



QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY CODE

2021

ANNEX NO. 1

QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

I. HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION - MANAGEMENT, AUTONOMY, AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Standard I.1 The institution and its bodies operate in accordance with the institution's statute

Criterion 1. The institution drafts the statute in full compliance with the legislation in force and in line with its mission and objectives.

Criterion 2. The institution drafts the internal regulation.

Criterion 3. The institution makes frequent adjustments and improvements to its statute and regulation.

Criterion 4. The academic development, allocation of resources and decision-making relating development policies are guided by the mission.

Standard I.2 The institution is organized so as to ensure management efficiency.

Criterion 1. The management bodies resort to effective management practices. The administrator proposes the draft budget to the Academic Senate.

Criterion 2. The Rector's Office encourages academic staff promotion.

Criterion 3. The Academic Senate is the highest management academic body - operating as a decision-making collegial body - that guarantees HEI's mission accomplishment.

Criterion 4. The Board of Administration is HEI's collegial decision-making body supervising and controlling the Higher Education Institution activity regarding its administrative, financial, economic, and asset management.

Criterion 5. The Council of Ethics is established for reviewing university ethical issues. The Council of Ethics makes proposals to the Rector on how to address such issues.

Criterion 6. The Dean's Office is a decision-making collegial body responsible for drafting the main unit strategic development plan, building on the proposals of departments.

Criterion 7. The institution establishes Standing Commissions as collegial bodies targeting scientific qualification and academic promotion that operate according to statute definitions.

Criterion 8. The Dean is the managing authority of the faculty and its legal representative. The Dean is elected by secret ballot by the academic staff, non-academic staff, and students of the faculty/research and development/professional college.

Criterion 9. The head of department/research and development center is elected by secret ballot by the respective academic staff.

Criterion 10. Non-public Higher Education Institutions internal organization and control abides by the statute definitions and their relevant regulation.

Standard I. 3 The institution drafts a development strategy.

Criterion 1. The institution has in place a development strategy building on consultations with the institution's academic community and other civic and private sector stakeholders.

Criterion 2. The strategic goals and objectives are commensurate with the budget and the relevant medium-term budget framework, which can be reviewed.

Criterion 3. The implementation of the strategy is monitored in the medium term, including evaluation of results.

Standard I.4 The institution respects its limits of autonomy.

Criterion 1. The institution has in place supervision and internal review bodies.

Criterion 2. The institution has engaged external consultants to guarantee smooth operation.

Criterion 3. The institution is organized so that to benefit funding from European programs and beyond.

Criterion 4. The institution implements the code of academic ethics and integrity which protects the values of academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and ethical integrity. Code implementation resorts to clear procedures and mechanisms that are revised and modified from time to time to safeguard the academic behavior standards.

Standard I.5 The institution favors constructive debate

Criterion 1. Documents undergoing review are drafted and made available to the members of the collegial bodies at the institutional or main unit level, before the decision is made.

Criterion 2. The Senate, the Board of Administration, and standing commissions convene periodically and the institution keeps all the records of the relevant meetings.

Criterion 3. The institution monitors the progress of collegial decision-making implementation.

Standard I.6 The institution makes public the main activity of the collegial bodies, the annual report and other transparency-related aspects

Criterion 1. The annual report mirrors the internal and external activity of the institution and is made available in the website.

Criterion 2. The institution makes public the decisions of the senate, board of administration, and other steering/decision-making bodies.

Criterion 3. The institution makes public detailed data on revenues and expenditure, medium-term budget, and public procurement information.

Standard I.7 The institution drafts and implements special transparency procedures on the quality assurance of provided study programs

Criterion 1. The institution has in place policies, bodies, and procedures to ensure Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), in accordance with the applicable legal and sub-legal provisions and institutional regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution has established and introduced the Internal Quality Assurance System and implements an institutional strategy for continuous quality improvement, wherein students, external partners, and experts are involved.

Criterion 3. The institution makes use of the right tools to ensure quality. External Quality Assurance in Higher Education is enabled through external accreditation assessment processes, analytical and comparative evaluations, as well as other processes that promote and improve quality.

Criterion 4. The Institution drafts and implements clear policies and follows periodic procedures to ensure and improve the quality of the study program it provides in the IQA framework. They aim to create a quality culture at the institutional level, the constituent units and all institutional internal actors.

Standard VI.8 The institution periodically monitors and evaluates the study programs to enable the achievement of the training objectives and intended learning outcomes.

Criterion 1. The institution establishes a special unit for monitoring, reviewing, and supervising the study programs delivered by the responsible units.

Criterion 2. The institution uses formal and documented processes and mechanisms for reviewing, approving and supervising the study programs.

Criterion 3. The institution uses quality indicators and indexes to assess the quality of study programs.

Criterion 4. The results of these assessments are documented and put forward to the responsible and decision-making authorities with the ultimate goal of improving them.

Criterion 5. The evaluation reports should include the expected results, the assessment results, and the measures adopted to address gaps and the ongoing quality improvement.

Standard VI.9 The institution makes use of procedures, methodologies, and instruments to assess the study program opening, development and progress, graduation, and participation in the labor market.

Criterion 1. The internal quality assurance unit performs the internal review of the study programs periodically. The institution incorporates this information in the institutional self-assessment in the framework of accreditation or internal reviews.

Criterion 2. In order to carry out the review, the institution uses various appropriate special methods and instruments, in line with the nature and specificities of the study programs.

Criterion 3. The institution - in order to ensure performance and program quality progress - uses direct quality review methods.

Criterion 4. The institution - in order to ensure performance and program quality progress - uses indirect quality evaluation methods such as surveys and interviews targeting students, graduates, academic staff, scientific researchers, collaborators, and partners.

Criterion 5. The evaluation mechanisms in the framework of ongoing program improvement include stakeholders, partner institutions in delivering study programs and other parties involved in the delivery or in the assessment of knowledge and competences benefited from such programs.

Standard I.10 The Institution includes academic units, staff and students in the study programs IQA process and informs the stakeholders on the results and the subsequent action plan.

Criterion 1. The institution should provide for and guarantee the involvement of internal and external actors, interested in continuously ensuring and improving the study program in internal quality policies and procedures.

Criterion 2. The institution defines the specific responsibilities and tasks of main units, individuals, students and other parties engaged in the study programs internal quality and guarantees the responsible performance of these tasks.

Criterion 3. During the study program assessment and quality assurance it is important to guarantee the inclusion of the main and basic unit responsible for the study program, academic staff, academic assistants, and administrative assistants and students in respective study programs.

Criterion 4. Internal actors inclusion and engagement in the continuous assessment procedures should observe the academic integrity and avoid any kind of discrimination or inequality against staff and students.

Criterion 5. Partners and/or external experts, who are related to the study program, or can provide valuable expertise and input about the program quality and improvement should actively participate in the review and internal quality assurance processes.

Criterion 6. The monitoring of the academic study programs and quality assurance is integral to basic unit and IQAU's activity.

Standard VI.11 Policies, processes and activities in the framework of the study program Internal Quality Assurance should be public, transparent, and effective, with the view to establish an Internal Quality Assurance Culture.

Criterion 1. The policy, strategy, organization and activities within the framework of the study program Internal Quality Assurance system are transparent and public to all students and parties concerned.

Criterion 2. The Higher Education Institution publishes the results of the study program assessment by observing the academic freedom and ethics, as well as the legislation on personal data.

Criterion 3. The assessment results should go along with an action plan designed to address and improve the identified weaknesses and issues.

Criterion 4. The institution assesses and ensures activities' effectiveness and impact in the framework of monitoring and quality assessment, with the view to ensure the ongoing study program improvement.

Criterion 5. The institution organizes periodic activities with the academic staff and students for their information and awareness-raising on the long-term quality assurance and study program improvement.

II. RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIP

Standard II.1 The institution pursues an open policy of employment and recruitment of human resources.

Criterion 1. The institution employs through transparent procedures the full-time academic staff necessary for the effective operation of the institution and the relevant bodies.

Criterion 2. In order to meet its own needs, the institution pursues the right policies on the part-time employment of academic staff, administrative staff, and various experts.

Criterion 3. The institution publishes the employment criteria for every single vacancy, implements clear rules on the separation of duties depending on respective functions, in line with the background, skills, and competences.

Standard II.2 The institution pursues a policy on the integration of academic, assistant and research, and administrative staff.

Criterion 1. The institution drafts and implements clear policies on the ongoing promotion and qualification of the full-time academic staff, be them invited or contracted, in line with law no. 80/2015 and other relevant sub-legal acts.

Criterion 2. The institution defines the criteria and the procedures on the recruitment of qualified academic staff from well-known international universities or foreign staff.

Criterion 3. The institution evidences to implement policies drafted having in mind the integration of its own staff in the institutional activities.

Criterion 4. The institution evidences to include its staff in the decision-making process at the institutional or respective unit level.

Criterion 5. The institution guarantees the involvement of its staff in different activities, working groups, temporary commissions etc., by implementing transparent application, competition, and selection procedures.

Criterion 6. The institution favors its staff participation in institutional social, cultural, and other activities.

Standard II.3 The institution pursues a policy on staff skills assessment and focuses on their development

Criterion 1. The institution performs a periodic or thematic appraisal of its staff by resorting to various methods of evaluation.

Criterion 2. The institution pursues a staff training plan according to pre-defined priorities and needs, as identified in a transparent evaluation process.

Criterion 3. The institution recognizes staff achievements and promotes them as best practices.

Criterion 4. The institution encourages the training and promotion of its academic staff in western universities.

Criterion 5. The institution engages renowned local and foreign professors/experts in order to train and enhance the capacity of its own staff.

Standard II.4 The institution pursues a policy of social development

Criterion 1. The institution schedules social activities.

Criterion 2. The institution favors social dialog.

Criterion 3. The institution favors staff participation in social and cultural activities other than institutional.

Criterion 4. The institution supports the participation of its own staff in other activities such as discussions, working groups, debates, roundtables, civic and political engagements etc. They may put forward their own perspectives, but in no case should they be to the detriment of the institution's viewpoints.

Criterion 5. The institution pursues a policy of life and health insurance.

Standard II.5 The institution guarantees long-term sustainability for the academic staff during the period between the two accreditation exercises

Criterion 1. The institution meets and complies with the contractual requirements and obligations (financial, social insurances and the labor code) regarding the academic staff.

Criterion 2. The academic staff at higher education institutions will be permanently employed once the period of probation is completed.

Criterion 3. Academic staff turnover rate within the accreditation period is less than 30% of the total academic staff.

Criterion 4. The overall and specific area of academic staff studies engaged with the basic units is in line with the direction of this unit.

Criterion 5. The institution ensures that the categories of academic staff are in line with the age, experience etc. requirements that guarantee exchanges between generations, to ensure the progress of basic units.

Criterion 6. The institution guarantees that the legal criteria on the number, qualification and student/academic staff ratio are met.

Standard II.6 The institution appraises and supports its own staff in meeting their annual academic and administrative obligations.

Criterion 1. The institution approves and makes public staff performance appraisal indicators, indexes and procedures.

Criterion 2. The institution monitors and evaluates the fulfilment of staff obligations through various mechanisms such as reporting, student survey etc.

Criterion 3. The institution periodically asks its staff to provide its own opinion through different mechanisms such as meetings, questionnaires, and analyses and reports the results to the head of the institution.

Criterion 4. The institution relies on evaluation methods to ensure trustworthiness and transparency in staff performance appraisal and/or cooperates with and engages external actors to perform them unbiasedly.

Criterion 5. The institution is committed to meet its obligations in order to support the staff in the framework of fulfilling their annual obligations.

Standard II.7 The institution owns and manages immovable properties and focusses on their continuous development and improvement.

Criterion 1. The institution carries out its activities in facilities/buildings/premises that meet the standards and criteria of a pre-university campus.

Criterion 2. The institution legally documents and proves that the infrastructure used to exercise its activities are under its ownership or under its exclusive use by means of a long-term contract.

Criterion 3. The institution has in place a safety, expansion and/or restructuring masterplan for its own immovable assets.

Criterion 4. The institution guarantees the necessary financial support for the management, maintenance, and development of its assets, as per a pre-defined plan.

Criterion 5. The institution supervises its construction and reconstruction projects in the framework of infrastructural and lab investments.

Standard II.8 The institution provides an appropriate environment and infrastructure for academic and scientific activities

Criterion 1. The institution is far from industrial development areas with contamination levels above the allowed standards.

Criterion 2. The institution meets the minimum 3,8 – 4.0 m²/student and the maximum 7.5 – 8.0 m²/student space to student ratio.

