

QUALITY MANUAL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREAMBLE	3
Main Responsibilities for Quality at the Institutional Level.....	3
Composition of the Curriculum and Quality Development Unit.....	4
Main Functions of the Curriculum and Quality Development Unit	4
Establishment and Functioning of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG)	5
Composition of the Internal Evaluation Group.....	5
Internal Quality Self-Assessment Period	5
Responsibilities of the Curriculum and Quality Development Unit.....	5
Recommendations for Continuous Improvement, Quality Assurance and Curriculum Development	6
Follow-Up Procedure	7
Reporting and Decision-Making for Quality Assurance and Enhancement	7
Final and Transitional Provisions	7

PREAMBLE

Legal Basis: The Quality Manual has been developed by the Curriculum and Quality Development Unit (hereinafter the CQDU), based on the following:

- The Law on Higher Education in the Republic of Albania, No. 80/2015, dated 22.07.2015; Articles 103 and 104;
- Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 621, dated 22.10.2021, "On the Approval of the National Education Strategy 2021–2026 and its Action Plan for Implementation";
- The Statute and Regulation of Barleti University;
- Documents of ASCAL (the Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education).

The Quality Manual contains and describes all aspects related to self-assessment and internal quality assurance, as well as aspects of quality management within the units of Barleti University.

Self-assessment and internal quality assurance are central to all teaching and scientific research activities at UniBa.

UniBa develops policies and procedures for internal quality assurance. Internal quality assurance is the assessment and guarantee of the quality of the academic and administrative activities carried out by UniBa.

The hierarchical organizational structures (governing bodies and authorities) of UniBa, which plan, organize, and guarantee the implementation of policies, strategies, and procedures for the realization of its vision.

- The CQDU, which periodically evaluates the results of UniBa's teaching and scientific research activities and prepares the corresponding internal assessment reports.

These reports are discussed in all UniBa units, with the aim of continuously improving the quality of these activities in the future.

As part of external quality assurance, UniBa undergoes periodic evaluation of the institution and its study programmes, in accordance with the legislation in force.

Main Responsibilities for Quality at the Institutional Level

At the institutional level, the following bodies are responsible for quality:

- The Senate of Barleti University, which approves the strategic plan, within which quality assurance and management constitute an important component, and which holds ultimate responsibility.
- The Rector, who is responsible for drafting the Quality Self-Assessment Action Plan, linked to the priorities in the various areas. The Plan is submitted for approval to the Board and the Senate, and its implementation in practice is overseen by the CQDU.

- The CQDU, which monitors and oversees the practical implementation of the Quality Self-Assessment Action Plan submitted by the Rector. It also coordinates all activities aimed at quality assurance and promotes a culture of quality within the relevant units.
- The Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs), which are responsible for the self-assessment process and for implementing the quality assurance action plans within the scope of the activities they carry out. The IEGs are composed of representatives of the academic staff and one student.
- The Head of the Core Unit, who leads the work of the IEG and is responsible for implementing the Quality Self-Assessment Action Plan submitted by the Rector.

IEGs report periodically to the CQDU on quality assurance and management and on the progress achieved. Academic staff, administrative staff, and students are encouraged to take an active part in the self-assessment process.

Composition of the Curriculum and Quality Development Unit

- a. The CQDU is an autonomous, permanent structure within the institution's organizational framework, reporting to the Rector. It periodically evaluates the results of teaching and scientific research activities and proposes changes for the necessary improvements, based on the quality assurance guidelines of the European Higher Education Area and the legislation in force.
- b. This structure is composed of the head of the office and its members, who are representatives of UniBa's core units. The Rector of UniBa appoints and dismisses the Head of the Unit.
- c. The office has operational autonomy and access to all institutional data. It conducts tracer studies to assess the progress of student employment and the effectiveness of the programmes offered by the higher education institution.
- d. At the end of each semester, or prior to the examination session, it organizes a student survey on the quality of teaching for the courses of each study programme.
- e. The more detailed organization and functioning of the CQDU at UniBa are set out in the CQDU Regulation and other internal regulatory acts.
- f. The institution's quality assurance standards are drafted in accordance with the Higher Education Quality Code.
- g. The CQDU periodically evaluates and reports to the Rector on the results of the institution's teaching and scientific research activities with regard to continuous quality improvement.

Main Functions of the Curriculum and Quality Development Unit

- a. The CQDU plans and organizes Internal Quality Evaluation within UniBa along two main lines:
 - Internal Quality Evaluation of study programmes;

- Internal Institutional Evaluation.
- b. The CQDU is a structure responsible for the periodic evaluation of the results of teaching and scientific research activity, reporting directly to the Rector.
- c. At the end of each semester, the CQDU organizes a student survey on the quality of teaching for the courses of every study programme.
- d. In cooperation with the Alumni and Career Office, the CQDU conducts tracer studies to assess the progress of student employment and the effectiveness of the programmes offered by the institution.
- e. The CQDU identifies problem areas and proposes tools and procedures based on higher education legislation, quality standards, and international best practices, as well as options for the continuous improvement of quality.
- f. In carrying out its activity, the CQDU collects and organizes various quantitative and qualitative data, carries out statistical data analyses, conducts surveys, and designs and processes questionnaires administered to students.
- g. The CQDU prepares an annual quality evaluation report for Barleti University, which is used as a resource for continuous quality improvement.
- h. The CQDU's proposals are reviewed by the institution's governing bodies and authorities and are reflected in concrete decision-making.
- i. The CQDU report is made publicly available once approved by the Rector.

