

	Slovak Medical University in Bratislava Limbová 12 833 03 Bratislava 37	Internal Regulation No.: 7/2021 Printout: No.: 1 No of pieces: 5pcs Storage Period:10 y.
	The Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance System of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava	



INTERNAL REGULATION No.: 7/2021

Slovak Medical University in Bratislava (further only “SMU in Bratislava”) in accordance with § 15-par1 letter b) of the Act no. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education and on amendments to certain laws as amended and after negotiation within the Academic Senate of SMU in Bratislava and approval by the Scientific Board of SMU in Bratislava, an internal regulation on the Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance System of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava is issued.

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Article 1

Introductory provisions

This internal regulation defines the rules for ensuring and evaluating the Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance System of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava ("university" in the appropriate grammatical form) in accordance with Art. 6 of the university statute, § 15 par. 1 letter b) of the Act No. 131/2002 Coll. On Higher Education and on amendments to certain laws as amended, § 3 of the Act No.: 269/2018 Coll. on Quality Assurance of Higher Education and amending of the Act No. 343/2015 Coll. on public procurement and on the amendment of certain laws as amended. It is further based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area ESG 2015¹⁾ and the standards of the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education.

Article 2

The Scope of IQAS

- (1) The main mission of the Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance System of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava (hereinafter referred to as "IQAS") is the transparent, fair, professionally founded, objective and independent assessment and approval of the study programmes of the individual faculties of the university.
- (2) Another mission of IQAS is to support the development of:
 - a) the university in the national and European context,
 - b) the quality of higher education, scientific, research, development, innovation and other creative activities aimed at the development of the student in preparation for the performance of the medical profession and life in the current globalized society,
 - c) professional, linguistic, pedagogical and digital skills and transferable competencies of university teachers and the development of researchers,
 - d) cooperation with students, employers and other relevant stakeholders.
- (3) The scope of the IQAS also includes assessment of ²⁾:
 - a) compliance of the study programme with the standards for the study programme
 - b) compliance of the proposal for a new study programme or proposal for modification of the study programme with the formalized processes of IQAS of higher education at the university
 - c) the fact, whether the content and level of higher education in the study programme meets the sector-specific expectations of employers
 - d) the fact, whether the level of qualification that students acquire by successfully completing of the study programme is clearly specified and communicated therein
 - e) the profile of the graduate and the education outputs defined and communicated within this framework, which are verifiable, correspond to the mission of the university, the relevant level of the qualification framework and the field of knowledge according to the relevant field of study in which their graduates obtain a higher education

¹ Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area – ESG 2015

² Art. 3 of Standards for Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance System

- f) the fact, whether the study programme clearly links education with creative activities, while the level and focus of creative activities corresponds to the level of higher education and educational
- g) the fact that the study programme provides students with transferable skills that affect their personal development and can be used in their future career and life as active citizens in democratic societies.

Article 3

Glossary of basic terms in IQAS

- (1) IQAS is a consistently linked set of policies, structures and processes through which the university and its faculties ensure and develop the quality of fulfilling their mission in the field of higher education, creative activities and other related activities
- (2) Basic definitions according to the standards for IQAS³:
 - a) Quality assurance internal system policies are a set of principles that guide the activities of the university and its staff, students and external stakeholders to achieve continuous quality assurance and the development of higher education and related activities.
 - b) (The) internal system processes are rules, regulations, codes, formalized procedures, and a sequence of steps through which the quality and development of higher education and related activities are ensured.
 - c) (The) structures of the internal system are authorities, departments of the institution, contracted partners and persons with specified competencies and responsibilities for a defined extent of quality assurance in higher education and in other related activities.
 - d) The quality means the fulfilment of standards through which the university, its faculties and other parts carry out activities in accordance with its mission and goals
 - e) The quality assurance means systematic and structured care for the quality of education, scientific research, innovation and other creative activity, its maintenance and improvement
 - f) The quality assessment means verification of the degree of fulfilment of goals and compliance with standards by carrying out activities and activities that are predetermined for the university,
 - g) The creative activity is research activity, development activity or other creative activity of the university that is relevant from the point of view of fulfilling the mission of the university, especially in relation to the learning objectives and outcomes.
 - h) Stakeholders are the persons within the university, communities or organizations that may have an influence on or be influenced by the educational process, research and other related activities. A distinction is made between internal stakeholders (students and teaching staff) and external stakeholders (employers and other representatives of the relevant sectors of the economy and society, university graduates, domestic and foreign university partners, etc.)
 - i) The evidence is a verifiable record, a statement of a verifiable fact or other information proving the fulfilment/non-fulfilment of a criterion provided by the university, or verifiable by the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as "SAAHE") from available sources,
 - j) A criterion is a specific requirement of the standard or its partial aspect, the fulfilment of which to the required extent is a prerequisite for the overall evaluation of the fulfilment of the relevant standard.

