



**INTERNATIONAL
BALKAN
UNIVERSITY**

EXCELLENCE FOR THE FUTURE!

**RULEBOOK
ON QUALITY ASSURANCE
AT THE INTERNATIONAL BALKAN
UNIVERSITY**

Preamble

Based on Article 94, Paragraph 1, Item 43 of the Law on Higher Education and the Law on Ensuring Quality in Higher Education, as well as Article 32 of the Statute of the International Balkan University (hereinafter: Statute), and in line with the Rulebook on Standards and Procedures for External Evaluation and Self-evaluation adopted by the National Board for Higher Education and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), the Senate of the International Balkan University, at the session held on 12.03.2016, brought the following:

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

This Rulebook regulates the quality assurance system, processes and procedures at the International Balkan University (hereinafter: University), aimed at establishing, maintaining and continuously improving the quality in all areas of the University's operations, as well as the composition, competences and responsibilities of the bodies and units involved in quality assurance.

Article 2

(1) The University is committed to promoting a culture of quality that ensures:

1. High standards of academic excellence in teaching and learning
2. Support for high-quality research and professional activities
3. High-quality student support services and administration, and
4. Continuous institutional improvement.

(2) Through evidence-based practices, transparent governance and inclusive participation of internal and external stakeholders, the University ensures that teaching, research and services meet the highest quality standards.

(3) The University promotes a culture in which every faculty, department, administrative unit and individual considers quality improvement an individual and collective responsibility.

Article 3

(1) Quality assurance processes are carried out in accordance with:

1. The Statute of the University
2. The Law on Higher Education
3. The Law on Ensuring Quality in Higher Education
4. The Rulebook on Standards and Procedures for External Evaluation and Self-evaluation adopted by the National Board for Higher Education, and

5. The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

(2) In case of discrepancy between this Rulebook and the applicable legislation, the provisions of the applicable legislation shall prevail.

II. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

Article 4

(1) The quality assurance system at the University covers:

1. Teaching and learning
2. Research and artistic/professional activities
3. Student support and administrative services
4. Management and governance, and
5. International cooperation and external relations.

(2) The quality assurance system ensures the establishment of effective processes, procedures and methods for regular monitoring, evaluation and improvement of activities.

(3) The system provides relevant information and data to support the University in achieving its strategic objectives and goals and in supporting evidence-based decision-making.

Article 5

(1) The quality assurance system at the University operates on the following principles:

1. Evidence-based practices for informed decision-making

The University is dedicated to systematic data collection, continuous monitoring and regular reporting on activities in all areas of its operations. These practices:

- enable early detection of potential problems
- support the identification of good practices, and
- provide a basis for informed strategic and operational decisions.

2. Effective governance and clear responsibilities

The quality assurance system ensures that the organizational structure and governance bodies are designed and function in a way that:

- is fit for purpose
- clearly allocates responsibilities for quality, and
- contributes to the realization of the strategic goals of the University.

3. Continuous quality improvement

The quality assurance system is based on an improvement cycle in which:

- strengths and weaknesses are identified
- action plans for improvement are adopted
- implementation is monitored, and
- follow-up and feedback are ensured.

4. Participation of stakeholders

The quality assurance system ensures active participation of academic and administrative staff, students, alumni and external stakeholders in quality assurance processes.

5. Transparency and accountability

The University ensures transparency of its quality assurance activities through regular publication and dissemination of key reports, data and improvement plans.

(2) The main steps in the quality assurance cycle are:

1. Defining the strategy in quality assurance
2. Determining key performance indicators (KPIs) in line with the strategy
3. Implementing effective processes for ensuring quality
4. Developing instruments for data collection
5. Monitoring and analysis of collected data
6. Determining concrete steps and action plans for continuous improvement
7. Monitoring the implementation of measures and reporting on results.

Article 6

The University uses digital tools (dashboards, achievement metrics, online surveys, information systems and databases) to monitor performance, evaluate teaching, track research activities and gather stakeholder feedback. These systems support transparency, efficiency and evidence-based decision-making.

