



# QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDELINE

Mitrovica | 2024

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

<b>UIBM</b>	University “Isa Boletini” in Mitrovica
<b>CCQAE</b>	Central Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation
<b>QAO</b>	Quality Assurance Office
<b>KAA</b>	Kosovo Accreditation Agency
<b>AU</b>	Academic Unit
<b>NQF</b>	National Qualifications Framework
<b>EQF</b>	European Qualifications Framework
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Education Institutions

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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The Public University of Mitrovica was established by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo on 06.03.2013, while the decision was ratified by the Assembly of Kosovo on 31 May 2013. Based on the Provisional Statute, approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, within the University “Isa Boletini” in Mitrovica (UIBM) there are six faculties: Faculty of Geosciences (FGS), Faculty of Food Technology (FFT), Faculty of Mechanical and Computer Engineering (FMCE), Faculty of Law (FL), Faculty of Economics (FE) and Faculty of Education (FE).

Within these faculties, the total number of accredited programs at UIBM until September 2021 is 18 programs within two levels: Bachelor and Master. The first programs accredited by KAA are: the Faculty of Geosciences and Technology, as well as the Faculty of Applied Technical Sciences in 2012, which have been part of the University of Prishtina. In 2014, we obtained institutional accreditation, where the University of Mitrovica was accredited with 23 programs within 6 faculties. Then, in 2017, the University of Mitrovica with the Decision Ref. No.: 535/17 dated 6.7.2017, was re-accredited at the institutional level for the period of one year, 1 October 2017 - 30 September 2018, and 11 programs were re-accredited. Based on the recent accreditation decisions, a total of 17 Master's and Bachelor's programs are accredited at the UIBM.

### 1.1. Purpose of the guidelines

The aim of the Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines is to establish an effective structure that guarantees the ongoing improvement of academic quality and institutional effectiveness within the university. Through QA Guidelines we aim to:

- ✓ **Promote Excellence in Education:** By establishing precise requirements and criteria for teaching, learning, and evaluation, the guidelines seek to promote an excellence-focused culture. This guarantees that all curricula are created and taught in accordance with the strictest standards of education.

- ✓ **Encourage Institutional Accountability:** These standards assist guarantee that the university continues to be accountable to its stakeholders, which include students, faculty, staff, and external accrediting agencies, by offering an organized approach to quality assurance.
- ✓ **Encourage Continuous Improvement:** The guidelines support a continuous process of self-reflection evaluation, and improvement. The institution can recognize opportunities for development and adjust to evolving difficulties and demands in education by putting in place regular reviews and feedback systems.
- ✓ **Improve Student Learning Outcomes:** In the end, these guidelines' main goal is to enhance students' learning outcomes and experiences. The institution seeks to give students the information, abilities, and skills necessary for success by providing high-quality instruction and support services.
- ✓ **Integrate with Institutional Goals:** The requirements are made to be in line with the purpose and strategic goals of the university, guaranteeing that all quality assurance initiatives support the institution's overall vision and objectives.
- ✓ **Promote Stakeholder Engagement:** The guidelines encourage students, staff, teachers, and external stakeholders to actively participate in the quality assurance process. A sense of ownership and dedication to quality improvement are fostered by this collaborative approach, which guarantees that a variety of viewpoints are taken into account.

The university underlines its dedication to upholding a high standard of education and operational excellence by developing these QA Guidelines, which will eventually improve the overall educational experience for every stakeholder involved.

## **1.2. The legal basis on which UIBM bases its quality assurance process:**

UIBM bases its quality assurance process on its Statute, the Law on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo, the Regulation on Quality Assurance and Evaluation, and the Instructions issued by KAA. In addition, UIBM takes as a key reference the NQF, EQF, guidelines provided for

by ENQA, as well as the Bologna process, according to which:

- a) HEIs should have policies and procedures in place for quality assurance and standards for programs offered and diplomas awarded through a continuous quality improvement process.
- b) Institutions should have formal structures for periodic evaluation of their programs.
- c) Students should be graded according to criteria and procedures applied consistently.
- d) Institutions should provide qualified and competent staff for the subjects and they should be accessible during the evaluation process and should be included in the comments on evaluation.
- e) Institutions should provide adequate resources and support to students for each program.
- f) Institutions must ensure that they collect, analyze and use relevant information for effective management.
- g) Institutions should regularly publish objective information on programs and diplomas.