Criterion 3 The height of facilities is no less than 3.0 m (ceiling-to-floor). The above space to student ratio is applicable to study programs such as Albanian language, Albanian literature, sociology, history, geography, economic sciences, law, mathematics, archeology etc. (generally speaking, social and political sciences). A ratio no less than the aforementioned average is applicable to courses on study programs such as architecture, music etc. (similar). The ratio for engineering and natural sciences study programs (physics, chemistry, biology etc.) get doubled (minimum and maximum).

Criterion 4. The institution meets the technical natural lighting standards - the surface area of windows covers at least (15-20%) of the floor surface area and the lighting comes over the student's left shoulder, if possible from the southeast.

Criterion 5. The institution counts more than 200 students (in one single facility), and therefore there is a fire escape exit and stair.

Criterion 6. The institution has in place a fire protection system and a lightning strike protection system.

Criterion 7. The higher education institution has a functional conditioning system.

Criterion 8. The institution has alternative sources of power supply (power generators etc.) and sufficient water reserves (water tanks).

Standard II.9 The institution provides working, teaching, and lab premises comfortable for the academic staff and students, as well as students and persons with disabilities

Criterion 1. The institution makes available to the teaching process constructed (or reconstructed) facilities with quality contemporary materials, that meet the hygiene and sanitation conditions for the students and academic staff, thus avoiding any danger.

Criterion 2. The institution guarantees the necessary capacities for the theoretical and practical training of students in the study programs delivered in line with the approved sub-legal acts.

Criterion 3. The institution has in place auditoriums, lab premises, academic staff premises, administrative staff premises, technical premises, library premises, senate premises, audiovisual rooms, computer rooms, multimedia rooms etc., commensurate with the number of students and staff.

Criterion 4. The institution provides good acoustics in all learning environments and isolation from noise, temperature, and humidity fluctuations.

Criterion 5. The institution provides appropriate working premises for the entire staff, computer posts, internet, and access to management systems.

Criterion 6. The institution provides infrastructure, logistics, and unlimited access to persons with disabilities that are part of the institution.

Standard II.10 The institution provides high-standard professional and scientific labs for medical and engineering study programs.

Criterion 1. The institution provides labs dedicated to engineering sciences, natural sciences, agricultural sciences etc., in line with the international standards on their establishment and operation.

Criterion 2. The lab infrastructure meets the criteria concerning use and safety and all labs are regularly evaluated by licensed authorities.

Criterion 3. Every lab has in place a plan on staff and student protection and safety, documents, instructions, manual of operation, and lab regulations.

Criterion 4. Research labs are used under the supervision of the assistant academic and research staff, as certified by the respective authorities.

Standard II.1 The institution provides the students and the academic staff with the appropriate rest, sports, and entertainment premises

Criterion 1. The institution makes available rest premises, coffee shops, and restaurants to the academic staff and students, commensurate with their numbers.

Criterion 2. The institution has in place and/or makes available to the academic staff and students outdoor and indoor premises for sport and gym activities, commensurate with their numbers. This kind of infrastructure is mandatory for institutions that provide sport/movement science programs.

Criterion 3. The institution makes available to the academic staff and students the appropriate premises to support the artistic and promotion activities, conferences, and exhibitions, commensurate with their numbers. This infrastructure is mandatory for institutions providing music/art programs.

Criterion 4. The institution assists the academic staff and the students by making available accommodating facilities, transport, parking lots etc., when requested.

Criterion 5. The institution makes available a first aid room with the necessary infrastructure for the academic staff and students, commensurate with their numbers.

Standard II.2 The institution periodically monitors the condition of the infrastructure and ensures its upgrade

Criterion 1. The institution establishes a special unit for the effective operation of the support infrastructure.

Criterion 2. The institution assesses the condition of the infrastructure available to students and academic staff through questionnaires and surveys, and is committed to meet their expectations and requirements

Criterion 3. The institution gets infrastructure facilities and services from third parties through contracts and cooperation agreements

Criterion 4. The special status institutions are assessed accordingly on the implementation of infrastructural standards.

Standard II.13 The institution possesses full documentation of academic activity in hard and soft copy

Criterion 1. There is a special body responsible for keeping hard copy documentation.

Criterion 2. The institution has in place a body for data digitalization and soft copy documentation storage.

Criterion 3. The institution has in place a body for statistics collection.

Criterion 4. The institution has a database about student enrolment, matriculation numbers, etc., in accordance with the sub-legal laws in force.

Criterion 5. The institution possesses general data on study programs, forms, curricula and syllabi, with mandatory credits specified.

Criterion 6. The institution possesses a basic student book with their relevant data.

Criterion 7. The institution makes available a basic student gradebook (permanent storage in hard and soft copy), with all the evaluations received during the study program, data on their diploma/diplomas, diploma supplement etc.

Standard II.4 The institution introduces information and management systems at the institutional level.

Criterion 1. The institution has in place management programs and systems, as well as internal communication networks at the institutional level, which are continuously updated.

Criterion 2. The information systems give dedicated access and services to the staff, students, partners, and collaborators.

Criterion 3. Information and management systems give real time statistics and information on activities, indicators and indexes at the institutional, program, and activity level.

Criterion 4. The institution publishes in its official website all the statistical data on the number of students disaggregated by program, academic offer, institution construction and operation, as well as its statute and regulations.

Standard II.15 The institution coordinates activities in the information technology area

Criterion 1. The institution is committed to use information technology in the informatization of documentation, processes and procedures, to the benefit of its activities.

Criterion 2. The institution provides information rooms or laboratories which are available to staff and students.

Criterion 3. The institution relies on information technology when engaged in distance learning, training etc.

Criterion 4. The institution assist and trains the staff on the information technology services it provides.

Standard II.16 The institution drafts the budget in accordance with the defined and transparent procedures

Criterion 1. The allocation of financial resources and their use by Higher Education Institution is in accordance with the rules and standards of budgetary programming and financial management.

Criterion 2. The budget outline for every institution complies with the State Budget outline, as defined by an Instruction of the Minister of Finance for public institutions, or internal acts approved by non-public institutions not in violation of the legal basis in force.

Criterion 3. The proposed budget is subject to review by the Senate and the Board of Administration.

Criterion 4. The budget of the institution is detailed and delegated for management up to the department level.

Criterion 5. The institution defined the salaries for supplementary load burdened by the academic staff, be them contract-based or invited.

Criterion 6. The institution defines and thoroughly implements clear procedures on the generation, allocation and use of financial data, service fees, projects, and donations, taking into account the performance of the respective units.

Standard II.17 The institution provides the necessary means to implement its financial policy.

Criterion 1. The institution has in place a body dedicated to its financial management and financial policy implementation.

Criterion 2. The institution analyses the indicators of monitoring the implementation of its financial policy.

Criterion 3. The institution is transparent with regard to the settlement of liabilities towards third parties, debts, and long-term loans.

Criterion 4. The institution has in place financial indicators to measure sustainability for the entire accreditation period.

Standard II.18 The institution pursues a policy of budgetary and financial control

Criterion 1. The institutions undergo a financial audit every academic year and their reports are made public.

Criterion 2. Financial audit results are analyzed and published to undergo review in open meetings with the students and the staff.

Criterion 3. The ALSSAI reports, MoES reports and audit reports produced by the public HEI are reviewed by the Board of Administration.

Criterion 4. The Higher Education Institution financial audit report identifies issues and policies on the use of student-fee-generated-revenues with the purpose of improving teaching quality and student services.

Standard II.9 The institution pursues an open cooperation and partnership strategy at the regional, national, and international level

Criterion 1. The institution defines its cooperation policy priorities in the development strategy.

Criterion 2. The institution defines its internationalization profile and the targeted research level.

Criterion 3. The cooperation strategy takes into account the local economy and labor market needs when seeking to open new programs or draft scientific research projects, and is aligned with the national strategy and development policies.

Criterion 4. The institution cooperates with regional partners in the framework of cooperation strategy implementation.

Criterion 5. The institution concludes and formalizes agreements with counterpart higher education institutions.

Standard II.20 The institution cooperates with other institutions to support its academic, administrative, scientific-research/artistic activity and internships

Criterion 1. The institution cooperates with other educational domestic or foreign institutions

Criterion 2. The institution cooperates with other bodies and institutions to meet its own needs in order to deliver its study program.

Criterion 3. The institution cooperates with businesses, associations, and other bodies to provide services to students.

Criterion 4. The institution cooperates with research institutes, laboratories, companies, and industries to enable the practical capacitation of students and their integration in the labor market.

Criterion 5. The institution provides efficient up-to-date lab infrastructure and makes it available to the cooperation with third parties.

Standard II.21 The institution pursues a policy favoring the mobility of the academic staff and students at an international level

Criterion 1. The institution cooperates with the partners to organize various activities and encourage staff and student participation therein.

Criterion 2. The institution pursues a policy favoring the mobility of the academic staff and students at an international level.

Criterion 3. The institution pursues a policy on foreign student integration.

Criterion 4. The institution pursues a policy on invited academic staff and foreign researchers' integration.

Standard II.22 The institution conducts market research to accomplish its mission and purpose.

Criterion 1. The institution should be updated about the regional economic development.

Criterion 2. The institution monitors the employment of its graduates.

Criterion 3. The institution abides by the competition rules.

Criterion 4. The institution continually assesses partnership and cooperation inputs.

III. STUDY PROGRAMS, TEACHING, AND EVALUATION

Standard III.1 The institution delivers its programs in line with its mission, development strategy, and market demands.

Criterion 1. The institution defines the priority study programs informing its profile.

Criterion 2. The institution pursues a clear policy to ensure coherence of study programs provided by its main units.

Criterion 3. The institution drafts study programs and defines therein objectives in line with its mission.

Criterion 4. The academic offer of the study programs is in line with the development strategy components.

Criterion 5. The institution provides study programs that are in line with the regional and national development lines.

Standard III. 2 The study programs are provided in accordance with the national and international objectives.

Criterion 1. The institution drafts its development policy by relying on the national policies (multidisciplinary, foreign culture promotion, foreign language teaching etc.)

Criterion 2. The institution reviews the documentation and takes into account the national development strategies when opening new programs.

Criterion 3. The institution provides its study programs jointly with other domestic or foreign higher education institutions.

Criterion 4. The procedures and framework agreements in case of joint study programs are preliminary detailed at the institutional level.

Criterion 5 Upon completion of the interdisciplinary study programs, a joint/dual degree is issued to the student by the Albanian and/or higher education institution.

Standard III.3 Programs have clearly defined objectives and their learning outcomes are in line with the qualification profile they provide

Criterion 1. The institution evidences that learning outcomes are in line with those under the Albanian Qualification Framework.

Criterion 2. The institution provides study programs according to the study cycles that fit the HEI profile.

Criterion 3. The institution evidences that program learning outcomes are in line with the market requirements.

Criterion 4. The institution evidences that program learning outcomes match the mission of the unit that provides the program.

Criterion 5. The institution has in place a clear and transparent procedure on measuring and assessing program study learning outcomes.

Criterion 6. The institution evidences that the analysis of learning outcomes has been made available to curriculum improvement and stakeholders.

Standard III.4 The institution pursues clearly defined procedures on the approval of new programs

Criterion 1. The institution has in place a clear regulation on the proposal and approval of new programs.

Criterion 2. The institution evidences that the basic unit is completely involved in the drafting of the program content, objectives, outline and resources.

Criterion 3. The institution includes other stakeholders in drafting the proposal for the new programs.

Criterion 4. The institution shows analytical skills when drafting the criteria and approves the student admission quota based on labor market/research needs and host capacities.

Standard III.5 Study programs are offered in accordance with the institutional capacities

Criterion 1. The institution provides sufficient and qualified human resources for the study program.

Criterion 2. Full-time academic staff comprises the 70% of the entire academic staff engaged to deliver first and second study programs.

Criterion 3. Lecturers' teaching load is defined in line with the criteria set forth by the sub-legal acts in force.

Criterion 4 The institution prioritizes the recruitment of the academic staff that is engaged in scientific research activities relating directly to the program profile.

Criterion 5 The institution evidences that the research activity of the unit is mirrored in the progress of programs it provides.

Standard III.6 Study programs are organized into study cycles

Criterion 1. The institution offers study programs in line with its profile cycles.

Criterion 2. Programs are organized into credits and detailed in teaching plans containing the components required by the legal framework in force.

Standard III.7 The cycle study programs are drafted in order to provide students with the best guidance and knowledge

Criterion 1. The institution pursues policies to support student advancement from one cycle to the other, through orientation and consultation activities.

Criterion 2. Study programs allow a progressive transition from one cycle to the other.

Criterion 3. Professional study programs aim at the acquisition of theoretical and practical specialized comprehensive knowledge in a specific area of employment in a wide range of professions and specialties.

Criterion 4. Professional study programs aim at providing students with a number of comprehensive cognitive and practical skills, necessary to find creative solutions to professional practical problems.