³ Art. 12 of Standards for Study Programmes.

Article 4

Ensuring and evaluation of IQAS

- (1) IQAS is modified and supplemented by several separate internal regulations of the university.
- (2) Ensuring and evaluation of IQAS stems from the definition of the university's mission and goals as stipulated in the Statute, long-term plan, internationalization, and other creative activity, which continuously respond to current stimuli of the academic community of the university. IQAS regulates the way of fulfilling the mission of the university in the field of higher education through:
 - a) strategies for ensuring the quality of higher education and the quality of research activity, development activity or other creative activity (hereinafter referred to as "creative activity" in the appropriate grammatical form) of the university,
 - b) processes of ensuring the quality of higher education and the quality of creative activity,
 - c) links between creative activity and higher education at the university in the relevant study programme and in the field of habilitation procedure and inaugural procedure.
- (3) The University ensures the quality of the provided higher education by implementing its own IQAS and its continuous development.
- (4) Part of the quality assurance policies and processes is the regular monitoring, evaluation and revision of IQAS, in which they participate all involved parties. As part of the mentioned processes, it is taken into account whether IQAS leads to the achievement of strategic goals in the field of quality assurance, which the university has determined in strategic documents, especially in the long-term plan.
- (5) While ensuring and evaluating of IQAS, the university cooperates with other universities and scientific institutions, public administration bodies, internal and external stakeholders, employers and other respective authorities.
- (6) Ensuring and evaluating IQAS is carried out according to the study programmes and scientific fields carried out at the university
- (7) IQAS regulates the rules:
 - a) for creation, approval, implementation and adjustment of each study programme, which:
 - a1) ensures consideration of the field of knowledge according to the relevant field of study in which graduates obtain higher education,
 - a2) regulates scope of the university's bodies or its faculties when approving the study programme,
 - a3) ensures the participation of representatives from students, employers, health care providers and other interested persons in the creation and modification of the study programme,
 - a4) ensures the definition of knowledge, skills and competences that the student should acquire during higher education (hereinafter referred to as "higher education outcomes" in the appropriate grammatical form) corresponding to the relevant level of the national qualification framework,
 - a5) ensures the fulfilment of the standards for the study programme,
 - b) for selection of teachers for individual subjects of the study programme,
 - c) for the admission procedure,
 - d) for approval of final theses supervisors,
 - e) for evaluations of students so that unjustified differences do not arise in similar cases,

- f) for monitoring and regular evaluation of the study programme, in which students, employers from the health sector and other involved parties also participate; in this monitoring and evaluation is/are taken into account:
 - f1) application of the latest knowledge of science and research to the content of the study programme,
 - f2) effectiveness of criteria and rules of students' assessment,
 - f3) the achieved results of higher education,
 - f4) results in student questionnaires about the quality of teaching and questionnaires about teachers,
 - f5) employability of graduates on the labour market
- g) for processing of appeals by which:
 - g1) the student seeks protection of his/her rights or interests protected by law, which he/she believes have been violated by the action or inaction of the university, or
 - g2) the student points out specific deficiencies in the activity or inactivity of the university, in particular a violation of legal regulations or a violation of the internal regulations of the university,
- h) for carrying out creative activities of the university,
- i) for cooperation with specialized teaching facilities in which practical teaching and clinical practice are carried out,
- j) for cooperation with external educational institutions participating in the implementation of the third-degree study programme and foreign partners,
- k) determining requirements for the selection of university teachers,
- l) for ensuring the professional development of university teachers and researchers,
- m) for verification of sufficient space, material conditions, information-communication technologies and personnel for the implementation of the study programme,
- n) for collection, analysis and use of information necessary for the effective implementation of the study programme,
- o) for regular publication of current, adequate and qualitative information about the study programme and its graduates.

Article 5

The Validity Span

- (1) IQAS is subject to regular revisions held at intervals of at least once in every two years and immediately after:
 - a) legislative changes affecting the subject of the document,
 - b) implementation of organizational changes at the university,
 - c) change of powers and responsibilities within the IQAS,
 - d) the occurrence of such fact, the non-incorporation of which in this document, could mislead its user,
 - e) completion of the standard length of study of the study programme.

