

**INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT**

**REPORT ON THE RESULTS  
OF THE TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT  
FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE ACADEMIC & ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

**Academic Year 2024–2025**

Tirana, June 2025

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# 1. Internal quality assurance and professional development strategy

## *The role of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU)*

The Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) is a key structure within the institutional mechanisms for continuous quality enhancement in Western Balkans University. Its primary role is to monitor, support, and evaluate the implementation of internal quality standards across all aspects of the university's functioning, including teaching, scientific research, academic administration, and professional staff development.

In line with institutional policies and national quality standards, the IQAU designs and implements evaluation tools to identify areas that require improvement or targeted interventions, as well as to guide the development of internal capacities. One of the core responsibilities of the unit is the organization of evaluation processes to assess the training needs of academic and administrative staff, aiming to support their preparation and professional growth in accordance with institutional goals and labor market demands.

This report represents one of the IQAU’s periodic activities to identify priority areas for professional development and to formulate data-based recommendations, ensuring that staff training is purposeful, effective, and tailored to the institutional context.

## *Composition of IQAU for the academic year 2024–2025*

For the academic year 2024–2025, the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) is composed of five members: three academic staff representatives from the main units (one per faculty), one student representative, and one external expert. The composition was approved by the Academic Senate upon the Rector’s proposal.

No.	Name Surname	Position	Representation
1	Nertil Bërdufi	Chair	Faculty of Dental Medicine
2	Elizabeta Susaj	Member	Faculty of Economics, Technology, and Innovation
3	Ardita Emiri	Member	Faculty of Medical Technical Sciences
4	Ramadan Çipuri	Member	External Expert
5	Franci Brahillari	Member	Student Representative

## *Professional development objectives within the institutional mission*

The professional development of academic and administrative staff is one of the main pillars for fulfilling the institutional mission of the university, which aims to provide high-quality, sustainable

education driven by innovation, scientific research, and international engagement. In this context, the continuous strengthening of internal capacities through targeted training is essential for meeting both the short-term and long-term objectives of the institution.

The main objectives of professional development are:

**Improving the quality of teaching and learning**, through didactic and methodological training.

**Strengthening research competencies**, to support increased scientific productivity.

**Enhancing managerial and administrative skills**, for more effective and transparent institutional operations.

**Adapting to technological and digital developments**, in line with the transformation of higher education in the era of artificial intelligence.

**Fostering an institutional culture of ethics and collaboration**, promoting responsibility, inclusiveness, and student-centered values.

These objectives contribute to the creation of a motivated and well-prepared professional body ready to face labor market challenges, while also enhancing the institution's overall image and performance.

### ***Purpose of the training needs assessment***

The main purpose of this assessment is to identify priority areas for the professional development of academic and administrative staff, in support of institutional quality improvement. The collected data serve to guide the strategic planning of training programs, aligned with the real needs of the staff and the institution's long-term goals.

## **2. Methodology and data collection process**

### ***Design and electronic distribution of the questionnaire***

The IQAU developed a structured questionnaire aiming to assess the relevance of various training areas for staff professional development. The questionnaire used a 1-to-5 rating scale for each topic and was distributed via the university's electronic platform during May–June 2025.

## ***Participation rate and representative categories***

A total of 73 staff members responded, representing different categories: academic staff (professors, lecturers, assistant lecturers), administrative staff, and support staff with hybrid responsibilities. All institutional units were represented in the responses.

The collected data were statistically processed using SPSS software, enabling accurate analysis of trends, priorities, and staff evaluations for each training topic.

## **3. Demographic and professional profile of respondents**

### ***Types of employment***

Out of a total of 73 respondents, the distribution by type of employment is as follows:

- **Academic staff** – 52 respondents (71.2%)
- **Administrative staff** – 19 respondents (26.0%)
- **Academic and administrative staff** – 1 respondent (1.4%)
- **Academic support staff** – 1 respondent (1.4%)

These figures show that most respondents belong to the academic staff category, reflecting their active involvement in professional development processes. The presence of administrative staff is also significant, ensuring a balanced assessment of cross-sectoral training needs.

### ***Professional positions***

The respondents represent a wide range of professional roles, reflecting the functional diversity within the institution. The most represented positions are:

- **Assistant Lecturers** – 24 respondents (32.9%)
- **Lecturers** – 24 respondents (32.9%)
- **Professors** – 5 respondents (6.8%)
- **Administrative staff (in various roles)** – 13 respondents in total, including titles such as *Administrator, Specialist, Coordinator, Faculty Coordinator, etc.*
- **Staff with combined roles (administrative and academic)** – 2 respondents
- **Academic support staff with administrative responsibilities** – 5 respondents
- **Unit heads or responsible personnel** – 1 respondent.