III. RESPONSIBLE BODIES AND UNITS

Article 7

(1) Quality assurance processes at the University fall under the responsibility of the Board of Quality.

(2) The Board of Quality:

1. Analyzes self-evaluation and other relevant internal and external reports
2. Proposes quality improvement measures and action plans
3. Ensures alignment of quality assurance activities with the University Strategic Plan
4. Monitors the implementation of action plans
5. Prepares proposals for amendments to this Rulebook and other quality-related acts
6. Reports to the Senate and Rector's Board on the state of quality at the University.

(3) The Board of Quality consists of 5 members:

1. The Vice-Rector for Research and Projects as the University Quality Assurance Coordinator (Chair)
2. Three members appointed by the Rector's Board from among the academic staff, and
3. The Secretary General.

- (4) The composition of the Board of Quality should reflect different scientific fields and include at least one representative with experience in quality assurance and accreditation processes.
- (5) The mandate of the appointed academic staff members shall be two years.
- (6) The mandate of the Vice-Rector as Chair and the Secretary General shall be determined by the duration of their respective appointments to those positions.

Article 8

- (1) At each faculty, a Faculty Quality Assurance Committee is established.
- (2) The Faculty Quality Assurance Committee consists of 4 members:
 1. The Dean of the Faculty (Chair)
 2. Two academic staff members, and
 3. One student representative.
- (3) For matters related to strategic planning and development, external stakeholders (e.g. employers, professional associations) may be invited to participate in the work of the Committee without decision-making rights.
- (4) The Faculty Quality Assurance Committees are responsible for:
 1. Conducting self-evaluation processes at faculty level
 2. Preparing faculty annual reports and other required quality reports
 3. Monitoring quality indicators at faculty level
 4. Proposing improvement measures and monitoring their implementation
 5. Cooperating with the Board of Quality and Quality Assurance Coordinator.
- (5) A Quality Assurance Committee for administrative units is also established. It consists of 3 members from three different administrative units. It works under the coordination of the Secretary General and reports to the Board of Quality.

Article 9

- (1) The Board of Quality and representatives of the Quality Assurance Committees meet at least three times per year.
- (2) Additional meetings may be held whenever necessary at the initiative of the Rector or the Chair of the Board of Quality.

Article 10

- (1) The University involves students, academic and administrative staff, alumni and employers in quality assurance processes through:
 1. Feedback questionnaires and surveys
 2. Consultations and focus groups
 3. Participation in committees and working groups, and
 4. Regular communication and public calls for comments on draft documents.
- (2) The input of the stakeholders from paragraph (1) of this Article is taken into account in decision-making and in the development of academic offerings and student services that respond to societal and labour market needs.

Article 11

(1) This Rulebook and the overall Quality Assurance Policy of the University are reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with the institutional strategy, legislation and international standards.

(2) The Board of Quality conducts a full review at least every three (3) years, or earlier if required by changes in legislation, accreditation standards or strategic priorities.

(3) Proposed amendments are submitted to the Senate for approval. After approval, changes are communicated to all stakeholders and published on the University website.

Article 12

(1) The University ensures transparency in all quality assurance activities.

(2) The following documents, as a minimum, are published on the University website:

1. Institutional self-evaluation summaries
2. Key quality policy and rulebooks (including this Rulebook)
3. Key survey findings (aggregated, without compromising personal data)
4. Approved action plans for quality improvement, and
5. Information on accreditation status and external evaluation outcomes.

(3) Detailed internal reports may be made available to internal staff and bodies in line with data protection rules.

IV. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

Article 13

(1) Quality in teaching, learning, research and services is ensured through the following main processes:

1. Faculty Annual Reports
2. Administrative Units Annual Reports
3. University Annual Evaluation
4. Self-evaluation Report (three-year cycle)
5. Performance evaluations
6. Student course evaluations
7. Evaluation of student satisfaction with university services.

(2) The guidelines for implementation of the processes from paragraph (1) of this Article are an integral part of this Rulebook.

V. GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

a. Faculty Annual Reports

Article 14

- (1) The purpose of Faculty Annual Reports is to provide a detailed overview of teaching, learning, research and other academic activities at the faculty.
- (2) Faculty Annual Reports are prepared for each academic year.
- (3) The Faculty Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for the preparation of the Faculty Annual Report.

Article 15

- (1) The Faculty Annual Report contains, at minimum, the following information:
 1. General information about the faculty;
 2. Organizational structure and faculty departments;
 3. Academic staff (structure, qualifications, rank distribution);
 4. Staff statistics (gender, age, employment status, workload);
 5. Number of students per study program, study cycle and year of study;
 6. Curricula and study programs offered;
 7. Course statistics (number of courses offered, enrolments, success rates);
 8. Internship and practical training activities;
 9. Graduation projects, master and PhD theses completed in the academic year;
 10. Research projects and project activities of the faculty;
 11. Academic journal(s) of the faculty, if applicable;
 12. Faculty events and activities (conferences, seminars, workshops, mobility);
 13. Cooperation with external partners and employers;
 14. Identified strengths and weaknesses;
 15. Recommendations and planned improvement measures.
- (2) The report is prepared using a template approved by the Board of Quality.
- (3) The Faculty Annual Report is submitted to the Board of Quality no later than the end of July for the ongoing academic year.

b. Administrative Units Annual Reports

Article 16

- (1) The purpose of Administrative Units Annual Reports is to provide a detailed overview of the activities, services, performance and development of the administrative units of the University (e.g. Student Affairs Office, Finance Office, IT Services, Library, International Relations Office, Human Resources, etc.).
- (2) Administrative Units Annual Reports are prepared for each calendar year or academic year, in accordance with the internal planning cycle of the University.

(3) The Quality Assurance Committee for administrative units, under the coordination of the Secretary General, is responsible for coordinating the preparation of these reports. Each administrative unit designates a responsible person for drafting its part of the report.

Article 17

(1) The Administrative Units Annual Reports contain, at minimum, the following information for each participating administrative unit:

1. General information about the unit (mission, main functions, contact information);
2. Organizational structure and key roles within the unit;
3. Staff overview (number of staff, positions, qualifications, training activities);
4. Description of main services and processes provided to students and staff;
5. Key quantitative indicators (e.g. number of processed requests, response times, system availability, number of events or activities organized);
6. Overview of digital tools and systems used and any major changes or upgrades;
7. Summary of user (student and staff) feedback and satisfaction results related to the unit's services;
8. Implemented improvement measures during the reporting period;
9. Identified strengths, challenges and risks in the unit's operations;
10. Planned improvement measures and development priorities for the next period.

(2) The Administrative Units Annual Reports is prepared using a template approved by the Board of Quality, harmonized with the format of the Faculty Annual Reports where applicable.

(3) The consolidated Administrative Units Annual Reports, covering all relevant administrative units, is submitted to the Board of Quality no later than the end of January for the previous year.

Copies or relevant extracts are also submitted to the Rector's Board and are used as input for the University Annual Evaluation.

c. University Annual Evaluation

Article 18

(1) The University Annual Evaluation Report presents a consolidated overview of activities undertaken during the academic year in the areas of teaching, learning, research and services, based on the Faculty Annual Reports and other relevant sources.

(2) The purpose of the University Annual Evaluation Report is to:

1. Provide an integrated overview of University performance
2. Inform the Rector's Board, Senate and other bodies, and
3. Support strategic planning and resource allocation.

Article 19

(1) The University Annual Evaluation Report includes, at minimum, the following information:

1. Information on instructors engaged in the teaching process (demographic characteristics, academic ranks, full-time/part-time status);
2. Number of students per study year, cycle of studies and faculty;
3. List and structure of study programs by field and level;

4. Information about the teaching process, including teaching methods, assessment of knowledge and examples of innovative teaching and assessment practices;
5. Overview of student success (pass rates, average grades, progression and dropout);
6. Number of graduated students per study program and level;
7. Overview of research activities and outputs (projects, publications, events);
8. Professional and community engagement activities;
9. Academic achievements and recognitions of staff;
10. Summary of student feedback and identified issues;
11. Recommendations for future actions and improvement measures.