### **1.3. Principles and values on which quality at UIBM is based**

Quality assurance at UIBM is based on principles and values such as:

- a) Responsibility;
- b) Transparency;
- c) Accountability;
- d) Academic integrity;
- e) Continuous improvement;
- f) Inclusiveness.

The notion of quality culture is understood as consisting of two separate groups of elements: "shared values, beliefs, expectations and commitment towards quality" and "a structural/managerial element with defined processes that enhance quality and aim at coordinating efforts" (EUA, 2006). As we can see, many elements are similar to an organization's cultural approach.

Quality culture is a complex structure that encompasses all internal actors and many external actors. The most important parts in the whole process are communication, trust and participation - the main elements of the educational process (formal or informal). Building such a culture requires many years of work and great commitment from everyone.

The quality culture at UIBM dates back to the last century, because the foundations of higher education studies in Mitrovica were laid with the opening of the Higher Technical School in 1961. In 1970 the Departments of Mining, Technology and Metallurgy were opened within the Technical Faculty, initially in Mitrovica in the academic year 1970/71, and then continued in Prishtina until the establishment of the Faculty of Mining and Metallurgy in Mitrovica in 1974. The Faculty of Mining and Metallurgy in Mitrovica was established on the basis of the Law on the Establishment of the Faculty of Mining and Metallurgy adopted by the Kosovo Assembly on 22 July 1974. In the year of the establishment of this institution, studies were offered in the following departments: Mining, Technology and Metallurgy, while in the academic year 1980/81 the Department of Geology was opened, as well. The establishment of the Faculty of Mining and Metallurgy bore immense significance for the whole of Kosovo. It was the Trepça Mineral-Metallurgical Complex that needed great engineering cadres from the Faculty of Mining and Metallurgy. The cadres graduating from the Faculty of Mining and Metallurgy and the Higher Technical School were worthily placed in the Kosovo Power Plant and in the entire industry and economy of Kosovo. Based on these faculties and based on the tradition of over 60 years of higher education in Mitrovica, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo established the Public University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica on 6 March 2013". Quality culture is a component that incorporates all the principles within it. The quality culture at UIBM is dependent on external and internal quality assurance processes. Quality assurance at UIBM is not a formal process that begins and ends with the re/accreditation process carried out by the KAA, but it is a continuous process that is part of the institution's daily planning and

management. During the last years, a genuine cooperation has been achieved between the rectorate, deanships, academic staff, students, administration and other relevant external parties. This cooperation is aimed at raising the awareness of the academic community regarding the responsibility that everyone has in terms of the continuous improvement of the quality of the study programs, as well as the opportunity that everyone has to report the deficiencies that are identified during the provision of the study programs.



## 2. QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

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The University “Isa Boletini” in Mitrovica has a number of mechanisms and instruments that play a very important role in the quality assurance process.

At UIBM, the internal quality assurance as mentioned above is conducted by several mechanisms and includes a wide range of stakeholders. Internal quality assurance at UIBM provides for the involvement of all members in taking responsibility for the procedures and results of the quality assurance system, as follows:

***The Governing Council*** is responsible for the integration of quality assurance results into the institution's policy-making and strategic planning.

***The Senate*** is responsible for approving internal quality assurance regulations and ensuring that each study program is subject to regular quality evaluation prior to approval.

***The Rector*** is responsible for providing sufficient resources for the effective operation of quality assurance procedures. The Rector ensures that the quality assurance functions are fully integrated into the daily and regular management of the institution.

***Vice-rectors*** with assigned duties and responsibilities based on the UIBM statute, namely Article 35.

***Deans*** are responsible for the implementation of the quality assurance system at the operational level and for each phase of the implementation of the study program plan.

The vice-deans for quality and international cooperation deal with the promotion of best quality practices and ensuring their implementation at the academic unit level.

***Vice-deans for Quality*** deal with the promotion of best quality practices and ensuring their implementation at the academic unit level.

***Quality Assurance Coordinator*** helps in the organization of internal and external evaluation

processes, including coordination of self-evaluation reports, organization of external evaluation visits by international experts, analysis and comparison of external evaluation reports by international experts, etc.

