

# **External Quality Assurance**

## Audit Report

**WOOLF**

Carried out between  
24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**Quality education for  
confident futures.**

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## Abbreviations List

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AMS	Accreditation Management System
AT	Accreditation Team
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EQA/QA audit	External Quality Assurance / Audit
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESG	European Standards and Guidelines (2015)
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ILO	Intended Learning Objectives
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
MFHEA	Malta Further and Higher Education Authority
NCFHE	National Commission for Further and Higher Education
NQAF	National Quality Assurance Framework
QAETAC	Quality Assurance, Enhancement and Technology Alignment Committee
QMS	Quality Management System
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAR	Self-Assessment Report
SUB	Student Union Board

# Executive Summary

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## Institutional Background

Woolf Education Ltd (Malta) (hereafter referred to as “Woolf”) is a subsidiary of Woolf Inc. (USA) that was created in 2018 with the aim to “promote academic excellence” and “broaden access to higher education” thanks to the use of new technologies that can connect students and teachers across the world and lower the costs of education. According to its mission statement, Woolf values “excellence in all things”, measures itself “against the highest international standards”, and aspires to deliver “world-class education” and “ground-breaking research.

Woolf was licensed in Malta in 2019 as a “higher education institution” providing higher education from Levels 5 to 8 of the EQF through digital channels. The initial list of programmes that may be offered has since been extended, following their accreditation by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA). The current licence is valid until 15<sup>th</sup> September 2024, subject to several “special conditions” regarding Woolf’s identity, mode of delivery, list of accredited programmes and their internal quality assurance.

Woolf does not offer its higher education activities directly, through its own teachers/researchers, but via 29 affiliated “colleges” operating in/from different countries in the world. Each one offers a specific subset of the approved programmes and bears full responsibility for its own faculty members and its own students. Hence, colleges differ widely in terms of size, identity and profile, while Woolf provides to all the same system of academic management and internal quality assurance and co-signs the corresponding degrees with the respective college.

Altogether, the 29 colleges employ 476 teachers, offer 90 accredited programmes and enrol 4,800 students, mostly at the postgraduate level in informatics/computer science and in management.

## Overview of the Audit Process

This report is the result of the External Quality Assurance procedure undertaken by an independent peer review panel on the basis of the information provided by Woolf in its self-assessment report (SAR) and subsequent meetings. Its main thrust is to evaluate Woolf's policies aimed at guaranteeing the quality of its education, training and research, in accordance with the MFHEA's 11 standards referring to the ESG 2015.

The composition of the panel was finalised on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The panel was presented with the SAR and additional documentation at the beginning of January 2024. After an initial round of discussion based on them, the panel requested some complementary data and information, all of which was provided on time on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024.

After a preliminary, desk-based evaluation of the documentation submitted by Woolf (i.e., the SAR, the student questionnaire requested by the MFHEA and the additional information provided) and some publicly available data (like Woolf's website, Scopus and colleges' profiles), the panel maintained a first, online meeting with Woolf's leadership ("scoping meeting") on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

The audit visit took place between 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024 and consisted of a series of meetings hosted by Woolf at the Excelsior Hotel in Floriana, Malta. These meetings involved in-person interviews with Woolf executives as well as the online participation of several persons located elsewhere in the world. While some interviewees were scheduled to participate in more than one session, in agreement with the panel, it reduced the number of participants in several other sessions, in order to avoid the physical or online presence of the same persons in too many of them. The whole three-day audit was accompanied by three staff members of the MFHEA; their communication with the panel was efficiently handled through the Slack application. In spite of some minor incidents, the technology functioned well and none of the sessions was disturbed by technical difficulties.

The panel is responsible for reaching conclusions on all 11 standards. Even though the panel investigated Woolf's economic sustainability, the evaluation of its financial capacity needs to be formally confirmed by expert advice to be sought by the MFHEA, in accordance with the agency's Manual of Procedures for Standard 2 (Institutional Probity).

At the end of the visit the panel requested that Woolf provide, within a week, some additional information about its monitoring of student questionnaires for the evaluation of teaching and teachers.

## Timeline

The full timeline from the preliminary steps to the completion of the audit visit included the following stages:

- The MFHEA's student questionnaire, to be submitted by Woolf to the student body, was communicated on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023;
- The panel's composition was communicated on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023;
- The "induction meeting" was conducted on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023;
- The SAR and the outcome of the student questionnaire were received on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2024.
- The panel met for a preliminary, desk-based evaluation on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and requested some additional information that was duly received by the MFHEA and passed on to the panel on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024;
- The "scoping visit" was held online on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024; it was the panel's first opportunity to meet with Woolf's leadership, listen to a presentation by Woolf's CEO and propose a programme of interviews for the audit visit.
- The audit visit took place between 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at the Excelsior Hotel in Floriana, Malta.

# Summary of the Conclusions Reached by the Review Panel

## Standards

On the basis of the findings documented in the present report, the panel has concluded that Woolf:

- Meets three MFHEA Standards, namely, Standards 5, 9 and 11;
- Requires improvement to meet eight MFHEA Standards, namely, Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10.

## Good Practice and Commendations

None. The panel found no area where Woolf's practice goes clearly beyond what is expected in the MFHEA's quality standards.

## Recommendations

The recommendations in the report are meant to improve the standards already in place and to enhance good practice.

The panel made four mandatory recommendations, one of which shall be implemented within 3 months from the date of publication of this report, while one shall be implemented within 6 months and two within 12 months from the date of publication of this report. The panel also made nine key recommendations, eight of which should be implemented within 12 months and one within 18 months from the date of publication of this report. In addition, the panel made four recommendations.

## Overall Conclusions

Overall, the panel has been impressed by Woolf's growth and success since its creation from scratch in 2018. Thanks to a streamlined management system capitalising on the cost-efficiency of digital higher education, it has become a sizeable, relevant and international higher education institution (HEI) serving a diverse student body in different countries and continents, mainly for the purpose of professional upscaling/upgrading. From this viewpoint, Woolf may well present several features of a new model of global HEI in the digital era. The panel has no doubt that Woolf's colleges offer quality education and professional relevance in several disciplinary/professional areas, and accepts that at this early stage of its development, Woolf's references to overall academic excellence, world-class education and ground-breaking research are more aspirational than really guaranteed across the board.

However, some other aspects are sources of concern. One is that in the panel's opinion, Woolf's sophisticated and highly automated internal quality assurance system is mainly focused on checking the educational inputs (qualification of teachers and students, contact hours, format of assessments, completion of learning units, etc.) rather than on the actual learning acquired by students in terms of knowledge, competencies and skills. Also, while the license states that the delivery and IQA of programmes is the sole responsibility of Woolf, the implementation of all academic activities is actually farmed out to 29 "colleges" about which the panel feels it has not had enough initial information; these colleges are affiliated to Woolf Education Ltd by means of a convention spelling out their obligations, but the panel has not found enough evidence that this allows Woolf to guarantee that the National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF) requirements are really understood and consistently applied across all programmes and all colleges.

The panel was also puzzled that between Woolf and its colleges there exists some lack of clarity about the concept and role of accreditation; some interviewees seem to believe that colleges' programmes are actually accredited by Woolf; at Woolf itself, its tailor-made IQA system is known as *Accreditation Management System (AMS)* and is served by a team called "*accreditation team*" (AT); in a message posted on Djinni (<https://djinni.co/r/62780-cto-at-woolf/>) a key member of this team explains that his job is to "help colleges from all over the world to accredit their degree programs in the US and the EU".

This concern about Woolf's college policy and its obligation to report to the MFHEA would need to be clarified with the MFHEA and addressed urgently in order to avoid the MFHEA's accreditation becoming a mere commodity. The panel believes that once alerted, Woolf's senior management at the central and college level would be in a position to further develop Woolf as a useful, relevant HEI.

# External Quality Assurance Audit of Woolf

## About the External Quality Audit

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### Aims and Objectives of the EQA

Quality assurance in Malta is underpinned by six principles that determine the remit and function of the National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education, and the relationship between internal and external quality assurance to enhance learning outcomes.

- i. The Framework is based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and enriched by the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) perspective.
- ii. The Framework contributes to a national culture of quality through:
  - increased agency satisfaction and numbers of service users,
  - an enhanced international profile and credibility of providers in Malta,
  - the promotion of Malta as a regional provider of excellence in further and higher education.
- iii. The Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is fit for purpose.
- iv. The External Quality Assurance (QA audit) is a tool for both development and accountability. The QA audit shall ensure that the internal quality management system of the provider is:
  - fit for purpose according to the provider's courses and service users,
  - compliant with Standards and regulations, and contributing to the development of a national quality culture,
  - contributing to the fulfilment of the broad goals of Malta's Education Strategy 2014-24,
  - implemented with effectiveness, comprehensiveness and sustainability.
- v. The Quality Improvement Cycle is at the heart of the Framework.
- vi. The integrity and independence of the QA audit process is guaranteed.

The QA audit provides public assurance about the standards of further and higher education programmes and the quality of the learning experience of students. It presents an opportunity for providers to demonstrate that they adhere to the expectations of stakeholders with regard to the programmes of study that they offer and the achievements and capabilities of their students. It also provides a focus for identifying good practices and for the implementation of institutional approaches to the continuous improvement in the quality of educational provision.

