

QUALITY POLICIES OF WESTERN BALKANS UNIVERSITY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Document

This document aims to define the fundamental policies and procedures for quality assurance at Western Balkans University (WBU). It serves as a guiding framework for fostering a sustainable quality culture that supports the continuous enhancement of standards in teaching, research, and student support services.

Furthermore, the document seeks to contribute to the social, economic, and cultural development of the community by preparing competent professionals, promoting innovative research, and encouraging effective collaboration with stakeholders both nationally and internationally.

1.2 Key Definitions

Quality: In higher education, quality is a multidimensional concept defined as the level of excellence encompassing the following elements:

- a) *Exceptional:* Attainment of the highest standards of performance.
- b) *Compliance with approved standards:* The University's capability to consistently fulfill approved standards and/or apply best practices in delivering academic, professional, technical, resource-related, and support services, as well as in communication with internal and external stakeholders.
- c) *Fitness for purpose:* The University's capacity to realize its objectives and mission defined at both institutional and program levels. This includes evaluating institutional processes and programs based on indicators and standards derived from its mission and goals.
- d) *Suitability of objectives:* The University's ability to set objectives that respond to stakeholder needs, align with its mission, harmonize national higher education priorities, and consider international developments in the field.
- e) *Transformative development:* The University's ability to positively impact the growth of knowledge, skills, and attitudes of its students and staff.
- f) *Cost-effectiveness (Value for money):* The University's demonstration of efficient and effective utilization of human, infrastructural, technological, informational, and financial resources.
- g) *Benchmarking and standardization:* The process of comparing and learning from best practices of similar institutions or specialized national and international organizations.

Internal Quality Assurance: A continuous process of monitoring, evaluating, assuring, maintaining, and improving the quality of activities within higher education institutions, conducted internally by the institutions themselves.

Accreditation (External Quality Assurance): An independent process of external evaluation of quality, which determines whether the higher education institution and/or its offered study programs meet defined quality standards, in accordance with applicable legal and regulatory frameworks.

Continuous Improvement: An approach aimed at the ongoing development of all processes and outcomes through systematic analysis and enhancements.

Self-Assessment: An internal process for analyzing the performance of an academic or administrative unit and identifying areas for improvement.

1.3 Context of the Policies

The quality policies of Western Balkans University (WBU) are grounded on a robust legal, regulatory, and strategic framework, which includes:

Quality Code in Higher Education in the Republic of Albania: A document that defines the national standards for quality assurance in higher education;

Law No. 80/2015, dated 22.07.2015 “On Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Albania”: The legal framework governing the operation of higher education and scientific research institutions;

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG): An international framework providing an integrated approach to quality management;

Statute of WBU: A foundational document defining the university’s core principles and structures, including academic and financial autonomy;

WBU Strategic Plan 2023–2030: Vision and objectives aimed at enhancing quality across all institutional aspects;

International Best Practices: Successful models and approaches for managing and improving quality in higher education.

1.4. Importance of Context

Drawing upon these diverse foundational sources, this document aims to establish a sustainable culture of quality at Western Balkans University (WBU). It represents a significant step towards

enhancing the standards of education and scientific research, contributing to the university's integration into the global network of higher education institutions and strengthening its position in both the national and international academic markets.

2. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY

2.1 Core Principles

The quality policies of Western Balkans University (WBU) are founded upon several fundamental principles, ensuring that all academic, research, and administrative processes are aligned with the highest national and international standards:

Mission Priority: The University's mission and the strategic objectives defined in the Strategic Plan and other guiding documents serve as the primary reference points for all quality-related activities.

Integrity: All processes and decisions at the university are grounded in honesty and accountability, guaranteeing that quality policies uphold high ethical and professional standards. This principle reflects the trustworthiness of higher education institutions, as articulated in the Quality Code for Higher Education in the Republic of Albania and in the ESG (European Standards and Guidelines).