Establishment and Functioning of the Internal Evaluation Group

- a. For every Internal Quality Evaluation of study programmes and Institutional Evaluation, the Rector, in cooperation with the CQDU, establishes the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG).
- b. An Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) is established within every base unit. In carrying out its activity, the IEG has operational autonomy and access to all data of the base and core units.
- c. The IEG carries out its activity based on the Higher Education Quality Code and the Standards for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the Republic of Albania. In cooperation with the CQDU, the IEG collects data from all base units, core units, and the academic, teaching-support, and administrative staff of UniBa. The IEG of every base unit carries out a SWOT analysis.
- d. Prior to the start of the self-assessment process, the CQDU, in cooperation with ASCAL, organizes training for the members of the IEG.
- e. The heads of the core and base units take all necessary measures and create the appropriate conditions for IEG members to carry out their tasks within the set deadline.
- f. The IEG submits the Internal Evaluation Report (for study programmes or for the institution) within the established deadlines; a SWOT analysis is included at the end of

the report. The report is accompanied by references to supporting evidence. The IEG report and its supporting documentation are kept in UniBa's Protocol and Archive Office.

Composition of the Internal Evaluation Group

1. The IEGs established within each Core Unit are composed of:
 - a. The chairperson;
 - b. Members of the academic staff;
 - c. A member representing the students.
2. Each IEG consists of 5 members.

Internal Quality Self-Assessment Period

Internal Quality Self-Assessment of study programmes and institutional evaluation, pursuant to Law No. 80/2015, dated 22.07.2015, on Higher Education in the Republic of Albania, is organized and monitored by the CQDU.

The manner in which the Internal Quality Evaluation of study programmes and the institutional evaluation are organized, the activities carried out during this process, the responsibilities involved, and the manner of presenting results are set out in this Manual and in the corresponding CQDU procedures.

Responsibilities of the Curriculum and Quality Development Unit

The Curriculum and Quality Development Unit (CQDU) is established by a decision of the Academic Senate.

It operates and carries out its activity based on the Regulation of the Curriculum and Quality Development Unit (CQDU), which sets out the main functions and duties of the CQDU.

Recommendations for Continuous Improvement, Quality Assurance and Curriculum Development

The CQDU provides recommendations for future work on continuous quality improvement and assurance in the following areas, using both direct and indirect methodologies:

1. **In the design of the curricula of study programmes offered by the Core Unit**
 - a. The extent to which the programmes are aligned with the dynamic requirements of the labour market.
 - b. The extent to which, and the manner in which, students' expected learning outcomes are achieved by the end of their studies.
 - c. The extent to which, and the manner in which, students acquire the competences required by the end of their studies.

- 2. In the design of course/module (syllabi)**
 - a. Preparation of the course syllabus by the instructor.
 - b. Application of the criteria established for the drafting of syllabi.
 - c. Students' familiarity with the course syllabus.
 - d. Updating of syllabi.
- 3. In strengthening the directions necessary for future developments in teaching and learning at UniBa**
 - a. Strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats, at UniBa.
 - b. Determination of the main directions for further development.
 - c. Recommendations for future development.
- 4. In strengthening and raising the level of work within the base and core units**
 - a. Strengths and weaknesses of each unit, as well as their opportunities.
 - b. Main directions for further development.
 - c. Recommendations for future development.
- 5. In the reciprocal relationship between teaching and scientific research work**
 - a. The support of teaching through research work in the relevant field.
 - b. The manifestation of scientific research work within the teaching process.
 - c. Involvement of students in the scientific research activities of the academic staff.
 - d. Recommendations for future development.
- 6. Teaching methods**
 - a. Interactive teaching and learning.
 - b. Use of technology in teaching.
 - c. Strengths and weaknesses.
 - d. Recommendations for future development.
- 7. Learning outcomes**
 - a. Achievement of the objectives of each course.
 - b. Evaluation of students by the course instructor.
 - c. Ongoing (continuous) assessment.
 - d. Recommendations for future development.
- 8. In conducting scientific research**
 - a. Involvement of academic staff members in scientific research work.
 - b. Support of scientific research work by UniBa.
- 9. In flexibility and quality assurance**
 - a. Adaptation of study programmes in line with labour-market requirements.
 - b. Recommendations for future development.
- 10. In the evaluation method**
 - a. Methods used to assess students' work and knowledge.
 - b. Assessment and documentation of the instructor's work.

11. In the good governance of the base and core units

- a. Engagement of UniBa's leadership and of the core and base units in realizing the institution's vision and mission.
- b. Engagement of the leadership of the core and base units in achieving the objectives set in the field of teaching and scientific research.

Follow-Up Procedure

- i. Self-assessment and Internal Quality Assurance have been, are, and will continue to be a central focus at UniBa. Self-assessment and Internal Quality Assurance are not regarded as a one-off act, but as an ongoing process.
- ii. The CQDU follows a procedure for quality assurance within the institution, and in particular for study programmes that are or have been subject to accreditation or re-accreditation, based on the conditions imposed and the recommendations issued.
- iii. This process takes place following the completion of the evaluation carried out within the framework of the accreditation of the study programme or the institution, in accordance with the deadlines set out in the decisions of the ASCAL Accreditation Board. Upon completion of the accreditation process for the study programme or the institution, UniBa takes the necessary measures to fulfil the recommendations given in the ASCAL Accreditation Board Decision, within the specified period.
- iv. The CQDU shall work continuously to develop the necessary culture of self-assessment in all areas of UniBa's activity.

Reporting and Decision-Making for Quality Assurance and Enhancement

The relevant reports are submitted to the Rector of UniBa.

Final and Transitional Provisions

The Quality Manual shall be reviewed annually by the CQDU to reflect the relevant changes arising from legislation and regulatory acts.

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