



**Agenția Națională de Asigurare a Calității
în Educație și Cercetare**

**AFFILIATE OF
ENQA**

Student-Centred Learning through external quality assurance: the experience of the Republic of Moldova

**Elena Petrov, PhD, ass. professor,
vice-president of ANACEC**

Astana, 2018



ANACIP



ANACEC

❖ Reorganization of the national quality assurance structures through absorption

(Government Decision No. 201 of 28.02.2018 On the Organization and Functioning of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research)



**National Agency of Quality Assurance in
Professional Education**



National School Inspectorate



National Council for Accreditation and Attestation



ANACEC – mission and functions

❖ Mission:

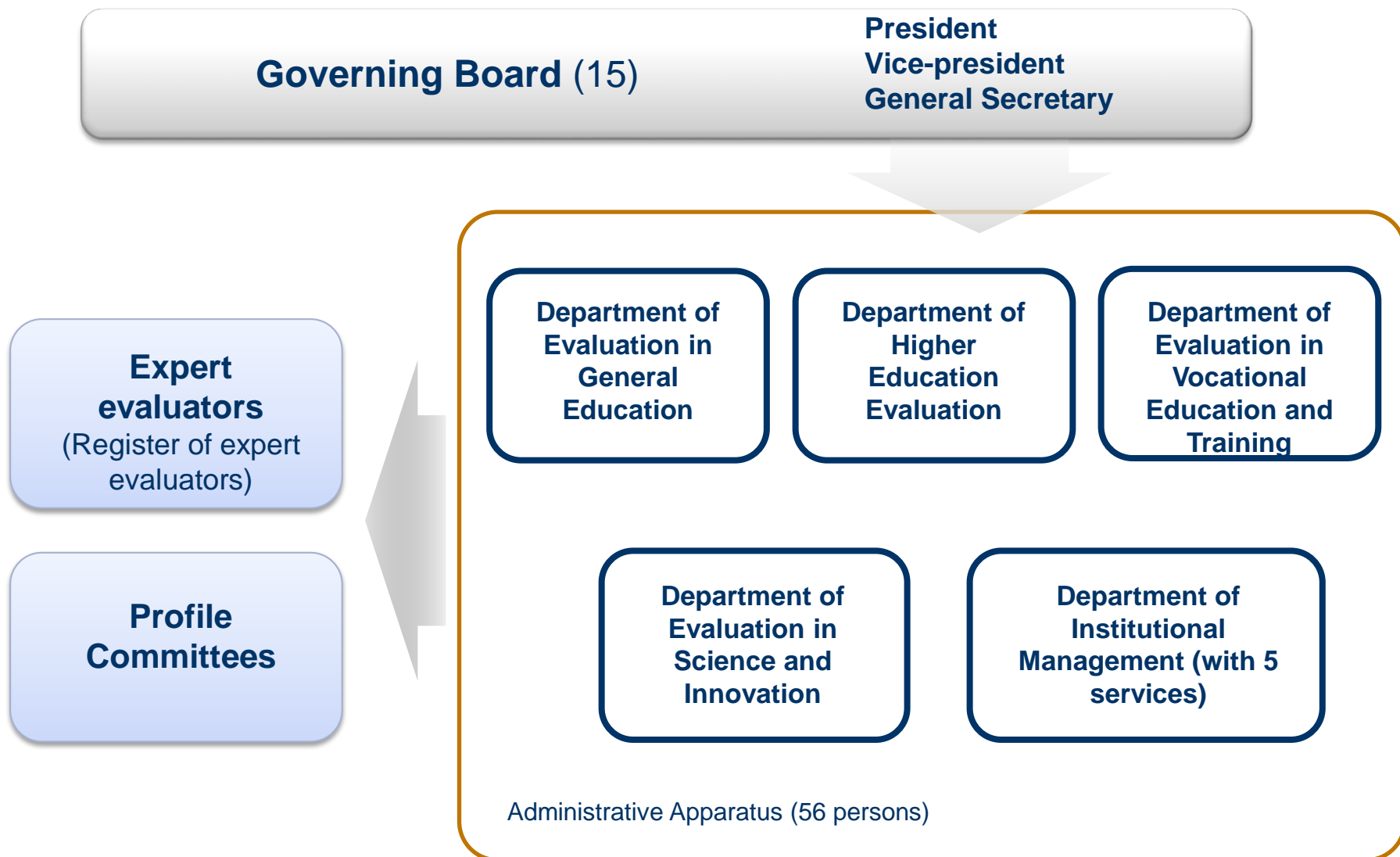
to implement the state policies and to contribute to the development oriented towards the best international standards in the areas of competence assigned.

❖ Functions:

- 1) evaluation of quality in general, professional and higher education;**
- 2) external evaluation of lifelong learning programs;**
- 3) external evaluation of organizations in the areas of research and innovation;**
- 4) evaluation of the scientific and scientific-didactic staff;**
- 5) control over the quality of general, professional and continuing education, respect of the requirements for accreditation and authorization of entities offering educational programs and services.**



ANACEC - organizational structure





Responsibilities for ensuring quality in HE

1

elaboration of the methodology and criteria for external evaluation for authorization of provisional functioning or accreditation of study programs and HEIs, elaboration of the methodology for approving the right to conduct PhD studies etc.

