



MANUAL

FOR THE INTERNAL PERIODIC ASSESSMENT OF  
THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

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## 1 Internal Quality Assurance and Improvement System

Ensuring and improving the quality and success of teaching at Algebra University is given a central position because only by accepting high quality as a work model is it possible to ensure the long-term prosperity of Algebra University. The internal quality assurance and improvement system developed within the University is clear, documented and transparent and comprehensively covers all aspects of work. It recognises the interests of students and adult education learners, but also employees, employers, the national economy and the national and European strategic development guidelines. The internal quality assurance and improvement system appropriately includes students, learners, employees, employers and other relevant stakeholders, providing them with clear functions and influence on all processes taking place at Algebra University. Work procedures, powers and responsibilities are prescribed by the system through appropriate normative acts.

The body of the internal quality assurance and improvement system is the Quality Committee of the Senate of Algebra University (hereinafter: Quality Committee), which shares responsibility for quality assurance and improvement in all areas of activity of Algebra University with the University Senate, other bodies of the Senate and organisational units responsible for promoting quality within the framework of their activity. The Quality Committee monitors the implementation of activities aimed at continuous quality improvement and ensures the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system at the Algebra University.

The general act regulating the internal quality assurance and improvement system at Algebra University is the Book of Regulations on the Quality Assurance System. Internal periodic assessment of the internal quality assurance system is carried out by the Internal Assessment Committee. The Internal Assessment Committee is an *ad hoc* body appointed by the Rector for the purposes of implementing the internal assessment procedure.

The Internal Assessment Committee applies the Manual for the Implementation of the Internal Periodic Assessment of the Internal Quality Assurance and Improvement System when carrying out periodic internal assessment.

## 2 Internal Periodic Assessment

The internal periodic assessment of the internal quality assurance system is carried out at the level of the institution and includes the areas of higher education, scientific-research activities and artistic activities as well as the area of adult education. The purpose of the internal periodic assessment is twofold and includes the assessment of the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system at Algebra University and the assessment of the level of quality of activities according to the evaluation areas. These two different but complementary purposes stem from the conceptual difference and specificity of the field of higher education and the field of adult education. The purpose of internal assessment in higher education is to determine the level of development of the internal system which is the basis for quality activities of the institution, while the purpose of internal assessment in adult education is to conduct a self-evaluation of the level of the quality of the institution's activities.

Since the measuring instruments in quality assurance in higher education and in adult education are complementary, for the sake of consistency in evaluating the various elements of the integrated quality assurance system of Algebra University and creating a complete picture of the internal system, for the purposes of implementing internal assessment, a Framework of Standards was created according to evaluation areas (Table 1.1. ) as an integrated instrument that includes European and national standards in quality assurance in higher education and in adult education, namely:

- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015)
- Quality Standards for the Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions in the Re-accreditation Procedure of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (AZVO, 2023)
- Guidelines for the Implementation of External Evaluation of Adult Education Institutions of the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (ASOO, 2023).

The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015) cover ten evaluation areas as follows:

- ESG 1.1. Quality assurance policy
- ESG 1.2. Creating and approving the programme
- ESG 1.3. Student-centred learning, teaching performance and evaluation
- ESG 1.4. Enrolment and advancement of students, recognition and certification
- ESG 1.5. Teaching staff
- ESG 1.6. Learning resources and student support
- ESG 1.7. Information management
- ESG 1.8. Informing the public
- ESG 1.9. Continuous monitoring and periodic revision of the programme
- ESG 1.10. Periodic external quality assurance

Each of the ten mentioned areas contains one quality standard to which the guidelines intended for higher education institutions in building their internal quality assurance systems are linked. European standards in higher education have been transferred into national, more elaborate, standards for external evaluation of higher education institutions within the framework of re-accreditation procedures.

The Quality Standards for the Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions in the Re-accreditation Procedure of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (AZVO, 2023) cover five areas as follows:

- VO 1. Higher education institution management and quality assurance
- VO 2. Study programmes and lifelong learning programmes
- VO 3. Student-centred learning and teaching – teaching process and support
- VO 4. Teaching capacities and infrastructure of the higher education institution
- VO 5. Scientific/artistic and professional activity.

