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vereniging van universiteiten
association of universities
THE NETHERLANDS

Professionalisation of university lecturers

The UTQ and beyond

VSNU, May 2018

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The UTQ and beyond

Foreword

Dear reader,

The University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) recognised mutually by our 14 universities has existed for ten years. That is something we wish to reflect on and celebrate.

The UTQ serves as proof of the didactic competency of (beginning) lecturers. It is embedded in the universities' HR policy, which makes it an important element of the professional development and evaluation of university lecturers.

The value and quality of the UTQ are widely appreciated, as was shown in a peer review which the universities jointly designed in 2017. Of course, the universities assess themselves critically and are alert to opportunities for improvement. In this report, drawn up together with the VSNU, they inform you about the main outcomes of the peer review.

At all universities, there is an increasing focus on the ongoing professional development of lecturers, not just at the start of their teaching career with the UTQ, but emphatically also in all subsequent phases. In this context, the present publication should be seen as a contribution to the ongoing development of the UTQ.

I hope you will find this report an enjoyable and inspiring read.

Kind regards,

Pieter Duisenberg
Chair,
Association of Universities in the Netherlands

Contents

1   Executive summary

In 2017, the 14 universities carried out a peer review around the theme of lecturer professionalisation on their own initiative. The review was centred on the UTQ and on the professionalisation activities preceding it and following it. The goal of the review was to exchange experiences, to reflect and to learn from each other in order for each university to make further improvements to its policies on lecturer professionalisation, quality of education and career development.

Design of the peer review

The peer review was carried out nationally in four clusters of universities.[1] In preparation, each cluster exchanged relevant documents, drew up fact sheets and analysed similarities and differences between the universities. Subsequently, each cluster held a work conference with 40 to 60 participants per conference. The participants shared information on the following seven themes: UTQ competencies, UTQ assessment, setting up a UTQ programme, UTQ quality assurance, embedding UTQ in education policy, embedding UTQ in HR policy and the post-UTQ programme.

Using the input from the preparatory documents and work conferences, the peer review led to three reporting formats: 1) fourteen institutional reports including an improvement agenda, 2) four cluster reports and 3) the overall report you are now reading.

Main conclusions and recommendations[2] per theme

UTQ assessment:
- The portfolio turns out to be an outstanding instrument for assessing whether the lecturer has developed the UTQ competencies.
- Recommendations are to include student feedback, to involve the manager and to finish the UTQ programme with a conversation in which further development goals are set. Another recommendation is to introduce proof of participation in training sessions for those whose teaching duties are (too) limited.

UTQ competencies:
- The generic UTQ competencies drawn up in 2008 (see Appendix 2) are still adequate. They offer a good framework as well as sufficient leeway for institutions to customise the UTQ.
- It is recommended to emphasise the following competencies: 1) testing, assessment and feedback, 2) education and ICT plus blended learning, 3) diversity and inclusion, and 4) ongoing professionalisation.

Designing the UTQ programme:
- The design of the UTQ learning/working programme is tailored to the lecturer's knowledge, skills and experience. It consists of an intake, the compilation of a portfolio (often to include a professionalisation programme) and an assessment.
- It is recommended to have both an educationalist and a senior lecturer supervise the programme, as well as to give student learning a more prominent position.

UTQ quality control:
- Different universities go about UTQ quality control differently.
- It is recommended to have 'calibration sessions' in which random portfolios of different faculties are reassessed. Two further recommendations are to evaluate UTQ programmes among former participants and to organise another national peer review in a number of years.

Universities resoundingly affirmed the quality of the UTQ and the system of mutual recognition.

Embedding UTQ in education and HR policy:
- Since the 2012 performance agreements, all institutions have made the UTQ part of their HR policy. At all institutions, thanks to the link with their own education policy, the UTQ also offers an excellent way of involving lecturers in this policy.
- It is recommended that institutions offer time for participation in the UTQ programme. Further, manager involvement and including lecturer professionalisation in the assessment cycle are best practices.

The post-UTQ programme:
- Institutions go about post-UTQ professional lecturer development in different ways. These include programmes for specific groups of lecturers (e.g., the Advanced UTQ or the Leadership in Education Course) and professionalisation activities for all lecturers.
- The majority of lecturers are UTQ-certified. Follow-up steps are now being taken, including developing suitable ongoing professionalisation programmes and linking these to HR policy/ the university career.

A final thought
The peer review has yielded rich results with practical applicability. Universities have learned much from the insider view into each other's practices. They resoundingly affirm the quality of the UTQ, its effectiveness as an instrument and the possibility of maintaining mutual recognition of the UTQ.

In general, it can be concluded that since the introduction of the UTQ in 2008 and the performance agreements in 2012 there has been a strong increase in attention to lecturer professionalisation. The majority of lecturers are UTQ-certified. The UTQ is firmly embedded in the institutions and is carried widely. Now it is time for the next step, to which the peer review and this report are making a contribution.

2   Background of the UTQ

2.1   Why and how did the UTQ come about?

At the end of the 1990s, Utrecht University introduced a qualification structure for research and education so as to achieve a better balance between education and research in terms of careers and valuation. This policy, new to the Netherlands, gave a boost to the development of lecturer professionalisation. Various other universities also developed teaching qualifications and nearly all universities offered training programmes used mainly by beginning lecturers to train for teaching duties.

> **Thanks in part to the agreements in the 2012 general agreement, there has been a considerable increase in the number of lecturers who hold a UTQ.**

The need for support, supervision and training was not new, but ending the voluntary and non-committal nature of such training was. Training and development were linked to teaching qualifications that lecturers had to obtain and that were also tested. In 2006, six universities took[3] the initiative to set up a national framework for these teaching qualifications, resulting two years later in nationwide mutual recognition of the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) among all Dutch universities.

2.2   What does mutual recognition UTQ entail?

Mutual recognition of the UTQ had various goals:

- contributing to a greater focus on the quality of academic lecturer training and of teaching at universities;
- ongoing development of lecturer professionalisation;
- a more objectivised accounting for 'staff quality' and 'human resources policy' in view of programme accreditation by the NVAO (Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders);
- determining the competency level of lecturers, as had been done for some time in other sectors of education (primary, secondary, vocational training and adult education, higher professional education);
- removing constraints to inter-university mobility among lecturers.