- (2) The assessment of IQAS by SAAVŠ is at least once in every ten years⁴⁾. Continuous supervision of the fulfilment of standards for IQAS is carried out by SAAVŠ at least once in every two years⁵⁾ based on data from:
- a) evaluation of the level of the university in its educational activity and in the field of creative activity reviewed by the Scientific Board of the SMU in Bratislava,
 - b) evaluation of the level of the university's faculties in their educational activity and in the field of creative activity reviewed by the Scientific Board of the faculty,
 - c) registers according to § 18 par. 4 of the Act on Quality Assurance.

Article 6

Quality assurance internal system policies

- (1) In its strategic management, the university consistently applies quality assurance policies and has accepted responsibility for the quality of higher education provided in all faculties and parts of the university, at all levels and in all aspects. It was established by Act No. 401/2002 Coll. and by supplementing of Act No. 131/2001 Coll. on universities effective since September 1, 2002 as a state university operating in the health sector. It provides, according to Art. 6, letter f) of the Statute of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, the education of health workers and the implementation of scientific research activities. One of its main priorities is the monothematic nature of education in health professions in all three levels of higher education, including habilitation and inaugural procedures and further education of health workers in specialized studies and certification preparations, as well as lifelong education in Slovakia.
- (2) In its strategic documents, especially in the long-term plan, the university has clearly defined strategic goals in terms of its educational activities, creative activities and other related activities that are in line with its mission⁶.
- (3) The strategic goals of the university respect the basic principles, moral principles, civic and social responsibility, education in the spirit of democratic values and leading students to creative, critical and independent thinking. They are heading to y. 2024 with a view to y. 2030 to the profiling of the university at the national level as a monothematically focused state higher education institution preparing health workers for the needs of medical practice based on a social order and the profiling of the university as an institution meeting international standards for education in health professions, including scientific and research activities linked to study programmes of higher education (undergraduate) and further education.
- (3) The mission of the university is to ensure the highest possible level of higher education and scientific knowledge in the development, promotion and protection of health in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment of diseases and taking care of patients with the aim of protecting and developing health as one of the most valuable human values. An integral part of the university's mission is the implementation of the latest knowledge from health sciences into life and the fulfilment of the tasks of the state health policy with focus to strategic goals of the state in the field of health care, science, research and education of health workers and other workers working in the health sector.

⁴ §24 par. 1 Act No. 269/2018 Coll.

⁵ §24 par. 2 Act No. 269/2018 Coll.

⁶ Long-term plan of SMU development for y.2019-2024

- (4) Ensuring and evaluating of IQAS is carried out transparently in accordance with material, professional and ethical criteria, or principles that are contained in the relevant internal regulations of the university.
- (5) The University has established and formalized quality assurance policies and follows them consistently. For this purpose, the Board of the Internal Quality Assurance System at the Slovak Medical University (hereinafter referred to as the "University Quality Board") has been created and other structures and processes are linked into a coherent internal system that includes the entire institution. The powers, scope and responsibility of individual structures, directors, other employees and other involved parties for ensuring the quality of higher education and related activities are defined in IQAS.
- (6) The competence and responsibility of the individual structures for ensuring the quality of higher education at the university belong to:
 - a) rector and vice-rectors,
 - b) Board of the Internal Quality Assurance System at the Slovak Medical University,
 - c) Support Centre of Internal Quality System of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava,
 - d) The Scientific Board of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava,
 - e) The Academic Senate of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava,
 - f) Deans and Vice-deans of faculties,
 - g) Department Heads and Heads of Institutes,
 - h) Scientific Boards of faculties,
 - i) Academic Senates of faculties,
 - j) Programme Boards,
 - k) Persons responsible for delivery, development and quality assurance of study programme,
 - l) Teachers of profile and other courses,
 - m) Quaestor,
 - n) Secretaries of faculties,
 - o) Other head staff according to the Statute of the SMU in Bratislava⁷.