2

external evaluation of quality in higher education

3

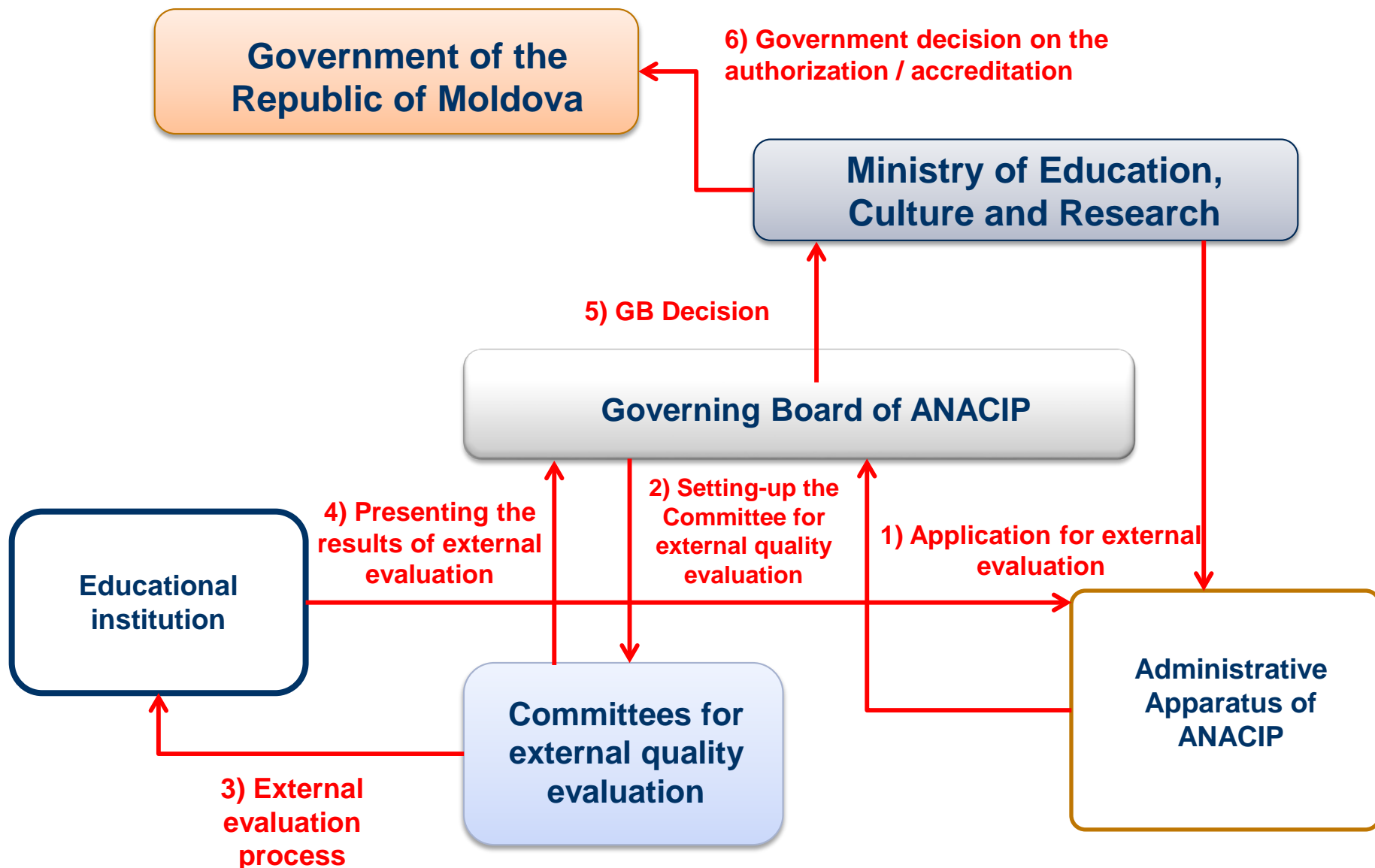
assessment of HEIs and study programs for the purpose of provisional authorization or accreditation

4

approval or rejection of the requests for the application to become a PhD supervisor following the evaluation of the dossiers submitted by the interested candidates

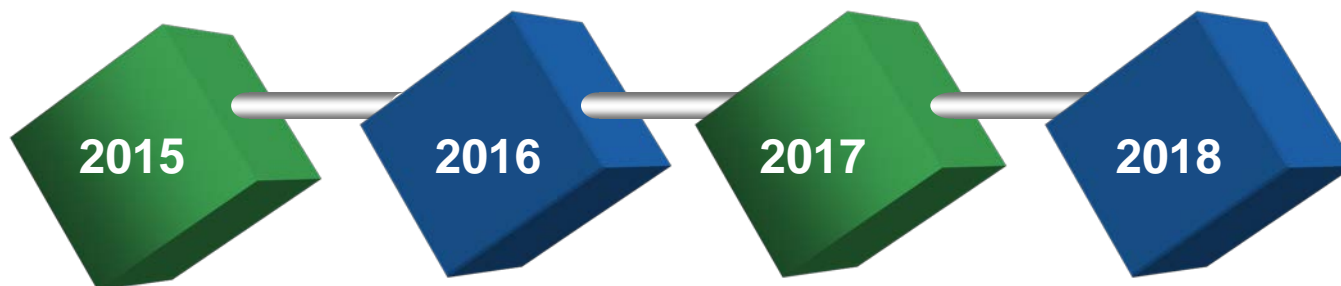


The process of quality external evaluation





ANACEC: Milestones in the activity



Preparatory stage:

- *Election of the Provisional Governing Board*
- *Development of Agency Regulations*

- *Election of the Governing Board*
- *Development / approval of the methodological basis*
- *Initialization of the external evaluation process*

External evaluation of 200 first-cycle programs

Reform/ Empowerment of the Agency

External evaluation of more than 100 first-cycle programs



External quality assurance / accreditation standards

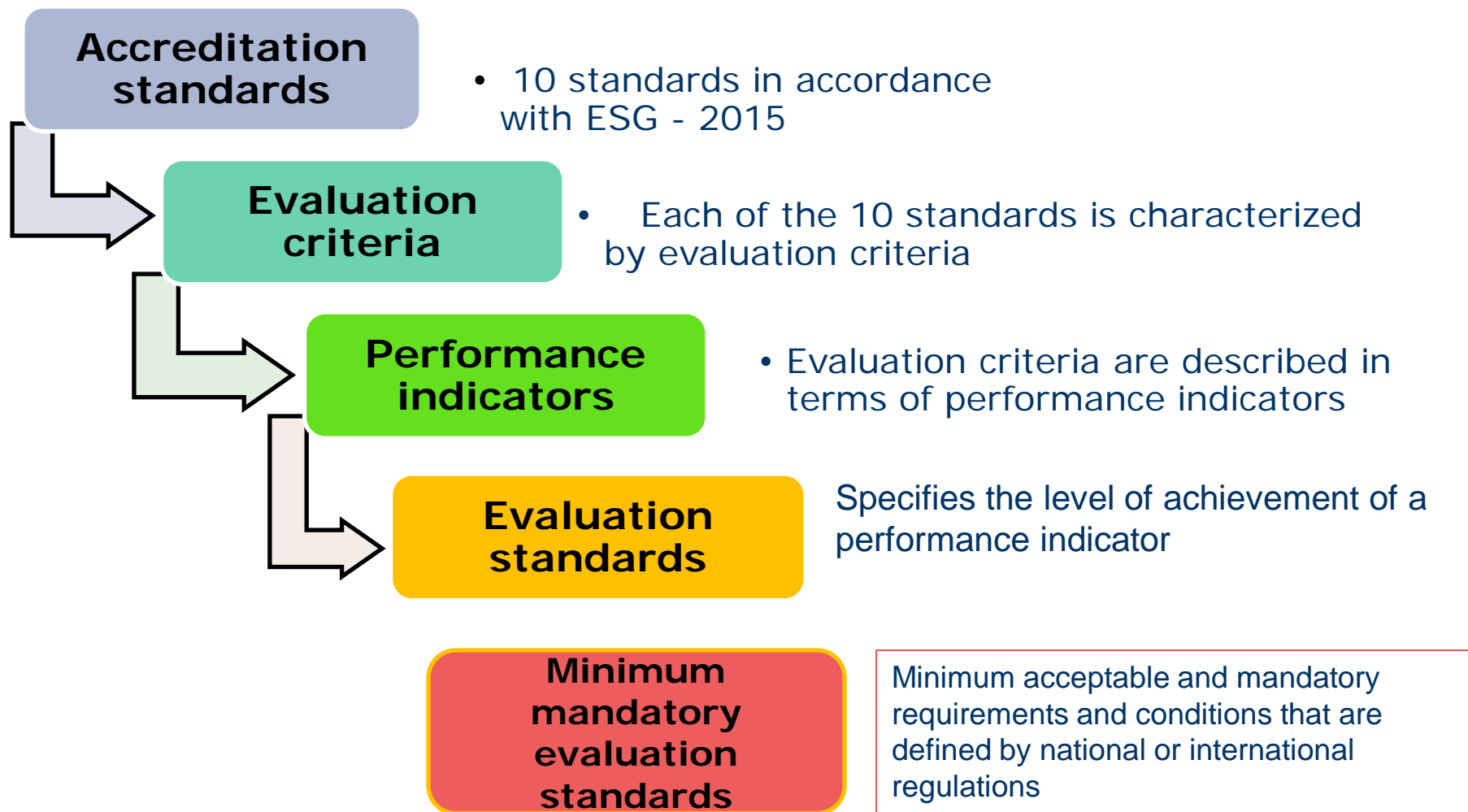
Moldovan accreditation standards = The Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area – ESG, 2015.