Transparency: The University is committed to providing full access to relevant information for students, staff, and stakeholders. This commitment fosters trust and facilitates the monitoring of policy implementation, in line with ESG standards promoting transparency.

Inclusiveness: Quality policies incorporate all stakeholders, ensuring that decisions consider the interests of students, staff, and the wider community. This principle is supported by WBU's Statute, which endorses inclusiveness as one of the University's core values.

Continuous Improvement: All academic and administrative activities at the University undergo a systematic cycle of evaluation and enhancement. The principle of continuous improvement is essential for achieving excellence, following internationally recognized quality management approaches such as the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) model. This model supports a structured process that facilitates planning, implementation, monitoring, and ongoing improvement of all processes, consistent with WBU's strategic commitment to excellence and innovation.

2.2 Support for Academic Autonomy and Internal Structures

WBU actively promotes and supports academic autonomy and the effective functioning of its internal structures, including faculties, departments, and administrative units. This commitment reflects the University's dedication to excellence, continuous improvement, and adherence to the highest national and international standards.

1. Academic Autonomy

The empowerment of faculties/research-scientific institutes and departments/research centers: Faculties and research-scientific institutes, as main units, and departments/research centers, as basic units, hold full authority to design and implement study programs that meet the needs of students and the labor market. This authority reflects a commitment to academic freedom and creativity, while respecting the standards established in the *Quality Code for Higher Education Institutions in Albania and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*.

Academic Freedom: The University guarantees the right of academic staff to conduct and develop independent research, fostering intellectual diversity and scientific innovation, as stipulated in Law No. 80/2015.

2. Internal Structures and the Role of Administrative Units

Flexibility of Internal Structures: Faculties, departments, and administrative units possess the flexibility to adapt their processes and procedures to achieve specific objectives. This flexibility promotes adaptability and efficiency, grounded in the Statute of WBU.

Performance Evaluation and Improvement: Internal structures are committed to regular processes of self-assessment and internal auditing. The *Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQUA)* supports these processes to ensure that quality standards are consistently met and exceeded.

3. Promotion of Operational Autonomy

Decision-making Independence at Faculties and Departments: Faculties and departments have the right and responsibility to make decisions based on their specific operational and academic needs, while respecting the central quality policies. This approach ensures that decisions are made in an informed and accountable manner.

Development of Internal Policies: Internal structures are empowered to formulate specific policies to address particular challenges, adhering to both national and international standards.

4. Collaboration and Oversight

Connection with Central Structures: Internal units work closely with the university's central bodies to ensure a unified approach in implementing quality policies. This collaboration guarantees alignment between institutional and local objectives.

Continuous Improvement through Feedback: Central and internal structures cooperate to collect, analyze, and utilize feedback data to identify areas for improvement and to develop a sustainable quality approach. This process is supported by the university's commitment to continuous improvement and the active involvement of all stakeholders, including students, academic staff, and administrative units. The WBU Strategic Plan promotes a comprehensive approach to continuous improvement, emphasizing the importance of monitoring and analysis processes as essential tools for achieving the institution's strategic objectives.

2.3 Involvement of Students and Stakeholders

WBU recognizes and values the critical role of student and stakeholder involvement in the processes of quality assurance and enhancement. This principle strengthens transparency, enhances institutional accountability, and ensures that university policies effectively respond to the needs and expectations of diverse actors.

1. Students as Central Stakeholders

Role in Decision-Making: Students actively participate in collegial bodies and decision-making processes related to the enhancement of study programs and the overall academic experience. This engagement is facilitated through their representation in entities such as the Academic Senate, the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (NJSBC), the Ethics Committee, and Student Councils, ensuring that their perspectives and needs are incorporated into every strategic decision. This involvement aligns with the standards set forth in the Quality Code for Higher Education Institutions in Albania and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

Feedback on Academic and Administrative Processes: Periodic surveys and student forums provide a structured platform for collecting student opinions on the quality of teaching, resources, and university services. The outcomes of these evaluations are

systematically integrated into improvement planning, guaranteeing that student needs and recommendations are effectively reflected in the university's strategic decisions.