The MFHEA has a responsibility to ensure that a comprehensive assessment is conducted for all higher education providers in Malta. The QA audit provides an opportunity to assess the standards and quality of higher education in Malta against the expectations and practices of provision across the European Higher Education Area and internationally.

The QA audit examines how providers manage their own responsibilities for the quality and standards of the programmes they offer. In particular, the following issues are addressed:

- The fitness for purpose and effectiveness of internal quality assurance processes, including an examination of the systems and procedures that have been implemented and the documentation that supports them.
- The compliance with the obligations of licence holders with established regulations and any conditions or restrictions imposed by the MFHEA.
- The governance and financial sustainability of providers, including assurances about the legal status of the provider, the appropriateness of corporate structures, and the competence of staff with senior management responsibilities.

The QA audit benchmarks the QA system and procedures within an institution against 11 Standards:

1. Policy for quality assurance: entities shall have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management.
2. Institutional and financial probity: entities shall ensure that they have appropriate measures and procedures in place to ensure institutional and financial probity.
3. Design and approval of programmes: self-accrediting providers shall have appropriate processes for the design and approval of their programmes of study.
4. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment: entities shall ensure that programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in the learning process.

5. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification: entities shall consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student 'life-cycle'.
6. Teaching staff: entities shall assure the competence and effectiveness of their teaching staff.
7. Learning resources and student support: entities shall have appropriate funding for their learning and teaching activities and sufficient learning resources to fully support the students' learning experiences.
8. Information management: entities shall ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.
9. Public information: entities shall publish information about their activities which is clear, accurate, objective, up to date and readily accessible.
10. Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes: entities shall implement the 'Quality Cycle' by monitoring and periodically reviewing their programmes to ensure their continuing fitness for purpose.
11. Cyclical external quality assurance: entities should undergo an external quality assurance audit by, or with the approval of, the MFHEA on a cyclical basis, according to the MFHEA guidelines, once every five years.

Peer review panels essentially ask providers the following question about their arrangements for quality management:

'What systems and procedures are in place and what evidence is there that they are working effectively?'

The approach to quality assurance can be encapsulated in a number of key questions which providers should ask themselves about their management of quality.

- What are we trying to do?
- Why are we trying to do it?
- How are we trying to do it?
- Why are we doing it that way?
- Is this the best way of doing it?
- How do we know it works?
- Could it be done better?

Answers to these questions should form the basis of the provider's critical assessment of and response to the self-evaluation questionnaire.

The approach of the QA audit is not simply about checking whether providers adhere to the regulations; it examines how providers are developing their own systems in addressing the expectations of sound management of educational standards and the quality of their learning and teaching provision. It does not involve the routine identification and confirmation of criteria – a 'tick-box' approach – but rather a mature and reflective dialogue with providers about the ways in which they discharge their obligations for quality and the identification of existing good practices.

## Peer Review Panel

The peer review panel was composed of:

<b>Chair of Review Panel:</b>	Dr Guy Haug
<b>Peer Reviewer:</b>	Prof Dr Josep-Maria Duart
<b>Student Peer Reviewer:</b>	Ms Furtuna Mehmeti
<b>QA Managers (MFHEA):</b>	Ms Fiona McCowan Ms Aurora Attard Coleiro Mr Giacomo Annese

## Specific Terms of Reference

As defined in the MFHEA's Quality Audit Manual of Procedures, the panel is responsible for examining how the institution manages its responsibilities to ensure the provision of the quality and standards of the education they offer. Therefore, the following issues were addressed.

The same as for all other audits procedure, the fitness for purpose and effectiveness of the Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) processes was a core area of inquiry, including the examination of the systems and procedures that are in place, together with the documentation that supports them.

In addition, in the case of Woolf, the following dimensions have been identified as particularly important lines of inquiry:

\* As a licenced provider, its compliance with the established regulations and any conditions or restrictions issued by the MFHEA, not only at the corporate level but also throughout the network of affiliated colleges;

\* As a young, fast-growing, proprietary institution, its sustainability in terms of governance and finance, with regard to its legal set up, its links to colleges, and the competence of staff with senior management responsibilities;

\* As an institution focused mainly of the upscaling of professionals via a network of diverse affiliated colleges, the ways, reality and effectiveness of its student-centredness.

The review team decided that, as part of an enhancement-led approach, it would issue recommendations linked to all parts of the operations of the institution. The report therefore distinguishes between:

- Mandatory recommendations (MR) which are crucial to meet a Standard and **shall** be implemented within the timeframes decided by the panel and indicated in this report.
- Key recommendations (KR) which are important to improve a Standard and **should** be implemented expediently by the institution, within the indicated timeframes, to address weaknesses.
- Recommendations (R) for improvement which are merely suggestions based on the panel's analyses and observations; these **could** be implemented by the institution.

## Institutional Context

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Woolf Education Ltd (hereafter referred to as “Woolf”) is the Maltese subsidiary of Woolf Inc., a company registered in the State of Delaware, USA. Woolf Inc. is in essence the main provider of academic systems and management services to Woolf. The only other subsidiary of Woolf Inc. is “Woolf University”, a (hitherto) non-accredited institution registered in the State of Wisconsin, USA. All three entities were created by Mr Joshua Broggi, PhD, who serves as their common CEO.

Woolf was created in 2018 with the aim to “promote academic excellence” and “broaden access to higher education” thanks to the use of new technologies that can widen access, connect students and teachers across the world, improve the educational outcomes for students and lower the costs of education. In this way, Woolf seeks to provide “personalised, bespoke education” that will “serve its students both in the near-term and in the long-term”. The institution’s mission statement indicates that “in all things, Woolf values excellence and measures itself against the highest international standards” and Woolf aspires to deliver “world-class education” and “ground-breaking research”.

Through licence 2019-015 issued on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019, Malta’s National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE, the MFHEA’s predecessor) allowed Woolf, as a “higher education institution” (not a “university”) to provide higher education programmes “virtually, through digital channels” up to Level 8 of the Malta and European Qualifications Frameworks. The initial list of programmes that may be offered has been updated through the addition of new ones, following their accreditation by the MFHEA. The current licence, valid until 15<sup>th</sup> September 2024, is subject to several “special conditions” regarding Woolf’s identity, mode of delivery, list of accredited programmes, and their internal quality assurance.

A major feature of Woolf is that the institution does not offer its higher education activities directly, through its own teachers/researchers, but via 29 affiliated “colleges” with whom Woolf has signed a specific “convention”. These colleges operate in/from different countries (including the UK, India, Nigeria, etc. – but not Malta) and differ widely in terms of size, identity and profile. Altogether, they employ 476 teachers, offer 90 accredited programmes (including three at PhD level) and enrol 4,800 students, mainly at the postgraduate level and in the areas of computer science and management.

## Analysis and Findings of the Panel

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### Standard 1: Policy for Internal Quality Assurance

*Policy for quality assurance: entities shall have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management.*

#### Main Findings

Woolf's operations started with the development (by Woolf Inc.) of a home-made, sophisticated, fully-computerised system for academic management and internal quality assurance. Article 14 of the MFHEA's licence states that the delivery and the quality of the programmes shall be "the sole responsibility of Woolf". The main tools for this are the "Accreditation Management System" (AMS) and the "Accreditation Team" (AT), under the purview of the Quality Assurance, Enhancement and Technology Alignment Committee (QAETAC).

The panel has no doubt that Woolf's comprehensive and highly automated QA system is a core piece of the institution's strategic management. It is publicly available (on the website) and certainly guarantees that all basic requirements are met regarding the educational inputs in respect of the structure of programmes, modules and assessment, the academic qualification of teachers and students, the access to e-documents, and the monitoring of student's services and progress. It also contains adequate measures to check students' identity and prevent fraud. However, it is not geared towards the output side: it checks facts and figures, but cannot monitor qualitative aspects such as the learning actually acquired by students (in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies) or the effective handling of issues with teachers, teaching and students.

There is also another dimension to Woolf's IQA, related to the collegial structure of its academic model. The panel noted that Woolf co-signs all degrees with the respective college and has reached recognition agreements for graduates' employment or further studies with some countries, like the UK, India or Canada. But the panel regrets that it had no means to assess the impact of Woolf's IQA system beyond the screen of colleges. According to the convention signed with Woolf, each of its 29 colleges bears full responsibility for its teachers and students and for the delivery of a specific subset of the MFHEA accredited programmes. The panel lacked information about colleges' IQA in key areas, e.g., the qualitative evaluation of teachers, teaching and assessment; students' satisfaction; or the homogeneity of the quality level actually achieved at different colleges that offer the same programme. It was also noted that the current system hardly encompasses the research function beyond the supervision of theses and does not include the monitoring of alumni.

Maybe the panel's main concern is that Woolf and its colleges seem not to share a common vision of the concept and role of accreditation. Some interviewees from colleges believed that their programmes were accredited by Woolf – not the MFHEA. At Woolf itself, the sheer use of terms such as “Accreditation Management System” and “Accreditation Team” may induce confusion: in a message posted on Woolf's website, a key AT member explains that his job is to “help colleges from all over the world to accredit their degree programs in the US and the EU”. The (not fully accurate) promise concerning accreditation in the EU can only refer to Malta's MFHEA. The panel has no idea to whom it may refer in the US, where only the non-accredited “Woolf University” was mentioned during the audit.

