communicate directly with the Board of Presidents. The external quality board can also get into direct contact with Task Teams or other groups to test the quality of the reporting systems and to enhance their understanding and the governance mechanism of the programme. Their recommendations, together with the recommendations of WP2, will underpin desirable adjustments in the internal procedures and mechanisms for individual Aurora Alliance members and, hence, enhance the overall quality of the programme. Those reports are made available to the Board of Presidents as well as to individual work package and task leaders. Thus, recommendations of the external quality board will reach all levels of programme actors.

Appendix 1: Key actors

WP2

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External Quality Board

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Appendix 2: Fast feedback mechanism

Activity 6.1 – Sustainability: Fast Feedback Mechanism

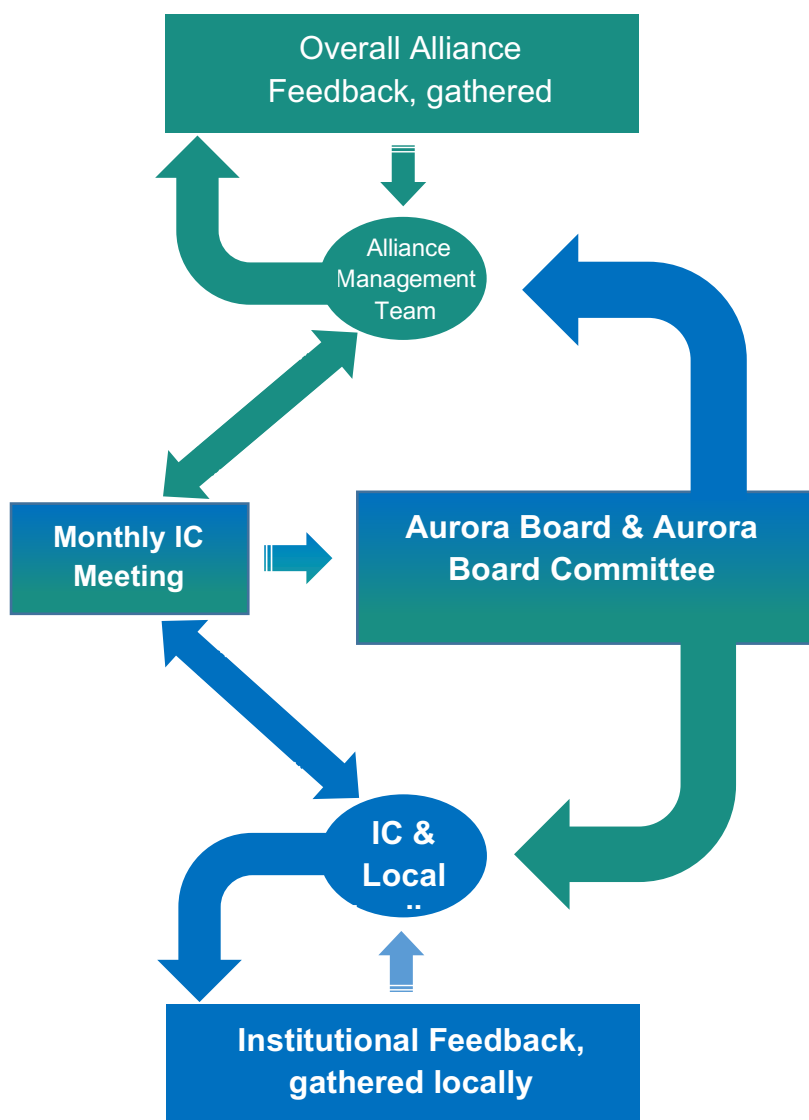
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Activity 6.1 - Fast Feedback Mechanism proposal

Diagram - Fast Feedback Mechanism

This diagram serves as the WP6 proposal for the Aurora Fast Feedback Mechanism. The Aurora Fast Feedback Mechanism is a part of the Aurora Alliance Sustainability Plan of Activity 6.1, where the overall objective is to create the Aurora Alliance as a lasting European University. The Fast Feedback Mechanism serves the purpose of gathering a wide array of direct feedback and addressing bottlenecks that occur in the execution of the project, at both the institutional and central level, by rapidly correcting any mismatch between objectives and obtained results, either locally, via the Institutional Coordinators, or centrally through the Aurora Alliance Management Team.



Local Feedback

Local feedback and concerns are gathered through localized institutional Aurora websites, and the other communication channels used by each Alliance institution. This will result in a very broad array of feedback, ranging from local, operational details to feedback pertaining to the sustainability and quality assurance of the Aurora Alliance as a whole.

This locally gathered feedback is to be processed by a local feedback team. The *Local Feedback Team* shall be presided by the IC, ideally with the addition of a representative group of participants, covering all of the WPs the Alliance Member is engaged in. Particularly important is the presence of a local WP2 participant, whose role will be to report to the Quality Assurance group on matters that are relevant to the quality of the Alliance.

The *Local Feedback Team* will manage and address the issues that can be addressed locally, directly. Records of this feedback, both addressed and unresolved, are filtered for relevance and then bundled for the consideration of the *Feedback Committee*, meeting monthly during the ICs Meeting.

Central Feedback

Similar to the local feedback loop, central feedback is gathered through the central alliance webpage primarily, combined with the other communication channels at the disposal of the Aurora Alliance Management Team.

This feedback is processed, addressed, and recorded at the Central Aurora Office, under the auspices of the Aurora Alliance Programme Director. These records are filtered for relevance and presented to the *Feedback Committee*, during the Monthly IC Meeting.

Feedback Committee

The *Feedback Committee* will be tied into the existing structure of monthly IC meetings, which sees representation from each institution, the management team, as well as at least one WP2 representative who will report back to the Quality Team. The student president and/or the student council secretary should also be given the possibility to attend these meetings, in order to ensure a student voice is present at this level of the feedback loop, in addition to the already existing structure of fortnightly meetings between the student council president and the Aurora Alliance Management Team.

Together, the *Feedback Committee* will have a complete overview of all bottlenecks in the project, both overall as locally. The setting of the Monthly IC Meeting will allow for the feedback to be discussed and assessed in an informal manner. Communication between local feedback teams and the overarching feedback community likewise shall be informal and dialogical in nature.

The *Feedback Committee* will serve as the first body recommending solutions to issues that cannot be resolved locally, should they arise. The recommendations of the *Feedback Committee* shall be written down following the Monthly IC Meeting and shared with the various parties according to the diagram of the *Fast Feedback Mechanism*.

The *Feedback Committee* will report to the Aurora Alliance Board & Aurora Alliance Board Committee, to give them an overview of the provided issues and solutions, by handing in written qualitative assessments of the resolved and unresolved feedback within the periodicity of six months, in time for the Aurora Alliance Board Meetings.

The Aurora Alliance Board & Aurora Alliance Board Committee

The Aurora Alliance Board & Aurora Alliance Board Committee will serve as the highest body assessing and reviewing feedback. They can evaluate and reflect on the handling of issues earlier resolved by *Local Feedback Teams* and the *Feedback Committee*.

The board and board committee can also arbitrate in case of sensitive concerns regarding the alliance sustainability, aimed at either central or institutional management.

The student council will be represented in these Aurora Alliance Board meetings, further ensuring the voice of students in the feedback mechanism.