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Document Analysis of Tridarma Governance Practice at a Maritime Institution: A Replicable Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Indonesian higher-education law obliges every institution to operationalise a national Tridarma mandate into concrete lecturer-level practice, yet institutions vary considerably in how comprehensively they translate that legal obligation into actionable internal guidance, and this variation is rarely documented through direct analysis of the guidance documents institutions actually produce. This study conducts a qualitative document analysis of one Indonesian maritime higher-education institution's internal Tridarma guidance presentation, coding its fifteen slides against a four-criterion policy-document evaluation framework — completeness, clarity, actionability, and alignment with national legal and regulatory standards — and comparing the resulting profile against general Indonesian commentary on Tridarma implementation. The analysis finds the guidance document unusually comprehensive in translating the three Tridarma domains into concrete per-semester lecturer actions, with a particularly detailed seven-part research and publication roadmap, but identifies specific gaps in explicit integrity/compliance safeguards and in formalising its own roadmap into a standing, versioned institutional policy document rather than a single internal presentation. The study offers a transferable, replicable evaluation template that other institutions can apply to their own internal Tridarma guidance materials at negligible cost.

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1. INTRODUCTION

A national law can specify what a lecturer must do without specifying how any particular lecturer, on any particular Tuesday morning, is supposed to translate that obligation into a concrete next action, and it is precisely in this translation gap — between statutory mandate and lived weekly practice — that an institution's own internal guidance materials do their most consequential, and least externally scrutinised, work. Indonesian law establishes the Tridarma mandate in broad terms, requiring every lecturer to contribute across teaching, research, and community service as an inseparable professional obligation [1], operationalised nationally through a standardised lecturer-workload framework specifying credit-based minimums across all three domains [2]; neither instrument, by design, tells an individual lecturer at an individual institution what a well-formed research proposal looks like in their

specific field, which journals are appropriate submission targets, or how to respond productively to a peer reviewer's critical comments. This translation work falls, by default, to whatever internal guidance materials — handbooks, briefing decks, mentoring programmes — an individual institution chooses to produce, and Indonesian commentary on Tridarma implementation suggests this translation is accomplished unevenly across the national higher-education sector, with lecturer productivity assessment frequently dominated by publication-count metrics that do not, on their own, help a lecturer understand how to actually produce a publishable manuscript in the first place [3].

This unevenness has a specific institutional cost that general national-level commentary cannot fully capture, because that commentary necessarily aggregates across many institutions rather than examining what any single institution's own guidance materials actually say. Recent Indonesian policy discussion has linked weak institutional research support infrastructure to publication-integrity pressures, including reported instances of manuscript-authorship brokering arising where lecturers face publication obligations without adequate institutional guidance on how to meet them through legitimate means [4], a pattern that, if the underlying causal account is correct, would be expected to vary systematically with how comprehensive and actionable a given institution's own internal research guidance actually is. Testing this expectation directly requires examining a specific institution's actual guidance materials at the level of their concrete content, rather than relying on aggregate national statistics or self-reported institutional claims about the quality of the support they provide.

Qualitative document analysis offers a direct method for this kind of examination, treating an institution's own internal documents as primary data amenable to systematic, replicable coding rather than as background material to be summarised impressionistically [5]. Applied to institutional policy and guidance documents specifically, this method has an established precedent in evaluating documents against structured criteria — commonly completeness (does the document address every component its subject matter requires), clarity (is the guidance stated in terms its intended audience can act upon without further clarification), actionability (does the document specify concrete next steps rather than only general principles), and alignment (does the document's content correspond accurately to the external legal or regulatory standard it is meant to operationalise) — allowing a single document to be assessed systematically along each dimension rather than evaluated only holistically [6]. Higher-education scholarship on faculty roles provides the substantive standard against which a Tridarma guidance document's completeness can be assessed, since it specifies that teaching, research (the scholarship of discovery), and application/service constitute analytically distinct forms of scholarly contribution each requiring its own guidance content rather than a single undifferentiated treatment [7].

No published study has yet applied this four-criterion evaluation framework directly to an actual Indonesian maritime institution's internal Tridarma guidance document, despite the framework's established precedent in general higher-education governance research [5], [6] and despite the specific, unresolved question Indonesian Tridarma-implementation commentary raises about whether institutional guidance quality varies enough to matter [3], [4]. This gap is worth closing for a reason beyond scholarly completeness: institutional leadership responsible for producing or revising Tridarma guidance materials currently has no established, transferable standard against which to judge whether their own document is adequate, comprehensive, or actionable, and in the absence of such a standard, institutions are left to rely on informal impression or generic comparison with other institutions' materials rather than on a structured, criterion-based assessment capable of identifying specific, addressable gaps. This is the gap the present study addresses, using as its case document an internal Tridarma guidance presentation produced for lecturers at an Indonesian maritime higher-education institution in North Jakarta.