**Academic staff** ensures that quality assurance policies are reflected in their every activity in relation to students and their independent scientific work.

**Administrative staff** supports every member of the academic community to achieve the institutional objectives and to widely disseminate the quality culture.

**Central Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation** designs and develops quality policies and procedures at the institution level and promotes the establishing of a quality culture. **Quality Assurance Office** implements strategic orientations, policies, and quality procedures at every level and in every field of the institution.

At UIBM, the main bodies that manage the quality assurance process are:

- a) Central Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation (CCQAE);
- b) Quality Assurance Office (QAO);
- c) Quality Coordinators in academic units.

## **2.2. Central Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation (CCQAE)**

CCQAE is the main body in UIBM which deals with the quality assurance process. This commission is an advisory body to the UIBM Senate on quality issues. CCQAE members are approved by the UIBM Senate for a 4-year term. After the end of this term, at least 1/3 of the members of the CCQAE are expected to continue to be part of it in order to ensure continuity in the work of the Commission.

CCQAE in its composition provides a comprehensive inclusion as follows:

- a) Vice rector for quality (ex-officio);
- b) Official from the quality assurance office (ex-officio);
- c) Up to 6 representatives of academic staff from different academic units;
- d) 2 student representatives.

The CCQAE roles and responsibilities include the:

- a) review the regulation on quality assurance and evaluation;
- b) review the quality assurance guidelines;
- c) review the package of evaluation instruments according to the proposals of the academic units;
- d) review the document of performance indicators;
- e) review the reports of the package of evaluation instruments;
- f) review the self-assessment reports for institutional and program accreditation;
- g) review improvement plans from institutional reaccreditation and programs in relation to the level of addressing the issues raised by KAA;
- h) draft and review the regulation on the preparation procedures for institutional and study programs re/accreditation at UIBM.

The Quality Assurance Commission reports on its work to the Senate.

### **2.3. Quality Assurance Office (QAO)**

The UIBM quality assurance office is an independent office that reports directly to the UIBM Rector only. This office is committed to raising the quality of UIBM by implementing the entire institutional policy. The office consists of quality officials, recruited through a public competition. Quality officials at QAO are not part of UIBM's academic staff. The Office takes care of quality measurement, through all instruments of the instrument package at UIBM. The Office drafts reports with findings and recommendations for each questionnaire developed, and sends it to the Rector of UIBM. In addition, the office sends the data from the questionnaires to the Dean of the academic unit in order to plan for the development of the academic staff and continuous improvement.

The office's mission is to ensure a quality level of teaching, learning, study programs, research and administration of UIBM through the implementation and continuous improvement of quality and ensure that the mechanisms and procedures for achieving quality are functional. Fulfilling this mission is in line with the mission of the institution and serves to fulfill its vision to be the best public university in the country and the region, and to prepare staff that will contribute to the development of the local and global community, in specific areas of study.

#### **The duties and responsibilities of QAO are:**

- To provide professional and administrative support and management, guidance and support for quality assurance at all levels of the institution and assist in the organization of institutional accreditation and study programs;
- To formulate strategies, policies, mechanisms, procedures and various practices for assurance and advancement of academic quality in the institution;
- To promote the culture of quality within the institution;
- To advise on the approval and development of study modules and programs;

- To develop strategies and assist in the advancement of teaching and learning;
- To coordinate the agenda of activities with quality coordinators at the level of study areas;
- To prepare all documents related to accreditation or re-accreditation, various internal evaluation reports in collaboration with all faculties and coordinate visits of foreign experts for accreditation or re-accreditation.

The quality assurance office has a senior quality officer who is also the manager of the office, and other officials. The duties of the senior official of the QAO are:

- a) Provides administrative and professional support for quality assurance procedures and mechanisms at UIBM;
- b) Analyzes the data collected through quality assurance mechanisms and based on the analysis of the questionnaires compiles reports on the academic and administrative services provided by UIBM;
- c) Provides administrative and professional support for the institutional accreditation process and programs at the University and provides technical support to the UIBM quality assurance commission;
- d) Controls the applications of the University according to the checklist of the University, the Accreditation Agency and the relevant legal acts;
- e) Monitors the progress of university applications from preparation to application to implementation of recommendations and maintains and reviews the files of the accreditation process and prepares relevant reports and analyses;
- f) Participates in the drafting of materials and documents related to scientific research and coordinates their implementation (science strategy, brochures, etc.);
- g) Provides appropriate advice, guidance and services to academic staff in the development of research projects (e.g. information on donor funds, legal issues, possible collaborations with the business community, etc.);

- h) Serves as a contact person at UIBM for scientific research projects, such as ERASMUS +, Horizon 2020, performs other tasks assigned to him by the supervisory officer.