Criterion 5. First cycle programs aim at equipping students with the basic knowledge on general scientific methods and principles, as well as to help them acquire special abilities.

Criterion 6. First cycle programs give out advanced knowledge on a particular study area in order to critically understand the academic theories and principles.

Criterion 7. The second cycle study programs help students acquire advanced knowledge in academic or professional areas, necessary to solve complex unpredictable problems in a specialized areas of study or professional area.

Criterion 8. Second cycle programs rely on research, and the institution cooperates with economic actors to deliver them.

Criterion 9. Study programs build upon the study and research policies of the institution.

Criterion 10. Same profile programs in a unit mirror the professional and academic progression from one cycle to the other.

Criterion 11. Students are given information and orientation on the opportunity to transfer their study programs or credits earned while attending such study programs.

Standard III.8 The institution offers lifelong learning programs

Criterion 1. Lifelong learning programs are approved and offered in line with the strategic targets and market needs.

Criterion 2. The institution details how the program will be delivered and developed in the approved regulations and plans.

Criterion 3. Such programs are periodically reviewed and improved.

Criterion 4. The institution evidences that program assessment and quality assurance procedures have been pursued.

Standard III.9 Study programs rely on the research and professional profile of the unit and are delivered in cooperation with area stakeholders

Criterion 1. Lecturers engaged in scientific research activities compose most of the academic staff of the unit that drafts and covers the program.

Criterion 2. The institution performs the periodic appraisal of the academic staff in order to improve its scientific qualification regarding the program.

Criterion 3. The institution engages business representatives or others in delivering the “Professional Master” study programs.

Standard III.10 Study programs are periodically monitored.

Criterion 1. The institution clearly defines the procedures and the program review time frames in its legal framework.

Criterion 2. The institution evidences that the monitoring process is inclusive of third parties, students, alumni, or external experts from counterpart institutions.

Criterion 3. The institution clearly defines the academic staff performance appraisal, including the appropriate handling of the teaching load, communication ethics, periodic content and module/literature upgrade, reflection of the individual research activity in the curricula, student feedback etc.

Standard III.11 Study programs undergo continuous improvement to boost quality

Criterion 1. The institution updates the curriculum, literature and support services in line with the market qualification updates.

Criterion 2. Study programs are improved by taking into account their assessment results from the academic staff and students.

Criterion 3. The institution evidences that monitoring results are mirrored in the teaching load, student evaluation forms, and support services to the benefit of learning results.

Criterion 4. Graduate employment statistics are also taken into account in program quality improvement.

Standard III. 12 The institution pursues a clear policy to improve teaching quality

Criterion 1. The institution is responsible for the teaching quality and therefore drafts a regulatory/guidance framework on such purpose.

Criterion 2. The institution has in place a support unit that promotes continuous teaching improvement.

Criterion 3. The institution qualifies/trains the academic staff in the area of scientific research to aid further teaching improvement.

Standard III.3 Announced study programs are implemented according to the structures approved at the institutional and national level

Criterion 1. The study programs are organized into subjects and modules evaluated in credits, in accordance with the applicable national legislation and according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

Criterion 2. Programs incorporate all the relevant components of the structure and clearly define the formative activities by category and relevant load.

Criterion 3. The institution ensures the effective organization and documentation of the study program teaching plan.

Criterion 4. The institution coordinates the work of the academic staff to ensure content coherence and periodic monitoring.

Criterion 5. The institution provides sufficient and appropriate facilities that enable students' practical and professional training (laboratory work, laboratory modules, practical tutorials, internships, etc.).

Criterion 6. The institution supervises the practices, internships and research work (project preparation, diploma thesis, other thesis etc.)

Criterion 7. The institution makes available to students the necessary supporting literature for the relevant study program.

Standard III.14 Study programs provide practical application of knowledge and skills acquired by students in theoretical courses

Criterion 1. Study programs are organized so as to enable the application of knowledge and skills acquired by students in theoretical courses.

Criterion 2. Study programs include the preparation and submission of student research projects, pursuant to the study regulation (diploma thesis, thesis, dissertation).

Criterion 3. The institution pursues policies supporting student activities that mirror the practical application of the knowledge acquired.

Standard III.15 Programs are developed in order to ensure student active participation in competency acquisition

Criterion 1. The programs are developed by enabling various forms of student-centered teaching.

Criterion 2. The institution evidences its ongoing efforts to enhance teaching capacities as per the above.

Criterion 3. The institution continuously monitors the study program implementation methodology.

Criterion 4. The institution uses questionnaires to receive the student opinion on the teaching quality and implements procedures aiming at improvement.

Standard III.16 The study programs aim at preparing students for employment.

Criterion 1. Study programs offer special modules of professional character and knowledge from the economic and social areas.

Criterion 2. Study programs are developed so as to prepare students for undertaking, internship, professional practicum etc.

Criterion 3. Study programs include sufficient modules, components, and time to enable the practical professional training (laboratory work, lab modules or projects, professional practice etc.)

Criterion 4. The student professional practice and diplomas are enabled in cooperation with the private sector and state companies.

Criterion 5. Study program regulations clearly define the employment profiles and opportunities upon completion.

Criterion 6. The institution builds on alumni feedback to update the curricula in order to adapt to the market.

Standard III.17 Study programs are designed to promote Albanian and foreign students mobility

Criterion 1. Study programs are delivered in line with the Bologna Process in consecutive cycles: Bachelor, Master, PhD.

Criterion 2. The institution publishes sufficient information on the study programs in foreign language.

Criterion 3. The institution offers study programs in foreign language and evidences the efforts to enhance the capacity of the academic staff in this regard.

Criterion 4. Foreign language teaching is in line with the internationalization policy. Second and third cycle study program students evidence foreign language skills as certified by internationally recognized tests. The institution also favors Albanian language learning to foreign students.

Criterion 5. The legal framework of the institution mirrors the mobility development

Criterion 6. The institution has in place mobility informative, advisory, and support bodies.

Standard III.18 Higher Education Institutions provide students who have met all the requirements of a study program with a relevant diploma, which is an official document

Criterion 1. Exam requirements and rules are approved by the responsible university bodies and are made known to all through the exam regulation, as announced publicly.

Criterion 2. The institution announces (displays at visible premises) the graduation criteria and procedures.

Criterion 3. The degree is issued upon completion of the first cycle study programs and second cycle/integrated study programs, while the Executive Master is concluded with a bilingual diploma supplement.

Standard III.9 The institution offers dedicated laboratories to support study programs and scientific/artistic research.

Criterion 1. The institution makes available laboratories/workrooms/workshops for any area and program provided.

Criterion 2. The institution evidences that the obligations relating to the number of students being commensurate with the laboratory seats are met.

Criterion 3. The institution is committed to establish laboratories that aid students' professional capacitation and competence development.

Criterion 4. The institution having scientific research among its priorities makes available at least one scientific research lab in one of the areas of study, which correspond to master and PhD studies.

Standard III.20 The institution provides lab equipment, infrastructure and services to support the study programs

Criterion 1. The infrastructure supporting the programs is in line with the program learning objectives and outcomes.

Criterion 2. The institution evidences the efficient use of the ITC infrastructure, labs and other similar services in the study program development.

Criterion 3. The institution updates the knowledge and supports academic and support staff qualification on equipment efficient use.

Criterion 4. The institution evidences that teaching quality is continuously guaranteed and undergoes monitoring, and that students are involved in the use of program support infrastructure.

Standard III.21 The library, infrastructure, and services ensure access to contemporary literature regarding program areas of study and research

Criterion 1. The institution updates the literature made available to students and staff according to the relevant profiles.

Criterion 2. Literature and library services are made available to the staff and students and ensure the study profile quality.

Criterion 3. The institution evidences that the library and its services ensure scientific and professional activity quality in the framework of study programs.

Criterion 4. The institution allocates funds to purchase specialized literature in the area of scientific research.

Criterion 5. The institution periodically assesses the library service quality by collecting staff and student feedback.

IV. SCIENTIFIC/ARTISTIC ACTIVITY AND INNOVATION

Standard IV.1 The institution defines the primary research, scientific/artistic areas of activity

Criterion 1. The institution sets the main priorities of the research activities in line with the areas of development and functioning, capacities, types, and profile (research strategy included).

Criterion 2. The institution harmonizes its own research and development priorities in line with the regional, national, and international long-term priorities.

Criterion 3. The main and basic units draft and approve the priorities of the respective units in order to ensure the implementation of institutional research and development priorities.

Criterion 4. The institution receives innovative ideas and proposals from various institutional actors to the benefit of the research/artistic activity.

Criterion 5. Institutional priorities regarding scientific/artistic research and development strategy are set through an open discussion process including actors inside and outside the institution, collaborators and other stakeholders.

Standard IV.2 The institution meets the priorities of the scientific research

Criterion 1. The institution meets the priority policies in the area of scientific/artistic research. The institution provides the mechanisms and the necessary tools to be used in the implementation of its priorities.

Criterion 2. The institution monitors and takes into account the needs of the society, local community and labor market when planning its professional and/or scientific and research/artistic activities.

Criterion 3. The institution selects academic staff qualified in the priority areas and in line with the profile of the main and basic unit.

Criterion 4. The basic units at universities and academies establish research groups consisting of staff with the adequate profiling and scientific/artistic activity.

Criterion 5. The institution guarantees the appropriate infrastructure to carry out the scientific/artistic research activities.

Criterion 6. The institution establishes an efficient support system on research and knowledge transfer, innovation and application of new technologies.

Standard IV.3 The institution encourages the development and dynamism of scientific/artistic and scientific activities

Criterion 1. The institution enables and supports an environment friendly to the academic staff in order to encourage their active participation in research/artistic activities, studies and projects.

Criterion 2. The institution supports initiatives and projects undertaken by research groups and academic staff, as well as pursues an inclusive policy regarding the involvement of new students in research projects.

Criterion 3. The institution ensures cooperation with institutions and other research units outside the institution and includes them in scientific research activities.

Criterion 4. The institution guarantees the participation of foreign academic staff in joint activities and projects in the research/artistic area of the main unit.

Criterion 5. The institution drafts its own policy of ethics in scientific/artistic research and monitors its implementation.

Standard IV.4 The institution and the units responsible for scientific/artistic research and innovation appraise their performance at the institutional level

Criterion 1. The university or academy type of institution drafts and approves the mechanisms and the indicators of performance appraisal of the main unit, basic unit, and research team.

Criterion 2. Every main unit/basic unit whose strategy foresees research activities appraises on an annual basis its achievements and performance in the research area and makes them public.

Criterion 3. The institution drafts and approves the mechanisms and indicators for the academic staff teaching and research performance appraisal, monitors the staff research activity, promotes its integration in the teaching process, according to the area of individual qualification.

Criterion 4. The institution guarantees a transparent and impartial academic appraisal process targeting the academic staff and makes public their results.

Criterion 5. The institution, building on the results of performance appraisal, implements various simulation/financial mechanisms to support the good practices and promotes them at the institutional level.

Standard IV.5 The institution guarantees the intellectual property of achievements and results in the filed of scientific research and uses them to ensure its own economic and financial development

Criterion 1. The institution, in cooperation with the partners, makes available the latest results/research, tendencies and findings to the labor market and businesses.

Criterion 2. The institution promotes its own achievements in the filed of scientific research and pursues a clear policy on the intellectual property protection.

Criterion 3. The institution patents its own achievements in the area of scientific research and makes them available to the interested parties for financial purposes.

Criterion 4. The institution generates financial revenues from its own achievements and scientific/artistic research activity.

Standard IV.6 In line with the scientific/artistic research priorities, the institution channels the research activity at the department level

Criterion 1. The institution evidences that the department is its basic teaching and research, as well as scientific/artistic development unit depending on homogeneous areas of research.

Criterion 2. At university and academy types of institution the department is organized into teaching and/or research groups.

Criterion 3. The department encourages, coordinates, and administrates the teaching and research/artistic activities by fully complying with the academic staff academic freedom and right to use the material and financial resources made available to the academic activity.

Criterion 4. The department and research groups are the engines driving forward the scientific research activity, studies, publications, and projects.

Criterion 5. The department is held responsible for the progress of the scientific research activity of the research group, academic staff, and scientific researchers.

Criterion 6. The department is granted transparent and open financial support by the institution and is held responsible for the financing of the research groups.

Criterion 7. The department and the research groups interact with actors and partners outside the institution also through joint projects and studies.

Standard IV.7 The institution approves clear objectives for the units, research/artistic groups and academic staff

Criterion 1. Every basic/main unit and research group, through open discussions with the academic staff, drafts and approves every year the scientific research objectives.

Criterion 2. In order to meet its objectives, the department clearly defines the annual requirements of the academic staff relating to the scientific/artistic research activity.