- 1) Policy for quality assurance
- 2) Design and approval of programmes
- 3) Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment**
- 4) Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
- 5) Teaching staff
- 6) Learning resources and student support
- 7) Information management
- 8) Public information
- 9) On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes
- 10) Cyclical external quality assurance



Standards, criteria and performance indicators (2016)





SCL: Standards, criteria and performance indicators

1

3. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Accreditation standard

2

3.1. Teaching and learning process

Evaluation criterium

3

3.1.2. Student-centred learning and teaching methods

Performance indicator

4

Specifies the level of achievement of the performance indicator

Evaluation standard

1,0 – The used teaching and learning methods are predominantly student-centred

0,5 – The used teaching and learning methods are partially student-centred

0 – The used teaching and learning methods are not student-centred



SCL in accreditation standards

Elements evaluated in the study programs evaluation process

Applied student-centered methods of teaching and learning

Availability of consultation mechanisms for improving teaching / learning processes

Applicability of the results of counseling to improve teaching / learning processes

Application of student-centered teaching and learning methods to students with disabilities

Internal mechanisms for promoting, applying and evaluating student-centered methods of teaching and learning

Applied forms of individual assistance to students in the learning process, etc.



SCL in accreditation standards

All standards



Oriented to SCL

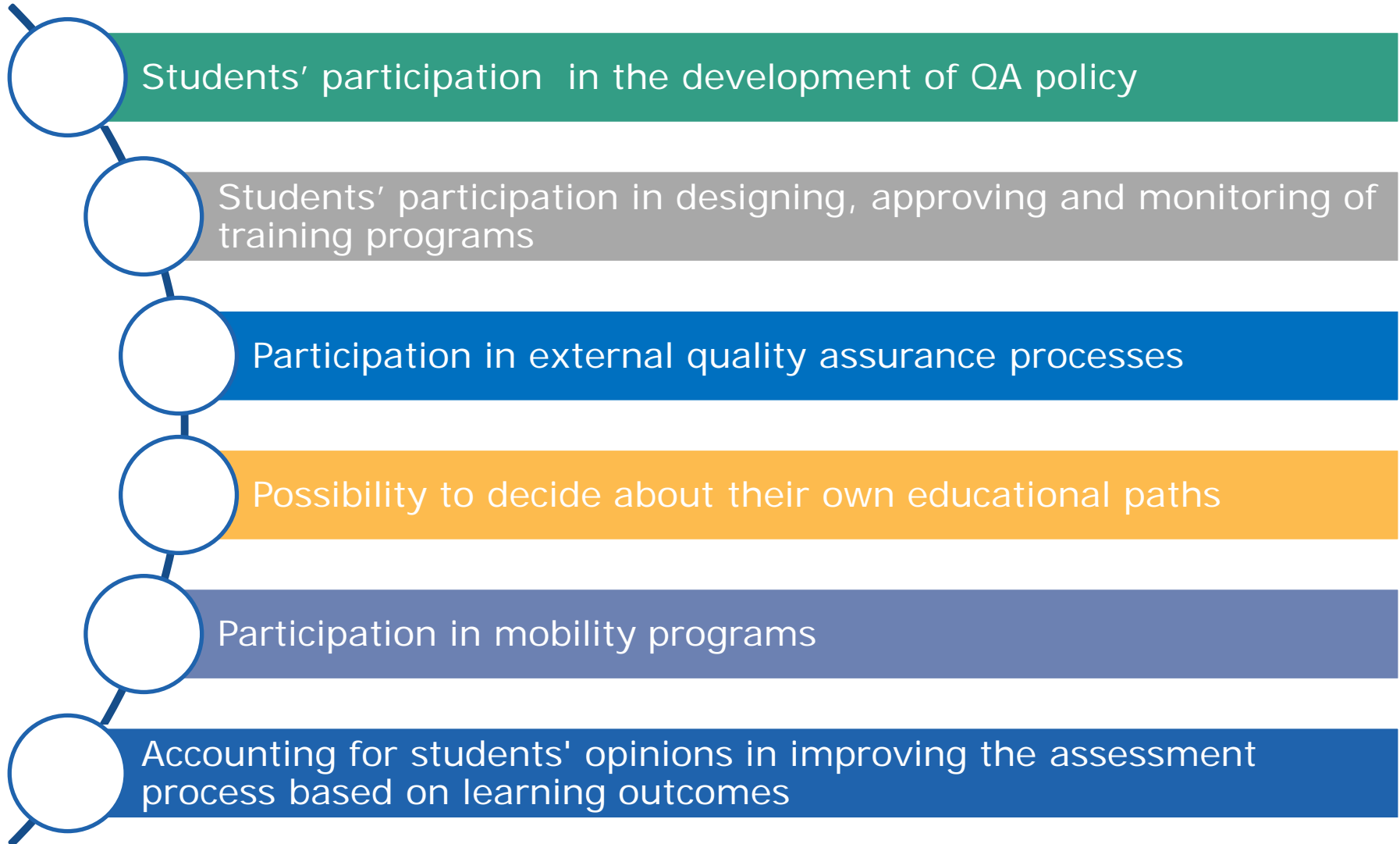
In each standard



**Some individual
components of SCL
are evaluated**



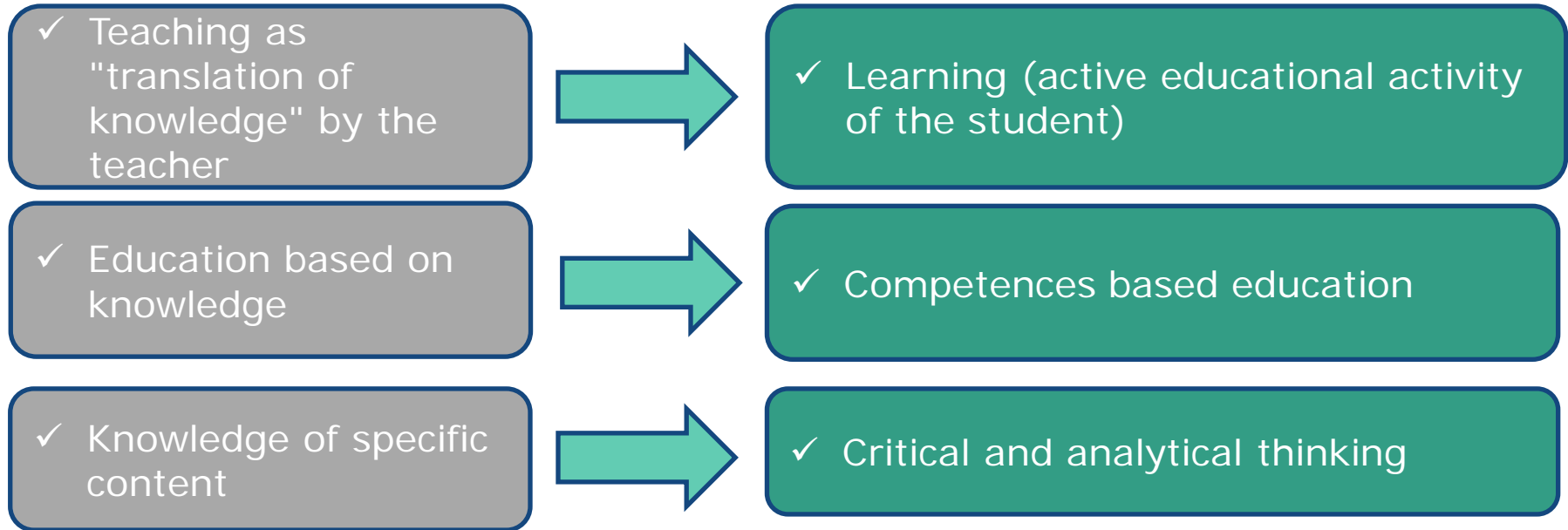
The main evaluated components





SCL – new paradigm in HE

❖ The shift in emphasis in the educational process



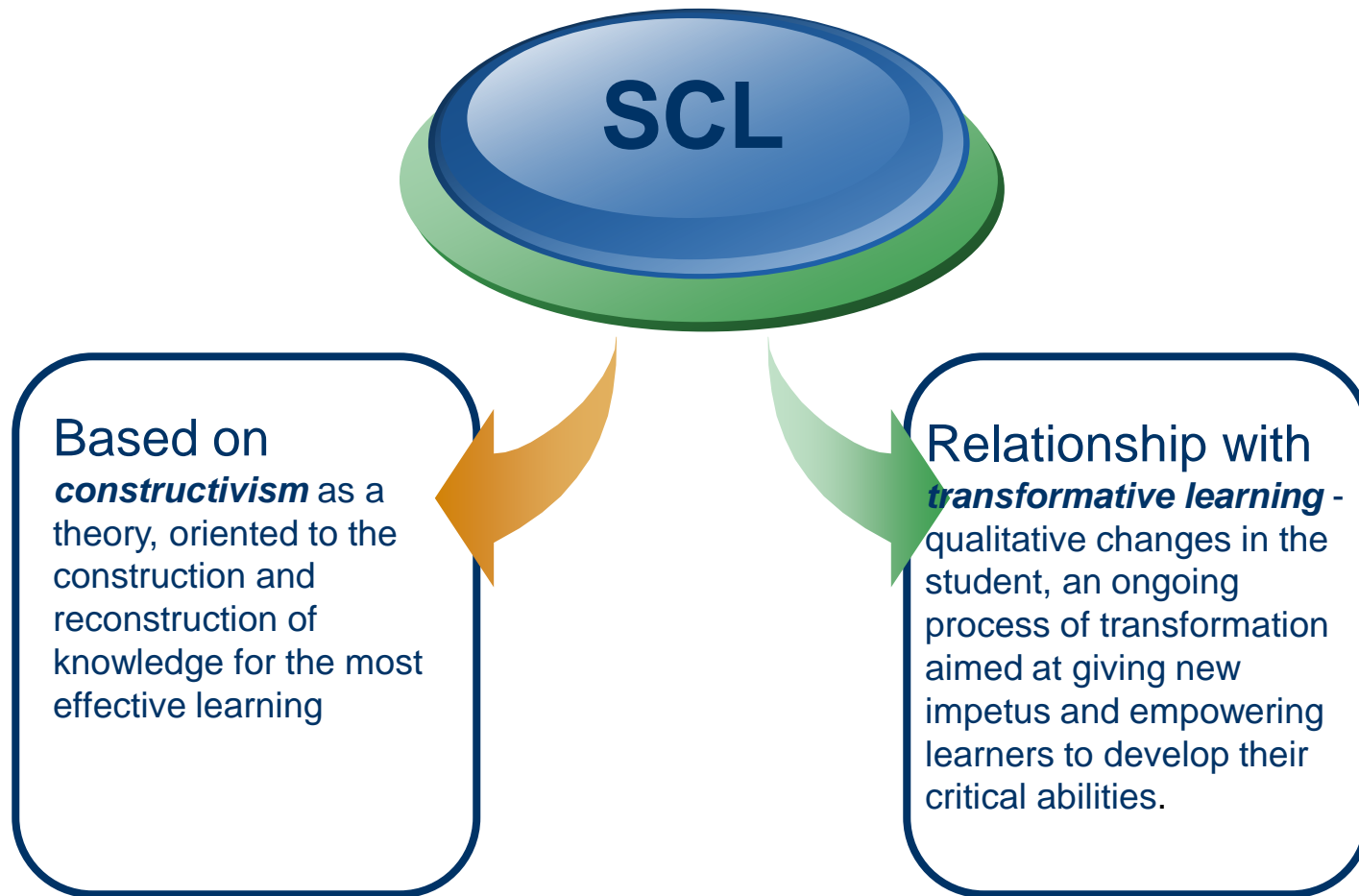
❖ Changes in the roles of the teacher and student with increasing student personal responsibility for learning outcomes