#### **2.4. Vice Dean for Quality Assurance**

The vice-dean for quality of the academic unit is proposed to the Faculty Council by the Dean of the unit and voted by the council of the academic unit. He/she deals with the promotion of best quality practices and ensures their implementation at the academic unit level, as well as assists in the organization of internal and external evaluation processes, including coordination of self-evaluation reports, organization of external evaluation visits by international experts, analysis and comparison of external evaluation reports by international experts, etc. Designs and coordinates processes that ensure accurate information for relevant actors regarding the internal evaluation process, accreditation and the status of accredited programs within the academic unit.

His/her main duties and responsibilities are:

- a) Works in close consultation with the Dean, the QAO and the vice-rector for quality issues and the vice-dean for international cooperation;
- b) Acts as a supporter of quality assurance within the faculty;
- c) Develops, directs, plans and provides the strategy as well as processes for quality and enhancement of international cooperation;
- d) Provides services and assistance for the implementation of best practices and initiatives;
- e) Advises on the approval and development of study modules and programs;
- f) Supports implementation for quality improvement strategies;
- g) Offers cooperation to the Group of External Evaluation Experts and on the re/accreditation process;
- h) Provides support for the smooth running of the monitoring and post-accreditation process defined by the KAA;

- i) Responsible for supporting the QAO as needed during evaluation processes through questionnaires;
- j) Prepares feedback on the fulfillment of recommendations for the relevant faculty, from the evaluation process, written in the form of an improvement plan, and discusses and adjusts the same in cooperation with the dean and the QAO.

## **2.5. Quality Assurance Coordinator within the academic unit**

The quality assurance coordinator of the academic unit is proposed by the Dean of the unit and he/she is directly accountable only to the Dean. The quality coordinator at the level of academic units has the following duties and responsibilities:

- a) Provides guidance to academic staff and students regarding the practical and academic aspects of ECTS implementation;
- b) Instructs the relevant department and the study commission of the academic unit during the accreditation / re-accreditation process to design / review study programs;
- c) In cooperation with the management of the academic unit, takes care and monitors the involvement of all stakeholders (academic staff, students, alumni, businesses or members of the Advisory Board) in drafting / reviewing study programs;
- d) Provides support to the process of evaluating subjects and teachers, the process of self-evaluation of academic staff, the process of evaluation of administrative staff, meetings of faculty councils, regular meetings of academic staff in order to discuss issues of interest in teaching, learning or research;
- e) Organizes information sessions for academic staff and students regarding the Bologna process;
- f) In cooperation with the management of the academic unit organizes data and information related to the scientific / artistic activity in the academic unit (recording of scientific works, artistic performance, professional and scientific projects);

- g) In cooperation with the official for international cooperation, he/she advises the management and students of the academic unit regarding the realization of student mobility - "Learning Agreement" (in accordance with the decision of the academic unit, explains the academic procedures of credit recognition, agreement, transcript of notes, monitoring before and after mobility, etc.).



### 3. ASSESMENT AND EVALUATION PROCESSES

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Internal process of quality assurance at UIBM includes:

- a) Students;
- b) Academic staff;
- c) Administrative staff;
- d) Management;
- e) UIBM graduates;
- f) External partners.

The internal quality assurance policy is defined by the CCQAE, and implemented by CCQAE and QAO.

Internal quality assurance is based on:

- a) Planning;
- b) Measurement;
- c) Management;
- d) Execution; and,
- e) Improvement.

#### **3.1. Methods of assessment**

The Central Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation proposes guidelines and deadlines for information collection. Information is collected in three ways:

4. ***Self-assessment report.*** It is prepared by academic units and contains:

- Brief description of institution, number of students,
- Data on academic staff including their CVs,
- Data about teaching and learning (programs/courses),
- Publications and academic/research activities and
- List of internal and external partners
- Data about the infrastructure where the program takes place.

