A1. Student Support and Engagement:

(from the students' point of view) (Revised from A1 in 2024): Focuses on supporting students' academic and career success, as well as welfare, diversity, inclusion, and participation. Additionally, it aims to enhance student welfare by offering various scholarship programs to reduce financial burdens and help students focus on their studies**. (We encourage students to prepare the cases in their real names.)**

Support on academic and career success
- **Pre**-stage: availability of comprehensive and easily accessible **information, mentorship** opportunities
- **On**-campus stage: Robust student support services, including **academic advising, counseling, career counseling, and workshops**, to address students' needs and help them navigate challenges effectively.
- **Post**-graduate stage: Provides alumni network and support, career placement services, and lifelong learning opportunities to help alumni to stay connected and develop their career

Promote student welfare, diversity, inclusion, and participation
- **Welfare**: Health and well-being services, financial assistance, housing and accommodation, career services and internship support, student support networks
- **Diversity and inclusion**: equal access to education and support, inclusive policies and practices, cultural sensitivity
- **Student participation**: variety of student involvement opportunities, students participation in decision-making processes effective communication and transparency

A2. Student Mobility and Openness

(from the students' point of view) (Revised from A2 in 2024): Focuses on promoting exchange and collaboration between schools, both domestically and internationally. The goal is to encourage openness, sharing of knowledge, and resource integration, moving away from isolated and closed system. **(We encourage students to prepare the cases in their real names.)**

- Focus on promoting student exchange and collaboration between schools.
- Encourages both domestic and international partnerships among educational institutions.
- Aims to foster openness and sharing of knowledge across schools.

- Supports the integration of resources and best practices.
- Seeks to move away from isolated and closed educational systems.
- Emphasizes the importance of collaboration in a global context.
- Encourage students to prepare and present their cases using their real names.

A3. Industrial Application:

Emphasizes the application of industrial-related education and research to generate tangible impacts, diverging from the conventional focus on academia-driven research and education.

- Research and Education on AI technology development
- Industry partnerships and collaborations
- Research funding and grants from industry sources
- Technology transfer and intellectual property
- Industry relevance of academic programs
- Alumni success and industry engagement
- Industry-ready skills development
- Industry recognitions and awards
- Feedback from industry partners

A4. Entrepreneurial Spirit:

Encompasses a range of elements and initiatives that collectively foster an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and innovation.

- Entrepreneurship programs and curriculum
- Entrepreneurial support services
- Entrepreneurial culture and community
- Funding opportunities
- Alumni entrepreneurship success
- Track record of entrepreneurial ventures
- Industry connections and partnerships to promote entrepreneurs
- Publications and research on entrepreneurship

A5. Crisis Management:

Focuses on managing environmental and economic crisis that universities face from the greater society, such as climate change, diseases like COVID-19, and other global and local crisis

- Environmental sustainability: conservation of natural resources, renewable

energy, waste management
- Climate crisis management: overcoming any uncertain crisis emerging from climate changes
- Economic sustainability: responsible business practices, economic resilience, sustainable supply chains

A6. Ethics and Integrity

(Revised from A6 in 2024): Emphasizes the importance of researching and promoting ethics and integrity in education. It encourages institutions to go beyond a narrow focus on academic knowledge and skills, by fostering moral values, ethical decision-making, and integrity among students and faculty, shaping responsible global citizens and leaders.

- Curriculum, course content on social responsibility, ethics, and integrity
- Research projects or initiatives on social responsibility
- Commitment to ethical leadership and governance
- Support on ethical decision-making skills and a sense of social awareness
- Ethical research and publication practices

A7. Technology Development and Application

(Revised from A7 in 2024): Examines how universities respond to and apply AI technologies (e.g., ChatGPT) in their education, research, and service to society and industry. It also emphasizes the role of AI in strengthening education and better preparing students for the future.

- Examine how universities respond to the rise of AI technologies.
- Focus on the application of AI (e.g., ChatGPT) in education.
- Analyzes the integration of AI in academic research.
- Highlights the role of AI in serving society and industry.
- Explores how AI can strengthen educational practices.
- Emphasizes preparing students for the future through AI.
- Encourages universities to adopt AI for broader institutional development.

A8. SDG-Based Responses to Global Challenges

(Revised from A8 in 2024): Highlights how universities incorporate and apply the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in their education, research and societal contributions. It focuses on how institutions integrate the 17 SDGs, such as quality education, climate action, reducing inequalities, and creating sustainable cities, into their curricula and research initiatives, equipping students and society/business leaders with the knowledge and skills to tackle global challenges and contribute to a sustainable future.

- Highlights how universities incorporate the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into their education.
- Focuses on integrating SDGs in research and societal contributions.
- Emphasizes institutions' efforts to address global challenges through the 17 SDGs.
- Includes key goals like quality education, climate action, and reducing inequalities.
- Promotes creating sustainable cities and communities within curricula and research.
- Prepares students and leaders with the knowledge and skills to contribute to a sustainable future.

B1. Visionary Leadership

(Revised from B1 in 2024): Exemplifies leadership in developing and communicating a clear, inspiring vision for the institution. It emphasizes understanding the evolving landscape of higher education, anticipating future challenges, and fostering innovation to maintain the institution's relevance and ensure its success.