! SCL is not limited to processes of teaching and learning



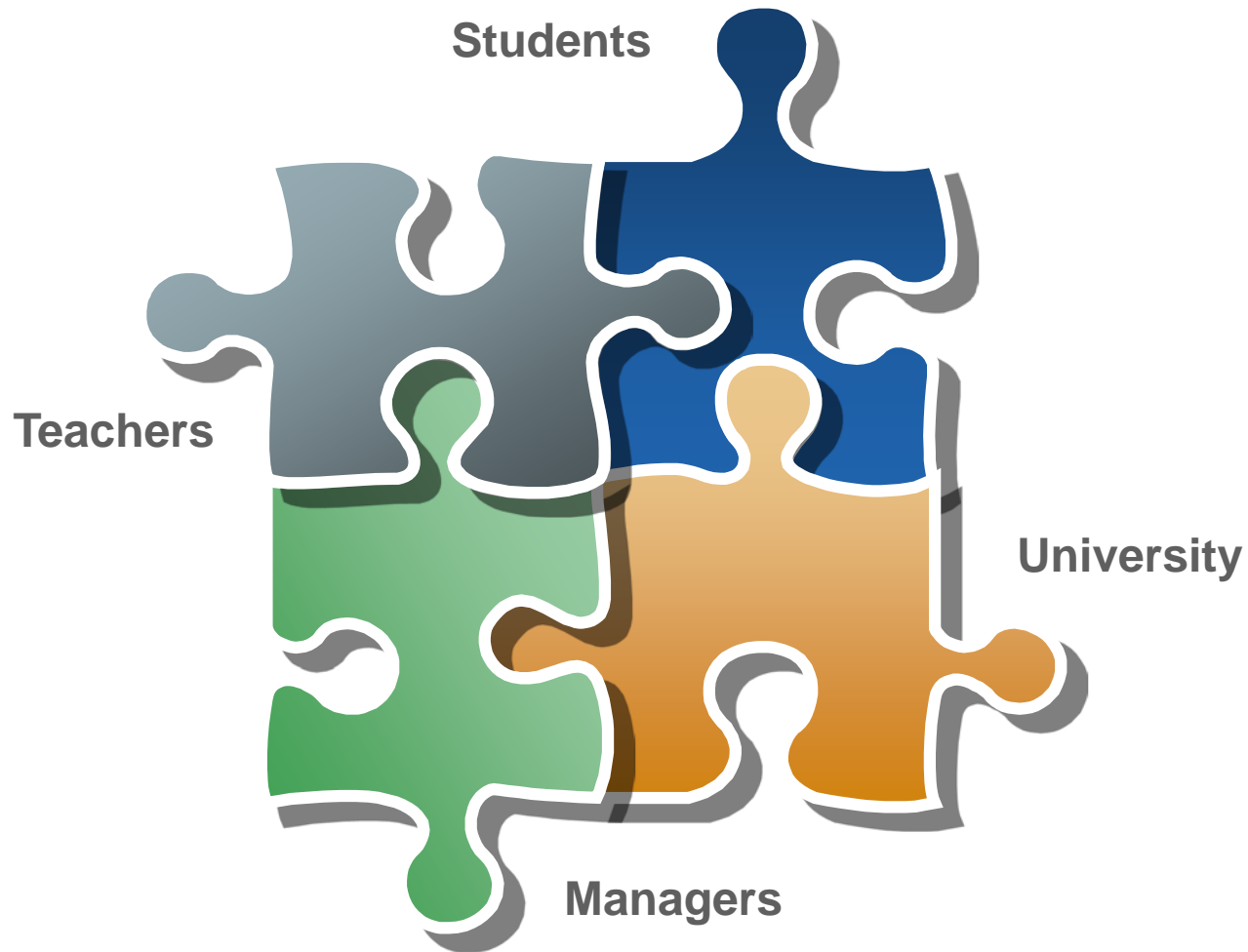


SCL: key issues



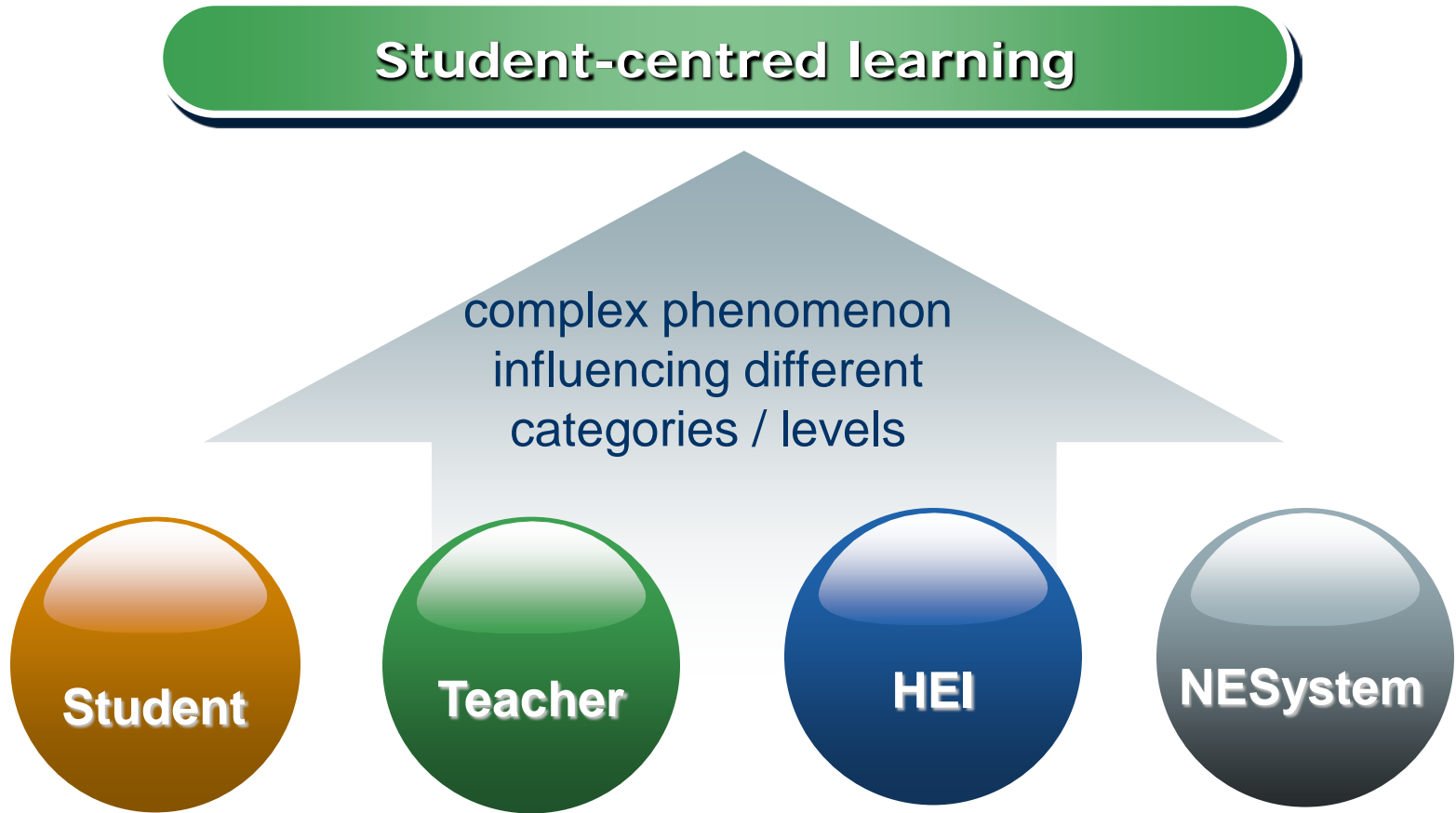


SCL: main actors





SCL: key issues





SCL: the main elements





SCL: key issues

*

- **Active** rather than passive learning

- **Deep** rather than surface (or strategic) learning with an emphasis on critical and analytical study and understanding

- **Increased responsibility, accountability, autonomy** of students

- **Interdependence** and mutual respect within teacher-learner relationship

*

- Gradual inclusion of students as part of a learned community or **co-producer of knowledge**

*

- **Reflexivity** in both learning and teaching processes from the both main actors: teacher and student



Principles of SCL

(formulated in the framework of the *T4SCL Project*)

- ❖ **SCL requires an ongoing reflexive process**
- ❖ **SCL does not have a One-Size-Fits-All solution**
- ❖ **Students have different learning styles**
- ❖ **Students have different needs and interests**
- ❖ **Choice is central to effective learning**
- ❖ **Students have different experiences and background knowledge**
- ❖ **Students should have control over their learning**
- ❖ **SCL is about Enabling not Telling**
- ❖ **Learning requires cooperation between students and staff**

(The project "Time of the new paradigm in education: student-centered learning" (t4SCL), implemented at the expense of the EU finances by the European Student Union (ESU) and the organization Education international (EI)



SCL: new possibilities



- ❖ **Students have the freedom to choose components within their own curricula;**
- ❖ **Activity-based learning;**
- ❖ **Use of small groups (e.g. self-directed learning, tutorials, small seminars etc.);**
- ❖ **Available study counseling in the learning process;**
- ❖ **Possibility of part-time studies;**
- ❖ **Professional Development for Academia;**
- ❖ **Students' assessment based on learning outcomes**
- ❖ **Etc.**

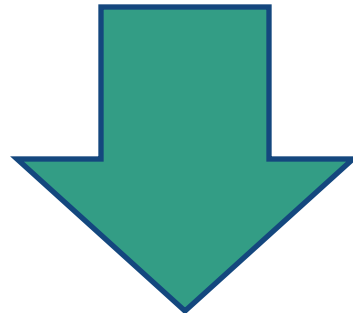


SCL – quality of education

- ❖ **SCL correlates with the process of quality of education**



- ❖ **Assessment of SCL – compulsory element in the implemented quality assurance procedures**



- ❖ **Evaluation of student-centered learning is an indispensable element in the process of external quality assessment**



Consultation with Students (discussion)

- ✓ **Transparent procedures in place for students to be able to give feedback on the quality of the educational process**