In conclusion, the panel is firmly convinced that Woolf should start, without delay, planning the various changes required in its internal QA system, culture and regulations.

### **Good Practice Identified**

None in particular.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

- MR1: Woolf shall, within 3 months from the date of publication of this report, clarify urgently with the MFHEA the rules applying for the addition of new colleges offering an accredited programme: Is it at Woolf's discretion, or is there an obligation to inform the MFHEA or to seek its approval? This requires adjusting the college convention and supervision, changing the names of the AMS and AT, and working out a medium-term plan and a clear procedure for college acquisition and change.
- MR2: While acknowledging the strengths of Woolf's IQA, the panel requires that the institution shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, better adjust it to its collegiate organisation, making it less dependent on technology alone (gearing it towards a more qualitative evaluation of the results actually achieved), broadening it in order to include aspects currently still missing (in particular the evaluation of teachers' teaching and research performance) and guaranteeing that programmes offered at more than one college are delivered at the same level of quality.

### **Conclusion**

Woolf requires improvement to meet Standard 1.

## Standard 2: Institutional Probity

*Institutional and financial probity: entities shall ensure that they have appropriate measures and procedures in place to ensure institutional and financial probity.*

### Main Findings

Institutional probity refers to the capacity of the organisation to ensure that senior staff members are fit and proper to deliver quality higher education and work together as a team towards the institutional goals.

The panel has been impressed by the entrepreneurial drive of Woolf's founder and top manager and his dedication to the building of an institution in line with his vision – relevant, global, dynamic, agile, competitive and recognised. It acknowledges that while the founder is still firmly holding the decision power in his hands, he has also been able to gather a number of qualified executives in charge, in particular of technology, quality monitoring and college relationships.

At the college level, Woolf may also count on a number of deans, teachers and instructors with significant professional and educational experience. Woolf pays due attention to academic integrity by means of built-in anti-fraud mechanisms in the AMS, and the panel learnt that only very few cases were reported.

Overall, the panel's view is that as Woolf grows in size and complexity, its entrepreneurial management style would benefit from the gradual integration of more strategic planning, in particular with respect to the building of a clearer institutional identity.

Overall, Woolf's announced intention to achieve a balance of administrative control at the centre (especially for programme management and QA) and collegiate diversity and freedom (in programme delivery) seems the right philosophy, even though it requires a clearer sharing of tasks. The panel appreciates that Woolf's three-person Board includes a Legal Representative based in Malta, and that the institution has set up a non-executive Academic Advisory Council (WAAC); they may help with paving the way forward for quality and sustainability.

Regarding Woolf's financial situation and capacity, the panel's observations take into account the report of the accountant appointed by the MFHEA to review the financial documentation of Woolf Education Ltd (Malta), in accordance with the Authority's Manual of Procedures for Standard 2.

From this and other information available to it, the panel understands that Woolf Education Ltd keeps comprehensive records of all its financial transactions, uses weekly cash reports

and monthly closes, has separated bookkeeping staff from those in charge of payments, and undergoes yearly auditing in line with the requirements of the Malta Business Registry.

Yet, it is important to add that these accounts cover only a modest part of Woolf's overall operations, for two main reasons.

One is that Woolf Inc. holds 100% of Woolf Education Ltd, designs and supports its QA system, and employs its administrative staff. Hence, a significant part of Woolf's investments, expenses and revenues are actually those of Woolf Inc., to whose financial data the panel has not had access. However, the two entities share a common chief executive (Mr Broggi), Woolf consistently reports a quarterly gross profit and has been able to finance its heavy initial investments and its rapid growth, which require ongoing support to colleges (management system, QA, curricular development). Student fees represent less than half of Woolf's revenue, the remainder coming from the college fee.

The other reason Woolf Education Ltd accounts reflect only a small part of the operations is that colleges are independent legal and financial entities, accountable to their own local authorities. It may be useful to mention that no difficulties were reported from either side in the financial relationship between Woolf and its affiliated colleges. During the audit, Woolf indicated its intention to continue investing in its infrastructure and its growth.

### **Good Practice Identified**

None in particular.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

- KR1: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, set medium-term priorities for its planned growth and international expansion, within the framework of a comprehensive strategy involving colleges, teachers/researchers, students and employers and encompassing its teaching and research programmes. The institution's aspiration to become a university would need to be underpinned by more than just a set of specific planned measures (such as an increased role for the Faculty Council, the transformation from a commercial company to a foundation, the increase of students' participation, a separate "academic" budget or declarations about the development of research and publication).
- R1: Woolf could start defining and building up the institutional identity it wants to promote, emphasising either the corporate centre or the plurality of its affiliated colleges and clarifying its role with respect to accreditation.

### **Conclusion**

Woolf requires improvement to meet Standard 2.

## Standard 3: Design and Approval of Programmes

*Design and approval of programmes: self-accrediting providers shall have appropriate processes for the design and approval of their programmes of study.*

### Main Findings

Woolf is not a “self-accrediting” provider at this time, which means that new programmes and significant changes to accredited programmes need to be submitted to the MFHEA for approval.

Woolf’s license opened it a broad range of possibilities in terms of disciplines, levels and modalities (full degree programmes or “awards”, i.e., just parts of such a programme). Some of these possibilities have been widely developed: Woolf has been able to offer a range of successful, useful programmes, especially for adults seeking upgrading/upscaling in management and in computer science. In other areas, the advancement towards accredited programmes has remained much more modest and/or more recent, e.g., in the humanities, at the doctoral level, in research or for award modules. In several cases, a programme has been developed by a college and then adjusted when the college joined Woolf, in order to meet the requirements of accreditation. In all cases, Woolf has a structured sequence in place for programme development, from the initial proposal to the feasibility analysis and the implementation plan.

Overall, the panel observes that programmes have been developed according to demand and Woolf has chosen to seize opportunities, rather than define a strategic development plan for the design and approval of its accredited programmes. As a result, Woolf currently offers over 90 accredited programmes at various stages of their development. It is unclear to the panel which programmes are offered at which colleges, and there seems not to be a built-in system to avoid discrepancies in the delivery of any given programme that is offered at more than one college. Also, while certain areas have been identified as current priorities, there is no comprehensive, strategic plan for the development of existing and new programmes for the next 3 to 5 years.

Woolf’s extensive AMS system includes a series of checks that provide a useful basis for programme development and delivery. A detailed description of each programme and each theoretical or practical module is available to applicants and students. All programmes use ECTS and are referenced to the Malta Qualifications Framework (and hence also to the EQF).

All new courses must undergo peer review, but it is unclear to the panel to what extent the process also involves external stakeholders for the setting of each programme's Intended Learning Objectives (ILOs). There is an Academic Board at each college. Courses must be approved by the QAETAC in Woolf's software. Colleges' learning management systems must be fully aligned with Woolf's AMS. The specific requirements and the sequence of steps to be completed in each module are described and checked. The assessment tools that will be applied are defined in their form (e.g., quiz, essay, etc.) and their extension (e.g., number of words for an essay, detailed regulation for the dissertation module that all students must complete before graduation). The system will automatically detect any failure to comply with these requirements, although possible qualitative weaknesses (e.g., regarding the adequation or level of an essay) may not be further investigated.

The adequate handling of Intended Learning Objectives is a key ingredient of any IQA system. Woolf publishes the ILOs for all its programmes and modules and makes certain, through the AMS, that students formally agree with them at the time of registering and comply with them step-by-step all along the programme. However, as said already, more qualitative aspects of student monitoring may be overseen. At the more fundamental level, the panel regrets that Woolf's "Accreditation Team" includes only administrative/technological staff: students' and employers' expectations are conspicuously absent in the definition of ILOs.

Hence, the planning and updating of programmes may result more from the conviction of Woolf's and colleges' leadership, rather than from the formal consultation of external stakeholders. To temper this observation, the panel appreciates that several managerial staff and college teachers have extensive work experience in industry and work at the interface between the professional and academic spheres.

All degrees come with a Diploma Supplement stating the LO's achieved, although on occasions it may not be very clear how the assessment methods allow colleges to certify that graduates have acquired these LOs.

In spite of Woolf's global dimension, the internationalisation of programmes seems not to be a specific priority. Given Woolf's collegiate structure and their presence in several countries, exchanging students and teachers between colleges offering the same module or programme in different countries might not be too difficult, but it seems not to be in high demand; one should not forget that most students have a job and are probably not very mobile.

### **Good Practice Identified**

None in particular.

## Recommendations for Improvement

- MR3: Woolf shall, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, define a medium-term plan for the development of its programmes, as a core component of its overall strategic plan. This requires in particular a cyclical review of the ILOs of all programmes and the formal involvement of external stakeholders, in particular employers.
- KR2: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, upgrade its IQA system in order to include qualitative evaluations in a more systematic way, and should train its staff and colleges accordingly.
- R2: The panel recommends Woolf draw up and maintain a digital table showing which programmes are taught at each college, in order to identify possibilities for cross-college cooperation and mobility.

## Conclusion

Woolf requires improvement to meet Standard 3.