The predominance of assistant lecturers and lecturers indicates a strong interest in training and professional growth among the younger academic staff, while the presence of administrative roles confirms their engagement in strengthening institutional management skills.

### **Units of affiliation**

Respondents are distributed across various academic and administrative units of the institution, ensuring broad and inclusive representation in the assessment process. The distribution by unit of affiliation is as follows:

- **Faculty of Medical Technical Sciences** – 27 respondents (37.0%)
- **Faculty of Economics, Technology, and Innovation** – 19 respondents (26.0%)
- **Faculty of Dental Medicine** – 17 respondents (23.3%)
- **Other supporting units** – 6 respondents (8.2%)
- **Central University Administration** – 2 respondents (2.7%)
- **Administration Office/Unit** – 2 respondents (2.7%)

<b>Faculty/Unit of affiliation:</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Administration Office	1	1.4	1.4	1.4
	Administration Unite	1	1.4	1.4	2.7
	Central University Administration	2	2.7	2.7	5.5
	Faculty of Dental Medicine	17	23.3	23.3	28.8
	Faculty of Economics, Technology, and Innovation	19	26.0	26.0	54.8
	Faculty of Medical Technical Sciences	27	37.0	37.0	91.8
	Other supporting units	6	8.2	8.2	100.0
	Total	73	100.0	100.0	

Most responses come from academic units, particularly the Faculty of Medical Technical Sciences, followed by the other two faculties. The representation of the administration and support units also ensures a balance between academic and institutional training perspectives.

### **Work experience**

Respondents are relatively well-distributed across different ranges of work experience, offering a comprehensive overview of training needs across all career stages. The breakdown is as follows:

- **Less than 3 years** – 26 respondents (35.6%)
- **3 to 5 years** – 17 respondents (23.3%)
- **6 to 10 years** – 7 respondents (9.6%)
- **11 to 15 years** – 4 respondents (5.5%)
- **More than 15 years** – 19 respondents (26.0%)

Years of work experience:					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	11 to 15 years	4	5.5	5.5	5.5
	3 to 5 years	17	23.3	23.3	28.8
	6 to 10 years	7	9.6	9.6	38.4
	Less than 3 years	26	35.6	35.6	74.0
	More than 15 years	19	26.0	26.0	100.0
	Total	73	100.0	100.0	

The data show that a significant portion of the staff (approximately 59%) has less than six years of work experience, which explains the high interest in training related to early career development. Meanwhile, the presence of experienced professionals highlights the need for more advanced and specialized training offerings.

## 4. Evaluation of training priorities and needs

### 4.1 General overview of results

The data collected through the questionnaire indicate a high level of interest in professional development among both academic and administrative staff. In most proposed topics, over 70% of respondents gave scores of 4 or 5, which are considered indicators of high training priority.

