	EPOKA UNIVERSITY POLICY “ON CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMS”				
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1. PURPOSE AND APPLICATION

Quality improvement of study programs is fundamental to the mission of the Epoka University. The University uses qualitative and quantitative data in the evaluation of its courses, study programs and teaching, including feedback from students and stakeholders to identify the strengths and weaknesses of study programs. This policy applies to all study programs offered by the University.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Epoka University systematically evaluates and improves the quality of study programs, processes and services to achieve a high level of efficiency, effectiveness as well as student and stakeholder satisfaction.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

The review of each study program is administered by the respective Department, Faculty, Curriculum Development Commission under the Permanent Commission on Quality Assurance and the Academic Senate.

DEFINITIONS

Continuous Improvement: It is an ongoing effort to improve products, services, or processes.

Accreditation: Recognition status granted to a study program for a stipulated period of time after the Accreditation Board evaluation indicates that it meets minimum standards of quality.

Decanate: Decanate is an executive collegial decision-making body at the Faculty-level.


Program Learning Outcome: Statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process.

4. POLICY

4.1. PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

The University applies for the accreditation of study programs one year before the expiring of the accreditation period. Based on the provisions of the Albanian higher education legislation, all study programs of the three cycles are subject to the internal evaluation (review) by the Department which offers them, and at the same time, they are subject to the external evaluation (review) by the External Evaluation Team appointed by the Albanian Agency on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASCAL) prior to the accreditation of the said study programs. At the same time, pursuant to the provisions of the Albanian higher education legislation, for the degrees to be

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recognized in the Republic of Albania, all study programs have to be accredited. Based on the above, all study programs offered by Epoka University are subject to internal and external evaluation (review) prior to their accreditation.

Departments under the governance of Faculties develop an action plan for the improvement of their study programs based on the recommendations of the Accreditation Board. The Faculty oversees the implementation of the action plan to ensure that recommendations for appropriate actions are followed up to remedy any identified shortcomings and provides a progress report to the Academic Senate within one year of the Senate’s receipt of action plan.

4.2. PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

On an annual basis, the University reviews the performance of its study programs based on the University’s department assessment database that comprises performance indicators on teaching, research¹ and responsiveness to society, based on department annual report and any additional department strategic measures. Through the annual review of study program performance, the University identifies amendments to ensure the ongoing success of the study program.

4.3. PROGRAM REVIEW


Study program review and development is an important part of ensuring that the study programs and curriculum that Epoka University offers meets the needs of the national and international labour market. The improvement of existing curriculum results from:

- The institution's goals and mission;
- National Accreditation standards (State Quality Standards/Quality Code);
- Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) (as an external benchmark);
- National Qualifications Framework;
- Increased need for new technology or skills to be taught or competencies;
- Labour market needs and student needs;
- Feedback received by Current Students;
- Feedback received by Alumni.

All proposals to make changes to the existing curriculum are submitted according to the Curriculum Proposal Form and in accordance with the process described below:

¹ Scientific research evaluation is carried out for each academic year based on Directive “On the Promotion of Scientific Publications”

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- The requested change is proposed by the Department and sent to the respective Decanate.
- If the Decanate recommends moving ahead with the change, the proposed change is submitted to the Curriculum Development Commission.
- The Curriculum Development Commission will provide feedback to the requesting Department with any changes or suggestions. If the minutes reflect approval with no changes, the minutes will be sent to the Permanent Commission on Quality Assurance.
- The Permanent Commission on Quality Assurance will review the proposed curriculum with input from Curriculum Development Commission and send the proposal on curriculum change to the Academic Senate for final approval.

4.4. TEACHING AND COURSES EVALUATION MECHANISM


The University evaluates each course at the end of each semester, using the approved survey for the evaluation of courses and teaching. The [Instructor/Course Evaluation Survey](#) is an important source of information on teaching and learning quality. To obtain student feedback on teaching and learning within units, the University uses an approved student survey, which is consistent with the University's commitment to continuous quality improvement in teaching and learning.

The Dean of the Faculty, in close collaboration with the Heads of Departments, receive regular information based on teaching surveys on student satisfaction and take measures to further enhance the quality of the teaching process. At the end of every semester, after the completion of surveys by students, the results are shown in the Epoka Interactive System and based on that, Lecturers with lower ratings are called to communicate with the Dean of Faculty on the problems encountered during the semester and regarding the issues highlighted by student surveys. The purpose is to enhance the quality of learning, to ensure a better communication with students, and to improve the teaching activity.

Besides Instructor/Course Evaluation Form, another evaluative mechanisms is used to complement the course and teacher evaluation survey is [Teaching Evaluation Form](#). The Dean of Faculty and the Heads of Departments who work closely with lecturers are aware of the curriculum and course syllabi being implemented. In this context, they (Dean of Faculty and Heads of Departments) as observers make visits to classes on a random basis and complete a Teaching Evaluation Form.

The Decanate reviews the results of the course and teacher evaluation surveys on a semester basis and transform the knowledge gained into recommendations on how the study programs can be improved. Faculties provide feedback to students on the evaluation of teaching. This feedback includes actions taken as a result of evaluation processes.

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4.5. ASSESSMENT OF ATTAINMENT OF PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF STUDENT RESULTS

Program Learning Outcomes are assessed in terms of successful completion of specific coursework. After each academic year, the Department reviews the results of students on assessments designed to measure student achievement of the program learning outcomes.

4.6. ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTINUED VALIDITY OF PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

On an annual basis, the Career Planning and Alumni Office administers the Alumni survey to find out about the applicability and practicality of the knowledge, skills and competencies gained as a result of the study program. The Alumni Survey is run annually. The summary report is sent to the respective Departments to review results. If after reviewing these inputs, the Department determines there is a need to modify either or both of the outcomes and objectives, it drafts the proposed changes.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Curricula Proposal Form
- Instructor/Course Evaluation Survey
- Teaching Evaluation Form
- Alumni Survey

6. REVISION HISTORY

Revision No.	Revision Date	Revision Reason	Effective Date
00	-----	<i>Initial Release</i>	
01	-----	• xxxxxxxxx	

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