## Standard 4: Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

*Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment: entities shall ensure that programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in the learning process.*

### Main Findings

Woolf expects its affiliated colleges to offer student-centred teaching and learning and students are encouraged to take an active role in shaping their own learning process. Teaching takes place in different styles according to colleges and programmes: large synchronous and asynchronous lectures, research and discussion seminars, supervised theoretical or applied research, tutorial teaching for small classes, etc. Degrees are made up of modules that are taught to specific student cohorts and have defined lessons, assignments, deadlines and synchronous meetings. All modules are defined in terms of their number of credits and their learning outcomes. Depending on the programmes, some modules are more theoretical or more research-based; others are industry-related, aim to upskill students and may include applied research at various levels. This approach also allows the engagement of mentors from the industry to teach fresh content to the students.

Assessment criteria and procedures are clearly defined and elaborated under the Quality Assurance Policy and the Academic Handbook and are published in advance. According to the Academic Handbook, assessment includes general and cumulative assessments. General assessment is continuous and includes, among others, individual or group assignments for every topic, collaborative projects, quizzes, etc. Cumulative assessment includes examinations, essays, oral examinations, projects, dissertations, and essays or theses in the final phase of courses. Although these assessment methods are said to ensure that students achieve the intended learning outcomes, the panel's view is that they better guarantee the structure of assessments than their actual ability to determine students' learning.

Woolf stresses the importance of student identity verification depending on the assessment methods. According to the SAR, students identity is checked by a service provider. For essays or projects, academic supervisors also confirm the student's identity through face-to-face video calls aimed at checking the student's comprehension of the submissions. To identify fraud and plagiarism, Woolf uses PlagScan as an antiplagiarism software system.

According to the Academic Handbook and the panel's meeting with teachers, students are allowed to extend the deadline for assignments or to retake exams. Such requests may be accepted under specific circumstances by the Academic Board of each college. Students also receive written feedback from lecturers. In case they face difficulties or have questions, teachers are available for additional consultations during office hours.

Internships are also part of some programmes. According to Woolf they are monitored and assessed through the AMS system. However, during the meeting with colleges, the panel heard that the placement of students in industry and the assessment of internships by employers actually follow different approaches, including informal ones. While acknowledging that the specifics of study programmes may be different, the panel considers that internship arrangements should be more clearly defined and included in the Academic Handbook, along with the assessment methods and procedures of the other components of the programme.

All students' learning activities and academic progress are recorded in Woolf's AMS system, where student records are maintained. While there is evidence that student progression data are monitored at the college and central levels, no process is in place to systematically investigate student dropouts and understand the reasons underlying them.

The panel found that Woolf does not conduct regular student surveys at the end of each module or each degree programme. Woolf states that students are frequently asked for feedback, whether formally or informally. However, while the AMS allows for student interaction, currently Woolf has no system in place to systematically assess the quality of teaching, administrative support, or learning resources. Woolf pointed out that if things are not going well, students are free to approach teachers and authorities, but acknowledged that they need to improve the quality assurance processes through more systematic and granular student evaluation. In the panel's view, colleges and Woolf do not have a shared understanding of how and when student feedback should best be sought. Without regular feedback at central and college levels and at different times, Woolf runs the risk of not closing the feedback loops and missing potentially important issues.

Woolf promotes an open-door policy for students who experience dissatisfaction with the teaching/learning process, but students are also entitled to submit an issue through the Red Flag procedure. As a first instance, the issue is handled through the student's College Advisor; if the issue is not resolved, the matter may then be submitted to the College Dean, or to the Committee designated by the College Dean. Students who continue to be dissatisfied with the college's decisions may appeal to Woolf's QAETAC.

### **Good Practice Identified**

None in particular.

## **Recommendations for Improvement**

- MR4: Woolf shall, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, establish regular student surveys for the evaluation of teaching, teachers, learning resources and administrative support. This should be done at defined stages, should be harmonised across colleges and programmes, and should include mechanisms to investigate student failure and dropouts.
- KR3: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, clearly define the arrangements and assessment methods for internships and include them in the Academic Handbook.

## **Conclusion**

Woolf requires improvement to meet Standard 4.

## Standard 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

*Student admission, progression, recognition and certification: entities shall consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student 'life-cycle'.*

### Main Findings

According to Woolf, students choose it mainly because it allows them to combine their professional activity with new learning at an affordable price, even for persons from comparatively poorer countries. Applicants choose a Woolf college mainly because of the design and mode of delivery of programmes, but also because they offer independent research activities and small classes, encourage discussions, etc.

During the site visit, the panel could confirm that admission requirements are included in the programme proposal sent to the MFHEA for approval and are made public on Woolf's website. The admission process is, however, mainly in the hands of colleges: Woolf itself does not have an institutional marketing strategy to attract students, except for its corporate website (that allows potential applicants to ask questions through the electronic platform) and for the recognition of prior learning.

Potential students must apply and submit the required evidence, including their prior educational achievements, on Woolf's online platform. Their identity is being verified through third-party technologies. Then, their application is checked by college administrators and faculty members who formally evaluate the applicant's evidence and may invite them to several interviews before making a decision. The formal enrolment is done through Woolf's central administration – not through each college. The panel was surprised that the admission procedure was supervised at the corporate level by Woolf's Director of Revenue.

Admission criteria and procedures may vary between colleges, provided they follow the minimal admission criteria and the step-by-step process defined in Woolf's AMS system. Colleges may add to the minimal criteria and allocate the agreed maximal number of places on a competitive basis following three general criteria: evidence of academic ability, aptitude to benefit from the education offered, and interest to pursue the particular course. At many colleges, students may attend a short or unaccredited programme and then be offered the opportunity to register as regular students in an accredited degree.

During the site visit, the panel learnt that in some cases a cohort may consist of a single student, at the decision of a college. No information was provided about the number of and reasons for rejected applications; during the meetings, Woolf interviewees only assumed that some 5 to 10 % of applications were being rejected.

Woolf has a procedure in place for the recognition of prior learning (RPL). Applicants should contact the Dean of their chosen college, but the procedure is managed by Woolf's QAETAC – not by the colleges. The panel has learnt that about 2% of students are registered through an RPL procedure.

In view of the above panorama, the panel considers that student admission procedures and criteria should be further defined by, and anchored in Woolf's quality assurance policy. They should ideally include information about the relevant college, language requirements and accreditation status, and should be available in a separate document for each type/level of study (modules only, degree programmes, master-level programmes, doctoral studies).

Following admission, an induction process is organised at the college level. Onboarding of students happens in groups or through individual sessions where students are informed about the requirements for successfully completing their courses. This information is also available on electronic platforms and through Woolf's Academic Handbook, that provide students and new teachers with practical information about entry requirements, learning outcomes, recourses available, assessment forms, etc. All students with whom the panel met confirmed that they were satisfied with the level of information received before their registration and upon starting their programme. Yet, the panel considers that the documents are too generic, i.e., they do not contain enough information specific to each college and to students' chosen programme.

Woolf does regular – mainly monthly – automatic online checks of students' progress, together with the proposal of specialised solutions based on the student's consumption history. Besides the AMS system, student progression is also monitored at college level and academic support is provided by colleges through their faculty and administrators. All students confirmed that they regularly communicate with their faculty members and receive continuous support in group sessions or individually.

All students registered in accredited programmes must sign an enrolment agreement before the commencement of their studies. The panel had access to a template agreement between Woolf and students that defined the rights and responsibilities of both parties. Upon successful completion of the programmes, students are issued certificates and diploma supplements. The panel had access to a template certificate, which includes information about the title of the qualification, MQF level, and number of ECTS – in line with the MFHEA's requirements.

The panel was interested to hear that some colleges (like Scaler) keep track of their graduates' career beyond the few years following graduation and that Woolf is considering doing the same at corporate level.

### **Good Practice Identified**

None in particular.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

R3: The panel invites Woolf to further develop its marketing and student recruitment policies, including the information, selection and admission of students under the purview of the IQA as factors contributing to academic quality. This would require that the Academic Handbook provide more specific information about each accredited programme and each specific college, and that the admission procedures be the responsibility of the academic teams (not mainly the Finance Department).

### **Conclusion**

Woolf meets Standard 5.

## Standard 6: Teaching Staff

*Teaching staff: entities shall assure the competence and effectiveness of their teaching staff.*

### Main Findings

The session with teachers affiliated with different Woolf colleges was very valuable and informative. Unfortunately, the panel was only able to interact with teachers from four of the 29 Woolf colleges. Those who attended the session were highly engaged with their college and openly shared information with the panel.

The meeting confirmed that Woolf's teachers are hired and directly involved with a college, not with Woolf. Woolf does not have teaching staff of its own. Teachers are selected by their college on the basis of criteria of their academic qualifications. All Faculty members must have a doctorate degree, which is however not a sufficient guarantee that they are trained teachers and know how to use teaching tools and strategies appropriate to non-face-to-face settings. Most of them are not full-time employees of their college, but teach or work at some other institution. Many teachers are professionals (instructors), who bring grass-root knowledge/experience; some are "antidotes to the boring teacher", are highly rated by students, and seem to significantly increase students' employability. The panel noted with interest that although Woolf has no teaching staff of its own, it is considering introducing Professorships (comparable to tenure, above the status of Faculty) allowed by Woolf (not by a college).

The panel found that the interviewed teachers have a high professional level and deep engagement. They have a good knowledge of the content they teach and are motivated by their teaching tasks.