- ✓ **Students consultation on curriculum content**
- ✓ **Students involvement in periodic programs quality reviews**
- ✓ **Students involvement as full and equal members in committees where issues relating the student experience are discussed at all levels (e.g. department, faculty, university, etc.)**



- Students consultation on the teaching and evaluation methods to be used
- Straightforward procedures in place for students to appeal decisions regarding their academic attainment or progression



ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) and Learning Outcomes

- ✓ Practices of students consultation at the stage of learning outcomes design
- ✓ Students information on the intended learning outcomes before they start a course or program component
- ✓ ECTS credits used are co-related with defined learning outcomes
- ✓ Credits measure student workload, independent of contact hours
- ✓ HEI refers its qualifications to a Qualifications Framework



- Student needs and the diversity of the relevant student group are considered when designing learning outcomes
- Credits are transferable between courses and institutions
- Students' award credits for activities that help them attain intended learning outcomes if conducted outside the institution



Quality assurance

- ✓ Staff and students are consulted during the institutional quality assurance process
- ✓ Representatives of teachers and students are involved as full and equal members in the panels undertaking institutional quality assurance reviews
- ✓ Institutional quality assurance reviews and guidelines take into account the overall elements of teaching and learning
- ✓ Program quality reviews take into account the use of learning outcomes
- ✓ Program quality reviews take into account the assessment methods used



The depth
of processes

Efficiency of
influence on
students



Mobility, Recognition and Prior Learning

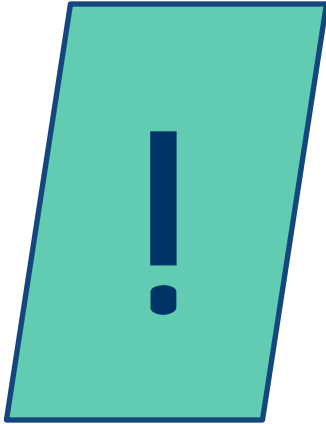
- ✓ Study periods conducted by students in other institutions within various mobility schemes are recognized by your institution
- ✓ Incoming mobile students at an institution benefit from support in order to be able to cope with their new cultural and linguistic environment
- ✓ Examples of good practice in teaching and learning that mobile staff come into contact with are discussed and disseminated at the institutional level
- ✓ The process of recognition is easy and does not imply additional efforts
- ✓ Recognition of prior learning can be done without significant costs or bureaucracy