(2) The University Annual Evaluation Report is prepared by the Quality Assurance Coordinator in cooperation with the Board of Quality and relevant academic and administrative units.

(3) The report is prepared in a template approved by the Board of Quality and endorsed by the Rector's Board.

(4) The University Annual Evaluation Report is submitted to the Board of Quality and the Senate no later than the end of September.

d. Self-evaluation (Institutional and Unit Level)

Article 20

(1) Institutional self-evaluation is conducted in a coordinated manner across all units of the University.

(2) The start, duration and deadlines for self-evaluation are determined by a decision of the Rectorate and communicated to all units.

Article 21

(1) Self-evaluation is carried out in accordance with the Rulebook on Standards and Procedures for External Evaluation and Self-evaluation adopted by the National Board for Higher Education and in alignment with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

(2) Self-evaluation covers at least the following standards:

1. Institutional policies for quality assurance;
2. Design and approval of programmes;
3. Student-centered learning, teaching, and assessment;
4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification;
5. Teaching staff;
6. Learning resources and student support;
7. Information management;
8. Public information;
9. International cooperation and internationalization.

Article 22

(1) The fulfillment of the standards from Article 19 is assessed through indicators and criteria defined in the national Rulebook on Standards and Procedures for External evaluation and Self-evaluation and through additional internal indicators defined by the University.

(2) The self-evaluation report includes:

1. Analytical and self-critical assessment of the current state;
2. Identification of strengths, weaknesses and risks;
3. Proposals and measures to address identified shortcomings;
4. Prioritized action plan with responsibilities and deadlines.

Article 23

(1) The Self-evaluation Report consists of:

1. Self-evaluation report prepared using the template established by the Evaluation Board or competent body;
2. Supporting documentation (policies, rulebooks, procedures, data tables, minutes, etc.);
3. Other relevant documents, strategies and plans.

(2) The report is intended for internal use at the University and its units and for external use during external evaluations and accreditation procedures.

Article 24

(1) The Board of Quality and the Faculty Quality Assurance Committees are responsible for coordinating the preparation of the Self-evaluation report.

(2) Based on the Self-evaluation report, the Board of Quality proposes an Action Plan for Quality Improvement, which includes:

1. Specific measures to eliminate weaknesses and mitigate risks
2. Responsible bodies/units and persons
3. Deadlines
4. Indicators for monitoring implementation, and
5. Method and frequency of reporting.

(3) The self-evaluation report and the proposed Action Plan are submitted to the Rectorate no later than the end of the calendar year in which the report is prepared.

(4) After adoption of the Action Plan by the Rector's Board, the Board of Quality and Quality Assurance Committees, together with other relevant units, are responsible for monitoring its implementation and reporting on progress.

e. Performance Evaluations

Article 25

(1) Within the quality assurance system, regular internal performance evaluations are conducted for:

1. Academic staff (teaching and research performance);
2. Administrative and professional staff (service quality and efficiency);

3. Organizational units (faculties, institutes, centers, administrative units).
- (2) Performance evaluations are conducted according to separate internal procedures and criteria adopted by the competent bodies, aligned with this Rulebook and relevant legislation.

Article 26

- (1) Academic staff performance evaluation is based on:
1. Teaching activities (teaching workload and mentorships);
 2. Research and professional activities in accordance with institutional criteria;
 3. Contribution to faculty and University development (committees, coordination roles, projects);
 4. Adherence to ethical standards and codes of conduct.
- (2) The results of performance evaluations are used for:
1. Staff development and training
 2. Recognition of achievements
 3. Planning of promotions and workload distribution
 4. Identification of support needs and improvement measures.
- (3) Performance evaluations are done for each calendar year.
- (4) Responsible for Performance evaluations is the Quality Assurance Coordinator.
- (5) Upon completion of the academic performance evaluation process, evaluation records shall be shared individually with academic staff and collectively at the faculty level with the respective Dean.
- (6) The process of performance evaluation should be completed no later than the end of February.

f. Student Course Evaluations

Article 27

- (1) Student course evaluations are a mandatory component of the quality assurance system.
- (2) At the end of each semester, students evaluate:
1. The course organization and content
 2. Teaching methods and assessment
 3. Teacher's clarity, engagement and support
 4. Learning resources and infrastructure
 5. Overall satisfaction with the course.