Mutual recognition involved the universities agreeing that each university records the level of academic lecturers in a University Teaching Qualification agreement. The university grants the UTQ to lecturers on the basis of prior assessment on characteristics agreed upon among universities. With regard to content, the universities agreed that as a minimum, lecturers should use their UTQ programme to work on designing, carrying out and evaluating their own teaching; and on testing, assessing and supervising students (see Appendix 2). Mutual recognition advanced the discussion on overall broad quality assurance for university UTQ agreements.

Since the mutual recognition in 2008, a number of foreign universities[4] have requested their own lecturer professionalisation programmes to be included in the Dutch mutual UTQ recognition. These universities were reviewed and, following a favourable assessment and approval from the university managers united in the VSNU, were added to the mutual UTQ recognition scheme as 'trend followers'.

2.3   External UTQ quality assurance

In 2010/2011, a pilot project carried out four external audits of UTQ schemes at six universities.[5] Apart from the experience of being audited, the audit and the audit report provided universities with insight into the content of their own UTQ scheme. The UTQ scheme was reviewed on the basis of the audit framework, with each institution receiving a report of the findings and suggestions for improvement. This was a stimulus for the further development of each university's UTQ scheme.

The findings of the four UTQ audits were summarised and an overview of the main general areas for improvement was drawn up. Also, in 2011 an overview was compiled of examples of good practices of the audited UTQ schemes. The experiences from the 2010/2011 audits have provided valuable information for structuring the current UTQ peer review.

2.4   BKO in de prestatieafspraken

In view of the 2012 performance agreements, the UTQ has become one of the performance indicators used in operationalising the quality of teaching. All universities have set goals and have reported on the percentage of lecturers required to have a UTQ. All universities have met these goals (figure 1).[6] Thanks in part to the agreements in the general agreement, there has been a considerable increase in the number of lecturers who hold a UTQ (figure 2) in recent years.
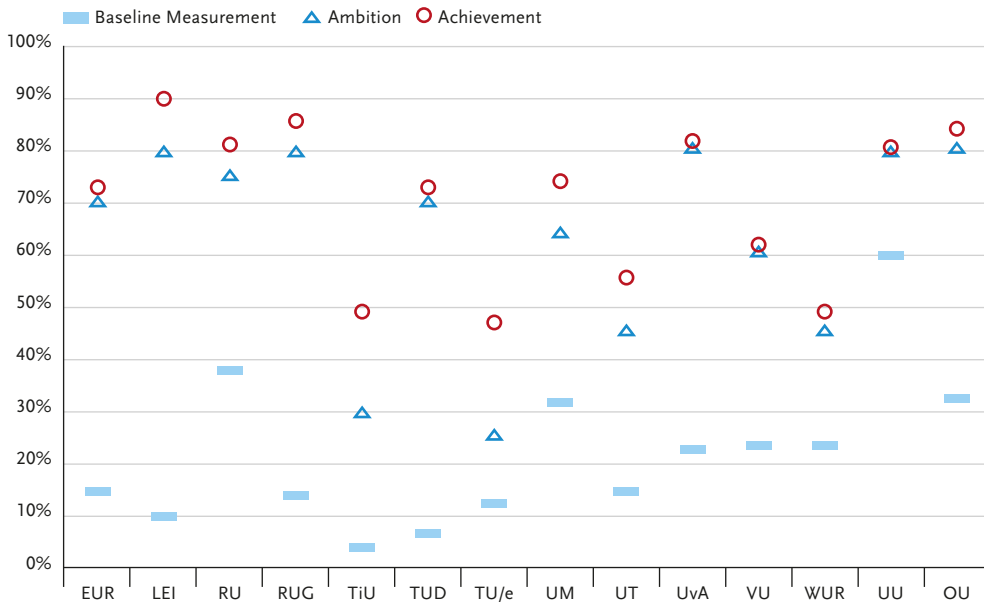
Source:annual university reports, 2015
* Utrecht University excluding Faculty of Medicine

Figure 1: UTQ ambitions and achievements in the general agreement[7].

University Teaching Qualification (UTQ)
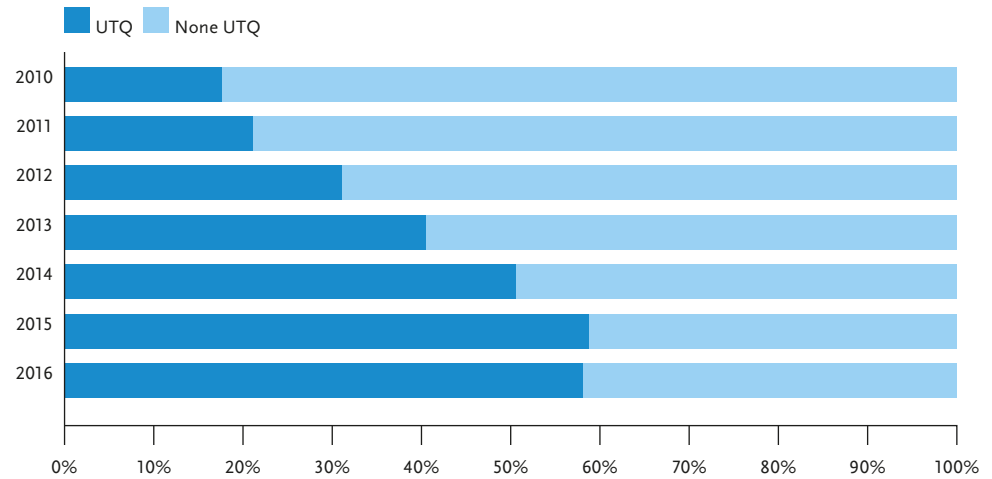Among academic teaching staff

Figure 2: The number of lecturers as against the number of obtained UTQs.[8]

2.5   The UTQ in practice

In 2016, the UTQ coordinators of the 14 universities inventoried and analysed all UTQ programmes at Dutch universities.[9] The main features of the UTQ programmes were described, and good practical examples were given, on the basis of the following five themes: UTQ competencies, the UTQ programme, the facilitation of development, assessment and the linkage with HR policy.