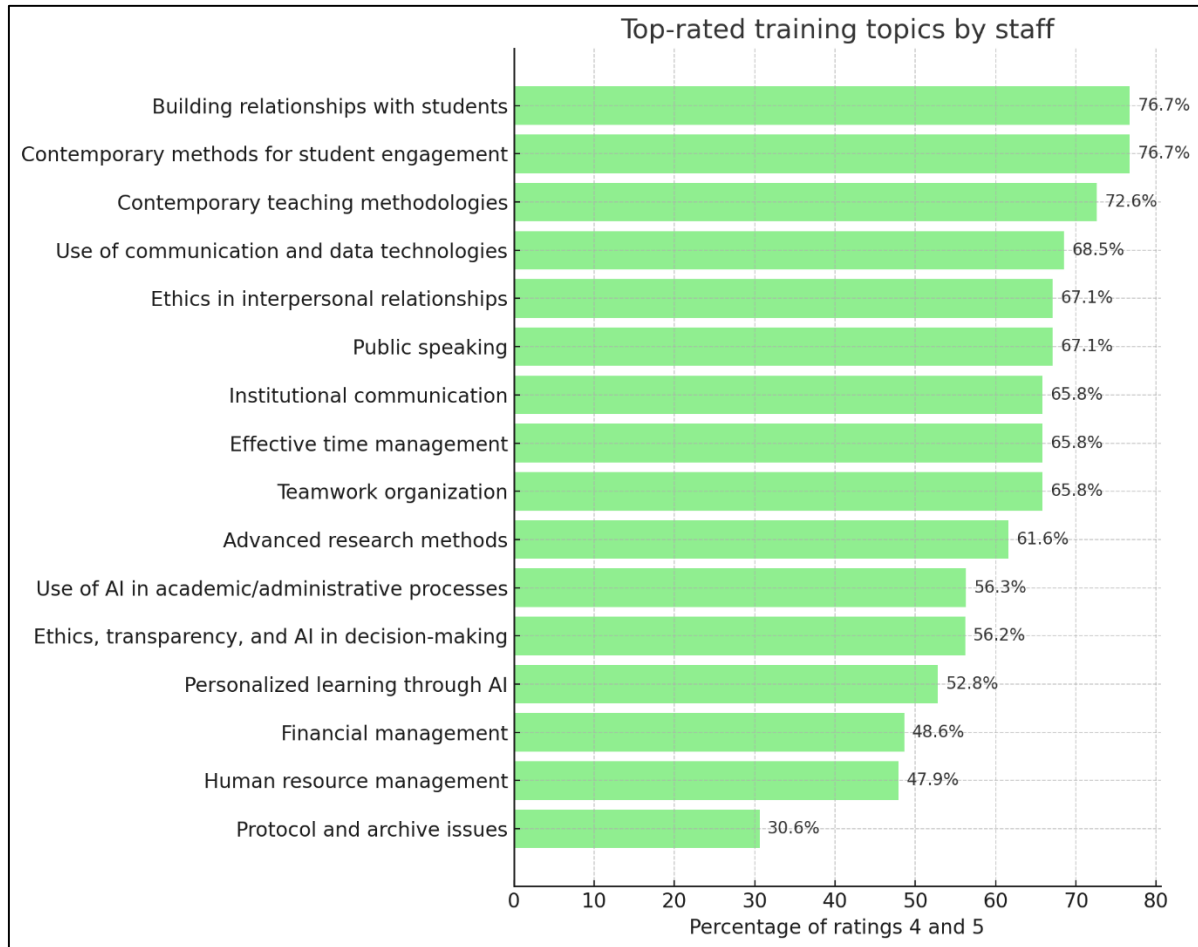
The highest-rated topics (with over 85% of responses marked as 4 or 5) include:

- **Building sustainable and professional relationships with students** – 76.7%
- **Contemporary methods for engaging students** – 76.7%
- **Contemporary teaching methodologies** – 72.6%
- **Use of communication and data technologies** – 65.8%
- **Ethics in interpersonal workplace relationships** – 68.5%
- **Public speaking and institutional communication** – over 65%
- **Effective time and teamwork management** – over 65%

Additionally, topics related to ethics in AI use, decision-making, and using AI for personalized learning also score highly, reflecting a growing need for capacity-building in the context of digital transformation.

Conversely, topics such as financial management, human resources, and protocol/archive issues receive slightly lower scores but remain relevant to specific staff groups.

## 4.2 Top-rated training topics based on high ratings (4 and 5)



	<b>Training Topic</b>	<b>Percentage (4+5)</b>
1	Building relationships with students	76.7
2	Contemporary methods for student engagement	76.7
3	Contemporary teaching methodologies	72.6
4	Use of communication and data technologies	68.5
5	Ethics in interpersonal relationships	67.1
6	Public speaking	67.1
7	Institutional communication	65.8
8	Effective time management	65.8
9	Teamwork organization	65.8
10	Advanced research methods	61.6
11	Use of AI in academic/administrative processes	56.3
12	Ethics, transparency, and AI in decision-making	56.2
13	Personalized learning through AI	52.8
14	Financial management	48.6
15	Human resource management	47.9
16	Protocol and archive issues	30.6

The training needs assessment reveals a clear prioritization of topics related to teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and interpersonal communication. Among the 27 proposed training areas, a considerable number were rated very highly, with over 65% of respondents giving a score of 4 or 5, indicating strong perceived relevance and an urgent need for training in these areas.

### ***Priority topics for training development***

- **Building sustainable and professional relationships with students** (76.7%)
- **Contemporary methods for student engagement** (76.7%)
- **Contemporary teaching methodologies** (72.6%)
- **Ethics in interpersonal workplace relationships** (68.5%)
- **Effective teamwork organization** (67.1%)
- **Effective time management** (65.8%)
- **Public speaking** (65.8%)
- **Use of communication and data technologies** (65.8%)

These topics represent core areas for improving teaching practices and student interaction. They are recommended for direct inclusion in the institutional training plan for the 2025–2026 period.

### ***Recommended topics for further development***

- **Use of AI in academic and administrative processes** (56.3%)
- **Personalized learning through AI** (52.8%)
- **Ethics, transparency, and the use of AI in decision-making and research** (47.9%)

While these topics received slightly lower scores, they reflect emerging strategic priorities, particularly in digital transformation in education, and are therefore recommended to be addressed through supplementary modules, workshops, or thematic seminars.