2. External Stakeholders

Employers and Industry Partners: Collaboration with employers and industry ensures that study programs align with labor market demands and economic development needs. This partnership strengthens WBU's role as an institution committed to the social and economic advancement of the community.

Alumni: The alumni network serves as a valuable resource for collecting feedback on the impact of education received and for the ongoing enhancement of academic programs. Alumni engagement also fosters strong connections between graduates and the university. The maintenance of these relationships, along with organizing various continuing education and related activities, is coordinated by a dedicated Alumni Office within the Student Dean's Office.

Community and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): Engagement with the community and NGOs contributes to expanding the university's impact and addressing diverse social and cultural needs. This involvement enhances WBU's social responsibility and enriches the student experience.

3. Mechanisms for Stakeholder Engagement

Shared Consultation Platforms: The university employs tools such as forums, public meetings, and surveys to establish an open and inclusive approach for engaging all stakeholders.

Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups: Special attention is given to involving groups from marginalized communities by providing support and opportunities to ensure equality in education.

4. Benefits of Stakeholder Engagement

Active involvement of students and stakeholders ensures that quality assurance processes are focused on continuous improvement, sustainable development, and positive societal impact. This engagement aligns with WBU's mission to be an open, inclusive institution with a strong and meaningful influence.

3. ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

3.1 Organizational Structure

To ensure a robust and effective quality assurance system, Western Balkans University (WBU) has established a well-defined organizational structure, which includes the following key bodies:

Academic Senate: The highest academic authority responsible for overseeing and guaranteeing the internal quality assurance. Among its duties, it supervises the implementation of quality policies across all academic and research activities, coordinates the work of the *Standing Committee for Quality Standards Assurance*, and ensures that quality processes align with the institution's mission and strategic objectives.

Board of Administration: The highest collegial administrative body accountable for maintaining the financial and administrative sustainability of the university. Its responsibilities include approving the strategic development plan, the budget, and regulations for resource management, as well as supervising their implementation to guarantee fulfillment of the institutional mission.

Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU): The principal body tasked with monitoring and evaluating quality processes within the university. It regularly conducts assessments, prepares quality reports, supports faculties and departments in implementing national and international standards, and collaborates closely with the *Standing Committee for Institutional and Program Quality Standards Assurance* to harmonize quality assurance procedures.

Standing Committee for Institutional and Program Quality Standards Assurance: A dedicated committee working alongside the IQAU and the Academic Senate to ensure that quality standards are integrated and enforced at all institutional levels. It performs independent evaluations to identify areas for improvement, provides recommendations for adjustments, and ensures compliance with both national and international standards.

Faculties and Departments: The primary and basic academic units responsible for implementing and monitoring quality policies at the program and teaching levels. Their duties include executing approved policies, collecting student feedback, and assuring quality in accordance with national and international standards.

Student and Alumni Councils: Structures providing valuable feedback to improve the academic and professional experience. Students actively participate in quality assurance processes through committee involvement, while alumni contribute by assessing the impact of education received and supporting program development.

3.3 Coordination Mechanisms

An effective quality assurance system necessitates well-structured coordination among all relevant units and bodies. In this context, Western Balkans University (WBU) implements specific mechanisms to ensure collaboration and operational efficiency:

Structured Linkages: A coordinated network among the *Standing Committee for Institutional and Program Quality Standards Assurance*, the *Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU)*, and academic units facilitates effective information exchange and strategic alignment.

Periodic Meetings: Regular meetings are convened among key units to review progress, identify challenges, and share best practices. These gatherings provide an open platform for discussion and continuous improvement.