Colleges are responsible for the monitoring and quality assurance of their teaching. The teachers told the panel that they do not have any meetings with other teachers from other Woolf colleges. All of them are officially members of Woolf's Faculty Council, but none of them has participated in any meeting, since this Council has not met for two years. The teachers interviewed stated that they appreciate the support received from their college, and confirmed that they do not receive any general or specific didactic training from Woolf. Some of them believed that their college was accredited by Woolf.

Woolf, as a collegiate higher education institution, does not have a systematic evaluation of teachers' teaching and research performance system. The panel also observed that there is no clear incentive and reward system at the corporate level.

Woolf's teaching model is online, and all lecturers deliver their teaching in the online mode. Teaching strategies are mainly based on synchronous sessions with students. Lecturers also include asynchronous group work by students. According to teachers, they closely monitor students' learning journeys and achievements. Although the panel appreciates that there are also essays and theses, it seems to the panel that a significant part of the assessment system is based on checking memorised knowledge (multiple-choice tests).

Woolf does not really have an educational model of its own. Teaching processes are the responsibility of each college and are based on each teacher's experience and motivation. At institutional level, Woolf has developed an extensive system of centralised control, based on the collection of factual and numerical data through the AMS system. The panel could, nonetheless, check that teachers may always propose changes to programmes and tend to apply their own teaching strategies, without seeking Woolf's prior green light. The AMS also includes a "red-flag procedure" that may be activated by teachers to protect their academic freedom.

With respect to research, Woolf claims 776 publications since its creation, but there is no evidence of their referencing; the panel found no Woolf researcher on Scopus (researchers publish under another institution's name). Yet, the panel has no doubt that some colleges are indeed doing cutting edge (applied) research, e.g., Deep Science, Retrobioscience or G-Cas' "Global Centre for Advanced Studies". The panel understands that Woolf has a plan for 2023-2026 encompassing all disciplines, fully respects researcher's property rights, helps them finding research grants, plans to create a dedicated office for the support of research, and plans to create its own publication facility (apparently under the name Woolf University Press).

Based on the documents and information collected during the visit, the panel observed that research at Woolf is mainly limited to the preparation of master theses, but also that the majority of Woolf's programmes have been research-intensive from the beginning (e.g., from the 90-ECTS Master in Humanities, 60 are research-based). Woolf offers three doctoral programmes (science, humanities, DBA). The panel was surprised to learn that Woolf had 49 PhD candidates in Humanities (an area that weighs just over 1% of its students) and only two in sciences (while sciences make up over 80% of the student population).

The panel found that most faculty members who conduct research in their field of expertise do not publish it in academic journals under Woolf's name; some do so under the name of their college, or under the name of another higher education institution that is their main affiliation.

### **Good Practice Identified**

None in particular.

## Recommendations for Improvement

- KR4: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, take steps for the development of a structured community of teachers, with some common features and policies across colleges, e.g., a common structure (including the proposed Professorship), some common activities for teacher training and development, a common system of incentives and rewards, including for research.
- KR5: Woolf should, within 18 months from the date of publication of this report, develop a comprehensive policy for the development of research, patents and publications under its name; this effort should include those of its colleges already involved in research and those who have the potential to join in. Some elements of such a policy have been announced (creation of a budget and a dedicated office to stimulate research, Woolf publishing, etc.), but they need to be integrated into a corporate development plan.

## Conclusion

Woolf requires improvement to meet Standard 6.

## Standard 7: Learning Resources and Student Support

*Learning resources and student support: entities shall have appropriate funding for their learning and teaching activities and sufficient learning resources to fully support the students' learning experiences.*

### Main Findings

With respect to learning resources, the panel could not really find out what procedures for their preparation and use are in place at the central and collegiate level. It seems that the decision about the learning resources to be used in each programme is actually taken at the college level under the responsibility of each teacher; the distant control by Woolf is via the AMS and consists mainly in checking the reality of the availability and use of such resources. The panel sees this as an acceptable model, since Woolf's online teaching is through colleges and mostly based on synchronous sessions where the role of learning materials is mainly to complement teachers' teaching.

In the interviews with students and teachers, the panel learnt that part of the teaching/learning was organised in the form of group work between students; such group sessions may be synchronous or asynchronous, but as far as the panel could investigate, group work is always organised at the college level, never at the inter-collegiate or corporate level.

The panel understands that Woolf's collegiate structure eases some cross-learning with students from other regions (e.g., in the MBA for Arts Innovation) and the mentoring of students by teachers (for readings) and by instructors (for business contacts).

With respect to student support, most of it is provided online by the colleges and the central administration of Woolf. All communication happens online; students usually address first the college administration for any support they need, but they can also ask for support through pop-up messages that appear on Woolf's website. According to the administrative staff with whom the panel met, they are nearly always in a position to reply to students' questions within less than 24 hours. Through Woolf's platform and the AMS system, Woolf can contact students at any time. In addition, students have the possibility to meet once per month with the Woolf central administration through the "Ask Me Anything" application. Students also use email, Slack and WhatsApp messages to communicate with teachers and administrators.

Academic support is provided by means of ongoing, one-on-one meetings between students and teachers, as well as through group meetings. Students are allowed to have a break when they have a busy agenda or don't feel ready to continue immediately, subject to Woolf's

approval of such requests. Woolf claims that, in this way, students benefit from the close attention that only small units/colleges can provide. On their side, teachers confirmed that working with small groups of students enables them to see how their students progress and help them to address whatever difficulties they may encounter throughout their studies.

There is formally a student representative on the QAETAC but, in the panel's opinion, students are not sufficiently involved in Woolf's academic and policy-making bodies, both at the level of their college and at Woolf. Woolf has no student union, but told the panel that it is considering establishing one in the next three years. The panel learnt from student interviewees that there is enough interaction with colleges, but they would favour the creation of an international, overarching student union linking students across the various countries and colleges.

As mentioned above, Woolf does not yet have an alumni association. Some colleges maintain a contact with their graduates, in order to assess their professional progress and/or to provide feedback for the revision of programmes or the introduction of new ones, but these processes seem to be mainly informal and not systematic: the involvement of graduates depends on each college, and there is currently no incentive from Woolf to increase and organise the interaction with graduates, particularly for designing and reviewing study programmes.

#### **Good Practice Identified**

None in particular.

#### **Recommendations for Improvement**

KR6: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, establish ways for the closer involvement of its students' and alumni in the quality assurance and policy-making bodies, both at the college and corporate level. This implies in particular that Woolf should establish an over-arching student union and an international alumni association.

#### **Conclusion**

Woolf requires improvement to meet Standard 7.

## Standard 8: Information Management

*Information management: entities shall ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.*

### Main Findings

Woolf has developed an extensive and complex monitoring system for its activities. The panel interviewed members of Woolf's administrative staff in charge of the AMS who reported that data for these activities is hosted on servers located in Malta. In various sessions the panel pointed out that the name of the system (*Accreditation Management System, AMS*) and of Woolf's team in charge of it (*Accreditation Team, AT*) is incorrect and confusing – in particular because it leads colleges to believe that they are being "accredited" by Woolf – rather than by the MFHEA.

The panel could verify that Woolf's management system is collecting extensive information about students and programmes. In the panel's view, it is basically a system for the monitoring of academic activities, programme compliance and students' information. The system allows students to access their personal and academic information and also provides a list of FAQs and an online communication system with their college, also accessible to Woolf's supervising staff.

The panel has no doubt that Woolf's management system constitutes the backbone of the institution, including its relationship with colleges and students. In line with its observations and recommendations under Standard 1, the panel considers that the system is technically and operationally very solid with respect to formal checking, but that Woolf may not be making the best possible use of the wealth of information available through it, in particular with respect to qualitative aspects (e.g., analysis of students' academic trajectories towards the ILOs, teachers' teaching and research performance, or the evolution of existing programmes).

### Good Practice Identified

None in particular.

### Recommendations for Improvement

KR7: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, enrich its information system by better collecting, producing and using qualitative indicators, whether as part of, or in addition to the AMS.

### Conclusion

Woolf requires improvement to meet Standard 8.

## Standard 9: Public Information

*Public information: entities shall publish information about their activities which is clear, accurate, objective, up to date and readily accessible.*

### Main Findings

Woolf does not have a marketing strategy in place, and there is no direct marketing of the programmes. As elaborated above, under Standard 5, students are mainly recruited from non-degree programmes of colleges who are then approached to see whether they wish to upgrade their degree. During the site visit, administrative staff members stated that references of current students and graduates are very important; therefore, until now, Woolf has not organised any information campaign, nor has it participated in any student fairs.

Woolf's website contains general information about its mission, organisational structure and academic members. The website also includes information on each college separately, the management of the colleges, faculty members, and the programmes they offer. Detailed information about each programme of every college is published, including an overview of the degree, the workload and respective number of ECTS (for the degree and each module separately), tiers, learning outcomes expressed in knowledge, skills and competencies, and templates of certificates awarded and diploma supplements.

Woolf has published several policies on its website, including the Quality Assurance Policy and the Research Strategy. The panel considers that several pieces of information are not easily accessible to external users or potential new students. Whereas the main webpage offers information about Woolf, colleges, and their degrees, the panel has found important information under the link Woolf Help Centre. The panel had difficulty locating this link on the main website and only found it through the links provided under the self-evaluation documentation. The Woolf Help Centre offers essential information for students, such as instructions on how to apply, how to write essays, information about ECTS, plagiarism, etc. This link also provides extensive information about those wishing to run a college, indicating the criteria for becoming part of Woolf.