Prior learning (in non-formal learning environments) are recognized by HEI for the purpose of access into educational programs



Social dimension



- ✓ **Special support measures are in place in order to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds**



- ✓ **Learning paths are flexible enough as to permit combining work/family-life and studies**



Teaching and Learning Methods

- ✓ **Extra-curricular activities of students are accepted and recognized as an essential part of the learning experience**
- ✓ **Group-work is used in the learning process within institution**
- ✓ **The development of transversal skills by students is one of the objectives of the learning process in the institutions?**



Level of implementation of:

- activity-based learning
- peer assessment and peer learning



Student Assessment Methods

- ✓ **Students are informed by teachers about the goals of the learning process**
- ✓ **Simulations of tasks and “real life situations” are used in the assessment of students**
- ✓ **Feed-back as part of the evaluation process**



- The goals of the learning process are agreed upon between teachers and students
- Peer- and self-assessment are used as a method in the student assessment process
- Projects are used in the assessment of students
- Quality of feed-back as part of the evaluation process



Learning Environment

- ✓ **Information technology is used within the learning process**
- ✓ **Students have access to appropriate research and study facilities both on and off campus**
- ✓ **Librarians collaborate with teachers in order to ensure students' learning experience with appropriate supporting materials**



- Institutions contribute to promoting a national/regional culture of SCL
- Librarians collaborate with teachers in order to enhance students' learning experience



Professional Academic Development

- ✓ **Institutions have a regular professional development program for teaching staff**
- ✓ **This program/strategy uses an SCL approach in providing training on the use of innovative teaching methods and student-centred curriculum development**
- ✓ **Institutions have some guidelines on learning**

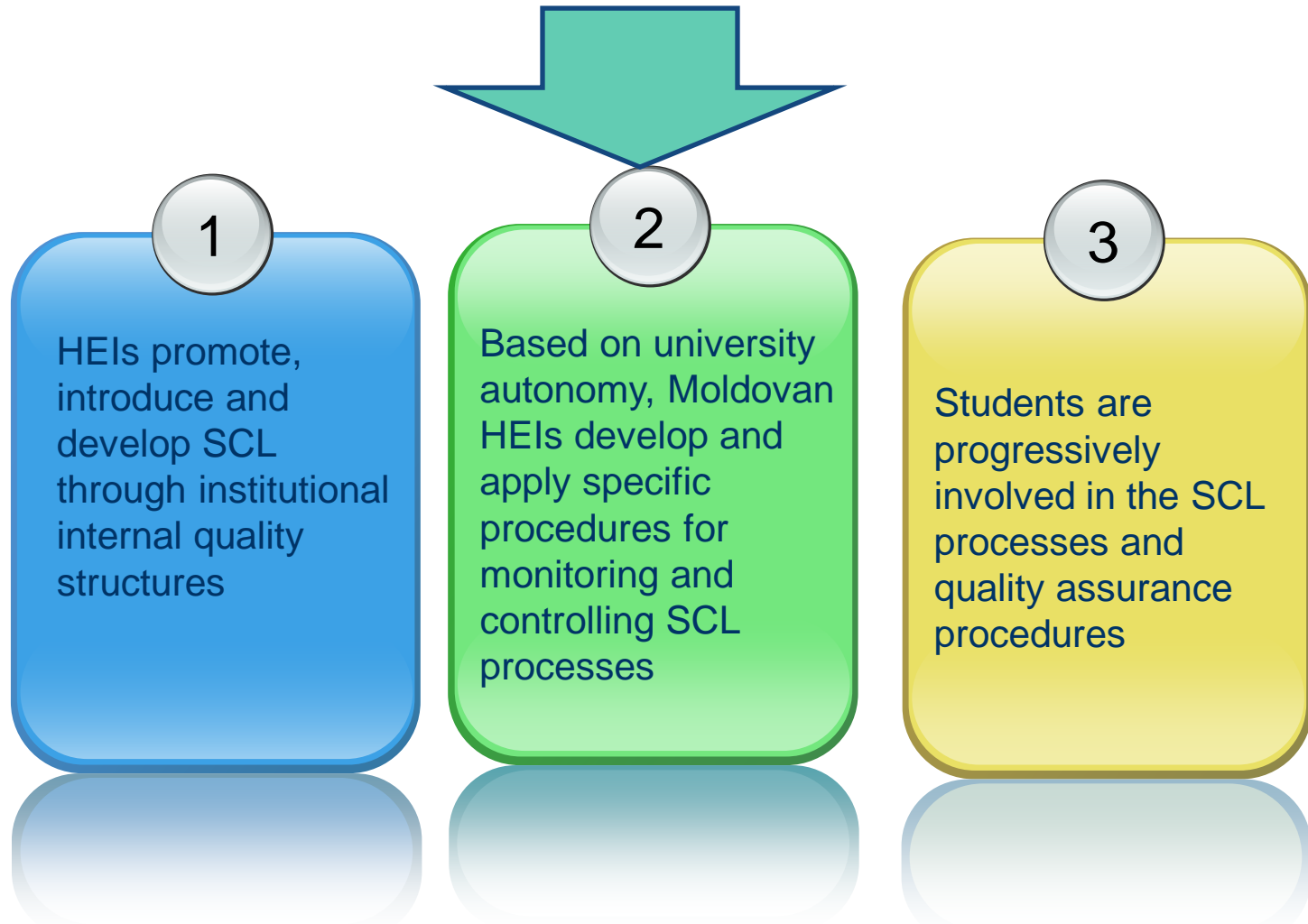


- This program/strategy includes a constructive discussion on the application of teaching methods
- Institution have any guidelines on teaching



SCL in Moldovan HEIs: general trends

- ✓ Two-year experience of external quality assessment of university study program
- ✓ More than 300 university-level programs have passed through external evaluation in terms of quality assurance





SCL in Moldova: main challenges

Important!!! Starting with 2015, the results / successes of universities in attracting students to an active role in teaching and learning processes has been part of the EQA
2016 - NQA

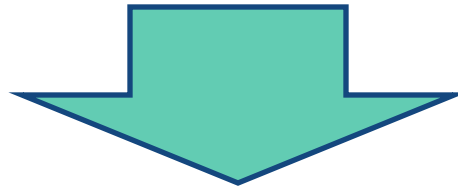


What is the depth, durability and effectiveness of the implemented processes in the universities of Moldova?