Integrated Reporting and Monitoring: Faculties and departments submit periodic reports to the IQAU, which processes the data and translates it into actionable recommendations for quality enhancement. This process guarantees transparency, accountability, and systematic tracking of progress.

4. QUALITY POLICIES FOR EDUCATION

Western Balkans University (WBU) is committed to ensuring high-quality standards in the design and implementation of academic programs. This commitment supports effective teaching and student learning, aligned with national and international quality codes and standards, as well as with the institution's established best practices.

4.1 Design and Evaluation of Study Programs

The design and evaluation of study programs at Western Balkans University are conducted in full compliance with national and international quality standards, ensuring that each program is relevant to labor market needs and meets student expectations.

Program Design Standards: Study programs are developed based on a well-defined methodology that includes a thorough labor market analysis, benchmarking against similar national and international programs, and consultation with relevant stakeholders. The WBU Strategic Plan 2023–2030 emphasizes the integration of innovation and contemporary practices in the development of study programs.

Review and Approval Process: Every new or revised program undergoes a detailed review process led by the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (NJSBC), which conducts

internal evaluations and provides recommendations for improvement. The final approval of programs is granted by the Academic Senate, ensuring alignment with national and international standards. The Permanent Commission for Quality Assurance Standards plays a supporting role by ensuring that the established standards are consistently applied throughout the review and development process, in accordance with the university's mission.

4.2 Evaluation of Teaching and Learning

Western Balkans University adopts an integrated and comprehensive approach to evaluating teaching, learning, and study programs through multiple mechanisms.

Evaluation mechanisms for faculty and courses/modules: Teaching evaluation is conducted via periodic student questionnaires, peer observations, and self-assessments by academic staff. The Internal Quality Assurance Unit (NJSBC) analyzes this data and formulates recommendations for improvement. The Quality Code for Higher Education Institutions in Albania emphasizes the importance of transparency and inclusivity in evaluation processes, a principle thoroughly reflected in WBU's internal documentation.

Student involvement in evaluations: Students play a central role in the evaluation process by providing valuable feedback on the quality of teaching and course content. This feedback is systematically collected and reviewed by relevant committees to ensure that student needs and expectations are adequately addressed.

Assessment of impact and achievement of program objectives:

Graduating students: Questionnaires administered to students nearing graduation gather data on the fulfillment of their expectations and overall experience within the program.

Alumni: Surveys directed at graduates with labor market experience evaluate the applicability of knowledge acquired during their studies in real work environments.

Employers: Employer questionnaires assess alumni performance based on the skills and knowledge gained through WBU's study programs.

4.3 Monitoring and Improvement of Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes serve as a critical indicator of the effectiveness of study programs and teaching quality. Accordingly, Western Balkans University has established a detailed system for the monitoring and enhancement of these outcomes.

Monitoring processes: Faculties and departments submit periodic reports on student performance, which are analyzed by the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (NJSBC) to identify challenges and areas requiring improvement. These reports include data on student achievements, the extent to which learning outcomes are met, and the effectiveness of teaching practices.

Improvement of outcomes: Based on the collected data, the Academic Senate and the Standing Commission develop strategies aimed at improving learning outcomes. This process involves revising course/module content, teaching methodologies, and academic resources to enhance overall educational quality.

5. POLICIES ON RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Western Balkans University places particular emphasis on the management of human resources, infrastructure, and technology, as well as on the development of student support services. These policies are designed to ensure a dedicated and effective academic environment, in alignment with national and international quality standards.

5.1 Human Resource Management

Human resource management at Western Balkans University is founded on clear standards aimed at the recruitment and professional development of academic and administrative staff, promoting excellence and innovation.

Recruitment of academic and administrative staff: Recruitment processes are based on meritocracy and transparency. Candidates are evaluated according to their academic and professional competencies, in alignment with the requirements of the open positions. The WBU Statute emphasizes the importance of recruiting personnel who meet the highest standards of expertise.