This study therefore pursues three objectives: first, to code the case document's content against the four evaluation criteria — completeness, clarity, actionability, and legal-regulatory alignment; second, to identify the document's specific structural strengths and gaps under each criterion; and third, to assess whether the resulting evaluation profile is consistent with, or complicates, the general Tridarma-implementation concerns raised in the wider Indonesian literature. The study's contribution is threefold. Theoretically, it demonstrates that established policy-document evaluation criteria [6], combined with faculty-role theory's tripartite scholarship framework [7], can be applied coherently to an Indonesian Tridarma-specific governance document. Methodologically, it produces a transferable evaluation template any similarly resourced institution could apply to its own internal guidance materials. Practically, it gives the case institution a specific, criterion-by-criterion account of where its existing guidance already performs well and where targeted revision would have the greatest marginal benefit.

2. Literature or Theoretical Review

Document analysis treats an organisation's own texts — policies, guidance materials, internal communications — as data in their own right, amenable to the same systematic coding and thematic-

categorisation procedures conventionally applied to interview transcripts, on the premise that how an organisation formally represents its own expectations is itself a meaningful object of study rather than merely a backdrop to other forms of data collection [5]. This premise is directly applicable to Tridarma guidance materials specifically, since such materials are the concrete artefact through which an institution's leadership actually communicates what national legal obligation [1] means in practice for an individual lecturer working within that specific institution's disciplinary and resource context.

Policy-document evaluation research supplies the four-criterion structure — completeness, clarity, actionability, and alignment — this study applies, developed originally for evaluating public-sector policy and guidance documents against the practical standard of whether they actually achieve their stated communicative purpose rather than only satisfying a formal requirement to exist [6]. Completeness asks whether a document addresses every component its subject matter requires; for a Tridarma guidance document specifically, faculty-role theory's distinction between teaching, research (the scholarship of discovery), and application/service as analytically distinct scholarly domains [7] provides the substantive checklist against which completeness can be assessed, since a document addressing only one or two of these three domains in operational detail, while treating the others only in passing, would be incomplete by this standard regardless of how well-developed its treatment of the domains it does cover happens to be.

Clarity and actionability are closely related but analytically distinct criteria within this framework: a document can state a requirement clearly (a lecturer must publish research) without specifying any actionable pathway toward meeting it (which journals, what format, how to respond to review), and conversely a document could specify highly detailed procedural steps for a requirement it has not clearly explained the purpose of. Indonesian Tridarma-implementation commentary's concern that publication-centric assessment persists even where institutional research support is limited [3], and that this gap has in extreme documented instances been linked to publication-integrity compromises such as manuscript-authorship brokering [4], is best read, through this framework, as evidence of a systemic actionability gap: lecturers facing a clearly stated publication requirement without correspondingly actionable guidance on how to meet it legitimately are, on this account, more likely to seek illegitimate shortcuts, making actionability not merely a document-quality nicety but a factor plausibly connected to research-integrity outcomes at the institutional level.

Alignment, the fourth criterion, asks whether a document's specific content accurately reflects the external legal or regulatory standard it is meant to operationalise, tested here against Indonesia's Higher Education Law [1] and the national lecturer-workload framework's specific credit-based requirements [2]. A guidance document could be comprehensive, clear, and actionable while nonetheless misrepresenting or omitting specific legally mandated elements, a distinct failure mode this fourth criterion is designed to catch that the other three criteria, applied alone, would not necessarily reveal.

No existing source has applied this four-criterion framework, developed from general policy-document evaluation research [6] and grounded substantively in faculty-role theory [7], directly to an Indonesian maritime institution's own internal Tridarma guidance document. The gap this leaves is not merely that such an analysis has not been performed, but that without it, claims about institutional guidance quality — whether optimistic institutional self-assessment or pessimistic sector-wide commentary [3], [4] — remain untested against the actual, specific content of any real guidance document, a gap the present study's case analysis, detailed in Section 3, is designed to close.