The UTQ helps to draw attention to the ongoing development of lecturers and quality in education.

The conclusion was that there are significant similarities between the university UTQ schemes and that these are in line with mutual recognition. All universities have included the UTQ competences agreed on in the VSNU framework in their own UTQ programmes. The UTQ is based on training and work programmes in which development takes precedence over training. Key objectives are gaining experience and applying educational knowledge in practice in order to improve teaching. Assessment committees evaluate lecturer quality on the basis of a file or portfolio setting out the UTQ competencies, expressed in terms of behavioural criteria. Agreements about obtaining the UTQ are embedded in HR policy. Discussion topics were formulated which the peer reviews could build upon.

The introduction of the UTQ at the universities and the performance agreements have led to greater attention for the ongoing development of lecturers and teaching quality. Many universities have also assigned a more prominent role to follow-up tracks such as the Senior Teaching Qualification (Senior Onderwijskwalificatie) or STQ and educational leadership. After all, the professional development of lecturers and its recognition and valuation do not stop once the UTQ has been obtained. Rather, the UTQ should be seen as a starting point.

3   Design of the peer review

In 2017, the universities carried out a peer review in which they evaluated their lecturer professionalisation policy and were able to formulate areas for improvement. The peer review was intended to encourage mutual learning through systematic joint reflection on experiences with lecturer professionalisation, career development and improving the quality of teaching. The inspiring form of a peer review was selected, with a work conference for each cluster of three or four institutions. These institutions peer-reviewed each other jointly and simultaneously.

The peer review was carried out nationally in four clusters of universities.
Cluster 1: University of Groningen, Leiden University, University of Twente and Utrecht University
Cluster 2: Maastricht University, Open University, Tilburg University
Cluster 3: University of Amsterdam, VU University Amsterdam, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Delft University of Technology
Cluster 4: Eindhoven University of Technology, Wageningen University & Research, Radboud University

In preparation for the work conferences, a working group within each cluster shared all relevant documents, drew up fact sheets and analysed similarities and differences between the universities. All of this provided input for the work conference programme.

Universities use the peer review to advance their policy on the professional development and valuation of lecturers.

Between 40 and 60 participants attended the conferences themselves. They represented the perspectives of students, lecturers, strategy and policy officers, educationalists, professors, directors of education, vice-deans and participants in the assessment committees. There were also representatives of national student networks (LSVb and ISO) and the universities (VSNU and representatives from other clusters).

All of the programmes offered an opportunity to deal with the following seven themes, agreed on in a VSNU framework:
1. UTQ competencies
2. UTQ assessment
3. Designing the UTQ programme
4. UTQ quality control
5. Embedding UTQ in education policy and HR policy
6. Professionalisation before the UTQ
7. Professionalisation after the UTQ

In addition, in all cases there was an opportunity to discuss topical issues at the different institutions and to develop a shared view of the state of affairs at each participant's own institution. Sharing best practices helped define the potential for improvement.

The peer review led to three types of report: fourteen institutional reports including an improvement agenda for the institution concerned, and four cluster reports which in turn provided input for this overall VSNU report.

4   Outcomes of the peer review

4.1   UTQ competencies

Ten years ago, the universities agreed that, over the course of their UTQ programme, lecturers should at a minimum work on the following competencies: designing, carrying out and evaluating (their own) teaching, and supervising, testing and assessing students (see Appendix 2).

All universities have translated these generic competencies into behaviours used for (self-)assessment. In addition, each university emphasises topics specific to the institution. These elaborated UTQ competencies reflect what teaching duties entail more specifically than does the description of the result areas in the University Job Classification (UFO) profiles. For two examples of such elaborations, see Appendix 3.

The UTQ competencies formulated in 2008 are still adequate.

The peer reviews compared the elaboration of competencies in terms of behavioural criteria for each cluster and discussed whether the competencies agreed on in 2008 are still adequate. The universities believe that the national UTQ competencies from 2008 are, generally speaking, still adequate and appropriate to the teaching duties of university lecturers. They offer a framework as well as sufficient leeway for institutions to customise the UTQ. Continued adjustment of the competency profiles to the strategic education policy of each institution will automatically raise the prominence of themes such as blended learning, internationalisation and inclusion in lecturer development.

In addition, all universities, apart from achieving the above-mentioned competencies, pay attention to issues for beginning lecturers such as finding one's way around the university and organising one's own activities. These issues are not always described in terms of competencies, but they do show that the UTQ programmes involve more than strictly achieving the described competencies.

Areas for improvement

Recent developments such as the renewed Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), the accreditation framework of the NVAO and the strategic agendas of institutions are generating specific attention for the below competencies. These competencies may deserve greater emphasis in the context of the UTQ-wide competencies.

Testing, assessment and feedback

A greater emphasis on the competency of 'Testing, evaluation and feedback' is in line with the more stringent requirements made of lecturers in recent years in this area. This is expressed, among other ways, in increased attention to testing, the NVAO's accreditation framework and reinforcing the role of examination boards.

Education and ICT and blended learning

The fast developments in the field of educational innovation mean that UTQ programmes should also dwell on what these developments mean for lecturers. This does not just involve specific skills in dealing with new applications, but should also cover the changing role of lecturers. Digitisation fosters closer teamwork in education, where lecturers receive support from specialists in areas such as online teaching methods, instructional design, and the use of video resources and social media.

Diversity and inclusion in education

Growing diversity of the student population means lecturers are increasingly faced with differences in prior knowledge and with cultural differences. One of the reasons for this increase in diversity is the higher number of international students in university programmes. If they are to offer quality education to all students, lecturers will have to pay attention to differences and acquire skills for taking these into practical consideration. This begins with fostering lecturers' awareness of interpersonal sensitivity.

Lecturers' own professionalisation

Mentioning the competency of 'Ongoing Professionalisation' separately highlights the fact that the UTQ is not an end point but a starting point in the ongoing development of university lecturers.

4.2   UTQ testing

Universities test whether lecturers have developed the UTQ competencies by assessing a portfolio or a file. The conclusion from the peer review is that the portfolio is a good instrument for testing competencies.