Analysis of the impact of external evaluation on SCL

Methodological elements of analysis: (1) Document analysis/observation; (2) Structured interviews with key actors



- ❖ The necessity to study the influence/impact of the external evaluation, carried out by the Agency, and the final results on the HEIs and main actors
- ❖ The necessity to study the degree of influence of external evaluation mechanisms on the introduction and consolidation of the SCL paradigm and SCL culture:
 - *what external evaluation standards have reached the expected effect;*
 - *what external evaluation standards did not achieve the expected effect;*
 - *how do they influence the evaluated programs / universities ...*

-



SCL: Questions to be answered



- To what extent is the national system of external quality assurance implemented by ANACEC with specific standards able to really help universities, the academic community, students in shaping the culture of CSC and ensuring quality?
- What is the influence of the quality control system on the quality of teaching, learning and evaluation processes?
- What is the level of the implementation of the SCL which is focused on the predefined learning outcomes?
- To what extent does the national quality assurance system promote the student mobility and internationalization in education?

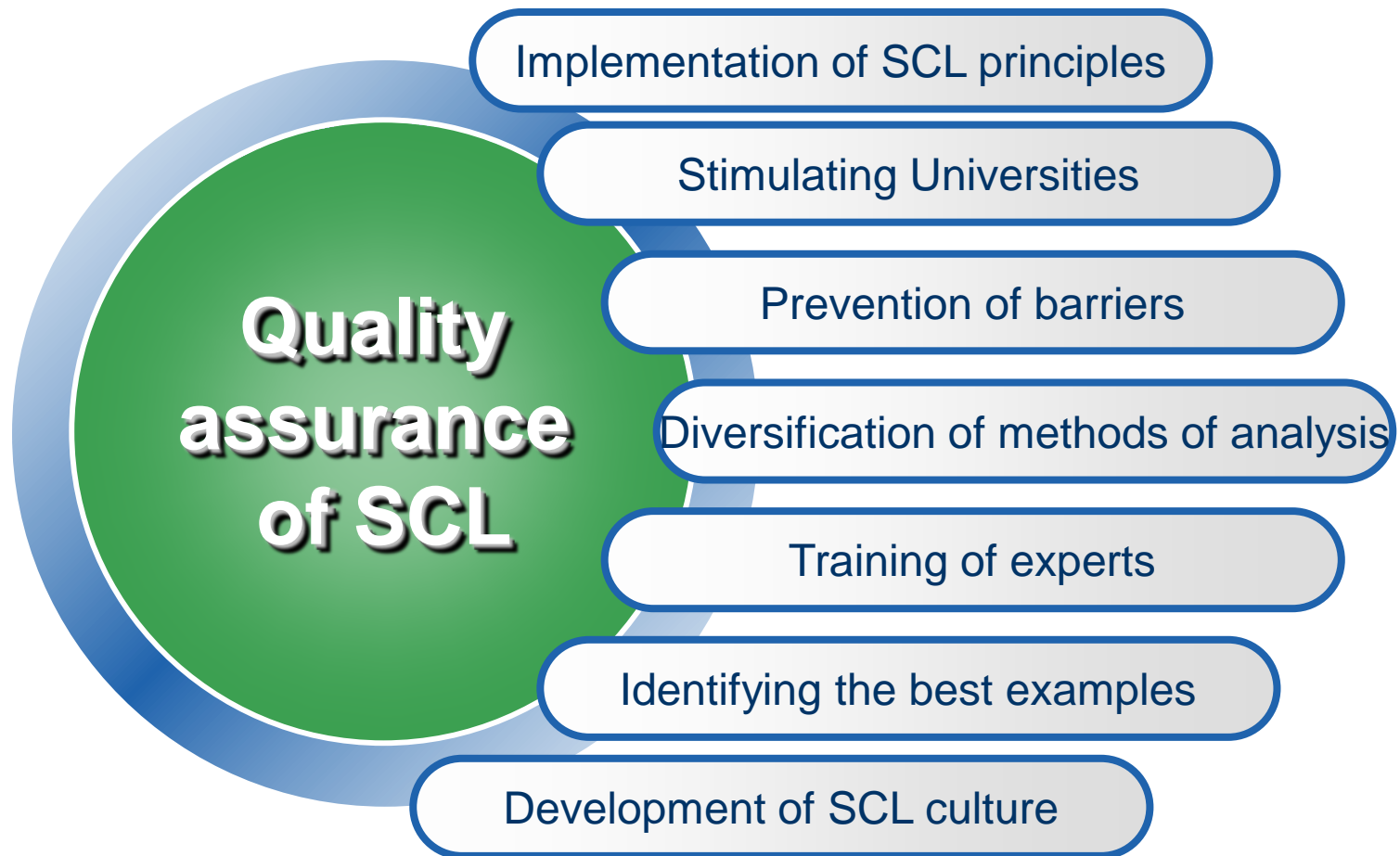


Our Reserves

- ❖ Most universities are still at the stage of transition from a SCL orientation towards the development of a SCL culture;
- ❖ Continuous quality assurance is still at the level of desire;
- ❖ ESG are used mainly by the Agency, already well known at the university level, but less familiar to students;
- ❖ The necessity to explain to all interested actors:
 - what processes triggered the introduction of SCL in ESG;
 - why the problem of SCL is so important for the Moldovan HE system;
- ❖ Relation between SCL and learning outcomes. Difficulties of implementation in the process of teaching-learning-evaluation of the announced learning outcomes;
- ❖ The need to identify and mediate good / successful examples of actual "practice" or "presentation" of SCL in Moldova;
- ❖ The need to identify ways to best address SCL problems in the context of quality assurance;
- ❖ Etc.



External evaluation of SCL: ANACEC goals





How to do?

- ❖ Development of the structure of the SCL evaluation process
- ❖ Identification of specific measurable indicators for an objective assessment of the degree of implementation of SCL
- ❖ Development/application of standardized surveys with different target groups, design of the before-after comparison, the formulation of causal mechanism hypotheses
- ❖ Assessment of the activities and achievements of HEIs in the implementation of SCL
- ❖ Targeted training of experts for the evaluation of SCL
- ❖ Identification of the best practices / examples of SCL implementation in the country / Promotion of good European examples in the field of CES in Moldovan society
- ❖ Etc.





Agenția Națională de Asigurare a Calității
în Educație și Cercetare

AFFILIATE OF
ENQA

Thank you for your attention!

elena.petrov.ch@gmail.com
elena.petrov@anacip.md