Article 7

Internal evaluation of the quality of higher education

- (1) Assurance and internal evaluation of the quality of higher education respects the internal culture, specificity and environment of the faculties in the field of health education and scientific fields carried out at the university.
- (2) The rules, procedures and evaluation criteria are published in the public part of the university's website, which enables the public to access the formalized policies and processes and other documentation of IQAS. The method of allowing the access to the information respects the specific needs of persons with disabilities. IQAS documentation is published in all languages of the study programme.
- (3) The evaluation is carried out transparently, based on professional criteria and ethical principles.
- (4) The assessment is supported by verified qualitative and quantitative data and based on objective facts.

⁷ Art. 9 par. 5 letter e) of the Statute of the SMU in Bratislava

- (5) If an evaluation of the faculty's activities is undertaken, other parts of the university that have an impact on its results also participate in the evaluation.
- (6) Evaluation is supported by feedback from teachers, researchers, other employees, students, graduates, employers and other involved parties.
- (7) An integral part of the evaluation are recommendations for the correction of identified deficiencies within the stipulated period and their subsequent control.

Article 8

Resources of ensuring and evaluation IQAS

- (1) Assurance and evaluation of IQAS is in general based on:
 - a) strategic, conceptual, balance sheet, analytical and other documents and internal regulations of the university, faculties and other parts of the university,
 - b) data from information systems and resources available at the university, faculties and other parts of the university and data from other public sources,
 - c) own evaluation reports regarding IQAS,
 - d) results of student questionnaires on quality of teaching and teachers,
 - e) initiatives/complaints of students and employers,
 - f) indicators monitored in the long-term plan and annual reports of the university.
- (2) Ensuring and evaluating of IQAS is further based on the regulations approved by the University Quality Board, which specify the requirements and procedures for enduring and evaluating of IQAS, as well as regulations according to Art. 9 par. 1 of this internal regulation.

Article 9

Ensuring and evaluating of educational activities in the study programme within IQAS

- (1) The following legislative frameworks and internal regulations of the university mainly determine the minimum requirements for ensuring and evaluating IQAS educational activities of the university:
 - a) Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education and on amendments and supplements to certain laws as amended,
 - b) Act No. 269/2018 Coll. on Quality Assurance of Higher Education and amending Act no. 343/2015 Coll. on public procurement and on the amendment of certain laws, as amended,
 - c) Government regulation no. 296/2010 Coll. on the professional competence for the performance of the health profession, the method of further education of health workers, the system of specialized fields and the system of certified work activities as amended,
 - d) Decree of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic No. 244/2019 Coll. on the system of study fields of the Slovak Republic,
 - e) Decree of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic No. 614/2002 Coll. on credit system in the study as amended,
 - f) Decree of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic No. 95/2018 Coll., which determines the scope of nursing practice provided by a nurse independently, independently based on a doctor's indication and in cooperation with a doctor, and the scope of midwifery practice provided by a midwife independently, independently based on a doctor's indication and in cooperation with a doctor,
 - g) Decree of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic No. 321/2005 Coll. on the scope of practice in some health professions as amended,

- h) Decree of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic No. 397/2020 Coll. on the central register of evidence of publishing activity and the central register of evidence of artistic activity,
 - i) Internal regulations of the university.
- (2) The support for the development of the quality of educational activities in the study programme is carried out through:
 - a) monitoring and evaluation of the study programme,
 - b) feedback from members of the academic community and graduates on the quality of teaching, study organization, study background and infrastructure,
 - c) evaluation of final theses,
 - d) monitoring the conditions, progress and results of the admission procedure and study, including ensuring equal access to the admission procedure and study and employability of graduates of the study programme,
 - e) continuous evaluation of the control stages of study within the individual study programmes.
 - (3) Ensuring and evaluating IQAS educational activities of the study programme is carried out through the internal evaluation report of the study programme, which is undertaken by persons responsible for the delivery, development and quality assurance of the study programme at least once in every two years during the period of validity of its accreditation.
 - (4) The requirements of the overall organization and the process of ensuring and evaluating the educational activities of the IQAS in study programmes are governed by the internal regulation for elaborating, editing, approving and submitting of applications to the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education for the granting of accreditation of the study programme and fields of the habilitation inaugural proceedings.
 - (5) Interest in the study, conditions, course and results of the admission procedure, monitoring of the course and results of the study takes place mainly on the basis of data from the university's modular academic information system, feedback from students, graduates and evaluations of state examination boards as well as employers.