- Demonstrates strong leadership in crafting and communicating a clear vision for the institution.
- Focuses on inspiring and motivating the academic community through a visionary approach.
- Emphasizes the importance of understanding the evolving landscape of higher education.
- Anticipates future challenges and prepares the institution accordingly.
- Fosters innovation to ensure institutional relevance in a changing environment.
- Aims to secure the long-term success of the institution through strategic leadership.

B2. Empowerment-Based Management

(New in 2025): Shows the leader's willingness to relinquish traditional privileges and continuously adapt to remain effective and influential in the ever-evolving landscape of higher education. It highlights the leader's strong interpersonal skills in building relationships and fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, and external partners. These skills enable effective communication, conflict resolution, and the ability to inspire and motivate others toward shared goals.

- Demonstrates the leader's willingness to relinquish traditional privileges for more effective leadership.
- Adapts continuously remain influential in the evolving landscape of higher education.
- Highlights strong interpersonal skills in building relationships with diverse stakeholders.
- Fosters collaboration among faculty, staff, students, and external partners.
- Enhance communication and conflict resolution through effective leadership.
- Inspires and motivates others to work toward shared goals.

B3. ESG Trend

(New in 2025): Emphasizes the adoption of ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) principles to foster sustainable practices. Universities are expected to minimize environmental impact, manage resources responsibly, and promote social inclusivity by fostering diversity and ensuring access to education for all. Governance within ESG includes ethical, transparent decision-making and strong anti-corruption measures. By integrating these principles, universities contribute to global sustainability efforts and enhance their institutional reputation.

- Emphasizes the adoption of ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) principles to foster sustainable practices.
- Universities are expected to minimize their environmental impact.
- Encourages responsible resource management within institutions.
- Promotes social inclusivity by fostering diversity and ensuring access to education for all.
- Highlights the importance of ethical, transparent decision-making under governance.
- Supports strong anti-corruption measures as part of ESG governance.
- By integrating ESG principles, universities contribute to global sustainability and enhance their institutional reputation.

B4. Culture/Values

(Same as B5 in 2024): Culture and value that promotes innovation throughout the students, professors, and administrators in universities

Promotes industry/student-centered thinking (rather than university/professor-centered thinking)
- Considers the potential social impact of the program
- Stakeholder engagement, especially students
- Clarity of purpose
- Novelty and uniqueness in addressing the identified purpose

Pursuit on social values (alongside the values of universities)
- Societal impact
- Program adheres to ethical principles and values
- Whether approaches with diversity and inclusion
- Whether the program commits to sustainability

Establish innovative culture
- Risk-taking and experimentation
- The level of support and encouragement by university leadership
- The extent to collaborate and engage in cross-disciplinary co-efforts

- Open communication and idea sharing

B5. Funding for Sustainability

(Revised from B2 in 2024): reveals the innovative strategies the university employs to secure financial resources by diversifying funding streams and adopting new methods. It also highlights efforts to ensure stable funding to support its long-term goals and initiatives.

- Highlights the university's innovative strategies to secure financial resources.
- Emphasizes the diversification of funding streams.
- Focuses on adopting new funding methods for sustainability.
- Aims to ensure stable financial support for long-term goals.
- Supports initiatives that align with the university's sustainability objectives.

B6. Infrastructure/Technology:

(Same as B3 in 2024): Focuses on how well a university is adopting new technologies and new infrastructure to support their innovative efforts

- Responses to **AI technology** in education and research
- **Use of new** technologies in teaching, conducting research, and implementing administrative processes
- Availability of **technology infrastructure and resources**
- **AI ethical and responsible practices**
- Recognition and awards to promote new technology and infrastructure adaptation

B7. Cost-Effectiveness Management

(New in 2025): This innovative project/program emphasizes launching innovative projects that either boost revenues or reduce costs to improve profitability. This strategy evaluates initiatives based on their financial return, prioritizing those with the highest economic efficiency. The aim is to ensure resources are allocated to areas that most effectively enhance the institution's financial health and support its educational goals.

- Emphasizes launching innovative projects to boost revenues or reduce costs.
- Focuses on improving profitability through strategic financial management.
- Evaluates initiatives based on financial return and economic efficiency.
- Prioritizes projects that offer the highest economic benefits.
- Ensures resources are allocated to areas that enhance financial health.
- Supports the institution's educational goals through cost-effective management.

B8. University Brand and Reputation

(Revised from B4 in 2024): Focuses on the use of creative and innovative strategies to effectively enhance the university's brand and reputation. It encourages the university to adopt unique approaches that appeal to diverse audiences, ultimately strengthening its visibility, influence, and competitive position in the higher education landscape.

- Emphasizes the use of creative and innovative strategies to enhance the university's brand.
- Encourages unique approaches to appeal to diverse audiences.
- Aims to strengthen the university's visibility and influence.
- Focuses on improving the university's competitive position in the higher education landscape.
- Seeks to build and maintain a strong institutional reputation.

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We are confident that these 16 categories represent the key areas of innovation that higher education institutions must focus on to gain a competitive edge in today's rapidly evolving environment.