Each area contains several standards as well as elements and indicators of the standards and sources for checking the fulfilment of the standards that serve the committees in internal or external evaluation in order to more easily assess the compliance of the activities of the higher education institution with the standard.

The Guidelines for the Implementation of External Evaluation of Adult Education Institutions of the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (ASOO, 2023) include five thematic units, i.e. quality areas as follows:

- OO 1. Management of the institution and quality assurance system
- OO 2. Educational programmes, learning and teaching
- OO 3. Student achievements and care of students
- OO 4. Human and material resources
- OO 5. Informing the public, communication and cooperation, integrity and ethics.

Conditions and obligations arising from the legislative framework are incorporated into the quality standards. For a better understanding of the quality standard, each quality standard is described in more detail by descriptors that describe the level of expected activities and processes for each quality standard, as well as indicators that help to better measure the level of compliance with the quality standard.

The framework of standards according to evaluation areas includes all evaluation areas prescribed by the Book of Regulations on the Quality Assurance System of Algebra University, which includes:

- activities, rules and procedures in permanently ensuring and promoting the quality of Algebra University,
- application of the system at all levels of external and internal assessment (self-evaluation),
- status and quality of professional and university study programmes,

- status and quality of professional development programmes in higher education,
- status and quality of adult education programs,
- enrolment of students in study programmes,
- enrolment of participants in professional development programs based on the principles of lifelong learning,
- enrolment of learners in adult education programmes,
- learning process and justification for awarding ECTS credits,
- learning process and justification for awarding ECVET credits,
- teaching process and quality of the teaching process,
- process of evaluating internships,
- process of evaluating student work and achieved learning outcomes,
- process of evaluating learner work and achieved learning outcomes,
- quality of resources and equipment for education,
- professional and scientific-research activities,
- IT equipment and up-to-date information system,
- administrative and technical resources,
- application of academic standards,
- cooperation with the industry,
- international cooperation,
- ensuring and improving the quality of work of the teaching staff,
- transparency of action.

### 3 Internal Assessment Criteria

The evaluation criteria, according to which the degree of development of the institution is categorised according to a particular standard are defined in such a way that they take into account the criteria of external evaluation in higher education and the criteria of external evaluation in adult education and are described as follows:

- I. level: PREPARATORY PHASE** – Unsatisfactory level of quality. The quality assurance system is being prepared (documentation in preparation, implemented agreements at the institution level). The institution did not meet the criteria necessary for a satisfactory level of quality. The standard is not met.
- II. level: INITIAL PHASE** – Satisfactory level of quality. The quality assurance system has been established, but it is not in operation (the basic documents of the system have been prepared). The institution is only partially in compliance with the quality standard, whereby some aspects covered by the standard are fulfilled and some are not. All conditions and obligations prescribed by the legislative framework have been met. In the scope of work covered by the standard, the

institution is recognised as an example of a satisfactory level of quality at the national level. The institution plans its activities, implements them, measures and analyses only some effects, but only partially proves the improvements implemented. The standard is minimally met.

**III. level: DEVELOPED PHASE** – High level of quality. The institution is largely in compliance with the quality standard and most aspects of the quality standard are met. All conditions and obligations prescribed by the legislative framework have been met. In the scope of work covered by the standard, the institution is recognised as an example of a high level of quality at the national level. The institution systematically plans activities from the scope of work covered by the standard, consistently implements and monitors them, measures and analyses their effects and proves the improvements made. The quality assurance system is in operation, an internal assessment has been carried out and the system is being improved based on the results of the internal assessment. The standard is satisfactorily fulfilled.

**IV. level: ADVANCED STAGE** – Very high level of quality. The institution is fully compliant with the quality standard and all, or almost all, aspects of the standard are met. All conditions and obligations prescribed by the legislative framework have been met. In the scope of work covered by the standard, the institution is recognised as an example of excellence at the national level. The institution systematically plans activities from the scope of work covered by the standard, consistently implements and monitors them, measures and analyses their effects and proves the improvements made. The quality assurance system is continuously improved based on the results of internal and external assessments. The standard is fully met.