Criterion 3. The institution has clearly defined the mandatory ratios between the different teaching, scientific/artistic, administrative activities and others, as well as supports the academic staff in their performance throughout the academic year

Criterion 4. In order to meet its own objectives, the department provides support to the academic staff engaged in mobility activities, project design, and study research in order to reduce their annual teaching and administrative load

Criterion 5. In order to meet the research objectives, the department establishes working groups/ad-hoc committees on project design, studies etc.

Criterion 6. In order to meet the research objectives, the department cooperates and includes in the working groups other personalities, researchers, well-known experts inside and outside of the institution, to provide their contribution, expertise and experience.

Standard IV.8 The institution aims at enhancing the continuous research/artistic and scientific activities and guarantees the involvement of second and third cycle academic staff and students

Criterion 1. The institution aims at increasing the number and level of research/artistic and scientific activities and improve its reputation at the national and international level.

Criterion 2. The institution organizes and participates in national and international research/scientific activities in the priority research areas.

Criterion 3. The institution, through its internal mechanisms, enables to students and academic staff to participate as many as possible in research/artistic, projects and other activities.

Criterion 4. The institution includes in its plan of scientific research activities PhD studies and activities developed in the framework of their delivery.

Criterion 5. The institution guarantees the integrity of the research scientific activity and the quality of the scientific research in the framework of promoting academic titles (when applicable).

Criterion 6. The institution pursues efficient assessment and financing procedures to encourage high-quality indexed and classified professional and/or scientific publications.

Standard IV.9 The institution makes public the outcomes in the areas of scientific/artistic research

Criterion 1. The institution provides the necessary infrastructure and logistic for the publication of scientific research activities in Albanian and English.

Criterion 2. The institution adopts a support policy on the dissemination of scientific research results and related activities.

Criterion 3. The institution issues at least one scientific journal with ISSN/ISBN to publish the research papers of the academic staff and students.

Criterion 4. The institution updates the electronic faculty scientific publications database and grants the staff, students and collaborators with full access therein.

Criterion 5. The institution updates the library archive with scientific publications of the academic staff, diploma theses, and student dissertations.

Standard IV.10 The institution is responsible for guaranteeing the quality of scientific/artistic papers and their integrity at the institutional level

Criterion 1. The institution drafts special regulations concerning the standard of research and scientific activity quality and establishes the scientific publication and paper quality assessment mechanisms at the institutional level.

Criterion 2. The institution invites foreign personalities to participate in commissions, editorial boards, assessment teams, so as to guarantee the quality of scientific papers published by the institution.

Criterion 3. The higher education institutions establish and operate the Council of Ethics, whose activity is governed by its Internal Regulation.

Criterion 4. The institution pursues a policy of promoting a culture of research at the national and regional level.

Criterion 5. The institution makes available anti-plagiarism electronic systems and other self-check mechanisms to eliminate plagiarism and ensure compliance with the right to intellectual property.

Standard IV.11 The university/academy type of institution clearly defines the requirements for the academic staff in the framework of participating in research activities, studies, publications and supports their self-realization

Criterion 1. The academic staff participates and presents its own work in the framework of a national research-oriented activity (seminar, conference, workshop, symposium) during a given academic year.

Criterion 2. During 5 academic years, the academic staff should participate and present their own papers in at least one international research event (symposium, conference, congress), held in one of the EU, OECD, or G20 countries, accepted following a preliminary scientific review and published in the "Proceedings", indexed with an ISBN or ISSN code.

Criterion 3. During the five academic years, the academic staff must publish as first or second authors at least one scientific article in an indexed journal in an OECD, EU, or G20 country, with an editorial board.

Criterion 4. During the 5 academic years, the academic staff should be the first author or co-author of at least one text book, or a series of lectures approved by the basic unit.

Criterion 5. Types of institutions such as professional college, higher college, and special status institutions define the criteria on academic staff and their research activity in their own acts.

Standard IV.1 The institution has defined the scientific research as a main strategy priority, focusing on research internationalization and related activities

Criterion 1. The institution enters into partnership agreements and cooperates with foreign higher education institutions in the OECD, EU, and G20 countries in the area of scientific research.

Criterion 2. The institution providing at least a third cycle study program cooperates with an OECD, EU, and G20 institution and is committed to organizing joint activities to the benefit of such programs.

Criterion 3. The institution participates in international calls in the area of scientific research in cooperation with other institutions.

Criterion 4. The institution organizes international conferences or activities in the area of scientific research in partnership with its international collaborators.

Criterion 5. The institution actively participates through its academic staff in international conferences or activities in the area of scientific research.

Criterion 6. The institution provides the necessary financial and logistic support to engage foreign staff and makes the engagement and financing procedures transparent.

Standard IV.12 The institution has set the participation of the foreign or diaspora academic staff in teaching and scientific/artistic activities a priority

Criterion 1. In order to enhance study quality and internationalization, the institution invites foreign academic staff to participate in research and teaching activities over limited periods of time.

Criterion 2. The academic staff scientific research papers are published in international scientific journals in cooperation with foreign staff.

Criterion 3. The institution includes the academic staff from OECD, EU, G20 institutions in the working groups, editorial boards, diploma theses, diploma jury panels, project design/implementation groups etc.

Criterion 4. The institution is committed to engage as academic staff internationally renowned Albanian researchers working and leaving abroad in the working groups, diploma mentoring, editorial boards, diploma jury panels, project design/implementation groups etc.

Standard IV. 13 The institution prioritizes the mobility of the academic staff and students, as well as provides the mechanisms for high participation rates

Criterion 1. The institution encourages and supports the participation of more than 10% of the academic staff in research and teaching activities over limited periods of time, ranging from 1 to 3 months, as carried out in an OECD, EU, and G20 institution.

Criterion 2. The institution encourages and supports at least 5% of students to participate in mobility programs at international institutions.

Criterion 3. The institution encourages and supports foreign students and diaspora mobility.

Criterion 4. The institution supports student participation in master and PhD programs at international events to make public their research results.

Standard IV.14 The institution guarantees an ongoing and increased impact in the area of scientific/artistic research

Criterion 1. Scientific research priorities are at the focus of institutional long-term objectives. They get updated according to institutional, regional, and national developments.

Criterion 2. The institution performs its scientific research activity to the best interest of institutional development and capacity enhancement.

Criterion 3. The institution guarantees the effective participation of PhD students in academic activities in order to guarantee academic staff continuity.

Criterion 4. The institution pursues cooperation policies with domestic and overseas institutions in order to enhance the institutional reputation, enhance academic staff capacities and upgrade the academic activity.

Standard IV. 15 The institution ensures the transfer of scientific research activity transfer to the benefit of the country's social and economic development

Criterion 1. The institution, through its own bodies and mechanisms, engages in continuing evaluation of scientific research results.

Criterion 2. The institution pursues policies that promote scientific research results, organizes debates or discussions concerning such results and is committed to ensure their implementation to the benefit of the country's social and economic development and beyond.

Criterion 3. The institution encourages and supports novice researchers to personally undertake to implement the achievements of the scientific research, patents, brands, to establish start ups, or set up incubators.

Criterion 4. The institution provides advice and orientation, performs research studies and implements innovative technologies for domestic and foreign institutions and bodies.

Standard IV.16 The institution guarantees the ownership of the achievements and results in the area of scientific research and uses them to its own economic and financial benefit

Criterion 1. The institution, in cooperation with the partners, makes available the latest results/research, trends and findings to the labor market and businesses.

Criterion 2. The institution promotes its own achievements in the filed of scientific research and pursues a clear policy on the intellectual property protection.

Criterion 3. The institution certifies/patents its own achievements in the area of scientific achievement and makes them available to the interested parties for financial purposes.

Criterion 4. The institution generates revenues from scientific/professional/artistic achievements.

V. STUDENTS AND THEIR SUPPORT

Standard V.1 The higher education institution drafts, pursues and implement policies and procedures on student selection and admission

Criterion 1. The institution drafts medium-term development projects, in line with student admission policies.

Criterion 2. The institution welcomes and pursues special policies on new student absorption and integration

Criterion 3. The institution defines and aligns the admission criteria and quota depending on 5-year-trends, market research, program progress and alumni employment rates.

Criterion 4. The institution accounts the numerical academic staff/student ratio in order to ensure quality education and the achievement of institutional objectives. The ratio stands at 1 to 8 for study programs that include lab work, teaching practicums and special professions (arts, sports), while other study programs have a fixed ratio at 1 to 20. The Higher Education Institution ensures a ratio of 1 instructor/laboratory technician per 60 students for study programs including practical lab work (study areas: medicine, nursery, engineering, teaching etc.).

Standard V.2 The institution provides support through university services to facilitate their progression

Criterion 1. The institution establishes special premises for hosting, informing and admitting new students (organizes visits within the institutional premises).

Criterion 2. The institution informs future students (seniors) on the study programs it provides, through career orientation bodies.

Criterion 3. The institution adopts a policy of welcoming the foreign students, interested in pursuing the provided study programs.

Criterion 4. The institution makes available courses in its own premises to aid students in difficulties.

Standard V.3 The institution employs an efficient student information system

Criterion 1. The institution has in place ad-hoc units to provide the information service.

Criterion 2. The institution makes available students full information on its academic offer.

Criterion 3. The institution uses official addresses in electronic communications.

Criterion 4. The institution effectively updates its information system and monitors its quality on an ongoing basis.

Criterion 5. The institution continuously publishes an ad-hoc guideline and schedules open information meetings.

Standard V.4 The institution encourages student participation in the institutional life

Criterion 1. Students are represented in the steering bodies, research and teaching units, and institutional services.

Criterion 2. Student councils express their opinions and make proposals on all issues relating to the overall institutional interest such as: teaching plans, study programs, study regulation etc.

Criterion 3. The institution supports the student councils and funds their activity.

Criterion 4. The institution guarantees that student representation is real and useful.

Criterion 5. The institution guarantees student participation in ensuring study program quality.

Standard V.5 The institution pursues a policy on student orientation and counselling

Criterion 1. The institution has in place a student orientation and counselling body

Criterion 2. The institution makes available to students information materials or booklets.

Criterion 3. The institution provides orientation to students willing to change their study program and documents the entire process.

Criterion 4. The institution defines the procedure on student progress measurement. This information is regularly collected and analyzed and suggestions for improvement are mirrored by the various voices within the institution.

Criterion 5. The institution informs students on mobility/internship/scholarship opportunities etc. and supports/facilitates application/performance procedures.

Criterion 6. Effectiveness and relevance of student services are regularly monitored by the institution.

Standard V.6 The institution pursues a support policy for specific social categories and extracurricular activities

Criterion 1. The institution pursues a supporting policy toward students with disabilities;

Criterion 2. The institution pursues a supporting policy toward Roma and Balkan Egyptian students;

Criterion 3. The institution pursues a supporting policy toward students engaged in high-level sport activities.

Criterion 4. The institution pursues a supporting policy toward students that desire to study full-time.

Standard V.7 The institution offers basic and ancillary literature for students

Criterion 1. The institution guarantees qualitative and quantitative textbooks and ancillary literature.

Criterion 2. The institution has a structure to store documentation.

Criterion 3. The institution owns a library providing literature to students and updates it continuously.

Criterion 4. Library premises and services are available to students according to the institution's approved schedules.

Criterion 5. The institution supports and guides the student regarding the manner of securing literature.

Criterion 6. The library provides securing materials electronically.

Standard V.8 The institution supports students' employment

Criterion 1. The institution has a structure that stores statistical data on its graduates' employment.

Criterion 2. The institution provides support on employment integration.

Criterion 3. The academic staff, teaching-scientific assistant, and administrative staff are engaged to implement this policy.

Criterion 4. The institution pursues policies in favor of its graduates' employment.

Standard V.9 The institution maintains continuous relations with its ex-students

Criterion 1. The institution utilizes cooperation forms with graduate students to support quality increase in the current programs.

Criterion 2. The institution involves graduate students in curricular reviewing and organizing processes, as well as in launching new programs.

Criterion 3. The institution organizes surveys with graduate students to evaluate the offered diplomas' worth and their validation toward market qualifications.

QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL STUDY PROGRAMS

I. STUDY PROGRAM PROVISION

Standard I.1. The High Education Institution provides study programs in accordance with its mission and purpose, the academic field of the main unit and responsible base to the study program, aiming to preserve national interests and values.

Criterion 1. The High Education Institution provides study programs that are not contrary to the national interests and aim to preserve and consolidate national academic and cultural values.

Criterion 2. The study program is drafted and delivered in accordance with the institution's goals and mission, and field of activity.

Criterion 3. The study program is drafted and delivered in accordance with the strategy on development, the Institution's Statute and Regulation and academic fields and areas.

Criterion 4. The study program is drafted and developed based on genuine studies on the national and local employment market regarding these programs.