Professional development of staff: WBU invests in continuous training for both academic and administrative personnel. Professional development programs include participation in international conferences, research projects, and training courses. The WBU Strategic Plan 2023–2030 highlights the importance of ongoing enhancement of staff skills and knowledge to support the institution's development.

5.2 Infrastructure and Technology

Western Balkans University aims to provide modern infrastructure and advanced technology to support teaching and research processes.

Standards for physical infrastructure: WBU develops and implements policies focused on creating suitable environments for teaching and research. These policies include the construction and equipping of lecture halls and laboratories with modern technology, in compliance with national and international standards. Through these efforts, WBU strives to ensure a safe and functional environment that fosters academic and research development.

Technology and digitalization: WBU establishes policies that promote the integration of advanced technology to support educational and administrative processes. The university has developed a modern technological infrastructure that provides easy access to academic resources and facilitates communication between students and staff. This includes the use of digital platforms for distributing learning materials, collecting feedback, and organizing supportive activities for teaching, always in accordance with the legal framework in Albania.

5.3 Development of Student Support Services

Student support services at Western Balkans University (WBU) constitute a fundamental pillar in ensuring a comprehensive academic experience and promoting student well-being.

Student Dean's Office: The Dean's Office plays a pivotal role in supporting students throughout their academic and social journey. It provides comprehensive counseling and assistance to help students overcome academic and personal challenges, ensuring an inclusive and accessible approach. Furthermore, the office organizes cultural and social activities that encourage student participation and engagement in university life, fostering a balanced academic and social environment.

Advisory and Support Services: WBU maintains a dedicated office to assist students in understanding, complying with, and implementing university policies, procedures, and regulations. This office guides students in effectively utilizing campus resources and supports them through diverse aspects of student life. Additionally, each department designates staff focused on student support and advising, serving as a liaison between academic units and the Dean's Office to facilitate timely responses to student needs and academic or extracurricular issues.

International Student Services: WBU implements specialized programs to support the integration of international students into academic and cultural university life. These services include assistance with accommodation, academic orientation, and cultural adaptation, thereby ensuring a successful and inclusive experience for international students.

Psycho-social and Health Services: WBU prioritizes creating a supportive and inclusive environment to ensure that every student experiences a positive and healthy academic journey. The ‘Psycho-social and Health Services Office’ focuses on the physical and psychological well-being of students, offering specialized health assistance and support. In coordination with all departments and academic and administrative staff, this office identifies psycho-social and health challenges, implements prevention strategies, provides necessary interventions, and refers critical cases to appropriate healthcare institutions for specialized care.

Financial Support Services: WBU offers financial assistance to students from all social backgrounds, including vulnerable groups, through merit-based scholarships. These scholarships aim to support academically outstanding students throughout their Bachelor’s and Master’s studies. The ‘Scholarships Office’ manages the entire scholarship awarding process, including applications, documentation collection, organizing interviews and committee meetings, and institutional communication with students and departments. It also oversees contract signing and coordinates with the Finance Office to implement scholarship decisions.

Extracurricular Services: The ‘Student Clubs Coordination Office’ supports and facilitates student organization and activation of clubs across various academic, social, cultural, artistic, and sports domains. This office coordinates, supports, and promotes student clubs both on and off campus and collaborates with university governance bodies and local and national institutions for involvement in promotional events and societal campaigns.

Career Services: The ‘Career Development Office’ assists students in their preparation and integration into the labor market by establishing effective connections with public and private institutions, nationally and internationally. Through organizing Career Workshops, Career Fairs, and dedicated training sessions, the office helps students develop professional and personal skills necessary for their success. This initiative facilitates the attraction of qualified staff by institutional partners and ensures a sustainable bridge between students and the labor market.

Alumni Services: The ‘Alumni Office’ acts as a liaison between the university and its graduates. This office organizes activities, seminars, workshops, conferences, and events aimed at strengthening relationships, promoting lifelong learning, and providing bilateral counseling for sustainable development. It contributes to forming engaged and inclusive citizens who add value to the university community, local society, and the global environment.

6. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION POLICIES

Western Balkans University (WBU) is committed to advancing scientific research and promoting innovation through a strategic approach grounded in both national and international standards. These policies aim to strengthen the university's role as a center of excellence in research and knowledge transfer.

6.1 Strategic priorities and objectives

Western Balkans University (WBU) has established a set of strategic priorities and objectives for scientific research, which include:

Promoting problem-oriented research addressing social and economic challenges:

WBU aims to contribute to sustainable societal development through projects aligned with both local and global needs.

Developing international collaborations: Through partnerships with universities and research institutions worldwide, WBU seeks to integrate into the global network of research and innovation.

Supporting interdisciplinary research: By fostering cooperation among faculties and departments, the university creates opportunities for innovative projects with significant impact.

Engaging students and staff in research activities: Both students and academic personnel are actively involved in research projects, benefiting from practical experience and the enhancement of research skills.

6.2 Quality assurance in research projects

Western Balkans University (WBU) has established a structured system to ensure quality in scientific research, guaranteeing that research projects meet the highest academic and ethical standards.

Project evaluation: Each research project undergoes a thorough assessment by the relevant committees to ensure clear objectives, appropriate methodology, and measurable impact.

Supervision and monitoring: Projects are regularly monitored to ensure that resources and research outcomes align with the institution's strategic priorities.

Research ethics: The university enforces strict protocols to ensure that research activities adhere to ethical standards, prevent plagiarism, and protect the rights of all participants.

6.3 Innovation and technology transfer

The promotion of innovation and technology transfer constitutes a key priority for Western Balkans University (WBU), ensuring that knowledge generated through research translates into practical benefits for society and the economy.

Innovation incubators and start-ups: The university supports the establishment of innovation incubators and start-ups, providing opportunities for students and staff to develop their ideas into successful projects.

Technology transfer: Through partnerships with industry and the private sector, WBU ensures that research outcomes are integrated into new technologies and processes that contribute to economic development.

Promotion of an innovation culture: The university organizes activities and programs that encourage creativity, entrepreneurship, and collaboration among students, staff, and external partners.

7. INCLUSION OF STUDENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Western Balkans University (WBU) has integrated the active involvement of students and stakeholders as a fundamental element of its quality assurance policies. This approach aims to ensure a comprehensive and transparent process that facilitates the continuous improvement of institutional standards and the academic experience.

7.1 Participation in Decision-Making Processes

In alignment with its quality assurance policies, WBU actively promotes the inclusion of stakeholders in strategic decision-making processes. The university engages students, alumni, employers, and industry partners to integrate labor market expectations into academic policies. Through representation in collegial bodies and specialized structures, stakeholders contribute to the development and implementation of policies that ensure the sustainable and quality advancement of study programs and all academic processes.

7.2 Feedback and Consultation Mechanisms

WBU has established structured mechanisms for collecting feedback and conducting consultative processes:

Periodic Surveys: Students, alumni, and employers are invited to complete surveys covering academic experience, program effectiveness, and labor market impact.

Forums and Public Meetings: The university organizes forums and meetings with stakeholders to share information and solicit suggestions for improving services and programs.

Analytical Reporting: Collected feedback is processed by relevant structures such as the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (NJSBC) and translated into concrete recommendations for improvement.

7.3 Policies Supporting Students from Vulnerable Groups

WBU implements clear policies to support students belonging to vulnerable groups, ensuring equality and inclusion:

Financial Support: The university provides scholarships and financial aid schemes for students from marginalized groups.

Academic Environment Adaptation: For students with disabilities, WBU guarantees full access to academic infrastructure and resources.

Psychological and Counseling Support: Counseling services assist students in coping with personal and academic challenges, ensuring a supportive environment for all.