At the end of the internal assessment, each standard is assigned one of four possible levels of development, i.e. a quality level rating: preparatory phase (unsatisfactory quality level), initial phase (satisfactory quality level), developed phase (high quality level) and advanced phase (very high quality level).

### 3.1 Determining the Degree of Development and Quality Level Rating

Determining the degree of development of the internal quality assurance system and the quality level rating is carried out by the assessment of:

1. all relevant documents of Algebra University
2. organisation and management of the institution and the effectiveness of the functioning of the quality assurance system
3. quality policies and quality assurance procedures
4. approvals, monitoring and periodic checks of programmes and qualifications
5. student evaluation procedure
6. quality of work of the teaching staff
7. quality and quantity of educational resources, teaching process and student support

8. information system and work transparency
9. quality of information to the public, cooperation with the media
10. impact of the university on regional and societal development
11. professional and scientific activities
12. quality of programmes, learning and teaching in higher education and adult education
13. student achievements and student care
14. human and material resources in the adult education system
15. informing the public, communication and cooperation, integrity and ethics in education
16. fulfilment of the key indicators defined by the university's strategic documents.

At the end of the assessment, an internal assessment report is written, in which the Committee makes observations and gives an assessment of the development of the system, an assessment of the quality level and recommendations for improvement.

### 3.2 Internal Assessment Committee

The Internal Assessment Committee is appointed by the Rector. Each member of the Committee is responsible for monitoring, collecting data and talking with system stakeholders for a specific segment of the assessment. The members of the Committee mutually agree on the responsibility for a particular segment of the assessment. Each member of the Committee undertakes the assessment independently.

## 4 Internal Periodic Quality Assurance Assessment

Before the start of the internal periodic assessment, Algebra University ensures that the members of the Committee are familiar with the institution and its internal quality assurance system, with the work methodology described in this Manual and with the evaluation standards and criteria that are applied in the internal assessment process. The internal assessment of the internal quality assurance system is carried out in four stages:

1. planning
2. assessment
3. report
4. follow-up

### 4.1 Planning

Planning is the first stage of the internal assessment in which the assessment activities are elaborated and the data collection plan is made.

During the planning phase, the following activities are carried out:

1. arranging of the internal assessment



2. creation of a roadmap and activity plan
3. distribution of the responsibility for a particular segment of the assessment
4. collection of data and other material

1. Arranging of the internal assessment

The Internal Assessment Committee discusses at its session the deadlines for the implementation of the internal assessment. No more than 3 months may pass from the beginning of the internal assessment, which begins with the agreement on the internal assessment, to the moment of the end of the assessment and subsequent monitoring.

2. Creation of a roadmap and activity plan

At the same session where it decides on the deadlines for the implementation of the internal assessment, the Internal Assessment Committee draws up a roadmap and activity plan in accordance with the phases of the internal assessment and the agreed deadlines.

3. Distribution of the responsibility for a particular segment of the assessment

The members of the Internal Assessment Committee agree on which segment of the assessment they will collect data and other materials for and undertake the assessment.

4. Collection of data and other material

The Internal Assessment Committee collects the agreed material and necessary data. The data is collected on a selected sample.

## 4.2 Assessment

Assessment is the second stage of the internal assessment, which in a narrower sense includes:

1. evaluation of the collected materials and data
2. conversation with responsible persons
3. analysing and synthesising the collected material, summarising observations, making conclusions and recommendations.

1. Evaluation of the collected materials and data

In accordance with the activity plan, the members of the Internal Assessment Committee collect materials and data in electronic form and, based on the collected data, make short notes on the basis of which they will request additional information, clarification of ambiguities and evidence of the activities carried out from the responsible persons.

2. Conversation with responsible persons

Each member of the Committee, depending on the collected data, holds meetings with responsible persons from whom additional information and clarifications, as well as evidence of the activities carried out, should be collected.