In the portfolio, lecturers show they have developed the competencies and offer evidence for this. In addition, they use it to reflect on their own actions. The portfolio has two functions: to encourage the individual development of lecturers and to document their development in order for it to be assessed. If lecturers already have a lot of experience (in the Netherlands or abroad), they can document this in the portfolio in order to demonstrate they already have specific competencies.

In the portfolio, lecturers show they have developed the competencies and offer evidence for this.

The committee assessing the portfolio consists of at least two reviewers, one of whom may be external. The members of the assessment committees jointly discuss the assessment criteria and how to apply these. This process can be supported with a rubric and/or a manual.

Areas for improvement
- Student feedback on the teaching they receive could be given more emphasis in the portfolio and, consequently, in the lecturer assessment.
- Ideally, a coach or peers provide feedback during the UTQ programme in order to stimulate lecturer development.
- It is recommended to finish the UTQ programme with an interview which preferably addresses areas for development, marking the start of the continued post-UTQ development of lecturers.
- It is recommended to involve the manager – in a role other than that of assessor – at both the start and the end of the UTQ programme, as this will help to embed lecturer professionalisation in the annual appraisals.

Some examples:
- Erasmus University Rotterdam uses authentic supporting documents for the UTQ where possible, relying as little as possible on secondary supporting documents.
- Wageningen University & Research structures the portfolio by way of a single comprehensive assignment that can be used to demonstrate many different competencies (e.g., the 'meso-assignment').
- VU University Amsterdam uses an assessment manual.
- The portfolios of Radboud University contain a paragraph entitled 'My vision on education', describing activities that can be logically linked to this vision.

4.3   Designing the UTQ programme

It consists of an intake – often on the basis of, or resulting in, a starting portfolio – followed by a professionalisation programme for new lecturers. This programme results in a portfolio or a UTQ file, and assessment on the basis of the portfolio. Lecturers are expected to attain the UTQ within 2-3 years, but many complete the programme in less time than that.

The UTQ programme is a training and work programme in which lecturers put acquired educational knowledge into practice. The emphasis is on the development of required competencies. Courses and training sessions are not a goal in and of themselves, but do normally form part of UTQ programmes. Like university teaching, UTQ programmes can be a mixture of face-to-face teaching and online teaching. The primary aim at all universities is for the UTQ programme to be tailored to the candidate's knowledge, skills and experience and, to the extent possible, to educational practice.

The timing of the UTQ programme is very important. Lecturers need to have sufficient teaching duties and still be at the start of their career in education. The UTQ programme offers an opportunity for beginning lecturers to meet each other and exchange experiences. In some cases, institutions organise the UTQ programmes in a group structure ('small classes') for the sake of community building. This type of exchange with fellow lecturers doing the programme has been shown to stimulate successful completion of the programme.

The UTQ programme is a training and work programme with a duration of 2-3 years.

Beginning lecturers usually go through a programme involving a number of basic courses or workshops that help them carry out their teaching duties correctly. The emphasis is on gaining relevant teaching experience and applying educational knowledge in practice.

The UTQ professionalisation courses have a number of factors in common:
- They link theory and practice as well as training and working.
- Lecturers' individual teaching settings serve as an example and are used for trying out newly acquired knowledge.
- Colleagues exchange experiences (network formation).
- Participants develop a vision and reflect on the basis of theory and experience.
- A variety of methods are used.
- There is a design assignment.
- The programme has a relatively long lead time (with contact meetings over a period of at least three months).

The programme optimally aligns with the candidate's knowledge, skills and experience and with educational practice.

Lecturers with ample experience (usually five years or more) can often restrict themselves to writing and compiling a portfolio or UTQ file. This acknowledges the competencies they have built up through years of experience. They often follow a customised programme with optional support from a supervisor, with a focus on the further development of specific competencies, or they put together a portfolio consisting, among other elements, of a teaching CV, course descriptions, teaching evaluations and a self-assessment.

Aandachtspunten
- There is added value in the supervision of lecturers in the UTQ programme by both an educationalist and a senior lecturer in the lecturer's field.
- Throughout, student learning could be integrated into the programme more explicitly – in the theoretical material on student learning, but also through engaging one's own students as a source of feedback on the course and the lecturer.

Some examples:
- Tilburg University (TiU) has an Intensive Portfolio Program (IPP), a two-day programme that supports experienced lecturers in putting together their UTQ portfolio, allowing it to be (virtually) ready in two days. The IPP often gives rise to a dialogue among participating lecturers about quality in education. The TiU's IPP was designed in Eindhoven and adopted by TiU with the approval of the Eindhoven University of Technology. In Eindhoven the IPP has since been expanded to comprise three days.
- Various universities are introducing Professional Learning Communities of lecturers.
- At Maastricht University, the UTQ is carried out at the faculty level to ensure that UTQ meetings fit well into teaching practice. Lecturers can build up a faculty network to develop a close-knit 'community of lecturers' who continue to learn from each other.

4.4 UTQ quality control

Different universities go about UTQ quality control differently. Many institutions formulated areas for improvement during the peer review, including, in particular, the following:

- So as to maintain comparability between UTQs, including within an institution, 'calibration sessions' can be held in which, for example, portfolios are reassessed among faculties on the basis of samples.
- Evaluations of UTQ programmes by the lecturers who have completed them are of great value. The results of these evaluations can be made a regular part of the UTQ's quality control cycle. Evaluation of the UTQ and lecturer professionalisation through focus groups has yielded much valuable information that can be used to make improvements.[10]
- External UTQ quality assurance can be improved by developing a (light) national UTQ quality assurance system that stimulates the exchange of experiences between universities.

Some examples:
- Within the 4TU[11] there is a Supervisory Committee to safeguard the quality of the assessment. The Committee takes an annual sample of assessed portfolios and reassesses these, communicating the results to the institutions.
- The University of Groningen (RUG) has a lecturer professionalisation committee which at various stages of their teaching career advices lecturers on professionalisation and on quality control for professionalisation. The committee consists of board members of the arts and humanities, natural sciences and social sciences faculties, the HR manager, a secretary and an educational adviser. At the behest of the Executive Board, the committee:
  1. supervises UTQ and STQ quality assurance;
  2. supervises the performance of faculty Registration Committees for UTQ;
  3. supervises the development, implementation and maintenance of UTQ-RUG;
  4. supervises the development and implementation of RUG-STQ (and evaluates STQ files);
  5. develops the RUG vision on qualifications after/in addition to UTQ: Permanent Education STQ and educational leadership.