Criterion 5. The institution demonstrates it possesses the proper experience, capacities and resources in the specific academic field in order to deliver a study program in that particular field.

Criterion 6. The general and specific field of the study program must be aligned to the academic and research field of the basic unit, responsible for the study program, according to the study program classification/codification, in accordance with the national and European directives and instructions.

Standard I.2. Higher education institution ensures cooperation relationships with institutions, companies, third parties, local and/or foreign business actors in view of delivering the study program, in the framework of professional training and mobility.

Criterion 1. The institution responsible for the program development, supervision, and progress ensures cooperation relationships within the institution through task divisions among staff units, respective responsibilities allocation, and their work continuous analysis.

Criterion 2. In order to meet the objectives of the teaching and student training process, the institution establishes cooperation relations with counterpart institutions in and/or outside the country, native and/or foreign business actors.

Criterion 3. In order to deliver the study program, the institution signs special agreements with institutions, research institutes, and same field companies to achieve professional practices, clinical practices, etc., and cooperates with them to achieve and supervise practice.

Criterion 4. The unit responsible for the study program periodically drafts analytical reports regarding benefits from cooperation agreements in the framework of study program delivery.

Criterion 5. The institution undertakes specific initiatives supporting student's entrepreneurship and employment.

Standard I.3. The Higher Education Institution drafts and implements transparent policies and procedures to ensure the study program quality in the framework of the internal system for quality assurance structures.

Criterion 1. The institution has in place structures and procedures for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), in accordance with the applicable legal and sub-legal provisions and institutional regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution has established and introduced the Internal Quality Assurance System implementing an institutional strategy for continuous quality improvement, involving students and external partners and experts.

Criterion 3. The Institution employs the appropriate quality assurance instruments and indicators. The external quality assurance in Higher Education is realized through external accreditation review processes, analytical and comparative evaluations, and other processes promoting and improving quality. The Institution employs the appropriate quality assurance instruments and indicators.

Criterion 4. The institution employs clear indicators, measurable throughout teaching and research to reflect the situation, achievements and vulnerabilities, as provisioned by the institutional regulatory acts. Based on quality indicators, the institution promotes incentively better achievements.

II. PROFESIONAL STUDY PROGRAMS ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Standard II.1 Study program is organized in accordance with the applicable legal and sub-legal provisions and internal regulatory acts

Criterion 1. Study programs are organized in subjects and modules. The elements comprising the professional study program structure are defined clearly in accordance with the applicable domestic legislation and to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation system (ECTS).

Criterion 2. Study program aims to train specific skills in a wide range of professions and specialties, provides advanced knowledge in an employment or study field, including critical understanding of the field academic theories and principles, develops knowledge, skills and advanced competencies in a professional field, useful to solve practical problems in a specialized professional field.

Criterion 3. Study programs have well-determined objectives about students' professional training, including knowledge, skills and professional competencies that students should obtain at the end of the study program, which characterize the program's professional profile.

Criterion 4. Study program has defined the credit weight to all subjects/modules, including credits for the professional Practicum realization and completion requirements.

Criterion 5 The study organization form, admittance of students, and financing in the special statute higher education institutions are realized in accordance with the higher education law and the respective specifications provided for in the legal framework of the Ministry responsible for education.

Criterion 6 Professional study programs that are offered in the same study field and under the same name should have similar content level, at least 70 percent.

Criterion 7 Study program is accompanied by the respective code, according to study field and published classifications by the ministry responsible for education. After that, program subjects are codified.

Standard II.2 The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the legal requirements and quality standards prescribed for these units.

Criterion 1. The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the legal requirements by the applicable legislation regarding academic organization and structure, academic staff, evaluation and accreditation.

Criterion 2. The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the legal requirements by the applicable legislation, engaging academic/administrative assisting staff to realize the teaching, laboratory, clinical practice, etc.

Criterion 3. The main/basic unit responsible for the study program appoints to each study program a study program coordinator, responsible for the program's and professional practicum progress and development, in accordance with its goals.

Standard II.3 The study program is detailed, informing, structured, and organized in accordance with the program's provisions and training objectives.

Criterion 1. The main/basic unit responsible for the professional study program possesses the information necessary for the study program organization, structure, and content.

Criterion 2. The study program contains the teaching plan, including the information necessary to organize the subjects into semesters, subjects/modules teaching load into credits, lecture hours in/out of the auditorium.

Criterion 3. The study program provides students with all the necessary information related to the general and specific criteria for admission, transfer and studies equivalency.

Criterion 4. Criterion 6 The study program contains the necessary information on subject programs (detailed syllabuses) for each subject, training, seminars or laboratory classes, as well as all the components of each program in and outside the auditorium in accordance with the approved formats.

Criterion 5. Study program content has been continuously improved and updated and in the beginning of the academic year the eventual changes are approved and the full file in Albanian and English is archived.

Standard II.4 The structure, organization and content of the study programs are in accordance with the training objectives, the qualification level based on the National and European Qualifications Framework, learning outcomes and competencies, and labor market requirements.

Criterion 1. The activities designation and content and division of subjects and training enable deep professional knowledge and skills helping student employment.

Criterion 2. Subjects/modules, distribution over years and terms, evaluation in credits and teaching classes enables the achievement of study program comprehensive objectives and expected learning outcomes and scientific research.

Criterion 3. The study program has a balanced ratio between theoretical modules/training activities and practical ones (50:50). About 25% of the program is dedicated to the practical training/specific work in the profession. The ratio theory-practice is in accordance with the program study profile, and approximative to similar international programs

Criterion 4. Division according to training activities and the ratio between theory and practice enable the achievement of comprehensive objectives, transfer of knowledge, mobility and employment upon studies completion.

Criterion 5. The syllabuses (subjects/modules programs) are updated continuously to obtain competencies in accordance with the labor market preferences, including base and ancillary literature.

Criterion 6. Cooperation with employers, internship/practical experience, tutoring and their appraisal in the profession is enough, appropriate and guarantees practical training, in accordance with profession requirements.

Criterion 7. Study program's content guarantees acquiring targeted knowledge, skills and competencies and/or student's employment in accordance with the exigences and preferences of the labor market, consistent to AQF level 5.

Standard II 5 Higher education institution encourages the inclusion of students and partners, networks and other bodies in the continuous improvement of the study program and its successful delivery in line with its objectives.

Criterion 1. In order to improve and adjust the integrated study program with the labor market demands to the highest extent possible, the responsible structures consult and consider the proposals of partner institutions, graduates, and other actors from the labor market.

Criterion 2. The institution encourages and involves in discussions students and their structures, maintains contacts and continuously consults graduates to improve the study program and reflect when they help improving the study program.

Criterion 3. In cooperation with companies, professional networks, associations, professional orders and public and non-public institutions, the responsible unit improves, updates and adjusts the study program in line with the latest proposals and field developments.

III TEACHING, LEARNING, EVALUATION AND COMPETENCIES

Standard III.1 The Higher Education Institution guarantees the learning process, professional skills with the best student-centered methods and practices to secure achieving results.

Criterion 1. Forms of teaching, learning and knowledge and skills transmission are lectures, seminars, lab classes, course assignments/essays, professional practices, open lectures and any other form approved by the institution.

Criterion 2. The academic staff, academic assisting staff respect and react to the students' needs and diversity, offering teaching and learning alternative forms, ways, methods, and opportunities.

Criterion 3. The institution supports the academic and assistant academic staff to improve didactic and pedagogical competencies, in accordance with the learning expected results, in the same time answering the students' needs and diversity.

Criterion 4. The academic staff engaged in program teaching has the competence to explain knowledge and concepts, employs different interactive teaching methods and student-centered discussion, encourage students' creative and critical thinking. At the same time, they provide guidance, support, and mutual respect relation-building between them.

Criterion 5. The unit responsible for providing the study program, assesses and improves periodically the teaching forms and methods, including the students in the process, reflecting their opinions and suggestions.

Criterion 6. The institution organizes structures/units at the institutional level promoting the continuous improvement of teaching, coordinating and cooperating with the main/basic units the activities in the framework of the teaching quality improvement. The responsible structures and units support the experimentation and development of new innovative teaching methods, continually train

the academic and academic assistant staff to improve academic teaching skills and new methods implementation.

Standard III.2 The institution drafts regulations and special procedures for knowledge and professional skills testing and evaluation, and guarantees their implementation

Criterion 1. Professional knowledge, competencies, and skills testing and evaluation criteria and manner are provisioned by the study program Regulation/Institution Regulation/special regulation, are made public and introduced to students.

Criterion 2. Students are introduced to the professional knowledge, skills, and competencies testing and evaluation methodology as provisioned in subject/modules syllabi by the subject/module head, at the beginning of each subject/module.

Criterion 3. Knowledge and professional and scientific skills testing methodology testing and evaluation is achieved in different forms and ways, giving to the students the opportunity to demonstrate their acquired knowledge and competencies both in theory and in practical skills.

Standard III.3 The institution guarantees a fair and transparent evaluation based on each student's merits, including the complaint process.

Criterion 1. Knowledge and professional skills testing and evaluation is achieved throughout the academic year and reflected in the final evaluation, as provisioned in the subjects/modules syllabi by the subjects/module head.

Criterion 2. The institution employs electronic testing and evaluation systems, eliminating different forms of abuse and increasing transparency.

Criterion 3. The final subject evaluation is done in accordance with the syllabus and the applicable legal basis.

Criterion 4. Professional knowledge and skills evaluation is associated with comments/feedback (if necessary) and advices on the learning process to help the student improve in the future.

Criterion 5. The responsible units and academic staff avoid and do not tolerate plagiarism and cheating during exams and assignments.

Criterion 6. Knowledge and professional skills check results are merit-based and are announced timely according to provisions under the relevant regulations.

Criterion 7. The institution guarantees students' rights to be informed regarding evaluation and requests to review the evaluation in line with the statute rules, regulations, and evaluation procedure.

Criterion 8. Any request and complaint is reviewed by the evaluation commission and then by the ad hoc commission. The pursued procedure must be transparent to the parties involved, documented and archived.

Standard III.4 The integrated study program delivery guarantees students' creativity and practical skills enhancement, aiming to in-depth development of students' professional competencies.

Criterion 1. The study program guarantees students' deeper knowledge and professional and special skills development.

Criterion 2. The study program guarantees the development of specific skills in the field of information, human, social, communication, and interaction technology.

Criterion 3. Student's competencies and skills, introduced in the study program and syllabi of each subject, are analyzed and reviewed at the end of the subject. The academic staff points out the most important matters and guides the students to their implementation and the completion requirements.

Criterion 4. Teaching is carried out on a competences-basis to provide students the opportunity to further develop their competencies acquired in labs and professional practicums. The academic staff supports discussions and group-work to interpret and solve respective problems/cases; combines teaching forms with the cooperating institutions to enable and improve students' mobility.

Criterion 5. The active and contract academic staff delivers open lectures and seminars on new scientific and technology developments within/beyond the study program structure.

Standard III.5 The institution pursues a clear students' completion requirements procedure in the study program and provides them with the necessary documentation

Criterion 1. The institution drafts a special procedure regarding completion requirements, before achieving them and renders them public.

Criterion 2. The responsible structures and academic staff assist the students, providing them with the necessary information, instructions and materials in the framework of the completion requirements.

Criterion 3. The special commission for the final exam administration is based on testing and knowledge acquired throughout the academic years, including all subjects/modules based on their relevance and specific weight.

Criterion 4. The academic staff/Mentor guides and assists students in selecting their final paper topics. The Mentor assists the student in extracting and processing results, as well as in drafting the final paper according to the approved instructions. He ensures the results quality and defines if the paper is complete and should be presented to the panel.

Criterion 5. The institution assists students in carrying out measurements, analyses, and tests in or outside institution premises, according to the specific topics and study scope.

Criterion 6. At the end of the completion requirements, the student is graded.

Criterion 7. At the end of the studies, the student is issued with a "Professional Certificate" or a "Professional Diploma" according to the education field, approved by the ministry responsible for education. Upon concluding their studies, a full official copy of the study program is made available to the student.

Criterion 8. The institution retains a copy of the students' documentation, as provisioned by the applicable legislation, and issues information regarding the student, on a case-by-case basis, if required.

Standard III.6 The Higher Education Institution pursues a clear policy to guarantee and promote the quality of teaching and develops special guidelines designed for teaching methods development and monitoring

Criterion 1. The institution designs guidelines at the institutional level for the development and use of different and innovative teaching methods based on the field of studies, subjects/modules.

Criterion 2. Structures responsible develop monitoring mechanisms and periodically evaluate teaching and innovative skills of academic and academic support staff.

Criterion 3. The structures responsible for monitoring and teaching quality assurance make public evaluation results.

Criterion 4. The institution, through its evaluation mechanisms and achieved results, promotes good practice examples, encourages the academic staff to further improve teaching.