Article 26

- (1) Course evaluations are conducted using standardized questionnaires approved by the Board of Quality.
- (2) The questionnaires are administered electronically, anonymously and in accordance with data protection regulations.
- (3) The minimum response rate and procedures to encourage student participation are defined by internal guidelines.
- (4) Responsible for Student Course Evaluations is the Teaching and Learning Center.

Article 27

- (1) After data processing, the following reports are prepared:
 1. Course evaluation reports for each course and instructor;
 2. Aggregated faculty-level and University-level reports.
- (2) Reports of Student Course Evaluations are submitted no later than the end of January for the Fall semester and no later than the end of July for the Spring semester.
- (3) Individual course evaluation summaries are made available to the relevant instructor, Dean and Quality Assurance structures, with clear guidance on interpretation.
- (4) Instructors are encouraged to provide feedback to students on how their comments will be used for improvement.

g. Evaluation of Student Satisfaction with University Services

Article 28

- (1) At least once per academic year, the University conducts a Student Satisfaction Survey regarding:
 1. Administrative services (enrolment, student affairs, finance, etc.);
 2. Library and learning resources;
 3. IT services and digital platforms;
 4. Facilities and campus environment;
 5. International office and mobility opportunities;
 6. Student support services (counselling, career services, etc.).
- (2) The survey is prepared and administered by the Quality Assurance Coordinator in cooperation with the Student Affairs Office and other relevant units.

Article 31

- (1) Based on the survey results, a Report on Student Satisfaction with University Services is prepared, including:
 1. Methodology and response rates;
 2. Key findings and trends;
 3. Comparison with previous years (where applicable);
 4. Identified strengths and weaknesses;
 5. Recommendations and proposed measures for improvement.
- (2) The report is submitted to the Board of Quality, Rector's Board and relevant administrative units and is published in a summarized form on the University website.

VI. CALENDAR OF QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES

Article 32

(1) A Calendar of Quality Assurance Activities is adopted annually by the Board of Quality, in coordination with the Rectorate and faculties.

(2) The Calendar includes at least:

1. Periods for student course evaluations (per semester);
2. Periods for preparation and deadlines for Faculty Annual Reports;
3. Periods for preparation and deadlines for the University Annual Evaluation Report;
4. Planned periods for student satisfaction surveys;
5. Timeline for self-evaluation (in the year when it is conducted);
6. Dates of regular meetings of the Board of Quality and Quality Assurance Committees;
7. Deadlines for submission of quality-related data from administrative units.

(3) The Calendar is communicated to all units and published on the internal information system of the University.

VII. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 33

(1) The quality assurance activities and procedures initiated before the entry into force of this Rulebook shall be completed in accordance with the provisions effective at the time of their initiation, unless the competent body decides otherwise in line with the legislation and in favor of quality improvement.

Article 34

(1) Within 60 days from the entry into force of this Rulebook:

1. The Board of Quality shall review and, if necessary, update existing templates for reports and surveys;
2. Faculties and administrative units shall align their internal procedures with this Rulebook;
3. The Calendar of Quality Assurance Activities for the current year shall be adopted or adjusted.

Article 35

(1) The Vice-Rector responsible for quality (or other person designated by the Rector) is responsible for the interpretation of the provisions of this Rulebook.

(2) In case of doubt or conflict between internal acts, the Rector's Board may request an opinion from the Board of Quality and the Legal Service.

Article 36

This Rulebook enters into force on the day of its adoption by the Senate of the International Balkan University.

Prof. Dr. Kire Sharlamanov
President of the Senate