4.5 Embedding UTQ in education and HR policy

The UTQ is a part of the ongoing professionalisation of lecturers. At the universities, this process is closely linked to the education and HR policies.

With regard to the UTQ specifically, institutions can link it to their education policy and to their vision on teaching and learning by the way in which they translate the nationally agreed UTQ competencies for the institution. This can include attention for internationalisation, interdisciplinarity and digitisation in education. In this way the UTQ provides an opportunity for more actively informing lecturers about, and involving them in, education policy and innovation.

Since the performance agreements, all institutions have made the UTQ part of their HR policy. At all institutions, the UTQ plays a part in hiring and selection (possessing the UTQ or being willing to obtain it within two to three years) and in promotion policy (no permanent position or promotion without the UTQ). The maximum term for acquiring the UTQ certificate varies from two to three years. Not every university has included the UTQ as a separate element of the annual appraisal.

When linking lecturer professionalisation in a broad sense to HR policy, universities should consider the valuation of education in the careers of their academic staff. This can take the shape of educational prizes, making time available for teaching duties, supporting lecturers with Comenius applications and the like, providing formal certification (the UTQ and the STQ) and financial incentives for career options in teaching.

Areas for improvement
- At the moment, not all universities and/or faculties explicitly free up time for the UTQ or for lecturer professionalisation in general. This is recommended, however.
- The manager can have an important part in fostering lecturer professionalisation, a part that can be reinforced by giving the manager a role at the start and in the assessment of the UTQ.
- Professionalisation should be a more prominent ingredient of the annual appraisal.

Some examples:
- In cooperation with the Royal Academy of Engineering in London and an international group of universities (including Harvard, UCL, EPFL, Lund, DTU, MIT, NUS), the University of Twente is participating[12] in an international 'Career Framework for University Teaching'.[13] This framework has been established to improve the development of university lecturers as well as to improve assessing and rewarding that development. The framework offers a clear, transparent method for evaluating educational achievements and for rewarding these in the course of a person's career. In the pilot at the University of Twente, the four levels of the framework are linked to UTQ profiles. All scientific staff involved in teaching are expected to meet the criteria at the first two levels. Additionally, there are clear opportunities for further growth for staff with a talent for/affinity with education.
- At Leiden University, the principle behind the career policy for scientific staff is the unity of education and research in academic positions. Promotion from university lecturer to senior university lecturer is possible on the grounds of excellent research achievements combined with good education or research. The criteria for excellent research and education have been developed into a guideline. The possibility of promotion on the basis of excellent achievements in education will help to improve will increase the weight of education in staff assessment.

- Utrecht University has a Teaching Fellows tenure track in support of a career in education leading to a professorship. An international selection committee proposes a candidate to the Executive Board. The Teaching Fellows are appointed for a period of three to five years and, if hen evaluated positively, are recommended for a professorship with a specific focus on education.
- At VU University Amsterdam, assessors can identify two areas for development in the fields of competency for each UTQ participant.

4.6 Professionalisation before the UTQ

Lecturers with limited teaching duties, such as doctoral and postdoctoral researchers or temporary lecturers whose main task is, for instance, the supervision of final projects or working groups, do not always qualify for a UTQ. Obtaining a UTQ requires a lecturer to be truly able to gain practical experience with all competencies and to develop those competencies. This means their range of tasks has to be sufficiently broad and varied. Everyone with sufficient experience in the various teaching duties ('flight hours') can obtain a UTQ.

In order to obtain UTQ certification, the lecturer has to have enough teaching duties.

Many institutions offer specific training courses to lecturers who, in view of their range of tasks, are not yet in a position to acquire all UTQ competencies. In many cases, they can also participate in parts of the UTQ, for instance those parts aimed at putting the teaching into practice. If these lecturers want to obtain a UTQ at a later point, they do still need to demonstrate in their portfolio that they have mastered these competencies.

- Offering proof of participation in an area of the UTQ programme (especially for the competency 'putting teaching into practice') can be attractive to doctoral researchers and other beginning lecturers whose current teaching tasks are not sufficient to obtain a full UTQ. Such proof of participation could be adduced together with other supporting documents when the lecturer starts on a full UTQ programme at a later point.

Some examples:
- At many of the universities, all teaching staff, including doctoral candidates and researchers, are encouraged to obtain their UTQ. Of course, they will need to have a sufficiently broad range of tasks to be able to develop all competencies.
- Radboud University offers a basic course called 'Education in a nutshell' to doctoral researchers who, although they do teach, do not yet have sufficiently weighty teaching duties to warrant their participation in the UTQ programme.
- Eindhoven University of Technology offers customised training courses to all tutors who teach core courses, and a special Teaching Skills course for PhDs aimed at the teaching practice competency.

4.7 Professionalisation after the UTQ

Evaluating and rewarding the teaching duties of academics is of great importance for their ongoing professionalisation as lecturers. This ties in with creating a culture in which teaching is deemed equally important as research. Ongoing professionalisation can be organised in a number of ways. Examples at universities include on-the-job coaching; exchanging feedback, knowledge and experience with colleagues; studying one's own teaching practice; and taking courses in specific terrains (such as educational innovation or inclusion).

Institutions approach ongoing post-UTQ professional development in different ways. In all cases a distinction can be made between, on the one hand, programmes for a specific group of lecturers through tracks such as the STQ and Educational Leadership and, on the other hand, the training and development of all lecturers

with a UTQ. At many institutions, the latter takes place on a volunteer basis or because the annual appraisal has shown that specific training is required. Many institutions are working on policy in this area to expand facilities for ongoing lecturer professionalisation.

> **The ongoing development and valuation of university teaching positions does not stop once lecturers have obtained their UTQ. In fact, the opposite is true.**

The link with the role of education in a person's career is crucial: structural attention to professionalisation in the course of one's career will help to reinforce that role. Accordingly, the development of policy for the ongoing professionalisation of lecturers involves contributions from HR policy, education policy and lecturer professionalisation.