8. CONTINUOUS MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND IMPROVEMENT

WBU has established an integrated system for the continuous monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of quality, following a structured approach aligned with national and international standards.

8.1 Continuous Improvement Cycle (PDCA)

WBU implements the internationally recognized PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) model as the foundation for the continuous improvement of all academic and administrative processes:

Plan: Strategic objectives, processes requiring improvement, and necessary resources are identified. This phase is based on data gathered from previous evaluation activities.

Do: Planned strategies and actions are executed at the institutional level, involving all relevant units.

Check: Achieved results are monitored and compared against the set objectives. This includes analysis of self-assessment reports, student feedback, and external evaluation outcomes.

Act: Based on monitoring results, corrective and adaptive measures are taken to ensure ongoing improvement.

8.2 Internal and External Evaluation

The quality assurance system at WBU is based on a balanced approach between internal and external evaluations, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of institutional processes.

Internal self-assessment procedures: WBU conducts periodic self-assessments to analyze internal performance in achieving strategic and quality objectives. This process includes:

- Preparation of detailed reports by the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (NJSBC).
- Collection and analysis of feedback from students, staff, and stakeholders.
- Evaluation of academic and administrative performance based on clear and measurable indicators.

Engagement of external evaluation agencies: To ensure transparency and objectivity, WBU collaborates with accredited agencies for external evaluations. This process encompasses:

- Assessment of the compliance of programs and processes with national and international standards.
- Preparation of improvement recommendations by independent experts.
- Implementation of recommendations aimed at enhancing the quality of services and institutional performance.

8.3 Reporting and Publication of Quality Results

WBU ensures transparency and accountability through regular reporting and publication of quality outcomes. This approach fosters institutional trust and enhances the engagement of all stakeholders.

Preparation of internal reports: Annually, the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (NJSBC) is responsible for drafting comprehensive reports on institutional performance and achievements in implementing quality policies. These reports provide continuous and objective analyses of the university's performance and include:

- **Academic staff evaluation:** Analysis of academic staff perceptions and feedback regarding the working environment, resources, and academic support.
- **Administrative staff evaluation:** Inclusion of administrative personnel in assessing the effectiveness of support structures and processes.
- **Student evaluation:** Feedback on the quality of teaching, support services, and overall student experience.
- **Semester and annual faculty performance reports:** Detailed analyses covering faculty performance at program, basic unit, main unit, and institutional levels. These reports assist in identifying achievements and areas for improvement.
- **Alumni evaluation:** Assessments from graduates aimed at analyzing the contribution of study programs to their professional preparation and employability. Alumni suggestions serve as a foundation for the continuous enhancement of academic program quality.

The reports also incorporate:

- Data on progress made in achieving strategic objectives.
- Results of self-assessments and external evaluations, including analyses of stakeholder feedback.
- Suggestions and recommendations for further improvements, which form the basis for the university's strategic and operational planning.

Publication of results: The university publishes summarized data on quality performance on its official website and in publicly accessible reports. This dissemination includes:

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to academic, research, and administrative outcomes.
- Updates on actions undertaken to improve quality.
- Results from external evaluation agencies, presented clearly and accessibly.

Engagement of stakeholders: Through the publication of results, WBU invites stakeholders—including students, staff, and the broader community—to participate in discussions aimed at further enhancing quality. This process ensures an inclusive approach and raises awareness of the critical importance of quality assurance.

9. MECHANISMS FOR IMPROVEMENT

WBU adopts a systematic approach to the continuous enhancement of quality by integrating action plans and implementing recommendations derived from evaluations. These mechanisms ensure that academic and administrative processes are consistently and effectively improved.

9.1 Development of Action Plans for Improvement

Following the analysis of internal self-assessments and external evaluations, the university develops detailed action plans aimed at addressing identified gaps and ensuring the achievement of strategic objectives. This process includes:

Identification of priorities: Based on analytical reports, the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (NJSBC) and relevant units determine the high-priority areas for improvement.