The panel has noted that besides having descriptive information about Woolf and its colleges, the website lacks information about student life, current activities of faculty members, and possibly research activities that Woolf engages in. Considering that Woolf presents itself as an institution that aims to offer world-class education and encourages its faculty members to engage in ground breaking research, it would be beneficial for all stakeholders to reflect these engagements through public information.

During the site visit, the panel noted that students were satisfied with the level of information received from colleges and Woolf. According to them, Woolf's website is really full of resources. The panel learnt that there is no newsletter at Woolf's level; however, some students with whom the panel met stated that newsletters are distributed weekly at the college level.

### **Good Practice Identified**

None in particular.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

- KR8: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, check its website and make the necessary changes in order to make it more user-friendly to external users, and publishing the most relevant information and documents in well-visible sections of the website, making more room for news concerning colleges' and students' activities, and ensuring that all users, including colleges and their students and staff, understand the nature and importance of the MFHEA's accreditation.
- R4: The panel advises Woolf to pay more attention to the development of an institutional marketing strategy reaching well beyond the maintenance of its website, not least to build up a strong corporate image for Woolf as a collegiate higher education institution and enhance its Maltese roots and international dimensions. This would imply publishing, on a regular basis, a Woolf newsletter to be disseminated internally (colleges, students, teachers, staff) and to all main categories of external stakeholders.

### **Conclusion**

Woolf meets Standard 9.

## Standard 10: Ongoing Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes

*Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes: entities shall implement the 'Quality Cycle' by monitoring and periodically reviewing their programmes to ensure their continuing fitness for purpose.*

### Main Findings

A main feature of Woolf is that all academic activities are implemented by its 29 affiliated colleges. Colleges are responsible for their students and staff, including their teaching staff. As was said earlier in this report, the panel's opinion is that colleges and their teachers enjoy a significant level of freedom to decide and organise their academic programmes and their teaching, under the factual and quantitative (rather than qualitative) supervision by Woolf's quality assurance staff.

Hence, colleges play an important role in reviewing and continuously improving academic programmes. Teachers seem to be the main source of suggestions for programme improvement, and the panel heard some concern about the number of ongoing, not necessarily cohesive, incremental changes made in programmes. The panel also heard about modules being redeveloped in order to address previous gaps identified by students. The panel found little evidence of the involvement of external stakeholders and professionals in these review processes, but accepts that many teachers at Woolf colleges are closely involved in professional life. Also, the panel could not get clear information about the mechanisms leading to the systematic, overall revision and improvement of programmes; the number of revisions (thousands, it seems) suggests that revisions consist more of minor adjustments than in-depth reviews.

### Good Practice Identified

None in particular.

### Recommendations for Improvement

KR9: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, establish procedures for the regular, systematic and comprehensive review and improvement of all programmes and formally involve external stakeholders (as well as colleges and students) in this exercise.

### Conclusion

Woolf requires improvement to meet Standard 10.

## Standard 11: Cyclical External Quality Assurance

*Cyclical external quality assurance: entities should undergo an external quality assurance audit by, or with the approval of, the MFHEA on a cyclical basis, according to the MFHEA guidelines, once every five years.*

### Main Findings

Woolf has faithfully complied with this requirement and applied for the renewal of its licence before its expiration. The MFHEA's approval has been sought for any substantial change in existing programmes and for all new programmes.

The panel wondered whether the same applies for changes in the list of affiliate colleges, but could not find anything in Woolf's licence that would require the institution to systematically inform the MFHEA or seek the MFHEA's approval for the addition of new colleges. The most recently revised version of the special conditions, dated 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023, is equally silent about Woolf's affiliated colleges. While the panel expected more comprehensive information about the delivery of Woolf accredited programmes through 29 colleges, it accepts that this was not formally required before the audit visit.

The panel acknowledges Woolf's open cooperation for the present audit procedure, both before and during the audit visit. Nonetheless, it seems that colleges, external stakeholders, students and teachers had little or no involvement in the SAR preparation, a few aspects could have been better informed (e.g., with respect to colleges as was just mentioned, to the role of the "accreditation team", the actual evaluation of LOs without an assessment system geared towards it) and no visit of facilities could be organised in Malta.

As far as the panel knows, Woolf has not undergone any other external evaluation at the institutional or programme level (e.g., in management by EQUIS or AMBA, or in computer science by Euro-Inf).

### Good Practice Identified

None in particular.

### Recommendations for Improvement

Nil.

## Conclusion

Woolf meets Standard 11.

## Response by the Provider

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### Preamble

Woolf appreciates the External Quality Audit panel's thorough review and thoughtful recommendations. External quality assurance is essential to maintaining and enhancing academic standards, and we welcome the panel's evaluation of our institutional model, internal quality assurance system, and educational outcomes.

As a global collegiate higher education institution founded in 2018, Woolf continues to evolve, and we are pleased that the panel has recognized the strengths of our innovative approach to internal quality assurance. We welcome the opportunity to further refine our quality assurance framework, particularly in ways that enhance qualitative assessment and reinforce Woolf's commitment to academic excellence.

In response, we will systematically address each action point outlined in the report. These enhancements will further enrich the academic experience for Woolf students, reinforcing our commitment to student learning outcomes, the relevance of Woolf degrees in the workplace, and a balanced integration of technological innovation with established quality assurance methodologies in higher education. Additionally, we will continue expanding our research initiatives and strengthening our institutional frameworks, further reinforcing Woolf's position as a research-driven institution with a growing portfolio of independent, high-quality research and doctoral programs.

We also note the panel's comments regarding the addition of new colleges. Woolf's collegiate model, developed in consultation with MFHEA, has been designed to ensure rigorous institutional oversight while fostering academic diversity. The process for establishing new colleges has operated transparently within an MFHEA-approved framework since our founding, with MFHEA receiving periodic updates on college additions. In line with our commitment to transparency, Woolf publicly lists all colleges, along with their Deans and Academic Board members, on our website. We will reconfirm MFHEA's expectations on this matter to ensure continued alignment with established regulatory practices.

Woolf remains committed to continuously strengthening its internal quality assurance processes, including the enhancement of qualitative assessment methodologies and ongoing programme development cycles. These efforts build upon Woolf's existing framework, ensuring that all academic activities remain aligned with both institutional goals and external expectations.

We look forward to our continued collaboration with the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) and to demonstrating our ongoing dedication to meeting and exceeding established standards, always with the aim of delivering exceptional value to our students.

## Response to Key Recommendations and Recommendations Made by the Peer Review Panel

Action plan		
Recommendations	Actions to be taken to address the recommendations	Date for completion
Standard 1: Policy for Internal Quality Assurance		
None		
Standard 2: Institutional Probity		
<p>KR1: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, set medium-term priorities for its planned growth and international expansion, within the framework of a comprehensive strategy involving colleges, teachers/ researchers, students and employers and encompassing its teaching and research programmes. The institution's aspiration to become a university would need to be underpinned by more than just a set of specific planned measures (such as an increased role for the Faculty Council, the transformation from a commercial company to a foundation, the increase of students' participation, a separate "academic" budget or declarations about the development of research and publication).</p>	<p>To guide Woolf's medium-term growth and international expansion, Woolf will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish clear medium-term priorities for Woolf's academic development, research initiatives, and international expansion, ensuring alignment with institutional values and long-term sustainability, and continuity with Woolf's public 2023-2026 research plan (<a href="https://woolf.education/research">https://woolf.education/research</a>).</li> <li>2. Consult faculty, students, and industry partners to incorporate stakeholder perspectives into Woolf's growth strategy, including facilitation for an expanded role of the Faculty Council, student participation, and long-term institutional transformation.</li> <li>3. Explore potential structural adjustments, such as transitioning to a foundation model, establishing a dedicated academic budget, and enhancing research support and publication initiatives to align with Woolf's long-term vision.</li> <li>4. Strengthen student and faculty participation in institutional decision-making by defining structured feedback and consultation processes.</li> </ol>	February 15th, 2026

<p>R1: Woolf could start defining and building up the institutional identity it wants to promote, emphasising either the corporate centre or the plurality of its affiliated colleges and clarifying its role with respect to accreditation.</p>	<p>Woolf will strengthen its institutional identity as a global, collegiate higher education institution, continuing to strengthen and exercise its centralized control over its faculty, curriculum, and student progression while respecting the academic freedom of its Faculty members and the unique social character of its colleges. Woolf will provide rigorous quality assurance while ensuring clarity about Woolf's role as a licensed higher education institution under MFHEA regulation. To strengthen and clarify this institutional identity, Woolf will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop an internal communications plan to ensure that Woolf faculty members across all colleges correctly understand their relationship to Woolf, the situation of their college as an internal operational unit within Woolf, and Woolf's status as a licensed higher education institution subject to regulation by the MFHEA.</li> <li>2. Develop and implement a cohesive public identity strategy that reinforces Woolf's mission and values, while respecting the diverse social identities of its internal colleges and the academic freedom of its faculty.</li> </ol>	<p>August 15th, 2025</p>
<p>Standard 3: Design and Approval of Programmes</p>		
<p>KR2: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, upgrade its IQA system in order to include qualitative evaluations in a more systematic way, and should train its staff and colleges accordingly.</p>	<p>To strengthen its evaluation of student outcomes and enhance qualitative assessment, Woolf will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement a structured framework for student surveys and peer faculty observations, ensuring consistent qualitative evaluations across all colleges.</li> <li>2. Provide training sessions for faculty and instructors, incorporating best practices for qualitative evaluation</li> </ol>	<p>February 15th, 2026</p>