IV. HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND LOGISTICS FOR THE STUDY PROGRAM DELIVERY

Standard IV.1 The academic and academic assisting staff covering the study program meet the quantitative standards and have the appropriate and special academic qualification in accordance with the program field to guarantee the study program teaching standards.

Criterion 1. The academic staff and academic assisting staff that engage in delivering the study program meet the applicable legal requirements regarding the academic qualification level, program guiding, guiding and engagement in covering program subjects/modules, research field or practical experience in accordance with the study program and its modules nature and specifics.

Criterion 2. The active academic staff covers the study program teaching load in accordance with the applicable legal framework.

Criterion 3. The institution guarantees and affirms the stability of the academic staff engaged in the study program for all the accreditation period, including the employment contracts and social and health insurance coverage.

Criterion 4. The institution applies recruitment and evaluation procedures based on the announced general and specific criteria that ensure the selection of staff with the appropriate qualification level, in accordance with the study program content's nature, structure, and modules.

Criterion 5. The institution ensures and guarantees the engagement of appropriate academic assisting staff adequate to deliver lab classes and maintain labs and other teaching premises, according to the specific nature of the study program.

Criterion 6. Every academic year, the institution collects, stores and updates data on the staff engaged in the study program. These data include the academic staff involved in the program and the person responsible for organizing the study program, engaging each academic staff in each academic semester and year, as well as the administrative and academic assisting staff.

Criterion 7. The institution, in agreement and cooperating with other higher education institutions, business representatives and companies, makes available the appropriate sufficient number of qualified staff to instruct, mentor and supervise students during their professional practice and other specific activities, depending on the nature of the study program.

Criterion 8. The host premises supervising staff engaged in delivering the professional practicums as by agreement, helps students to accomplish their requirements/final practicum report and to participate in their professional practicum evaluation process.

Standard IV.2 The higher education institution makes available the learning premises and the appropriate infrastructure for the delivery of the study program teaching process and practical training, according to the nature and field of the study program

Criterion 1. The institution provides sufficient and appropriate teaching facilities, depending on the number of students and study groups, in accordance with the specific nature of the study program and respective modules.

Criterion 2. Learning premises such as classrooms, laboratories, studios and the like are equipped with electronic and information technology devices that guarantee the realization of the theoretical and practical teaching process through the use of contemporary teaching and learning methodologies and technologies.

Criterion 3. Laboratories, studios, ateliers, professional practice bases, or other premises, according to the specific nature of the study program, contain the necessary equipment and tools to meet module requirements, theoretical and practical training requirements, and overall study program objectives.

Criterion 4. The institution provides at least one information technology lab, equipped with professional software appropriate to the nature of the study program provided.

Standard IV.3 The study program should contain the required and up-to-date literature to assist teaching and the support learning facilities (library, dedicated facilities)

Criterion 1. Basic and support literature made available to students in the language of the study program (physical and digital) guarantees the acquisition of necessary knowledge and information, foreseen under the study program.

Criterion 2. The institution makes available the academic library to students, guaranteeing students equal access to the study program.

Criterion 3. The library should be equipped with physical fund such as: sufficient required textbooks, support literature, both in Albanian and foreign languages, necessary and appropriate books or scientific journals to cover all modules and teaching activities according to each study program specifics.

Criterion 4. The institution should enable the adequate conditions for students' equal use of online libraries for each study program field.

Criterion 5. The library should be equipped with computer software and other technical equipment, enabling unrestricted use by all students.

Criterion 6. Library hours should be in line with the teaching process hours and beyond, but also appropriate with student number and needs, as well as its capacity.

Criterion 7. The library and responsible units of the program monitor and report on the quality of the physical and online library fund (main titles available for the program), update, rate of usage of the physical and online funds by the academic staff and program students, use of study rooms, highlighting the effectiveness of efforts to enrich the physical and online funds, as well as the demand for titles.

Standard IV.4 The Higher Education Institution has an internal institutional management system, which is made available to the management, information and monitoring of academic, financial and administrative activity for the study program

Criterion 1. The institution has in place a management system for the management of all student-related information and activity from enrollment to the study programs up to their graduation.

Criterion 2. The internal management system manages the information, documentation and activities of academic staff, academic support staff, administrative staff and partners engaged in program implementation.

Criterion 3. The management system provides dedicated access to information and documents for all study program staff and students.

Criterion 4. The management system has integrated platforms and modules that enable interactive communication and information exchange between staff and students.

Criterion 5. The management system guarantees real-time monitoring of academic and administrative staff activity and enables individual and real-time reporting to governing bodies and authorities.

Criterion 6. Information related to the study program, academic staff, and the various activities is published on the website of the responsible unit of the study program.

Standard IV.5 The higher education institution guarantees the necessary funding and financial support for the implementation of the teaching/research process, study program progress and student support

Criterion 1. The institution drafts a financial report on the costs of the basic unit responsible for the study program and the financial support plan required for the study program progress for at least one full cycle study program.

Criterion 2. The funding plan of the basic unit responsible for the study program should include funding for human resources made available to program implementation, operating costs for premise maintenance and teaching process support technologies, library and literature enrichment costs, and access to online libraries, financial obligations, national or international grants received and service contracts on study program performance, and other projects and items.

Criterion 3. The institution conducts a periodic audit, assesses and documents the financial situation and its financial effectiveness.

Criterion 4. The institution reports at the level of the basic unit responsible for the study program on the realization of the adopted budget of the previous year.

Criterion 5. The institution ensures financial sustainability for delivering basic unit study programs and sufficient financial capacities for the normal progress of said programs. In case the financial situation requires improvement, the institution plans dedicated interventions and eventual diversification of study program funding.

V. STUDENTS AND THEIR SUPPORT

Standard V.1 The higher education institution drafts, follows and implements policies and procedures on student admission, selection, progress, transfer, recognition, knowledge assessment and graduation from the study program

Criterion 1. The institution develops and implements policies and procedures that cover the full study program academic cycle, from enrollment to graduation, in accordance with applicable legislation and its own regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. Policies and procedures from enrollment to graduation guarantee equality and equal rights to all study program applicants and students.

Criterion 3. At the start of each academic year, the institution drafts and publishes the criteria on the selection of candidates to be admitted to the study program. The institution cooperates with structures established in the framework of the State Matura, and pursuant to the relevant law and instructions.

Criterion 4. Student admission and selection criteria and procedures, progress throughout the study course, transfer, and recognition of professional courses attended, knowledge assessment and graduation are easily understandable and accessible to the public.

Criterion 5. At the start of each academic year, the institution drafts and publishes special criteria on the selection of candidates with disabilities, from minority and marginalized groups.

Criterion 6. The institution develops assistance/scholarship policies for those in need, as well as policies to improve the quality of admission to priority programs for the institution and the country's economic development.

Standard V.2 The higher education institution makes available to the students of the study program detailed and comprehensive information on academic progress, recognition, and knowledge assessment up to the completion of program studies and graduation

Criterion 1. The institution provides full and detailed information on the criteria and procedures for student academic progress and passing from one academic year to the other.

Criterion 2. The institution informs students about diploma recognition procedures and criteria regarding previous qualifications from professional courses or part-time studies.

Criterion 3. The institution informs students about the criteria and procedures on knowledge and skills assessment during the study program.

Criterion 4. The higher education institution informs students about the study program's final thesis and graduation criteria and procedures.

Criterion 5. Before the start of and throughout each academic year, the higher education institution publishes special guidelines and organizes open briefings to inform potential students and current students about the study program.

Standard V.3 The higher education institution provides students with comprehensive and detailed information on training objectives, study program structure, organization and content, expected learning outcomes and employment opportunities

Criterion 1. The students are thoroughly informed on study program structure, organization and duration.

Criterion 2. The institution provides students with the necessary information and documentation on modules/subjects, content and training activities.

Criterion 3. The institution informs students on employment opportunities, as well as institutional support for career counseling and labor market.

Criterion 4. Students are provided with extensive and up-to-date information on the teaching process development and organization, logistics, infrastructure and services for its realization.

Criterion 5. The institution informs students about professional practices in the framework of study program completion, collaboration partners and institutions where such practices are to take place, as well as employment opportunities and institutional support for labor market orientation.

Standard V.4 The higher education institution collects, manages, updates and maintains detailed information about the number and profile of students attending the study program from their admission to graduation, as well as their employment data

Criterion 1. The institution generates annual statistics on the number of students enrolled in the study program until their graduation, withdrawals from the program, dropouts during or before the end of the program, or failures to successfully complete the academic year in which the study program is delivered.

Criterion 2. Student's statistical data are managed by the internal information system and must be secured and easily verifiable by authorized persons.

Criterion 3. Through acts, the institution supports the annual periodic inspection at the level of all units responsible for management (teaching secretariats, internal information management system, etc.), reviews and documents the condition and accuracy of the information and documentation pertaining to students and their relevant activity.

Criterion 4. The unit responsible for the study program should develop periodic analytical reports on incoming and outgoing students' profile and quality, as well as their employment rate, along with appropriate measures to improve these indicators.

Standard V.5 The higher education institution includes and engages students in decision-making and advisory bodies for drafting, approving, reviewing and improving the study programs, teaching methods and quality of provided resources and services

Criterion 1. The institution envisages students and/or their representatives' involvement and engagement in decision-making and advisory bodies, according to the institution's legal and regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution should ensure that students and/or their representatives' involvement in decision-making, advising or evaluation of the academic process is realistic, concrete, productive and with easily verifiable and measurable results.

Criterion 3. The responsible unit guarantees student involvement in drafting, reviewing and improving the study program on a regular basis and includes their suggestions and contributions obtained in joint department meetings, through questionnaires, focus groups, etc.

Criterion 4. Students have the opportunity to give their input on the equality and fairness of the knowledge assessment and testing process, including their right to appeal with the responsible body/unit/lecturer the result, assessment, and evaluation awarded.

Standard V.6 The higher education institution has special procedures and units for student admission, induction, counseling, complaint and issue management, which exercise their activity permanently and are easily accessible to students

Criterion 1. The institution has special units and procedures which ensure student information and assistance in accordance with the legal provisions and regulatory acts of the institution.

Criterion 2. The institution has set up and introduced a special system for student information, counseling, progress monitoring and assistance in matters related to the teaching process and study program.

Criterion 3. The institution provides students with career counseling service. The Career Counseling Office/Unit welcomes students continuously and periodically, providing specific information and guidance in terms of completing the learning process, selection and induction regarding professional practice in other institutions, and also advises them on labor market.

Criterion 4. The Career Office/Unit follows-up students after graduation, by collecting, processing and storing data on the level and quality of study program student employment and makes them available to students and relevant bodies and authorities

ANNEX NO. 3

QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR FIRST- CYCLE “BACHELOR” STUDY PROGRAMS

I. STUDY PROGRAM PROVISION

Standard I.1 The higher education institution provides study programs in accordance with its mission and goal, as well as the academic field of the main and basic unit responsible for the study program, aiming to preserve national interests and values

Criterion 1. The higher education institution provides study programs that do not infringe on national interests and aim to preserve and consolidate national academic and cultural values.

Criterion 2. The study program is designed and delivered in accordance with the goals and mission of the institution and field of activity.

Criterion 3. The study program is designed and delivered in accordance and pursuant to the strategy for development, Institution’s Statute and Regulation and its relevant academic fields and directions.

Criterion 4. The institution demonstrates it possesses the proper experience, capacities and resources in the specific academic field in order to deliver a study program in that particular field.

Criterion 5. The general and specific field of the study program must be in line with the academic and research field of the main/basic unit responsible for the study program, according to study program classification/codification, in line with national and European directives and instructions.

Standard I.2. The Higher education institution ensures cooperation relationships with institutions, companies, third parties, local and/or foreign business actors in order to deliver the study program, in the framework of professional training, scientific research and mobility

Criterion 1. The institution responsible for program development, supervision and progress ensures successful cooperation relationships within the institution through task division among staff and units, allocation of respective responsibilities and ongoing review of their work.

Criterion 2. In order to meet the objectives of the teaching and student training process, the institution establishes cooperation relations with counterpart institutions in and/or outside the country, native and/or foreign business actors.

Criterion 3. In order to deliver the study program, the institution signs special agreements with institutions, research institutes, and companies operating in the same field to conduct professional, clinical and work practices or internships, etc.

Criterion 4. The unit responsible for the study program drafts periodic analytical reports in terms of benefits from cooperation agreements in the framework of study program delivery.

II. ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF FIRST-CYCLE BACHELOR PROGRAMS

Standard II.1 The study program is organized in accordance with national legal provisions and bylaws in force

Criterion 1: Study programs are organized into subjects and modules. The elements constituting the structure of the study program are clearly defined in accordance with the national legislation in force and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Criterion 2. The study program aims to develop special skills in a wide range of professions and specialties, provide advanced knowledge in a field of study or employment, including critical understanding of academic theories and principles in the field, building advanced knowledge, skills, and competences in an academic or professional field, necessary to solve complex and unforeseeable problems in a specialized study or professional area.

Criterion 3: The study programs have clearly defined practicums by grouping subjects / modules according to specific categories and corresponding load in credits.

Criterion 4: The study program has defined load in credits in terms of professional practice delivery and fulfillment of completion requirements.

Criterion 5 The form of study organization, student admission, and funding in higher education institutions of special status are carried out in accordance with the law on higher education and relevant specifications provided for by instruction of the ministry responsible for education.

Criterion 6 Bachelor study programs offered in the same study field, cycle, and under the same name should have a content level that is at least 70 percent similar.

Criterion 7 The study program is accompanied by the relevant code, according to field of study and classifications published by the ministry responsible for education. Then, program subject codification is performed.

Criterion 8. Study programs may also be shared programs between two or more domestic and foreign higher education institutions, pursuant to the legislation in force.

Standard II.2 The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the legal requirements and quality standards prescribed for these units

Criterion 1. The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the obligations set forth in the legislation in force as regards academic organization and structure, academic staff, evaluation and accreditation.

Criterion 2. The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the obligations set forth in the legislation in force by engaging academic/administrative support staff for teaching, laboratory, clinical, etc. practice delivery.

Criterion 3. The main/basic unit responsible for the program appoints for any study program a study program coordinator, who is responsible for the study program and professional practices progress and development in line with its objectives.

Standard II.3 The study program is detailed, informative, structured, and organized in accordance with the provisions and objectives relevant to the first cycle study program

Criterion 1. The main / basic unit responsible for first-cycle study programs possesses the necessary information on study program organization, structure, and content.

Criterion 2. The study program contains the teaching plan, including the information necessary to determine semester subjects, teaching load of subjects/modules, and hours inside/outside the auditorium.

Criterion 3. The study program provides students with all the necessary information related to the general and specific criteria on admission, transfer, and study equivalence.

Criterion 4. The study program contains the necessary information on subject programs (syllabuses) for each subject with regard to practices, seminars or laboratory classes, as well as all the components of each program in and outside the auditorium in accordance with the approved formats.

Criterion 5. The content of the study program is subject to continuous improvement and update and at the beginning of each academic year the eventual changes are approved, and the complete file is archived.

Standard II.4 The structure, organization and content of study programs comply with training objectives, qualification level based on the National and European Qualifications Framework, learning outcomes and study continuation, as well as competences in accordance with labor market requirements

Criterion 1. Naming, activities content, subject and practice distribution enable the advancement of knowledge and skills, and/or student employment.

Criterion 2. Subjects/modules, distribution over years and semesters, evaluation in credits and classes enable the achievement of comprehensive study program objectives and expected learning outcomes.

Criterion 3. Study program design, subjects, and theory vs. practice ratio are in line with the profile of the study program and similar to related international programs.

Criterion 4. Division according to training activities and the ratio between theory and practice enable the achievement of comprehensive objectives, transfer of knowledge, mobility and employment upon studies completion.

Criterion 5. Syllabuses (subject/module programs) are updated on an ongoing basis to ensure acquisition of competences in accordance with labor market requirements, including the basic and support literature of recent years.

Criterion 6. The content of the study program guarantees the acquisition of intended knowledge, skills, and competences.

Criterion 7. Study program content enables the furthering of studies and/or student employment in line with labor market expectations and demands.

Standard II.5 The higher education institution encourages students and partners, and other networks and organizations to participate in the design and ongoing improvement and successful delivery of the study program in accordance with their objectives

Criterion 1. In order to improve and adapt the study program to labor market demands to the highest extent possible, responsible units consult and consider the proposals of partner institutions, graduates, and other actors from the labor market during program study design and delivery.

Criterion 2. The institution encourages and involves students and their structures in discussions, maintains contacts and regularly consults with graduates to enhance the study program and reflect when it benefits study program improvement.

Criterion 3. In cooperation with professional networks, associations, and orders (especially in the field of medicine) and public and non-public institutions, the responsible unit improves, updates and adjusts the study program in compliance with proposals and latest developments in different fields.

III. TEACHING, LEARNING, EVALUATION AND COMPETENCES

Standard III.1 The higher education institution ensures teaching process realization, as well as professional and scientific skill acquisition through best student-centered methods and practices that guarantee outcome achievement

Criterion 1. Forms of teaching, learning and knowledge transmission are lectures, seminars, lab classes, course assignments/essays, professional and clinical practices, open lectures and any other form approved by the institution.

Criterion 2. The academic staff respects and responds to the variety and needs of students by offering alternative teaching and learning forms, means, methods, and opportunities.

Criterion 3. The institution supports the academic staff in improving didactic competences and in compliance with expected learning outcomes.

Criterion 4. The academic staff involved in program teaching is competent in regards to explaining knowledge and concepts, utilizes various interactive teaching methods and holds student-centered discussions, promotes students' creative and critical thinking, as well as their autonomy and responsibility

At the same time, it guides, supports and helps build relationships of mutual respect between them.

Criterion 5. The unit responsible for study program delivery assesses and improves teaching forms and methods periodically, by including students in the process and reflecting their opinions and advice.

Criterion 6. The institution organizes structures/units at the institutional level promoting the continuous improvement of teaching, coordinating and cooperating with the main/basic units in the framework of the teaching quality improvement. The responsible structures and units support the experimentation and development of new innovative teaching methods, deliver continuous academic staff training for teaching skill improvement and implementation of new methods.

Standard III.2 The institution drafts regulations and special procedures for knowledge and professional skill testing and assessment, and guarantees their implementation

Criterion 1. Knowledge and professional skill testing and assessment criteria and manner are set forth under the Study Program Regulation/ Institution Regulation/ special regulation, and are made public and known to students.

Criterion 2. Students are informed about knowledge and professional and scientific skills testing methodology as foreseen in subject/module syllabuses by the subject/module head, at the beginning of the academic year.

Criterion 3. Knowledge and professional and scientific skill testing and evaluation are done in different forms and ways, by enabling each student to demonstrate his/her knowledge and competences acquired

Criterion 4. The basic unit/academic staff assesses and improves teaching forms and methods periodically, by including students in the process and reflecting their opinions and suggestions.

Criterion 5. The institution enables the use of multiple flexible pedagogical methods, appropriate and in line with expected learning outcomes, training objectives and employers' requirements. Teaching forms and methods encourage students' sense of autonomy, by ensuring simultaneous instruction and support from the teacher and establishment of mutual respect relations between them.

Standard III.3 The institution ensures a fair and transparent evaluation based on each student's merits, including the appeal process

Criterion 1. Knowledge and professional skill testing and evaluation are done throughout the academic year and are reflected in the final evaluation, as foreseen in subject/module syllabuses by the subject/module head.

Criterion 2. The institution has in place electronic testing and evaluation systems, preventing different forms of abuse and increasing transparency.

Criterion 3. The final subject evaluation is performed pursuant to the syllabus and legal basis in force.

Criterion 4. Knowledge and professional skill evaluation is accompanied with comments/feedback (if necessary) and advice on the learning process to help the student improve in the future.

Criterion 5. The responsible units and academic staff prevent/do not tolerate plagiarism and cheating during exams and assignments.

Criterion 6. The results of knowledge and professional skill examinations are merit-based and announced on time in accordance with the provisions of the applicable regulations.

Criterion 7. The institution observes students' rights to be informed on the evaluation and request an evaluation review in line with the rules included in the statute, regulations, and evaluation procedures.

Criterion 8. Any request and complaint is reviewed by the evaluation commission and then by the ad hoc commission. The procedure adopted must be transparent for parties involved, documented and archived.

Standard III.4 The institution establishes special institutional bodies, which raise awareness on improving the quality of teaching and learning with regard to study programs

Criterion 1. The study program should ensure students' knowledge advancement and professional and special skill development.

Criterion 2. The study program guarantees the development of specific skills in the information technology, humanities, social, communication, and interaction fields.

Criterion 3. Student's competences and skills, introduced in the study program and syllabi of each subject, are analyzed and reviewed at the end of the subject. The academic staff highlights prominent matters and guides students on their implementation and completion requirements.

Criterion 4. Teaching is competence based, in order to provide students with the opportunity to further develop their competences in laboratories and professional practices. The academic staff support group discussions and work with regard to the interpretation and resolution of certain problems/issues; foster an appropriate climate for the development of innovative ideas, advanced research and scientific studies and support them; combine teaching forms with cooperative institutions to enable and increase student mobility.

Criterion 5. The academic staff, both active and under contract, delivers open lectures and seminars on new scientific and technological developments within and outside the scope of the study program structure.

Standard III.5 The institution pursues a clear procedure in terms of student's completion requirements relevant to the study program and provides the student with the necessary documentation

Criterion 1. The institution drafts special regulations on the general final examination or diploma thesis. The study program regulation determines the average grade threshold qualifying the student for a diploma thesis and makes it public.

Criterion 2. The responsible structures and academic staff assist students by providing the necessary information, instructions and materials in the framework of the completion requirements.

Criterion 3. The ad hoc commission for the final exam administration is based on the testing of knowledge acquired throughout the academic years, including all subjects/modules based on their relevance and specific weight.

Criterion 4. The academic staff/diploma mentor guides and assists students in selecting their diploma thesis topics. The mentor assists the student in producing and processing the relevant results, as well as in drafting the thesis according to approved guides. They ensure quality of results and either approve or disapprove whether the thesis is complete to be presented to the panel;

Criterion 5. The basic unit assists students in carrying out measurements, analyses, and tests in or outside institution premises, according to the specific topics and field of study.

Criterion 6. At the end of the general final exam or diploma defense, the student is evaluated with a mark.

Criterion 7. Upon study completion, the student is provided with a diploma and its supplement as approved by the ministry responsible for education. Upon concluding their studies, a full official copy of the study program is made available to the student.

Criterion 8. Pursuant to the legislation in force, the institution retains a copy of students' documentation and issues attestations to the student, on a case-by-case basis, if required.

IV. HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND LOGISTICS FOR STUDY PROGRAM DELIVERY

Standard IV.1 The academic staff covering the study program meets the quantitative standards and holds the proper and adequate academic qualifications, in line with the program scope, to guarantee teaching standards in the study program

Criterion 1. The academic and support staff involved in study program delivery meet the legal requirements in force on academic qualification level, program delivery, delivery and involvement in program subject/module coverage, research area or practical experience in line with the study program, and nature and specificity of modules thereof.

Criterion 2. The active academic staff should cover the teaching load of the study program pursuant to the legal framework in force.

Criterion 3. The institution should ensure and demonstrate the stability of the active academic staff involved in the study program throughout the accreditation period, including employment contracts and social and health insurance coverage.

Criterion 4. The institution follows recruitment and evaluation procedures based on published general and specific criteria that ensure the selection of staff with the appropriate level of qualification, and in accordance with the nature, structure, modules and content of the study program.

Criterion 5. The institution ensures and guarantees the engagement of appropriate and sufficient academic support staff to carry out laboratory classes and maintain laboratories and other teaching premises, according to the specific nature of the study program being delivered.

Criterion 6. Each academic year, the institution collects, stores and updates the data of the staff engaged in the study program, pursuant to the legislation on personal data protection in force. These data include the academic staff involved in the program and the person responsible for organizing the

study program, engagement of staff in each academic semester and year, as well as the support and administrative staff.

Criterion 7. The institution, by entering into cooperation agreements with other higher education institutions, business representatives and companies, makes available the appropriate sufficient number of qualified staff to instruct, mentor and supervise students during their professional practice, diploma thesis work and other specific activities, depending on the nature of the study program.

Criterion 8. The supervisory staff in the host premises involved in the delivery of professional practices on an agreement basis should assist students in meeting requirements/final report of practice and participate in the process of their evaluation of the professional practice.

Standard IV.2 The higher education institution makes available the learning premises and appropriate infrastructure for the delivery of study program teaching process and practical training, according to the nature and field of the study program

Criterion 1. The institution provides sufficient and appropriate teaching facilities, depending on the number of students and study groups, in accordance with the specific nature of the study program and respective modules.

Criterion 2. Learning premises such as classrooms, laboratories, studios and the like are equipped with electronic and information technology devices that guarantee the realization of the theoretical and practical teaching process through the use of contemporary teaching and learning methodologies and technologies.

Criterion 3. Laboratories, studios, ateliers or other premises, according to the specific nature of the study program, contain the necessary equipment and tools to meet module requirements, theoretical and practical training, and the overall study program objectives.

Criterion 4. The institution provides at least one information technology lab, equipped with professional software appropriate to the nature of the study program provided.