Definition of clear objectives: Each action plan contains specific, measurable, and achievable objectives aligned with the institution's strategies.

Resource allocation: Human, technological, and financial resources are assigned to action plans to ensure their successful implementation.

Progress monitoring: Each plan incorporates key performance indicators (KPIs) to track and assess progress toward meeting the objectives.

9.2 Integration of Technology in Processes

To support continuous improvement and enhance efficiency, WBU has adopted a technology-driven approach. The utilization of advanced technological tools based on Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning, and data analytics is a key mechanism for elevating educational quality, optimizing administrative processes, and fostering innovation. This integration is implemented through several core directions:

Use of AI-based tools: AI technologies enable personalized learning by adapting academic content to the needs and progress of students. These tools provide real-time feedback, assisting both students and staff in continuously improving performance.

Data-driven decision-making: By employing advanced data analytics platforms, the university can promptly identify and address challenges. For instance, student performance analysis allows for the recognition of areas requiring targeted interventions, aiming to provide direct support for academic enhancement.

Optimization of administrative processes: Digital technologies facilitate the automation and simplification of administrative procedures, reducing the time and resources required for their execution. This approach increases service efficiency and improves the overall experience for students and staff.

Fostering innovation through technology: WBU encourages the adoption of new technologies to develop innovative projects by students and staff, creating an environment that stimulates creativity and practical skills development.

9.3 Implementation of Recommendations from Evaluations

Recommendations derived from self-assessments and external evaluations constitute a key component for institutional process improvement. WBU has established clear mechanisms to ensure their successful implementation:

Involvement of relevant units: Recommendations are communicated to the responsible units for implementation, including faculties, departments, administrative units, and decision-making bodies.

Setting clear deadlines: Each recommendation is accompanied by a defined timeline to ensure that necessary actions are completed within specified timeframes.

Supervision by the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (NJSBC): NJSBC monitors the implementation of recommendations, ensuring their integration into the university's operational and strategic processes.

Reporting on outcomes: Following the implementation, NJSBC prepares dedicated reports that reflect the impact of the recommendations, and the improvements achieved.

These mechanisms guarantee that improvement processes are structured, transparent, and supported by data and in-depth analyses. By following a comprehensive and systematic approach, WBU ensures the continuous evolution of its service quality, meeting the expectations of students, staff, and stakeholders.

10. CONCLUSIONS

The Quality Policies of Western Balkans University (WBU) have been developed to support continuous development and the achievement of the highest standards across all aspects of institutional activities. These policies represent a clear commitment to ongoing improvement, stakeholder engagement, and the integration of national and international standards into every facet of management and academic processes.

Summary of the Objectives and Expectations from the Quality Policies

The primary objective of the quality policies is to ensure that WBU provides high-quality education grounded in scientific research and innovation. Within this framework, the university aims to:

Meet the expectations of students and stakeholders: Through well-structured academic programs and continuous support for the personal and professional success of students.

Foster a culture of quality: Engaging all actors in the processes of quality assurance and enhancement contributes to creating an inclusive and accountable academic environment.

Ensure transparency and accountability: Through regular reporting and publication of quality outcomes, thereby enhancing the institution's credibility and reputation both nationally and internationally.

University's Commitment to Continuous Quality and Improvement

Western Balkans University remains dedicated to a continuous improvement approach, following a structured process that includes:

Implementation of effective quality assurance policies: Through regular monitoring and adapting policies to meet the evolving needs of stakeholders and the labor market.

Adoption of a comprehensive and systematic approach: By coordinating decision-making bodies and involving students, staff, and external partners.

Alignment with best international practices: By adopting the latest standards and guidelines in higher education and scientific research.

WBU regards quality not as a static goal but as a dynamic and ongoing process. In doing so, the university not only addresses current needs but also prepares for future challenges and opportunities, maintaining its position as a leader in higher education.