	<p>and feedback mechanisms.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Map all summative assignments to Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). Ensure all ILOs are systematically reviewed, verifying their alignment with teaching practices and assessment methods.</li> <li>4. Establish a structured process to analyze and report on student performance and competency development, enabling a clearer picture of student achievements across Woolf's internal collegiate divisions.</li> </ol>	
<p>R2: The panel recommends Woolf draw up and maintain a digital table showing which programmes are taught at each college, in order to identify possibilities for cross-college cooperation and mobility.</p>	<p>To improve transparency and cross-college collaboration, Woolf will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create and maintain a digital table of all programmes offered at each college.</li> <li>2. Use this table to identify opportunities for student mobility and academic collaboration across Woolf's internal colleges.</li> <li>3. Periodically update the programme map to reflect new offerings, changes, and emerging opportunities for intercollegiate engagement.</li> </ol>	<p>November 15th, 2025</p>
<p>Standard 4: Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment</p>		
<p>KR3: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, clearly define the arrangements and assessment methods for internships and include them in the Academic Handbook.</p>	<p>Woolf will formalize its internship structure and assessment methods by updating the Academic Handbook to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clear eligibility criteria for internships at different programme levels.</li> <li>2. An established placement process including selection, approval, and oversight.</li> <li>3. Clear roles and responsibilities for students, faculty advisors, and internship providers.</li> <li>4. Standardised internship</li> </ol>	<p>February 15th, 2026</p>

	<p>assessment methods, aligning grading methods with programme ILOs and professional skill development.</p>	
<p>Standard 5: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification</p>		
<p>R3: The panel invites Woolf to further develop its marketing and student recruitment policies, including the information, selection and admission of students under the purview of the IQA as factors contributing to academic quality. This would require that the Academic Handbook provide more specific information about each accredited programme and each specific college, and that the admission procedures be the responsibility of the academic teams (not mainly the Finance Department).</p>	<p>To strengthen the alignment between marketing, student recruitment, and academic quality, Woolf will consider the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure the online catalogue and Academic Handbook continue to make available detailed descriptions of each accredited programme, ensuring prospective students have access to comprehensive information.</li> <li>2. Presenting the value of the programme's learning outcomes more prominently in the academic catalogue, academic handbooks, and on Woolf's website to support informed student decision-making.</li> <li>3. Exploring ways to further communicate existing academic oversight of admissions, ensuring that admissions decisions continue to remain exclusively the outcome of academic processes defined in the QA Policy.</li> </ol> <p>Woolf confirms that admissions decisions have always been made by academic teams, with financial considerations playing no role in applicant selection. Woolf will ensure that this established practice is further clarified in policy documents and communication to avoid any potential misunderstanding.</p>	<p>November 15th, 2025</p>

Standard 6: Teaching Staff		
<p>KR4: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, take steps for the development of a structured community of teachers, with some common features and policies across colleges, e.g., a common structure (including the proposed Professorship), some common activities for teacher training and development, a common system of incentives and rewards, including for research.</p>	<p>To develop a structured faculty community across colleges, Woolf will implement the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explore expanding Woolf’s standardized academic titles to include, for example, named Professorships along with Assistant and Associate professorial titles, and expanded role expectations for staff members across all colleges, ensuring alignment with Woolf’s academic framework.</li> <li>2. Develop shared faculty training, including workshops, roundtables, and intercollegiate discussions, to improve teaching effectiveness and research collaboration.</li> <li>3. Consider introducing a system of faculty incentives, which may include research funding opportunities, non-monetary awards, and potential sabbaticals, to recognize excellence in teaching, research, and mentorship.</li> </ol>	<p>February 15th, 2026</p>
<p>KR5: Woolf should, within 18 months from the date of publication of this report, develop a comprehensive policy for the development of research, patents and publications under its name; this effort should include those of its colleges already involved in research and those who have the potential to join in. Some elements of such a policy have been announced (creation of a budget and a dedicated office to stimulate research, Woolf publishing, etc.), but they need to be integrated into a corporate development plan.</p>	<p>Woolf will expand its research policy in line with the 2023-2026 research theme and research budget allocation for the same set out in the 2023 Consolidated Financial Report, including developing support for publications, grant applications, and management of IP. This initiative will reinforce Woolf’s capacity to oversee doctoral-level research activities, ensuring alignment with international research expectations. To achieve this, Woolf will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investigate the provision of funding opportunities to support faculty-led research projects, including research sabbaticals.</li> <li>2. Develop clear guidelines on intellectual property rights and</li> </ol>	<p>August 15th, 2026</p>

	<p>patent ownership for research conducted under Woolf's name.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Facilitate collaborative research projects between Woolf's internal colleges to strengthen interdisciplinary scholarship.</li> <li>4. Create a centralized Research Office to provide funding guidance, compliance support, and opportunities for research dissemination.</li> <li>5. Establish a structured system for faculty and student research dissemination, supporting academic publishing and knowledge-sharing, including a Woolf press.</li> </ol>	
Standard 7: Learning Resources and Student Support		
<p>KR6: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, establish ways for the closer involvement of its students' and alumni in the quality assurance and policy-making bodies, both at the college and corporate level. This implies in particular that Woolf should establish an over-arching student union and an international alumni association.</p>	<p>Woolf will enhance student and alumni engagement in quality assurance and policy-making at both the college and corporate levels by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creating a representative student body with a formal role in policy consultation and quality assurance.</li> <li>2. Launching an alumni network to facilitate long-term engagement and structured feedback mechanisms.</li> <li>3. Ensuring alumni are formally included in structured review processes, alongside industry experts, faculty, and employers, to contribute to programme evaluation and development.</li> </ol>	February 15th, 2026
Standard 8: Information Management		
<p>KR7: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, enrich its information system by better collecting, producing and using qualitative indicators, whether as part of, or in addition to the AMS.</p>	<p>Woolf will enrich its information management system by improving the collection, analysis, and use of qualitative indicators. This will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthening the use of student surveys and peer teaching reviews</li> </ol>	February 15th, 2026

	<p>to provide qualitative insights into teaching effectiveness, learning resources, and faculty engagement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Utilizing feedback from student surveys, peer reviews, and faculty evaluations to inform programme reviews and academic quality improvements.</li> <li>3. Conducting graduate tracer studies &amp; industry analyses to assess the effectiveness of Woolf's programmes in supporting employability and career advancement, ensuring that programme design remains aligned with industry needs and student outcomes.</li> <li>4. Producing qualitative curriculum reports for all courses.</li> </ol>	
Standard 9: Public Information		
<p>KR8: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, check its website and make the necessary changes in order to make it more user-friendly to external users, and publishing the most relevant information and documents in well-visible sections of the website, making more room for news concerning colleges' and students' activities, and ensuring that all users, including colleges and their students and staff, understand the nature and importance of the MFHEA's accreditation.</p>	<p>Woolf will conduct a thorough review of its website to identify potential enhancements that improve accessibility and transparency for external users, students, and colleges. This review will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assessing how we might refine the website to improve user experience, navigation, and clarity, particularly for those unfamiliar with Woolf.</li> <li>2. Evaluating the clarity of published accreditation information to ensure all users, including colleges, students, and external stakeholders, fully understand the role and significance of MFHEA accreditation.</li> <li>3. Exploring the possibility of a dedicated section for essential academic and policy documents to improve accessibility for students and faculty.</li> <li>4. Examining how best to update and feature news sections that highlight</li> </ol>	<p>February 15th, 2026</p>

	colleges' and students' activities, research, and successes.	
R4: The panel advises Woolf to pay more attention to the development of an institutional marketing strategy reaching well beyond the maintenance of its website, not least to build up a strong corporate image for Woolf as a collegiate higher education institution and enhance its Maltese roots and international dimensions. This would imply publishing, on a regular basis, a Woolf newsletter to be disseminated internally (colleges, students, teachers, staff) and to all main categories of external stakeholders.	Woolf acknowledges the importance of a broader institutional marketing strategy to strengthen its corporate identity, international presence, and connection to its Maltese roots. As Woolf builds its marketing capacity, it will consider the following initiatives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appointing a Director of Marketing to strengthen communications.</li> <li>2. Assessing the potential for blogs, online seminars, or podcasts featuring intercollegiate faculty to disseminate academic expertise and research, reinforcing Woolf's identity as a global collegiate higher education institution.</li> <li>3. Reviewing the feasibility of a regular newsletter to enhance communication among colleges, students, faculty, and external stakeholders.</li> <li>4. Identifying opportunities for structured outreach with industry and academic partners to strengthen Woolf's visibility and positioning.</li> </ol>	February 15th, 2026
Standard 10: Ongoing Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes		
KR9: Woolf should, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, establish procedures for the regular, systematic and comprehensive review and improvement of all programmes and formally involve external stakeholders (as well as colleges and students) in this exercise.	Woolf will establish a structured process for the regular review and improvement of all programmes, ensuring the involvement of external stakeholders, colleges, and students. This will include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conducting structured programme reviews at defined intervals, ensuring curricula, Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), and module offerings remain relevant and aligned with academic and industry standards.</li> </ol>	February 15th, 2026