5. ***Quantitative and qualitative instruments.*** Quality assurance instruments are an integral part of the quality assurance framework. The quantitative instruments that are used to collect data for quality assessment consist of questionnaires as follows:

- Student evaluation questionnaire for teaching, subject and resources at University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica - Bachelor, which is carried out twice a year (at the end of each semester).
- Questionnaire for evaluation of students for the study program and research work at University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica - MASTER, which is carried out twice a year (at the end of each semester).
- Self-assessment questionnaire for the academic staff of University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica, which is carried out once a year.
- Self-assessment questionnaire for the deans of the academic units of University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica, which is carried out once a year.
- Assessment questionnaire for the work of the deans by the academic staff of the academic units of University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica, which is

carried out once a year.

- Evaluation form from the dean for the academic staff of University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica, which is carried out once a year.
- Questionnaire for UIBM's external stakeholders, at least every second year.
- Questionnaire for UIBM-ALUMNI graduates, which is carried out once a year.
- Questionnaire from the administrative staff at UIBM about the work environment and the quality of services, which is carried out once a year.
- Questionnaire for the evaluation of the support services of University "Isa Boletini" in Mitrovica, which is carried out once a year.
- Questionnaires that are part of the package of instruments for evaluation from the QATEK project, and that are questionnaires for evaluation of teaching, research and other components related only to the Faculty of Education.

Qualitative quality assurance instruments include, but are not limited to:

- PEER TO PEER EVALUATION,
- Focus groups,
- Ad-hoc commissions for the assessment of specific topics relevant to the institution or specific topics that can cover all areas of the institution's action. The establishment of ad-hoc commissions is done by decision of the Central Quality Commission. Administration of qualitative quality assurance instruments is a process that is adequately documented.
- AU Council meetings.

The information collected by the qualitative and quantitative instruments address:

- Issues of learning materials, student evaluation, teaching methodology such as interaction, mentoring, etc.
- Infrastructure issues including classrooms, computer center, laboratories, heating, IT support, equipment and other services).
- Issues related to research.
- Issues related to the management of AU.
- The connection between theory and practice, learning support, such as the library, additional courses and student experience with administration, professors, services in general can also be addressed.

**6. *Other documentation.*** This type of documentation includes: statute, regulations in force, complaints (if any), acknowledgments, media reports, evaluation reports from external experts engaged by UIBM, scientific papers and student tests.

Evaluation reports should be a summary of the facts and their interpretation. The report also contains examples of questionnaires and the methodology used for the collection and analysis of information. It should be understandable. The reports are made after each phase of the evaluation, while the general report is made after the collection of the evaluation reports of the students' opinions, teachers' opinions, archived documents. The report contains general parts for the university and part of special reports for academic and administrative units.

### **3.2. Evaluation Results**

The evaluation of the academic staff is done in harmony with the work plan of the quality assurance office, at least on semestral and annual basis. Through the evaluation instruments, the performance is evaluated with points from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). All performance evaluations below-average (below 2.5 points) are evaluated as negative, in which cases steps are taken for improvement that are explained below.

Depending on the results of the staff evaluation, there are specifics regarding the results of the staff evaluation, as well as specific rewards such as:

- The highest evaluated teacher by the students;
- Successful publisher [with the highest number of publications within the year];
- Young researcher [assistants with the greatest contribution].

Likewise, in the strategic research plan 2022-2026 of UIBM, the creation of the "Academic Prize" annual reward fund is specified.

The evaluation of the academic staff, through the package of instruments for evaluation, summarizes:

- students' assessment of the academic staff,
- teaching staff self-assessment,
- evaluation by colleagues and
- evaluation by direct managers.

The aforementioned instruments contain specific aspects of the work of the academic staff, starting from teaching and enriching the content of the courses, relationship with students, professional development, research work, community service, collaboration with colleagues, participation in conferences.

The results of the assessments analyzed by the quality assurance office are presented in reports that are published on the UIBM website.

Depending on the content, some instrument results are discussed with staff individually, while a summary is made which is shared with all academic staff.

