



SHIFT ESG Certification for Higher Education Institutions

Qualitative Institutional Assessment Template



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SHIFT ESG Certification - Qualitative Institutional Assessment Template

This document provides the **Qualitative Institutional Assessment Template** for Higher Education Institutions participating in the SHIFT ESG Certification. It is intended to support institutions in reflecting on and documenting their current performance across the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) dimensions of the certification framework. Developed within the SHIFT project, the template helps institutions assess their strengths and areas for improvement, present supporting evidence, and prepare for the external evaluation process in a structured and consistent manner.

Purpose

This template supports universities in preparing a structured qualitative self-assessment against the SHIFT ESG standards. For each standard, institutions should provide a concise narrative, refer to the most relevant quantitative results, and identify priorities for improvement.

Short guide for completing the Template:

1. Review the quantitative survey results relevant to each standard.
2. Provide an evidence-based narrative in the template below.
3. Reference data, policies, initiatives, examples, or outcomes where relevant.
4. Summarise strengths, gaps, and next steps.
5. Use the quantitative survey results as evidence. Keep the narrative concise and, where useful, refer to specific data, examples, or documents.

Code	Dimension	Standard	Definition
E1	Environmental	Campus Operations	The university manages campus operations in a systematic and measurable way to reduce environmental impact and improve resource efficiency across land use, energy, waste, and water.
E2	Environmental	Research and Innovation	The university demonstrates that its research, innovation, and academic practices make a meaningful contribution to environmental sustainability and climate resilience.
E3	Environmental	Procurement	The university applies procurement practices in a systematic and measurable way to reduce

			environmental impact, promote responsible sourcing, and strengthen sustainability across its supply chains.
S1	Social	Equity and Access	The university promotes equity and access through inclusive policies, support structures, and measurable actions that widen participation and reduce barriers for diverse learners and staff.
S2	Social	Wellbeing	The university fosters the wellbeing of students and staff through supportive policies, services, and practices that promote physical, mental, and social health in a safe and inclusive environment.
S3	Social	Research and Innovation	The university ensures that its research, innovation, and academic practices contribute to social inclusion, societal wellbeing, and the creation of positive impact for communities and stakeholders.
G1	Governance	Management and Accountability	The university ensures effective management and accountability through transparent structures, clear responsibilities, and evidence-based processes that support the achievement of ESG objectives.
G2	Governance	Ethics and Integrity	The university upholds ethics and integrity through clear standards, responsible conduct, and institutional mechanisms that promote fairness, trust, and compliance in decision-making and practice.
G3	Governance	Digital Readiness and Security	The university strengthens digital readiness and security through robust systems, policies, and capacities that support secure, reliable, and responsible digital transformation.
G4	Governance	Stakeholder Engagement and Communication	The university engages stakeholders in a meaningful and transparent way and communicates its ESG priorities, actions, and progress clearly to internal and external audiences.

Institution profile

Institution name	.....
Country / location	.....
Contact person / unit	.....
Date of self-assessment	.....

E1 Campus Operations

Dimension	Environmental
Standard definition	The university manages campus operations in a systematic and measurable way to reduce environmental impact and improve resource efficiency across land use, energy, waste, and water.

1. Summary self-assessment	....................
2. Quantitative evidence to reference	...............
3. Qualitative evidence / examples	...............
4. Strengths, gaps, and next steps	....................

E2 Research and Innovation

Dimension	Environmental
Standard definition	The university demonstrates that its research, innovation, and academic practices make a meaningful contribution to environmental sustainability and climate resilience.

1. Summary self-assessment
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2. Quantitative evidence to reference
3. Qualitative evidence / examples
4. Strengths, gaps, and next steps

E3 Procurement

Dimension	Environmental
Standard definition	The university applies procurement practices in a systematic and measurable way to reduce environmental impact, promote responsible sourcing, and strengthen sustainability across its supply chains.

1. Summary self-assessment	....................
2. Quantitative evidence to reference	...............
3. Qualitative evidence / examples	...............
4. Strengths, gaps, and next steps	....................

S1 Equity and Access

Dimension	Social
Standard definition	The university promotes equity and access through inclusive policies, support structures, and measurable actions that widen participation and reduce barriers for diverse learners and staff.

1. Summary self-assessment
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2. Quantitative evidence to reference
3. Qualitative evidence / examples
4. Strengths, gaps, and next steps

S2 Wellbeing

Dimension	Social
Standard definition	The university fosters the wellbeing of students and staff through supportive policies, services, and practices that promote physical, mental, and social health in a safe and inclusive environment.

1. Summary self-assessment	.....
2. Quantitative evidence to reference	.....
3. Qualitative evidence / examples	.....
4. Strengths, gaps, and next steps	.....

S3 Research and Innovation

Dimension	Social
Standard definition	The university ensures that its research, innovation, and academic practices contribute to social inclusion, societal wellbeing, and the creation of positive impact for communities and stakeholders.

Template for completion

Use the quantitative survey results as evidence. Keep the narrative concise and, where useful, refer to specific data, examples, or documents.

1. Summary self-assessment	....................
2. Quantitative evidence to reference	...............
3. Qualitative evidence / examples	...............
4. Strengths, gaps, and next steps	....................

G1 Management and Accountability

Dimension	Governance
Standard definition	The university ensures effective management and accountability through transparent structures, clear responsibilities, and evidence-based processes that support the achievement of ESG objectives.

Template for completion

Use the quantitative survey results as evidence. Keep the narrative concise and, where useful, refer to specific data, examples, or documents.

1. Summary self-assessment	....................
2. Quantitative evidence to reference	...............
3. Qualitative evidence / examples	...............
4. Strengths, gaps, and next steps

G2 Ethics and Integrity

Dimension	Governance
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Standard definition	The university upholds ethics and integrity through clear standards, responsible conduct, and institutional mechanisms that promote fairness, trust, and compliance in decision-making and practice.
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Template for completion

Use the quantitative survey results as evidence. Keep the narrative concise and, where useful, refer to specific data, examples, or documents.

1. Summary self-assessment	....................
2. Quantitative evidence to reference	...............
3. Qualitative evidence / examples	....................
4. Strengths, gaps, and next steps	.........................

G3 Digital Readiness and Security

Dimension	Governance
Standard definition	The university strengthens digital readiness and security through robust systems, policies, and capacities that support secure, reliable, and responsible digital transformation.

Template for completion

Use the quantitative survey results as evidence. Keep the narrative concise and, where useful, refer to specific data, examples, or documents.

1. Summary self-assessment	....................
2. Quantitative evidence to reference	...............
3. Qualitative evidence / examples	....................
4. Strengths, gaps, and next steps	.........................

G4 Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

Dimension	Governance
Standard definition	The university engages stakeholders in a meaningful and transparent way and communicates its ESG priorities, actions, and progress clearly to internal and external audiences.

Template for completion

Use the quantitative survey results as evidence. Keep the narrative concise and, where useful, refer to specific data, examples, or documents.

1. Summary self-assessment	....................
2. Quantitative evidence to reference	....................
3. Qualitative evidence / examples	....................
4. Strengths, gaps, and next steps	....................

Annex: Optional evidence list

Institutions may attach or reference supporting evidence such as strategies, action plans, policies, dashboards, public reports, committee minutes, course descriptions, research outputs, or procurement guidelines.

Ref.	Document or evidence source	Related standard(s)
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