Areas for improvement
- Involving the manager in the UTQ helps to make lecturer professionalisation part of the appraisal cycle.
- The UTQ final interview offers a good opportunity for discussing ongoing post-UTQ development with lecturers.

Some examples:
- In the spring of 2018, the UvA together with HR will start the teaching indicators project (part of HR policy and the vision on teaching and learning). The 'VU educational performance framework' will serve as a good practice along with other (inter)national examples.
- The Teaching Academy Utrecht University (TAUU) is a network for and by all lecturers at Utrecht University. It is a place where lecturers meet online and in person to share knowledge, acquire ideas, be inspired and develop projects together. There are regular gatherings such as workshops, book reviews and drinks at which lecturers meet up to discuss current issues. Through the website lecturers can

contact colleagues with specific expertise, and via the wanted/offered section they can find peers for feedback or coaches.
- The Open University has a Permanent Education system which is mandatory for all lecturers with a UTQ. In this system they spend 40 hours a year, or 120 hours every three years (on a full-time basis), on professionalisation. While the lecturers personalise the content, the system is based on nine competency areas.

4.8   Other relevant findings

In addition to the above-mentioned findings for the seven themes of the peer review, a number of other relevant issues were raised at the review meetings.

- An increasing number of lecturers have worked at universities abroad. Agreements could be made at the national level about the UTQ value of foreign programmes, so people can learn from each other and make similar decisions.
- It could be explored whether the UTQ could be a qualification for admission to teaching in primary education, secondary education, senior secondary vocational education and training, and higher professional education.
- More research could be done into the effect of obtaining a UTQ on the student's learning process.
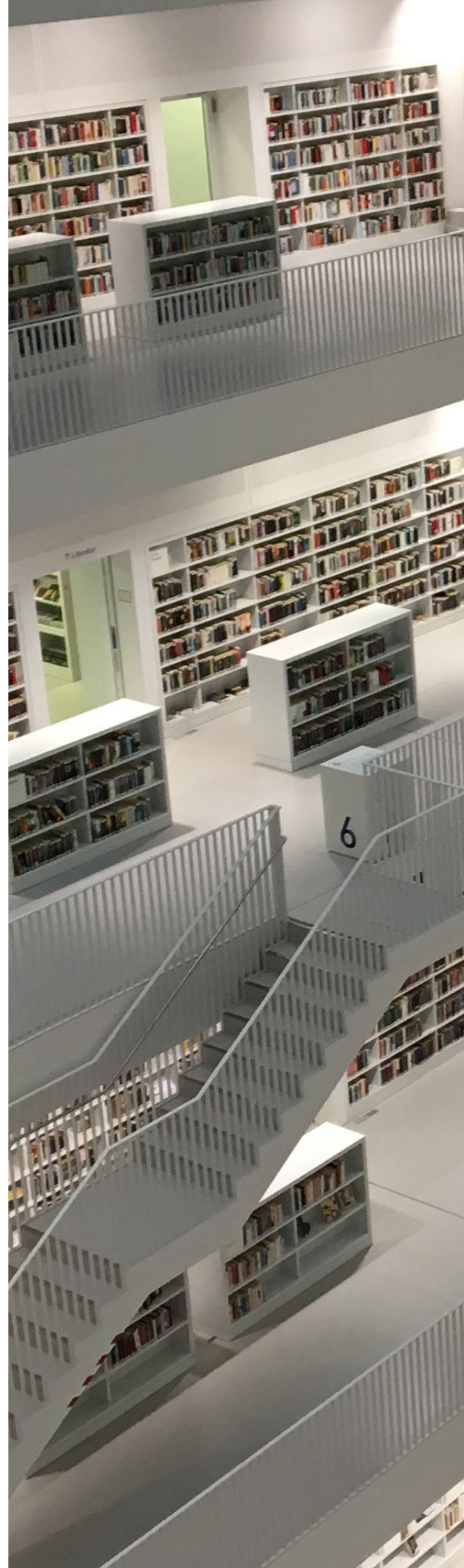
5 Conclusion

The UTQ peer review is yielding rich results, as is evident from the 14 reports alone that the institutions have been or will be producing. Universities have learned a lot from the insider view into each other's practices.

The UTQ was found to be firmly embedded in the institutions and is carried widely by lecturers who are qualifying for it and by the receiving study programmes that are working on improvement and/or innovation. Accordingly, the universities clearly confirm that mutual recognition of the UTQ should be maintained.

The peer review has turned out to be a highly useful instrument. It would seem worthwhile repeating this process in a number of years, as would having a peer review on a smaller scale with a number of institutions (e.g., the UTQ trend followers).

Apart from carefully safeguarding and upholding the quality of the UTQ, institutions are increasingly involved in developing lecturer professionalisation before and after the UTQ. This includes embedding lecturer professionalisation in HR policy. On these issues, the peer review identified several areas for improvement which all universities have begun to work on.