3. Analysing and synthesising the collected material, summarising observations, making conclusions and recommendations

Based on the documentation, the Committee prepares a draft report containing observations and conclusions that assess the degree of development and efficiency of the system and its compliance with standards.

### **4.3 Report and Recommendations for Improvement**

The third phase of the internal assessment includes the writing of the Report on the Internal Assessment of the Internal Quality Assurance System of Algebra University with recommendations for quality improvement. The Report and recommendations for improvement are prepared on the basis of collected documentation and data, observations, conversations with responsible persons and conclusions reached in the internal assessment procedure. The Report on the results of the internal assessment of the quality assurance system contains a rating of the level of development and efficiency of the system according to individual quality standards in the field of higher education and a rating of the level of quality according to individual quality standards in the field of adult education.

Based on the Report and recommendations for quality improvement, the Quality Committee prepares a proposal for an Action Plan for quality improvement for a two-year period, until the next periodic internal assessment of the internal quality assurance system. The Quality Committee submits the Report and draft Action Plan to the Senate. The Report on the Internal Assessment of the Quality Assurance System of Algebra University, upon approval by the Senate, is published on Algebra University's internal website.

### **4.4 Follow-up**

The follow-up phase lasts two years from the date of the adoption of the Report on the results of the internal assessment of the quality assurance system with recommendations for quality improvement and the Action Plan for quality improvement. During the follow-up phase, responsible persons carry out activities according to the Action Plan, which improves the quality of activities of Algebra University. The Quality Committee continuously monitors the implementation of the Action Plan, which it reports on to the Senate of Algebra University at least once a year.

Assistant Professor, Mislav Balković, PhD

RECTOR

Table 1. Framework of standards according to evaluation areas

ESG	HIGHER EDUCATION		ADULT EDUCATION	
<b>Management and quality assurance of the institution</b>				
1.1 1.7 1.8	1.1 (VO)	The <b>mission</b> of the higher education institution directs the operational planning process and the development of the quality assurance process.		
	1.2 (VO)	The higher education institution has defined the internal organisation and processes that are managed responsibly, <b>effectively</b> and efficiently, and the higher education stakeholders are included in the decision-making processes.	1.1. (OO)	The institution for adult education has established an <b>effective</b> management system of the institution.
			1.2. (OO)	The institution for adult education has established an effective internal quality assurance system that is part of <b>strategic</b> management.
	1.3 (VO)	The higher education institution ensures the <b>collection, analysis and use of the information</b> relevant to the effective management of all activities and publishes information about its work.	1.4. (OO)	The institution for adult education regularly <b>collects and analyses data</b> on all its activities and uses the obtained analyses for further improvements.
	1.4 (VO)	The higher education institution supports <b>ethics and transparency of work</b> , academic integrity and freedom, and prevents all forms of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination.	5.3. (OO)	The institution for adult education has developed mechanisms for preserving integrity as well as preventing and sanctioning all forms of unethical behaviour.
	1.5 (VO)	<b>The quality assurance system</b> is periodically improved and revised based on the results of regular internal and external quality assurance procedures.	1.3. (OO)	The institution for adult education regularly conducts a self-evaluation process and, based on the findings of the self-evaluation process, continuously <b>improves</b> the quality of all its activities.
	-	-	1.5. (OO)	The institution for adult education manages and keeps andragogic documentation and records and issues public documents in accordance with regulations.