10% of positive results are made public in general. In cases of evaluation lower than average [respectively less than 2.5 points], the Dean of the faculty discusses directly

with the teacher and he/she compiles the intervention plan for improvement. The plan is monitored and improvement is ensured. In cases of high results, 10% of the staff of each academic unit are recognized by UIBM senior management. Acknowledgments are also given for the commitment of the staff in the research process, for the highest number of publications in journals indexed on the WEB of SCIENCE and SCOPUS platforms, as well as the UIBM young researcher award.

### **3.3. Key Performance Indicators**

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are crucial measures that assess how well a university's quality assurance initiatives are working. Putting these KPIs into practice and keeping an eye on them will give important information about how well the university's quality assurance programs are working. Frequent evaluation of these indicators will assist make data-driven decisions, pinpoint areas that need work, and guarantee that the university stays dedicated to providing high-quality instruction and services.

Our university has approved KPI document through which monitors and measures the progress of the work within it. Further is the link of the document:

<https://www.umib.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/5.1.6.-Key-Performance-Indicator.pdf>

### **3.4. Data Collection and Storage**

The collected data is stored in a database in the SMU managed by the QAO. Following the completion of any type of internal quality assurance procedure, the QAO draws up a summary report and makes it public on the UIBM website. The report should be a summary of the facts and their interpretation. The report also contains examples of questionnaires and methodology used to gather and analyze information. It must be comprehensible. Reports are made after each evaluation phase, and the general report is made after the collection of all evaluation reports. QAO shares detailed

reports with the Rector of UIBM, CCQAE, Deans of academic units and Vice Deans/Quality Coordinators in academic units.

### **3.5.Improvement Process**

Following the drafting of the reports, UIBM and the academic units improve the areas for which the evaluation has turned out to be poorer.

Some of the activities include:

- a) Compilation of the improvement plan based on the final report,
- b) Analyzing the syllabuses,
- c) Proposing changes to the syllabuses,
- d) Proposal for personnel training,
- e) Communication of recommendations and collection of comments from personnel,
- f) Communicating recommendations and collecting comments from students,
- g) Preparation of the final action plan for improvement.

It is intended that the plan for improvement includes all activities of the university, including the procedures and methodology of quality assurance through activities that must be undertaken to improve quality or achieve certain objectives within the annual planning of academic and administrative units.

## 4. RIGHT OF COMPLAINT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

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In order to ensure the quality assurance process, the university has also regulated the right of complaints by students, academic and administrative staff.

### 4.2. Disciplinary responsibility and right of appeal - students

Students have the right to present their dissatisfaction with the processes at the faculty in the following forms:

- The complaint box located in a place that is not covered by the camera and is opened once a week by the committee appointed at the faculty level consisting of the faculty secretary, the vice dean for learning and a student representative. In case the complaint is directed against the vice-dean, then he/she is replaced by the head of the program.
- Complaints against the assessment in the written or oral exam;
- Complaints about the quality of teaching;
- Complaints about infrastructure conditions;
- Complaints through SMU.

Also, based on the UIBM Statute:

- Article 100: Candidates who have not been admitted to the first year of Bachelor, Master and Doctorate studies can appeal, according to the regulations in force.
- Article 140: The student has the right to complain about the quality of the teaching process or the infrastructure of the University;
- Article 107: Against the grade received, the student has the right to complain in writing to the dean of the academic unit. The appeal must be submitted within two working days after the announcement of the results. Complaints can be made for the following reasons: for the written exam - an appeal is filed against the written grade; for the oral exam - a complaint is



filed against the oral grade; for the combined written and oral exam; and based on the regulations for Bachelor and Master studies of UIBM and academic units.

The complaint boxes are opened in weekly periods by the Complaints Review Commission, which is formed by AU and consists of the Secretary, the Vice-Dean for Education and a student, which they process for review. The complaint box is located in each academic unit in positions that are not visible from the cameras.

The committee that opens the complaint box, evaluates the type of complaints and directs them to the responsible persons. Complaints are reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee within the academic unit, which consists of two professors and one student. In case the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the disciplinary committee, he has the right to address the matter to the Appeals Committee as a second instance body [according to Article 146 of the Statute and Article 8 of the Regulation on the responsibility and disciplinary procedure of students].