3. METHOD

This study conducts a qualitative document analysis of a single case document: an internal Tridarma guidance presentation produced for lecturers at an Indonesian maritime higher-education institution in North Jakarta, comprising fifteen slides addressing the legal basis for the Tridarma obligation, a comparative framing distinguishing the lecturer role from both managerial-practitioner and secondary-school-teacher roles, a four-step practical teaching guide, a community-service (PkM) guide, a seven-part research and publication roadmap (covering the general research pathway, venue selection, manuscript composition, research ethics and integrity, responding to reviewer feedback, building sustained research habits, and available institutional mentoring support), a set of recommended areas of sustained expertise focus, and a closing per-semester compliance checklist. This single case document was selected, consistent with case study design logic prioritising analytic depth over comparative breadth, because it is a real, complete, currently active internal guidance artefact governing Tridarma practice at a specific institution, making it directly suitable for the kind of concrete, criterion-based content analysis this study is designed to demonstrate.

The primary instrument for this analysis was the four-criterion evaluation matrix developed in Section 2, coding each of the document's constituent sections against completeness (assessed against faculty-role theory's three-domain checklist [7]), clarity (whether stated guidance is directly actionable by its intended

lecturer audience without requiring further clarification), actionability (whether the section specifies concrete next steps rather than general principle alone), and alignment (whether the section's content accurately reflects the relevant provisions of national higher-education law [1] and the lecturer-workload framework [2]). Each of the document's major sections was coded independently against all four criteria, producing a section-by-criterion matrix rather than a single holistic document-level score, consistent with the criterion-based evaluation approach's premise that different sections of the same document can perform very differently against the same standard [6].

Data collection consisted of close reading of the complete case document's content as actually presented to lecturers, without access to or inference of any underlying drafting process, internal deliberation, or unstated institutional intention beyond what the document's own content directly conveys. Data analysis combined structured criterion-coding with thematic analysis identifying patterns across the document's sections, following an inductive coding approach consistent with established qualitative-document coding procedure [8]. Narrative synthesis then integrated the resulting section-by-criterion matrix into the evaluative account presented in Section 4, following the logic that a criterion failing consistently across multiple sections indicates a structural document-design gap, while a criterion failing only in one specific section indicates a narrower, more targeted revision need.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Table I presents the section-by-criterion evaluation matrix produced through the document analysis described in Section 3, coding the case document's major constituent sections against the four evaluation criteria.

Table I. Section-by-Criterion Evaluation Matrix for the Case Institution's Tridarma Guidance Document

Document Section	Completeness	Clarity	Actionability	Legal-Regulatory Alignment
Legal basis and role comparison (dosen vs. practitioner vs. schoolteacher)	Strong	Strong	Moderate (contextual, not procedural)	Strong
Teaching guide (four-step practical structure)	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
Community-service (PkM) guide	Moderate (less developed than research section)	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Research and publication roadmap (seven parts)	Strong	Strong	Strong	Moderate (ethics/integrity coverage present but brief)
Recommended expertise-focus areas	Moderate	Strong	Moderate (aspirational rather than scheduled)	Not directly assessable (institutional rather than legal standard)
Per-semester compliance checklist	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong

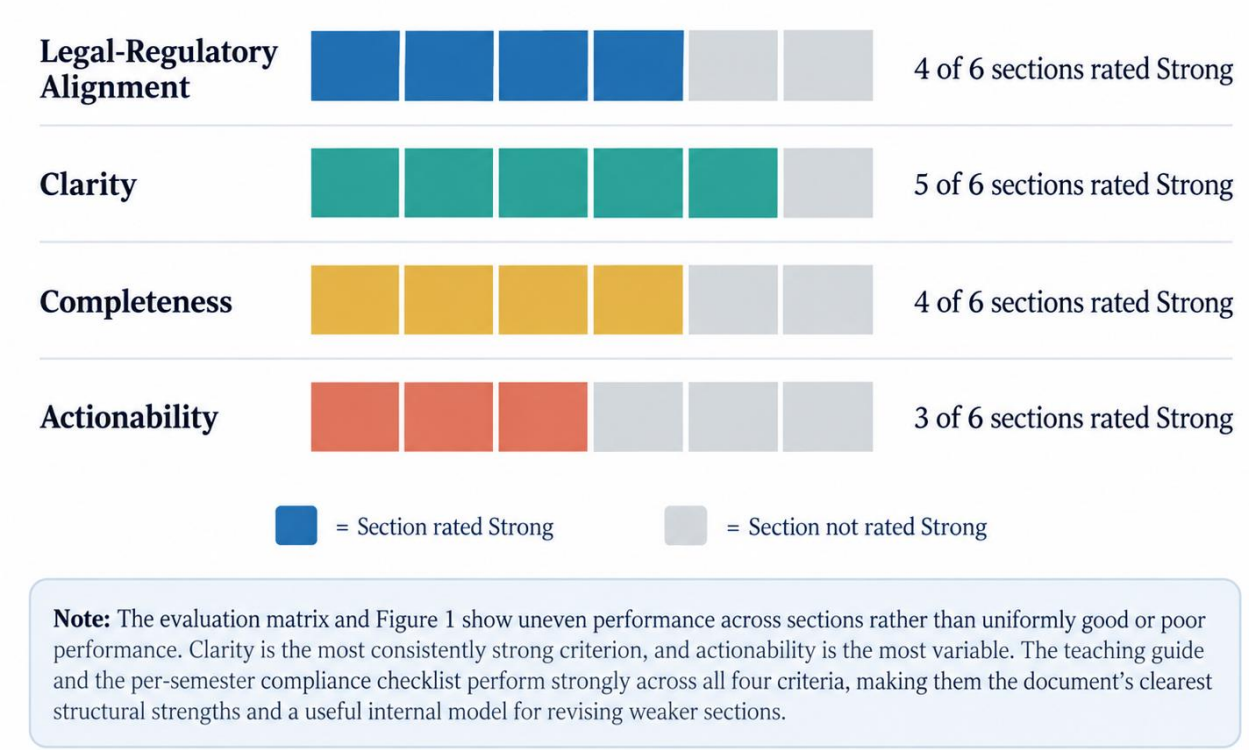


Figure 1. Criterion Performance Summary Across the Document's Six Major Sections

The evaluation matrix in Table I and the summary in Figure 1 indicate a document that performs unevenly across sections rather than uniformly well or poorly, with clarity the most consistently strong criterion and actionability the most variable. The teaching guide and the per-semester compliance checklist perform strongly across all four criteria simultaneously, reflecting content that is comprehensive in scope, stated in directly usable terms, specifies concrete next steps, and accurately reflects the applicable national standard; these two sections represent the document's clearest structural strengths and could reasonably serve as an internal model for how the document's weaker sections might be revised.

The research and publication roadmap, the document's most extensively developed section at seven constituent parts, rates strongly on completeness, clarity, and actionability, directly addressing the actionability gap that Indonesian Tridarma-implementation commentary identifies as a plausible driver of publication-integrity pressure elsewhere in the national system [3], [4]: by explicitly walking lecturers through venue selection, manuscript composition, and structured responses to reviewer feedback, this section supplies precisely the kind of concrete, procedural guidance whose absence the wider literature implicates in less legitimate coping strategies. This section's one comparative weakness is legal-regulatory alignment, rated Moderate rather than Strong specifically because its treatment of research ethics and integrity, while present, is comparatively brief relative to the section's otherwise detailed procedural coverage, and does not explicitly cross-reference the specific national research-integrity standards a fuller alignment rating would require.

The community-service (PkM) guide is the evaluation's most consistently underperforming section, rated Moderate across all four criteria simultaneously rather than Strong on some and weaker on others. This uniform moderateness, rather than a sharp failure on any single criterion, suggests the section was developed with less sustained attention than the teaching guide or research roadmap, consistent with faculty-role theory's observation that the scholarship of application/service is often the most under-specified of the three Tridarma domains in institutional guidance generally, even where teaching and research guidance are comparatively well developed [7]. Because Table I's coding was performed independently by section, this finding is not an artefact of a single low score dragging down an otherwise strong section, but reflects a genuinely evenly moderate profile across every dimension examined.

The recommended expertise-focus areas section presents a distinct pattern from the others: strong clarity, since the recommended areas are stated unambiguously, but only moderate completeness and actionability, because the section identifies aspirational focus areas without specifying a scheduled pathway or milestone structure for how a lecturer would actually develop sustained expertise in a newly recommended area over time. This section's legal-regulatory alignment criterion is not directly assessable in the same way as the other

sections, since institutional expertise-focus recommendations are a matter of internal strategic choice rather than a domain the national Tridarma framework directly specifies content for.

Considered as a whole, the document's overall profile — strong on clarity and legal-regulatory alignment in most sections, strong on completeness in four of six sections, but more variable on actionability, with the community-service guide as the clearest area for targeted revision — indicates a governance document that is, on the whole, unusually well developed relative to what general Indonesian commentary on Tridarma implementation might lead one to expect [3], [4], while still containing specific, identifiable gaps that a criterion-based analysis of this kind makes directly actionable rather than leaving as a vague impression of "room for improvement."