After all, the ongoing development of university teaching does not stop once lecturers have obtained their UTQ. Rather, the UTQ is a firm foundation to build on.
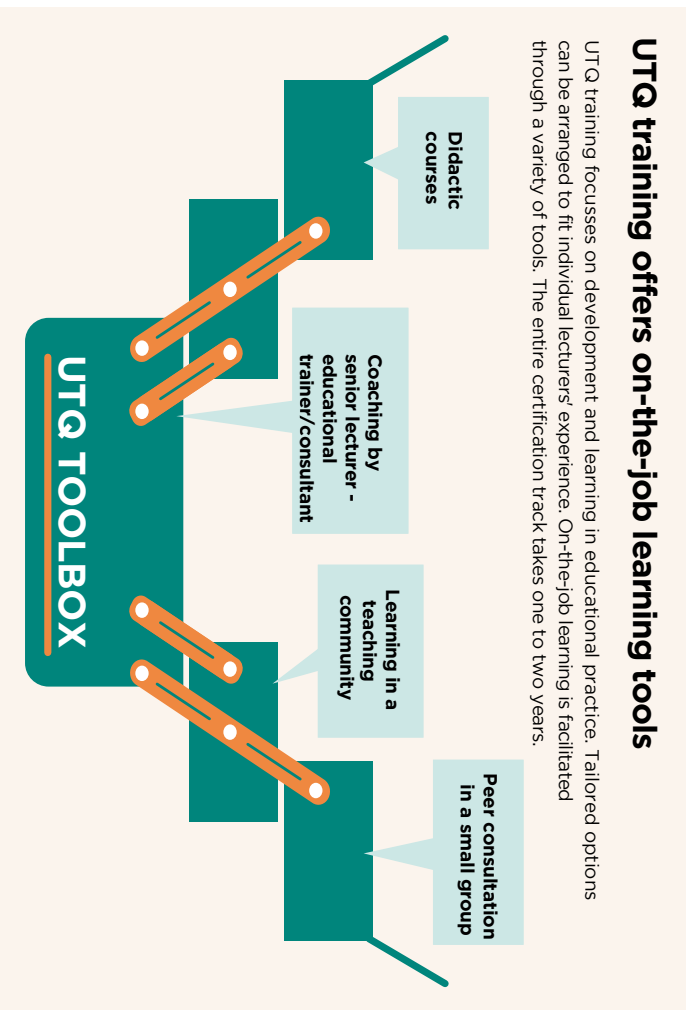
University Teaching Qualification (UTQ)

The University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) is a proof of didactic competence for lecturers in academic higher education. Lecturers who are certified are recognised by all 14 member research universities in the Netherlands as being qualified to teach at the higher academic level. UTQ certification enhances and assures the quality of academic higher education.

UTQ certification requires lecturers to develop teaching competences

The design of education

The provision of education

The testing and assessment of students

The evaluation of their own teaching

The supervision of students

UTQ training offers on-the-job learning tools

UTQ training focusses on development and learning in educational practice. Tailored options can be arranged to fit individual lecturers' experience. On-the-job learning is facilitated through a variety of tools. The entire certification track takes one to two years.

UTQ TOOLBOX

Didactic courses

Coaching by senior lecturer - educational trainer/consultant

Learning in a teaching community

Peer consultation in a small group

Evaluation

The final step is the presentation of a portfolio compiled by the lecturer to a UTQ assessment committee.

Portfolio

The UTQ certification is awarded upon committee approval.

Assessment committee

UTQ
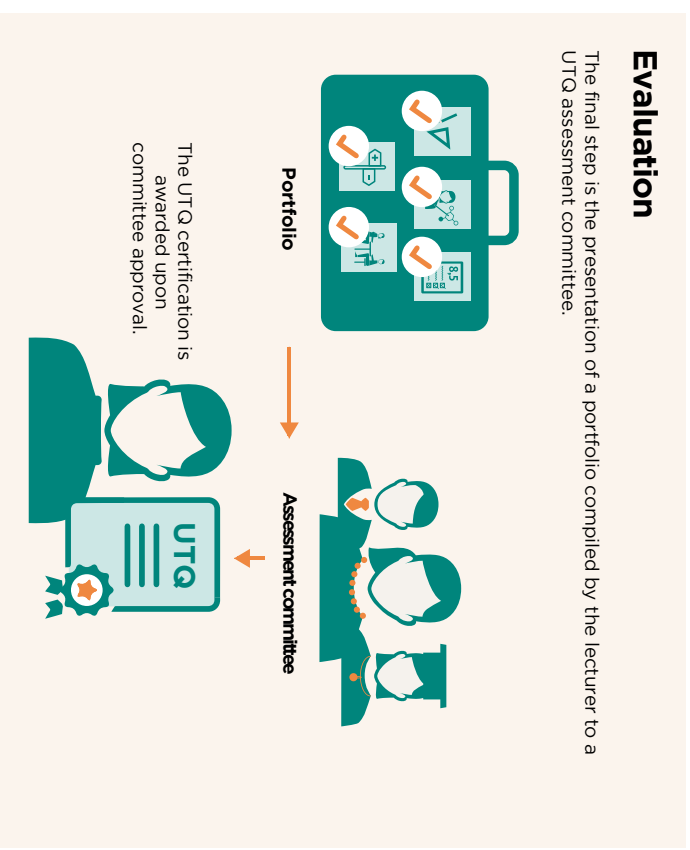
Appendix 2 – Characteristics of the UTQ scheme as agreed in 2008

Participating universities appreciate the mutual recognition of the University Teaching Qualification. They appreciate uniformity where possible, and freedom for differentiation and profiling where this is desirable.

Mutual recognition of UTQ schemes can take place when these schemes meet the following requirements:

Content-related characteristics:
- The level of the certified lecturer is described in terms of behaviour ('The lecturer is able to...; is capable of ...').
- Lecturer requirements meet international standards for academic lecturers (NVAO, 2.1; Dublin Descriptors).
- Lecturer requirements are derived from professional practice (NVAO, 2.1): specifically, this means attention for the result areas of teaching practice, teaching development, assessment of teaching, evaluation of teaching, supervision of students and organisation (UFO), and the implementation of teaching programmes in regard of content, educational principles and organisation (NVAO, 2.3).
- Lecturers are expected to contribute to the development of their own field through research (NVAO, 2.3).

Assessment-related characteristics:
- The assessment covers all result areas of the academic lecturer.
- There are descriptions of assessment criteria for all result areas of the academic lecturer.
- It has been determined how substantial lecturers' experience in these result areas needs to be.
- The assessment substantially involves lecturers reflecting on their own professional behaviour.
- There is a description of the assessment procedure.
- There is a description of the kind of expertise required of the assessment committee.
- There is a description of the way in which the assessment committee safeguards rigour, confidentiality and objectivity.

Process-related characteristics:
- The content, scope and shape of lecturer development programmes (such as courses, coaching, building a portfolio) are derived from the requirements lecturers have to meet in the UTQ programme.
- In the development programmes, lecturers learn to apply educational knowledge and current research results in the relevant domain.
- The institution facilitates the professional development of lecturers up to the level of the UTQ.