During meetings with new students, students are introduced to the complaints box and shown the options where they can complain about issues that concern them. It is very important that students are assured of their anonymity or confidentiality. In cases of anonymous complaints, the relevant committee evaluates the complaint and after review, the decision is provided to the student representatives who share the information with all students. There are cases [for example when the complaint is about respecting the consultation schedule] the information is made public on the website of the academic unit or the website of the university and thus it is automatically sent to you by email to all students.

Also on the University website, there is a space where students can make a complaint or give feedback:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf3Em8k5ri-FYDI4vsiTPXgMpvPBwM7K-rc2z-xpC\\_FQOtpg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf3Em8k5ri-FYDI4vsiTPXgMpvPBwM7K-rc2z-xpC_FQOtpg/viewform)

Students have the right to complain against the decision made by the University bodies, academic units and organizational units that are related to their rights, obligations and responsibilities.

Such appeals are submitted to the studies committee of the academic unit within fifteen (15) working days after the announcement of the decision. The study committee is obliged to submit the report with the proposal for the corresponding complain to the council of the academic unit, within thirty

(30) working days after receiving the complaint. The appeal about the decision in the second instance is decided by the Senate. Also, students have the right to challenge the decision of the Senate in the competent court.

#### **4.3. Disciplinary procedures and the right of appeal – academic staff**

With Regulation No. 2855 dt. 27.12.2019 for the disciplinary measures and procedures against the academic staff, the disciplinary procedures and measures applicable in cases of disciplinary responsibility of the academic staff of UIBM are determined, in accordance with the University Statute, the Code of Ethics and other applicable legal and by-laws in university.

The suspected violation is initiated at the disciplinary commission of the relevant academic unit, respectively at the Ethics Council of UIBM, depending on the nature of the disciplinary violation. The Disciplinary Committee of the relevant academic unit evaluates minor violations. The Disciplinary Commission in its composition has 3 (three) members, at least one of them must have the title of professor.

The violation assessed as a serious violation entered the exclusive competence of the Ethics Council. The decision of the Ethics Council must be confirmed in the Senate of the University, respectively in the Governing Council, depending on the legal and statutory powers. The Council of Ethics consists of four members of academic units with a four-year term and the representative of the Parliament of students with a two-year term.

The decision of the Disciplinary Committee, pronounced against the academic staff, in the case of minor violations, can be appealed to the Council of Ethics.

The decision of the Ethics Council, as a second instance for minor violations, is final in the competent bodies of UIBM.

The decision of the Senate, as the first instance for serious violations, can be appealed to the Governing Council of UIBM.

The party dissatisfied with the final decision of the competent body within UIBM, can open the appeal procedure at the relevant inspectorate or even the judicial-administrative conflict procedure against such decision according to the legislation on administrative conflict.

#### **4.4. Disciplinary responsibility and right of appeal – administrative personnel**

The public service employee is responsible for professional misconduct and violation of professional obligations in accordance with the law.

In accordance with Article 72, paragraph 4 of the Law on Public Officials, UIBM has established the Disciplinary Commission which consists of: a representative of Human Resources Unit; two representatives of the naming body; a lawyer of the nominating body and a representative of the trade union or of the representatives of the relevant public service employees.

The disciplinary committee has the following powers:

- Examine the facts and evidence presented; AND
- Determines and pronounces the disciplinary measure.

The disciplinary procedure includes the administrative procedure, which is carried out from the notification of a disciplinary violation, until the taking of a disciplinary measure by the direct supervisor or the Disciplinary Commission.

Against the employee, I can start disciplinary procedures as defined in article 48 paragraph 2 of the Law on public officials, if the employee has violated the work duties and legal obligations provided for in article 46 of the Law.

The administrative disciplinary procedure guarantees the employee's right to be notified about the initiation of the proceeding, to be informed about the alleged factual violation and the evidence for its commission, the right to be heard, to present evidence, the right to have access to documents related to the procedure, for legal protection and the right to be assisted, as well

as the right to appeal against the final decision.

The employee can be assisted during the disciplinary procedures by a representative of the trade union he belongs to, by a lawyer or by a representative of the employees of the institution, if he is not a member of a trade union.