### ***Training Topics with lower ratings***

- **Financial management** (48.6%)
- **Human resource management** (56.2%)
- **Protocol and archive procedures** (30.6%)

are considered targeted training needs relevant primarily to specific administrative staff categories.

### 4.3 Thematic categorization of training areas

Thematic Category	Training Topic	Percentage (%)
<b>Teaching and learning</b>	Building relationships with students	76.7
	Contemporary methods for student engagement	76.7
	Contemporary teaching methodologies	72.6
	Personalized learning through AI	52.8
<b>Communication and professional interaction</b>	Ethics in interpersonal relationships at the workplace	68.5
	Institutional communication	67.1
	Teamwork organization	67.1
	Public speaking	65.8
	Time management	65.8
<b>Ethics, transparency, and decision-making</b>	Ethics in diversity and inclusion	60.3
	Ethical dilemmas in organizational environments	49.3
	Ethics, transparency, and the use of AI in decision-making and research	47.9
<b>Technology and artificial intelligence</b>	Use of communication and data technologies	65.8
	Use of AI in academic and administrative processes	56.3
<b>Management and administration</b>	Human resource management	56.2
	Financial management	48.6
	Protocol and archive procedures	30.6

### 4.4. Staff suggestions for additional training topics

At the end of the questionnaire, staff members were invited to suggest any additional training topics they considered important for their professional development.

An analysis of the collected responses shows that most of the suggestions align with the topics already included in the questionnaire, confirming their relevance and importance. These included:

- **Development of pedagogical skills** and the use of **interactive teaching methods**
- **Effective student engagement** and building positive student relationships
- **Use of Artificial Intelligence in teaching and administration**
- **Time management and balancing teaching, administrative duties, and research activities**

These suggestions strongly reinforce the previously prioritized training topics, further validating their inclusion as institutional priorities.

In addition, a few new training topics were suggested, which had not been part of the original list but represent specific and highly valuable needs for further development. These include:

- **Strengthening university–industry cooperation** – aimed at better preparing students for the labor market and promoting collaboration beyond academia
- **Cultural competencies and building cross-cultural relationships** – increasingly important in today’s globalized academic environment
- **Training in the use of medical simulation devices and specialized technological applications** – particularly relevant for technical staff and academic personnel in specific fields
- **Understanding institutional procedures for specific issues or tasks** – related to internal operations and proper execution of administrative responsibilities

These suggestions provide valuable insights into the evolving professional development needs of the staff and can serve as a basis for expanding the institutional training portfolio in the future.

## Conclusions

The results of this training needs assessment confirm that professional development is a central pillar in advancing institutional quality and effectiveness. The high participation rate and diverse representation among respondents underscore a strong institutional commitment to continuous improvement.

The top-rated training priorities reflect a growing demand for enhanced student engagement, pedagogical innovation, and effective communication and time management—skills essential for fostering a student-centered academic culture. These areas should be treated as strategic priorities in the upcoming training programs.

At the same time, there is a noticeable emphasis on the integration of Artificial Intelligence and digital tools in teaching and administration, indicating the staff’s readiness to embrace technological advancements and modernize institutional practices.

Additional suggestions from staff further highlight the relevance of the proposed topics and introduce new areas for consideration, such as university–industry cooperation, cross-cultural competencies, and specialized training in medical and administrative technologies.

In conclusion, this assessment offers a well-founded basis for the design of a targeted and flexible institutional training plan, aligned with the university’s mission and evolving educational challenges.

### ***Training Plan for Academic and Administrative Staff***

Based on the results of the distributed questionnaires and a comprehensive analysis of the needs of the academic and administrative staff, the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) has prepared a three-day training plan aimed at supporting the continuous improvement of teaching quality, institutional communication, and internal institutional functioning.

This training cycle is designed to address both the priorities identified by the staff and the latest developments in pedagogy, technology, and institutional ethics. In this context, it is recommended that the trainings be held prior to the start of the 2025–2026 academic year, on dates agreed upon with the institutional leadership, to maximize participation and establish a shared foundation for consolidated standards in daily academic and administrative work.

### ***Training Agenda***

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Day 1	09:00–10:30	Building student relationships
	10:45–12:15	Methods for student engagement
	13:15–14:45	Contemporary teaching methods
	15:00–16:30	Ethics in interpersonal relations
Day 2	09:00–10:30	Institutional communication
	10:45–12:15	Teamwork organization
	13:15–14:45	Use of communication and data technologies
	15:00–16:30	Public speaking
Day 3	09:00–10:30	Effective time management
	10:45–12:15	Strengthening university–industry links
	13:15–14:45	Intercultural competencies and relationship building
	15:00–16:30	Familiarization with institutional procedures for specific issues