Appendix 3 – Two examples of elaborated UTQ competencies

Example No. 1

In a 4TU context, the elaboration of the UTQ competencies was recently studied jointly and brought up to date. For Eindhoven University of Technology, Delft University of Technology, the University of Twente and Wageningen University & Research, the competencies have been elaborated as follows:

1. *Designing or redesigning teaching*
   The lecturer is able to:
   a. explain how his[14] course[15] is embedded in the curriculum or degree programme as a whole.
   b. design teaching based on the principles of 'constructive alignment'.
   c. design active, effective, and efficient learning methods and learning materials.
   d. design his teaching with respect to the specific (curricular) characteristics and needs of the students.
   e. design his teaching in a practically and logistically feasible (do-able) way.

2. *Teaching and supervising*
   The lecturer is able to:
   a. prepare an educational meeting.
   b. conduct an educational meeting and reflect on his performance.
   c. supervise students, individually and in groups.

3. *Assessment*
   The lecturer is able to:
   a. design and implement the assessment of student development and learning outcomes.
   b. analyse the assessment results and draw conclusions.

4. *Evaluating teaching*
   The lecturer is able to:
   a. conduct an evaluation and collect information (data) purposefully to improve his teaching.
   b. analyse evaluation results, draw conclusions, and pinpoint areas for improvement.

5. *Professionalisation*
   The lecturer is able to:
   a. formulate his own vision on teaching and student learning.
   b. manage his work as a lecturer and can collaborate in a teaching team.
   c. reflect on his work as a lecturer and on his future professional development in teaching.

Voorbeeld 2

The elaboration of the UTQ competencies for Maastricht University was brought up to date and given greater detail in 2017. The first two competencies are indicated below. For a complete elaboration, see the first Appendix of Maastricht University's 'Basiskwalificatie Onderwijs 2017' .

Developing education
1. Is able to apply the educational principles of active, student-focused learning when developing the teaching.
2. Is able to explain how his/her own part of the curriculum is related to the structure and intended academic achievements of the (partial) curriculum.
3. Is able to account for decisions made at every step of the design process for course components, such as a block, workshop, training session or lecture.
4. Is able to chart characteristics of the target group such as prior knowledge and to take these into account when developing his/her teaching.
5. Is able to formulate the goals of the teaching (intended academic achievements) clearly and to communicate these to students.
6. Is able to align educational goals, educational and learning activities and test formats using the principles of 'constructive alignment'.
7. Is able to include ICT and/or digital tools in the educational structure in a meaningful way.
8. Is able to improve the developed teaching on the basis of student evaluations, practical experience and up-to-date educational insights

Teaching Practice
1. Is able to apply the educational principles of active learning in the teaching practice.
2. Is able to assume various educational roles, such as tutor, thesis supervisor, coach, mentor or lecturer.
3. Is able to identify differences in prior knowledge and backgrounds among students and to take these into account.
4. Is able, on the basis of the educational principles of active learning, to encourage students to apply active learning.
5. Is able to supervise and give feedback to students individually and in groups.
6. Is able to recognise and deal with group dynamics.
7. Is able to analyse the strong and weak sides of his/her teaching and to adjust his/her activities.

Notes

1   Cluster 1 - University of Groningen, Leiden University, University of Twente, Utrecht University; Cluster 2 - Maastricht University, Open University, Tilburg University; Cluster 3 - University of Amsterdam, VU University Amsterdam, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Delft University of Technology; Cluster 4 - Eindhoven University of Technology, Wageningen University & Research, Radboud University.

2   These recommendations are general outlines for improvement and do not necessarily apply to all universities.

3   Radboud University, Technical University Delft, University of Amsterdam, University of Twente, Utrecht University and the Free University of Amsterdam.

4   University of Antwerp, University of Humanistic Studies, Netherlands Defence Academy, Nyenrode Business Universiteit, KU Leuven, UNESCO Institute for Water Education and Hasselt University.

5   The following universities took part in the UTQ external quality control pilot: the federation of the three Technical Universities (3TU), consisting of the Technical Universities of Delft, Eindhoven and Twente, the University of Groningen, Utrecht University and the Free University of Amsterdam. The project's steering group also included the University of Leiden and Radboud University, while an expert delegated by the University of Amsterdam sat on the audit committee. For more information, see: Jong, R. de, Andernach, T., Barendsen, E. & Mulder, J. (2011). *Externe kwaliteitsborging BasisKwalificatie Onderwijs in de Praktijk, Een onderzoek naar een bruikbaar auditsysteem* (External quality control University Teaching Qualification in Practice, A study into a workable audit system), The Hague: SoFoKles.

6   As the universities have used various definitions for calculating the percentage of lecturers with a UTQ, these percentages cannot be compared with each other.

7   Source: prestaties in perspectief, eindrapport hoofdlijnenakkoord en prestatieafspraken (achievements in perspective, final report on the general agreement and performance agreements), VSNU - https://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Nieuwsberichten/VSNU_ Prestaties_in_perspectief_%28web%29.pdf).

8   Source: https://vsnu.nl/hoge-kwaliteit-onderwijs.html#eerste.

9   Margje van de Wiel, Riekje de Jong, Jaap Mulder, Kathleen Schlusmans (2016) - *De BKO in de praktijk - Inventarisatie en analyse van alle BKO-programma's aan Nederlandse universiteiten* (The UTQ in practice - Inventory and analysis of all UTQ programmes at Dutch universities). Available from: https://www.ehon.nl/ehon/de-bko-in-de-praktijk/.

10 Van de Wiel, de Ponti & Schlusmans, *Docentperspectief op docentprofessionalisering: een focusgroeponderzoek bij de OU, TiU en UM* (Lecturers' perspective on lecturer professionalisation: a focus group study at the OU, TiU and UM), 2018

11 Federation of the Delft University of Technology, the Eindhoven University of Technology, the University of Twente and Wageningen University & Research.

12 Utrecht University and the Delft University of Technology, too, are collaborating on developing and (on the basis of custom work) piloting the framework.

13 For more information, see: http://www.evaluatingteaching.com/about/.

14 'He/his' can also be read as 'she/her'.

15 The term 'course' stands for any substantial and specific part of a university educational programme that the lecturer designs or teaches. This could be a course or a module but also a series of educational meetings.

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