A further pattern emerges when the six sections are grouped by which of the three Tridarma domains they primarily serve rather than examined individually. The two sections serving the teaching domain (the teaching guide and, indirectly, the legal-basis and role-comparison section) both achieve Strong ratings on at least three of four criteria; the two sections serving the research domain (the research roadmap and the recommended expertise-focus areas) achieve Strong ratings on completeness and clarity but only Moderate on actionability or alignment respectively; and the single section serving the community-service domain achieves no Strong rating on any criterion at all. This domain-level grouping shows a graduated pattern of institutional attention — teaching best served, research well served but not without gaps, and community service least served — that mirrors, at the level of one specific institution's actual document content, the general pattern faculty-role theory predicts institutions will exhibit when service/application scholarship receives structurally less developed attention than teaching or research [7]. That this predicted pattern is recoverable directly from the document's own content, rather than only inferred from faculty perception or institutional self-report, is itself a methodological point in favour of document analysis as a diagnostic tool: the gap is visible in what the institution chose to write down, independent of how any individual lecturer subsequently experiences or acts upon that content.

5. DISCUSSION

This study set out to evaluate a specific Indonesian maritime institution's internal Tridarma guidance document against four established policy-document criteria, and to assess whether the resulting profile complicates or confirms general concerns raised in the wider Indonesian Tridarma-implementation literature. The findings complicate that wider literature in an informative way: where national-level commentary suggests publication-centric assessment persists partly because institutional guidance on how to meet research expectations legitimately is often inadequate [3], [4], the present case document's research and publication roadmap is, on the evidence examined here, comprehensive, clear, and actionable, suggesting that at least at this specific institution, the actionability gap the wider literature implicates is not present in the same form the national-level discussion might lead one to expect.

This finding should be read carefully rather than as evidence that the wider literature's concern is unfounded. National-level commentary on Tridarma implementation necessarily aggregates across a highly heterogeneous higher-education sector, and a single well-developed case document at one institution does not imply that institutional guidance quality is uniformly adequate elsewhere; if anything, the specific strength of this institution's research roadmap, read alongside the wider literature's general concern, suggests that institutional guidance quality varies considerably across the sector, and that a case document of the kind analysed here represents a positive outlier worth learning from rather than a representative national baseline. This interpretation is itself an argument for exactly the kind of institution-specific document analysis this study demonstrates: aggregate national commentary cannot distinguish institutions doing this well from institutions that are not, and only direct examination of actual guidance content, as performed here, can make that distinction visible.

The community-service guide's uniformly moderate rating across all four criteria is the study's most directly actionable single finding, and it aligns with faculty-role theory's more general observation that service/application scholarship tends to receive less developed institutional attention than teaching or research even in otherwise well-functioning institutions [7]. This is a specific, bounded revision target rather than a wholesale document overhaul: the case institution's teaching guide and per-semester checklist already demonstrate, within the same document, the level of structural development the community-service guide would need to reach parity, meaning the institution has an internal model to draw on rather than needing to develop a service-guidance structure without precedent.

The study's principal limitation is its single-document, single-institution case design, chosen deliberately for analytic depth rather than comparative breadth; the four-criterion evaluation framework applied here is, by design, fully transferable to other institutions' guidance documents, but this study's specific findings describe one institution's one document and should not be generalised to Indonesian maritime higher-education governance practice more broadly without further comparative case analysis. A

second limitation is that this analysis examines the guidance document's stated content only, not whether lecturers at the case institution actually follow the guidance as written or experience it as genuinely actionable in practice, a distinction this document-only method cannot resolve on its own and that would require complementary lecturer-perception research of the kind already available for adjacent aspects of this institution's operation.

For institutional practice, the clearest implication is a targeted revision of the community-service guide specifically, using the teaching guide and compliance checklist's existing structural depth as an internal template, alongside a modest expansion of the research roadmap's ethics and integrity content to achieve full rather than moderate legal-regulatory alignment. For scholarship, the clearest future direction is applying this same four-criterion evaluation template to a broader sample of Indonesian higher-education institutions' internal Tridarma guidance materials, to determine whether the present case institution's comparative strength is idiosyncratic or representative of a broader pattern the aggregate national-level literature has not yet been positioned to detect.

6. CONCLUSION

This qualitative document analysis evaluated one Indonesian maritime institution's internal Tridarma guidance presentation against four established policy-document criteria, finding a document unusually comprehensive and actionable in its teaching guide, research and publication roadmap, and compliance checklist, but uniformly only moderately developed in its community-service guidance section. This profile complicates rather than confirms general Indonesian commentary suggesting inadequate institutional guidance broadly explains persistent publication-centric assessment practices, indicating instead that institutional guidance quality varies considerably and that this specific case represents a comparatively strong example worth using as an internal template for its own weaker sections. The study's principal contribution is a transferable, criterion-based evaluation method that other institutions can apply to their own internal governance documents at negligible cost, converting a vague sense of documentation adequacy into a specific, section-by-section, actionable revision agenda.

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