Table 1. Framework of standards according to evaluation areas

Programmes, learning and teaching				
1.2 1.9	2.1. (VO)	The expected learning outcomes of a study programme are in accordance with the competences that the student should acquire upon completion of the studies and correspond to the <b>level of the HKO (Croatian Qualifications Framework)</b> .	2.1. (OO)	The adult education programme is based on the concept of learning outcomes and is aligned with the HKO.
	2.2 (VO)	The higher education institution has established processes for planning and developing new as well as monitoring and periodically <b>revising existing study programmes</b> . This ensures the contemporaneity of the programme and the alignment of the contents of the study programmes with the latest scientific/ artistic/professional knowledge.		
	2.3 (VO)	<b>Student internship</b> is an integral part of study programmes, where applicable.	2.3. (OO)	The institution for adult education provides work-based learning and the acquisition of <b>practical skills</b> (if applicable).
	2.4 (VO)	Quality assurance of <b>lifelong learning programmes</b> is part of the internal quality assurance system of the higher education institution. This ensures the contemporaneity of these programmes and their compliance with current social needs.		
1.3 1.4 1.6	3.1 (VO)	Learning and teaching are <b>student-centred</b> and ensure the achievement of all intended learning outcomes.	2.2. (OO)	Learning and teaching are <b>focused on the learner</b> and in accordance with the expected learning outcomes.
	3.2 (VO)	<b>Evaluation</b> and assessment are objective and consistent and ensure the achievement of all expected learning outcomes.	3.1. (OO)	<b>The evaluation</b> of the learner's achievements is objective and consistent and ensures the achievement of the expected learning outcomes.
	3.3 (VO)	<b>The conditions for enrolment and advancement of students, recognition and certification</b> are clear, publicly announced and consistently applied.	3.3. (OO)	The institution for adult education ensures <b>the enrolment</b> of learners with appropriate prior knowledge and motivation, encourages the inclusion of learners from vulnerable and underrepresented groups and takes care of learners' <b>progress</b> .
	3.4 (VO)	The higher education institution provides sufficient and easily accessible resources to <b>support</b> students.	3.4. (OO)	The institution for adult education has an appropriate learner <b>support</b> system that is adapted to the needs of a diverse population of learners
	3.5 (VO)	The higher education institution provides favourable conditions and support for students who participate in international outgoing and incoming <b>mobility programmes</b> .	5.2. (OO)	The institution for adult education actively cooperates with other institutions and organisations and encourages <b>mobility</b> and internationalisation, transfer of knowledge and innovation.
			3.2. (OO)	The institution for adult education <b>monitors learners after the end of their education</b> and improves the quality of its work in accordance with the findings.

Table 1. Framework of standards according to evaluation areas

Teachers, lecturers and resources				
1.5 1.6	4.1 (VO)	The higher education institution provides adequate <b>teaching capacities</b> .	4.1. (OO)	<b>The teaching capacities</b> are satisfactory for quality teaching and ensure the achievement of the expected learning outcomes.
	4.2 (VO)	<b>The recruitment, promotion and reappointment of teachers</b> are based on objective and transparent procedures that include evaluation of excellence.		
	4.3 (VO)	The higher education institution provides <b>support to teachers</b> in their professional development.		
	4.4 (VO)	The space, equipment and entire <b>infrastructure</b> are suitable for teaching, scientific/artistic and professional activities.	4.2. (OO)	<b>Spatial and material conditions</b> are satisfactory for the implementation of the adult education programme and ensure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
	4.5 (VO)	<b>The library</b> and its equipment and access to additional contents ensure the availability of literature and library services for the needs of quality studies and quality scientific-teaching/artistic-teaching activities.		
	4.6 (VO)	The higher education institution provides the necessary <b>financial resources</b> to carry out teaching, scientific and professional activities.	4.3. (OO)	The institution for adult education <b>manages finances</b> in a sustainable and development-oriented way.
Scientific, artistic and professional activity				
N/A	5.1 (VO)	The higher education institution is recognised for its scientific-research and/or artistic achievements in all scientific fields in which it conducts studies.		
	5.2 (VO)	The higher education institution is recognised for its professional achievements in all fields in which it conducts professional studies.		
	5.3 (VO)	The higher education institution affects the economy and society as a whole through the scientific and/or artistic work of its teachers.		
	5.4 (VO)	The doctoral studies of the higher education institution are aligned with the strategic programme of the higher education institution, contemporary scientific/artistic achievements, professional standards and internationally accepted standards of quality doctoral education, where applicable.		
	5.5 (VO)	The higher education institution applies the principles of open science in its activities, processes and acts.		
Informing the public and communication				
N/A	-	-	5.1. (OO)	The institution for adult education publishes information on all its activities and actively promotes the role and importance of adult education.