Article 10

Ensuring and evaluation of creative activities within IQAS

- (1) Assurance and Evaluation of IQAS of university creative activities is carried according to:
 - a) groups of scientific fields with related content to the study programme in question,
 - b) the specifics of individual fields (as a rule, it takes place in the form of the international comparison),
 - c) expert assessment of the results of creative activity by independent, internationally recognized experts
 - d) indicators of the quality of creative activity,
 - e) evaluation reports on creative activity of faculties.
- (2) When ensuring and evaluating IQAS of creative activity, it is monitored whether the given field of science is excellent in an international or, in justified cases, in a national comparison. As a rule, this ensuring and assessment takes place on the basis of comparing the outputs of creative activity with significant foreign or domestic universities or research institutions.

- (3) The report on creative activity, takes into account the specifics of the faculty and scientific fields where it was carried out, and usually describes and evaluates:
 - a) mission, vision and goals in the field of creative activity,
 - b) strategic management of the development of creative activity,
 - c) measures taken to support the development of creative activity,
 - d) connecting creative activity with educational activity,
 - e) staffing and qualification growth of creative workers,
 - f) student scientific activity with emphasis on PhD study programme,
 - g) undertaken university (internal), national and foreign scientific projects,
 - h) cooperation of individuals and workplaces at the university, national and international levels,
 - i) the most significant achieved results of the implemented creative activity,
 - j) method and results of internal evaluation of creative activity,
 - k) strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks in the field of creative activity.
- (4) The report on creative activity is elaborated from the following documents:
 - a) report on educational activities,
 - b) report on research and science,
 - c) evaluation of internationalization,
 - d) other internal documents and internal regulations of the university.
- (5) The report on creative activity is drawn up by the relevant faculty of the university. The mentioned report is processed by the Programme Board of the respective faculty, and then the chairman of the Programme Board of the faculty forwards it to the chairman of the University Quality Board for further processing with the aim of ensuring and evaluating IQAS of creative activities at the university in accordance with quality standards.
- (6) The Scientific Board of the university may also discuss/process the report on creative activity.
- (7) The report on creative activity is regularly published and updated in the public part of the university website.
- (8) The report on creative activity serves as a basis for the development of scientific departments, especially in relation to the preparation of the university's long-term plan and the support of science and research.

Article 11

Ensuring and evaluation of related activities within IQAS

- (1) Ensuring and evaluating of IQAS of related activities means evaluating those activities that support the educational and creative activities of the university.
- (2) As a rule, related activities are:
 - a) organizational management of the university,
 - b) use of university resources (especially personnel and financial ones),
 - c) infrastructure and material equipment of the university,
 - d) IT systems to support university activities,
 - e) information and counselling services of the university,
 - f) university library services,
 - g) publishing and editing activities of the university,

- h) accommodation services for students.
- (3) When ensuring and evaluating related activities, mainly the activities of other workplaces and purpose-built facilities of the university are assessed.

Article 12

Ensuring and evaluation of activities of faculties and other parts of university within IQAS

- (1) The rector of the university assigns the vice-rector for the internal quality system and accreditation with the coordination of activities related to the provision and evaluation of the university's IQAS.
- (2) Assurance and evaluating IQAS activities of faculties or other parts of the university is carried out in such a way that the requirements of Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on universities and on amendments to certain laws as amended, Act No. 269/2018 Coll. on quality assurance in higher education and amending Act no. 343/2015 Coll. on public procurement and on the amendment of certain laws, as amended, Standards of the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (Standards for the Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance System; Standards for the Study Programme; Standards for the Habilitation Proceedings and Proceedings for the Appointment of Professors, other legal regulations related to the activities of the university, internal regulations of the university or relevant measures of the university rector.
- (3) Assurance and evaluation of IQAS activities of faculties or other parts of the university beyond the scope of this internal regulation is determined by the internal regulation of the relevant faculty.
- (4) The dean of the faculty establishes a Board for the faculty's internal quality assurance system and usually assigns one of the vice-deans to coordinate activities related to the assurance and evaluation of the faculty's IQAS.

Article 13

Final provisions

- (1) This internal regulation was reviewed by the Academic Senate of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava on October 7, 2021.
- (2) This internal regulation was approved by the Scientific Board of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava on October 21, 2021.
- (3) This internal regulation as well as its amendments and supplements become valid from the date of registration by the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic in accordance with § 45 par. 4 letter a) of the Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education and on the amendment of certain laws, and effective from the date of entry into force of the decision on its registration by the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic.
- (4) This internal regulation is archived in printed form at the rectorate of SMU in Bratislava and published in electronic form on the website of the public part of SMU www.szu.sk.

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