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Formally incorporating input from employers, alumni, faculty, and industry professionals to inform programme revisions and enhancements.</li> <li>3. Utilizing student surveys on teaching effectiveness, learning resources, and academic support to guide programme improvements.</li> <li>4. Establishing internal timelines for acting on review recommendations, ensuring necessary updates are effectively implemented and aligned with MFHEA requirements.</li> </ol>	
Standard 11: Cyclical External Quality Assurance		
None		

## Response to Mandatory Recommendations Made by the Peer Review Panel

Action Plan		
Mandatory recommendations	Actions to be taken to address the recommendations	Date for completion
Standard 1:		
<p>MR1: Woolf shall, within 3 months from the date of publication of this report, clarify urgently with the MFHEA the rules applying for the addition of new colleges offering an accredited programme: Is it at Woolf's discretion, or is there an obligation to inform the MFHEA or to seek its approval? This requires adjusting the college convention and supervision, changing the names of the AMS and AT, and working out a medium-term plan and a clear procedure for college acquisition and change.</p>	<p>To ensure regulatory clarity and continued alignment with MFHEA requirements, within three months, Woolf will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Request official re-confirmation regarding the existing MFHEA-approved process of notifying the MFHEA when Woolf forms a new college, requesting clarification on whether notification or approval is required when adding new colleges offering approved programmes under the approved new college creation process.</li> <li>2. Adjust Woolf's college convention and supervision policies based on MFHEA's response to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.</li> <li>3. Rename the Accreditation Management System (AMS) and Accreditation and Compliance Team (AT) to the Academic Management System (AMS) and Academic Administration &amp; Quality Assurance Team (AT) to eliminate potential confusion.</li> <li>4. Establish a clear procedure, in line with Woolf's QA Policy, for the formation of a new college or the change in a college, ensuring alignment with MFHEA guidance while maintaining operational flexibility.</li> </ol>	<p>May 15th, 2025</p>

<p>MR2: While acknowledging the strengths of Woolf's IQA, the panel requires that the institution shall, within 6 months from the date of publication of this report, better adjust it to its collegiate organisation, making it less dependent on technology alone (gearing it towards a more qualitative evaluation of the results actually achieved), broadening it in order to include aspects currently still missing (in particular the evaluation of teachers' teaching and research performance) and guaranteeing that programmes offered at more than one college are delivered at the same level of quality.</p>	<p>Woolf will refine its Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system to better align with its collegiate structure by incorporating qualitative evaluation mechanisms alongside its existing quantitative systems.</p> <p>To ensure continued quality assurance alignment with Woolf's collegiate model, within six months, Woolf will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a structured faculty observation framework and a standardized student feedback process to assess teaching effectiveness across colleges.</li> <li>2. Conduct periodic internal reviews to ensure high-quality student learning outcomes while maintaining the academic distinctiveness of individual colleges. Where discrepancies are identified, Woolf will implement targeted improvements to raise any potentially lagging programmes to the required level.</li> <li>3. Develop a structured framework for the annual review of research activity within colleges, deepening Woolf's mission of internal collegiate competition to enhance quality.</li> <li>4. Develop a plan to launch individualized competency reports based on students' demonstrated learning outcomes. These reports will provide insight into academic achievement and skill development across Woolf's internal colleges.</li> </ol>	<p>August, 15th, 2025</p>
<p>Standard 3:</p>		
<p>MR3: Woolf shall, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, define a medium-term plan for the development of its programmes, as a core component of its overall strategic plan. This requires in particular a cyclical</p>	<p>Woolf will establish a medium-term plan for programme development, ensuring cyclical reviews of Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and the involvement of external stakeholders, including employers. Within 12 months, Woolf will:</p>	<p>February 15th, 2026</p>

<p>review of the ILOs of all programmes and the formal involvement of external stakeholders, in particular employers.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a medium-term roadmap for the creation of new programmes and the enhancement of existing programmes.</li> <li>2. Develop a structured review process for all accredited programmes, incorporating feedback from employers, alumni, and industry representatives to ensure learning outcomes remain relevant and aligned with workforce and academic standards.</li> <li>3. Conduct graduate tracer studies and industry analysis to assess the effectiveness of Woolf's programmes in supporting employability and career advancement.</li> </ol>	
<p>Standard 4:</p>		
<p>MR4: Woolf shall, within 12 months from the date of publication of this report, establish regular student surveys for the evaluation of teaching, teachers, learning resources and administrative support. This should be done at defined stages, should be harmonised across colleges and programmes, and should include mechanisms to investigate student failure and dropouts.</p>	<p>To support Woolf's strategic goal of academic excellence, Woolf will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and deploy regular student surveys at key academic stages (e.g., end-of-course, graduation) to evaluate teaching effectiveness, faculty engagement, learning resources, and administrative support. Surveys will be harmonized across colleges and programmes to ensure consistent feedback collection.</li> <li>2. Develop key processes and policies for the investigation of student drop out, failures, as well as lowered engagement with curriculum and classes, allowing Woolf to take proactive steps to support student retention and success.</li> </ol>	<p>February 15th, 2026</p>

### Annex 1: Review Panel Bio Notes

In the setting up of the review panel for Woolf, the MFHEA sought to maintain a high degree of diligence in the process of selection of the members of the peer review panel. The panel sought to be composed of specialists in quality assurance to act as external peers, professionals and practitioners of quality assurance frameworks, as well as students who, prior to the audits, attended professional training seminars organised by the MFHEA.

The following bio notes present the profiles of the members of the peer review panel. The bio notes are correct as at the time of carrying out the QA audit (between 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024).

#### **Chair of Review Panel: Dr Guy Haug**

International expert in the design, development, evaluation and internationalisation of higher education policies, systems and institutions, mainly in Europe and the Americas. One of the main “architects” of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and designers of the ERASMUS and TEMPUS programmes. Main shaper and promoter of the “Bologna Process” for the compatibility and competitiveness of the EHEA.

#### **Peer reviewer: Prof Josep-Maria Duart**

Full professor of Educational Technology and Leadership at the Open University of Catalonia (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, UOC). President of EDEN, Europe’s leading network in digital education. Editor-in-chief of the International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education. Member of the “University of the Future Network”. Coordinator of Redunete, a network of Colombian universities for the use of technology in education.

#### **Student reviewer: Ms Furtuna Mehmeti**

PhD candidate. Works on the impact of accreditation processes on strategic planning at higher education institutions. Quality Assurance manager at AAB College in Kosovo. Ten years of experience in internal and external QA in higher education. Has drafted and reviewed QA legislation and policies and other regulations related to higher education in Kosovo.

## Annex 2: Agenda of the Onsite Visit

- Venue:** Provence meeting room, 7th floor, Grand Hotel Excelsior, Floriana, FRN1810, Malta
- Panel:** Dr Guy Haug (Chair of panel), Prof Josep-Maria Duart (Peer reviewer), Ms Furtuna Mehmeti (Student reviewer)
- Officers:** Ms Fiona McCowan (MFHEA officer), Mr Giacomo Annese (MFHEA officer), Ms Aurora Attard Coleiro (MFHEA officer)

### **Day 1 – Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

- 8:30 – 9:00 Panel and officers arrive at venue
- 9:00 – 10:30 Meeting with Woolf leadership to discuss business model
- 10:30- 10:40 Panel discussion
- 10:40 – 12:10 Meeting with Woolf leadership to discuss academic programmes and teaching model
- 12:10 – 13:10 Panel discussion and working lunch
- 13:10 – 14:40 Meeting with Woolf leadership to discuss quality assurance and management control system
- 14:40 – 14:50 Panel discussion
- 14:50 – 15:10 Why Malta?
- 15:10 – 16:20 Meeting with college representatives (complemented by a recorded interview of a college dean that was submitted shortly after the session)
- 16:20 – 17:00 Panel discussion and conclusions of Day 1

### **Day 2 – Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

- 8:30 – 9:00 Panel and officers arrive at venue
- 9:00 – 10:30 Meeting with staff involved in research function, including doctoral studies
- 10:30 – 10:40 Panel discussion
- 10:40 – 12:10 Meeting with Woolf students and recent graduates
- 12:10 – 13:10 Panel discussion and working lunch
- 13:10 – 14:40 Meeting with professionals (external stakeholders, mainly professional managers and informaticians)
- 14:40 – 14:50 Panel discussion
- 14:50 – 16:20 Meeting with Woolf teachers
- 16:20 – 17:00 Panel discussion and conclusions of Day 2

**Day 3 – Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

8:30 – 9:00 Panel and officers arrive at venue

9:00 – 10:00 Meeting with Woolf administrative staff in charge of QA, e-platform

10:00 – 10:15 Panel discussion (10 minutes)

10:15 – 11:15 Meeting with Woolf administrative staff in charge of marketing, student service

11:15 – 13:15 Closed panel meeting, including working lunch

13:15 – 14:00 Final meeting with leadership – Presentation of initial findings, next steps

*End of audit visit*



**Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA)**

Quality Assurance Office

J Abela Sclaro Street, Hamrun. HMR 1304, Malta.

**Email:** [qa@mfhea.mt](mailto:qa@mfhea.mt)

**Tel:** +356 2598 1489

**[www.mfhea.mt](http://www.mfhea.mt)**