The public service official can complain to the employer when he claims that his rights have been violated in the employment relationship. Candidates also have the right to appeal in the competition procedure.

The public service employee can appeal within fifteen (15) days from the announcement of the decision when he claims that his rights have been violated at the employer.

In order to review the complaints of administration workers - public service employees, based on the Law on public officials and the relevant Government Regulation, the University has established the Complaints Commission with a 3-year mandate. The complaints commission consists of three (3) members who must be public service officials, one of whom must be a lawyer and has the following composition: Public service official, management level - Chairman of the Commission; Public service official of professional level – member and Representative of the human resources unit – member.

The complaint is reviewed within fifteen (15) days from its submission. The appellant, if he is not satisfied with the decision of the appeal body or if he does not receive an answer within the specified period, in the following period of fifteen (15) days, he can initiate a work contest in the competent court.

Procedures for discipline and complaints of public officials are regulated by the Regulation of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo REGULATION (QRK) NO. 11/2020 ON DISCIPLINE AND COMPLAINTS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS.

## 5. EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

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The external evaluation at UIBM, as well as for all HEIs in Kosovo, is aligned with the policies established by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and the development policies of the state. UIBM complies with all the procedure, regulation and norms determined by KAA and SCQ.

Also, UIBM has the regulation on preparation procedures for institutional re/accreditation and study programs at UIBM which facilitates the process of external quality assurance.

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Kosovo No. 04/L-037, Administrative Instruction on the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions 15/18, and the Accreditation Manual of the KAA, the KAA will organize the post-accreditation procedures as well as the monitoring procedures of the higher education institutions and their study programs. It is accordingly divided into two parts:

- Monitoring procedure and
- Post-accreditation procedure.

KAA develops **monitoring procedures** that aim to verify and confirm whether the given conditions of accreditation as well as the standards of the Accreditation Manual continue to be implemented by accredited institutions of higher education. These procedures are implemented at the institutional level and/or at the level of study programs and are not duplicated by the post-accreditation procedure which focuses only on the fulfilling of the recommendations given in the external evaluation reports. Monitoring procedures include:

### 1. General monitoring

- Monitoring of study programs;
- Monitoring of official websites and advertising materials of HEIs.

### 2. Monitoring according to the Accreditation Manual Standards

- Monitoring of academic staff;
- Monitoring of lecture and exercise schedules;
- Monitoring of infrastructure and resources.

### 3. Extraordinary Monitoring

- Monitoring started after receiving complaints from external parties;
- Submission of false evidence to KAA;
- Monitoring in cooperation with the Education Inspectorate.

**Post-accreditation** procedures are an integral part of the process of the external quality evaluation of HEIs and close the accreditation cycle. The post-accreditation procedures are limited to the verification of the accreditation conditions and the confirmation of the degree of fulfillment of the recommendations by the KAA and the commitments by the HEI and not to the re-evaluation of the Accreditation Manual standards.

## CONCLUSION

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For UIBM, the quality management component is a strong and crucial point for the development of the institution: teaching, learning, research, community service, and the very fulfillment of its mission and vision. A well-defined structure of stakeholders dealing with quality assurance in UIBM, as well as a clear procedure for the development of activities aimed at ensuring this component, make the institution serious and determined towards a secure future in Higher Education.

The university's dedication to maintaining and improving the standards of instruction, research, and community involvement is embodied in the Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines. The institution aims to foster an atmosphere that encourages excellence, responsibility, and ongoing development by putting in place a systematic framework for quality assurance.

This Guideline is a guideline document for all parties involved in the quality assurance process. We are aware that the quality assurance process is dynamic, changeable and always in progress, so even this guideline will change whenever UIBM advances and improves along the way. UIBM is committed to making this guideline a "living document", vis-a-vis the progress from year to year.

Quality assurance at UIBM aims to ensure and improve the continuous quality of all activities of UIBM as well as foster the promotion of a culture of quality among all stakeholders.

In conclusion, the university's commitment to excellence in higher education is outlined in the QA Guidelines. By following these guidelines, the university puts itself in a position to handle the challenges of the educational system, maintaining its status as a leader in offering excellent education and cultivating an active academic community. These values will be a living document as the institution develops, always changing to take into account new developments in higher education and best practices.