Standard IV.3 The study program should contain the necessary and up-to-date literature to assist teaching and the support learning facilities (library, dedicated facilities)

Criterion 1. Basic and support literature made available to students in the language of the study program (physical and digital) guarantees the acquisition of necessary knowledge and information, foreseen under the study program.

Criterion 2. The responsible unit should report literature updates with recent publications.

Criterion 3. The institution makes available the academic library to students, guaranteeing students equal access to the study program.

Criterion 4. The library should be equipped with physical fund such as: sufficient required textbooks, support literature, both in Albanian and foreign languages, necessary and appropriate books or scientific journals to cover all modules and teaching activities according to each study program specifics.

Criterion 5. The institution should enable the adequate conditions for students' equal use of online libraries for each study program field.

Criterion 6. The library should be equipped with computer software and other technical equipment, enabling unrestricted use by all students.

Criterion 7. Library hours should be in line with teaching process hours and beyond, but also adequate for the number and needs of students, as well as its capacity.

Criterion 8. The library and units responsible for the program monitor and report on the quality of the physical and online library funds (main titles available for the program), update, rate of use of the physical and online funds by academic staff and program students and use of study rooms, highlighting the effectiveness of efforts to enrich the physical and online funds, demand for titles, as well as academic staff performance.

Standard IV.4 The higher education institution has an internal institutional management system, which is made available to the management, information and monitoring of academic, financial and administrative activity for the study program

Criterion 1. The institution has in place a management system for the management of all student-related information and activity from enrollment to the study program up to graduation.

Criterion 2. The internal management system manages the information, documentation and activities of academic staff, academic support staff, administrative staff and partners engaged in program implementation.

Criterion 3. The management system provides dedicated access to information and documents for all study program staff and students.

Criterion 4. The management system has integrated platforms and modules that enable interactive communication and information exchange between academic staff and students.

Criterion 5. The management system guarantees real-time monitoring of academic and administrative staff activity and enables individual and real-time reporting to governing bodies and authorities.

Criterion 6. Information related to the study program, academic staff, and various activities is published on the website in at least two languages, one of which being Albanian.

Standard IV.5 The higher education institution guarantees the necessary funding and financial support for the implementation of the teaching/research process, study program progress and student support

Criterion 1. The institution drafts a financial report on the costs of the basic unit responsible for the study program and the financial support plan required for the study program progress for at least one full cycle study program.

Criterion 2. The funding plan of the basic unit responsible for the study program should include funding for human resources made available to program implementation, operating costs for premise maintenance and teaching process support technologies, library and literature enrichment costs, and access to online libraries, financial obligations, national or international grants received and service contracts on study program performance, and other projects and items.

Criterion 3. The institution conducts a periodic audit, assesses and documents the financial situation and its financial effectiveness.

Criterion 4. The institution reports at the level of the basic unit responsible for the study program with regard to the realization of the adopted budget of the previous year.

Criterion 5. The institution ensures financial sustainability for delivering basic unit study programs and sufficient financial capacities for the normal progress of said programs. In case the financial situation requires improvement, the institution plans dedicated interventions and eventual diversification of study program funding.

V. STUDENTS AND THEIR SUPPORT

Standard V.1 The higher education institution drafts, follows and implements policies and procedures on student admission, selection, progress, transfer, recognition, knowledge assessment and graduation from the study program

Criterion 1. The institution develops and implements policies and procedures that cover the full study program academic cycle, from enrollment to graduation, in accordance with applicable legislation and its own regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. Policies and procedures from enrollment to graduation guarantee equality and equal rights to all study program applicants and students.

Criterion 3. At the start of each academic year, the institution drafts and publishes special criteria on the selection of candidates to be admitted to the study program. The institution cooperates with structures established in the framework of the State Matura, and pursuant to the relevant law and instructions. The criteria also provide for the enrollment of foreign students.

Criterion 4. Student selection criteria and procedures, progress throughout the study course, transfer, and recognition of previous or part-time studies, knowledge assessment and graduation are easily understandable and accessible to the public.

Criterion 5. Prior to the start of each academic year, the institution informs the public and interested parties on study program general and specific criteria and requirements.

Criterion 6. At the start of each academic year, the institution drafts and publishes criteria on the selection of candidates with disabilities, from minority and marginalized groups.

Criterion 7. The institution drafts and publishes at the start of each academic year the criteria for the selection of candidates from other countries.

Criterion 8. The institution develops assistance/scholarship policies for those in need, as well as policies to improve the quality of admission to priority programs for the institution and the country's economic development.

Standard V.2 The higher education institution makes available to the students of the study program detailed and comprehensive information on academic progress, recognition, and knowledge assessment up to study completion and graduation

Criterion 1. The institution provides full and detailed information on the criteria and procedures for student academic progress and passing from one academic year to the other.

Criterion 2. The institution informs students about diploma recognition procedures and criteria regarding previous qualifications or part-time studies.

Criterion 3. The institution informs students about the criteria and procedures on knowledge and skills assessment during the study program.

Criterion 4. The Higher Education Institution informs students about study program graduation criteria and procedures.

Criterion 5. Before the start of each academic year and periodically thereafter, the higher education institution publishes special guidelines and organizes open briefings to inform interested parties and potential students about the study program.

Standard V.3 The higher education institution provides students with comprehensive and detailed information on training objectives, study program structure, organization and content, expected learning outcomes and employment opportunities

Criterion 1. Students are thoroughly informed on study program structure, organization and duration.

Criterion 2. The institution provides students with the necessary information and documentation on modules/subjects, content and training activities.

Criterion 3. The institution informs students on employment opportunities, as well as institutional support for career counseling and labor market.

Criterion 4. Students are provided with extensive and up-to-date information on the teaching process development and organization, logistics, infrastructure and services for its realization.

Criterion 5. Information about the study program is provided through the internal information management system and should be easily accessible even to distance students.

Standard V.4 The higher education institution collects, manages, updates and maintains detailed information about the number and profile of students attending the study program from their admission until graduation, as well as their employment data

Criterion 1. The institution produces and maintains annual statistics on the number of students and alumni in each study program.

Criterion 2. The institution generates annual statistics on the number of students enrolled in the study program until graduation, withdrawals from the program, dropouts before the end of the program, or failures to successfully complete the academic year in which the study program is delivered

Criterion 3. Student's statistical data should be managed by the internal information system and must be secured and easily verifiable by authorized persons.

Criterion 4. Through acts, the institution supports the annual periodic inspection at the level of all units responsible for management (teaching secretariats, internal information management system, etc.), reviews and documents the condition and accuracy of the information and documentation pertaining to students and their relevant activity.

Criterion 5. The basic unit should draft periodic analytical reports on incoming and outgoing students' profile and quality, as well as their employment quality rate, along with appropriate measures to improve these indicators

Standard V.5 The higher education institution includes and engages students in decision-making and advisory bodies for drafting, approving, reviewing and improving the study programs, teaching methods and the quality of provided resources and services

Criterion 1. The institution envisages students and/or their representatives' involvement and engagement in decision-making and advisory bodies, according to the institution's legal and regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution should ensure that students and/or their representatives' involvement in decision-making, advising or evaluation of the academic process is realistic, concrete, productive and with easily verifiable and measurable results.

Criterion 3. The responsible unit guarantees student involvement in drafting, reviewing and improving the study program on a regular basis and includes their suggestions and contributions obtained in joint department meetings, through questionnaires, focus groups, etc.

Criterion 4. Students have the opportunity to give their input on the equality and fairness of the knowledge assessment and testing process, including their right to appeal with the responsible body/unit/lecturer the result, assessment, and evaluation awarded.

Standard V.6 The higher education institution has special procedures and units for student admission, induction, counseling, complaint and issue management, which exercise their activity permanently and are easily accessible to students

Criterion 1. The institution has special units and procedures which ensure student information and assistance in accordance with the legal provisions and regulatory acts of the institution.

Criterion 2. The institution has set up and introduced a special system for student information, counseling, progress and assistance in matters related to the teaching process and study program.

Criterion 3. The institution provides students with career counseling service. The Career Counseling Office/Unit welcomes students continuously and periodically, providing specific information and guidance in terms of completing the learning process, selection and induction regarding professional practice in other institutions, and also advises them on labor market.

Criterion 4. The career office/unit follows-up with students after graduation by collecting, processing and storing data on the rate and quality of study program student employment and makes them available to students and relevant governing bodies and authorities.

VI QUALITY ASSURANCE OF “BACHELOR” STUDY PROGRAMS

Standard VI.1 The higher education institution pursues a clear policy to guarantee and promote the quality of teaching and drafts special guidelines designed for teaching method development and monitoring

Criterion 1. The institution designs guidelines at the institutional level for the development and use of different and innovative teaching methods based on the field of studies, subjects/modules.

Criterion 2. Structures responsible develop monitoring mechanisms and periodically evaluate teaching and innovative skills of academic and academic support staff.

Criterion 3. The institution guarantees student inclusion in the periodic assessment of teaching methods, and knowledge testing including complaint handling opportunity.

Criterion 4. Structures responsible for monitoring and teaching quality assurance make public evaluation results.

Criterion 5. The institution, through its assessment mechanisms and achieved results, promotes examples of good practice, and prompts the academic staff to further improve teaching.

Standard VI.2 The higher education institution drafts and implements transparent policies and procedures on study program quality assurance within the framework of internal quality assurance structures and system

Criterion 1. The institution has in place structures and procedures for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), in accordance with applicable legal and sub-legal provisions and institutional regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution has established and utilizes the Internal Quality Assurance System and implements an institutional strategy for ongoing quality improvement, which involves students and external partners and experts.

Criterion 3. The Institution uses the appropriate quality assurance instruments and indicators. External quality assurance in higher education is realized through external accreditation assessment processes, analytical and comparative evaluations, as well as other processes that promote and improve study program quality.

Criterion 4. The institution uses clear and measurable teaching and research indicators to display the status, achievements and weaknesses, as also set forth under institutional regulatory acts. The institution builds on qualitative indicators to promote better achievements in the study program.

Standard VI.3 The higher education institution periodically monitors and evaluates the study program through the special units, in order to ensure training objective and intended learning outcome achievement

Criterion 1. The higher education institution uses formal and documented processes and mechanisms to periodically review, approve and supervise the first cycle study program, in the framework of its accreditation. In this process, it identifies achievements and weaknesses, motivation of best practices and achievements, as well as the plan of measures for improvement.

The results of these assessments are documented and put forward to the responsible and decision-making authorities for the study program.

Criterion 2. Evaluation reports should include expected outcomes, evaluation outcomes, motivation of best practices and achievements, and measures taken to address weaknesses and improve quality further, as well as motivation of better achievements in teaching and research by academic staff and students.

Criterion 3. In the framework of evaluating study program realization, performance and quality, the institution employs direct methods such as: quality assessment of teaching, didactics, curricula, learning outcomes; parallel assessment of student examinations or assignments, direct observations in the auditorium during exercises/practice, local or standardized tests, results achieved in inter-institutional or national tests such as state exam for regulated professions, etc.

Criterion 4. In the framework of study program realization, performance and quality evaluation, the institution uses indirect assessment methods and instruments such as: students, graduates (alumni), and academic staff's surveys and interviews; academic and administrative assistance, employers and institutions that cooperate for the study program delivery and other parties involved in conducting the assessment of knowledge and competences acquired during this program.

Standard VI.4 The higher education institution includes academic units, academic staff and students in the study program IQA processes, and informs interested parties of the results and subsequent measures taken

Criterion 1. The institution should provide for and guarantee the involvement of internal and external actors, interested in continuously ensuring and improving the study program in internal quality policies and procedures.

Criterion 2. The institution defines the specific responsibilities and tasks of main units, individuals, students and other parties engaged in the internal quality assurance of the study program and guarantees the responsible performance of these tasks.

Criterion 3. During study program assessment and quality assurance, it is important to guarantee the inclusion of the main and basic unit responsible for the study program, academic staff, support and administrative staff, and study program students.

Criterion 4. Internal actors' inclusion and engagement in the continuous assessment procedures should observe the academic integrity and avoid any kind of discrimination or inequality against staff and students.

Criterion 5. Partners and/or external experts, who are related to the study program, or can provide valuable expertise and input about the program quality and improvement should actively participate in the assessment and internal quality assurance processes

Standard VI.5 Policies, processes and activities for the Internal Quality Assurance of the study program should be public, transparent, and effective, with the view to establish an Internal Quality Assurance Culture

Criterion 1. The policy, strategy, organization and activities within the framework of study program Internal Quality Assurance system are transparent and are made public to all students and parties concerned.

Criterion 2. The Higher Education Institution publishes the results of the study programs assessment, by observing the academic freedom and ethics, as well as the legislation on personal data.

Criterion 3. The assessment results should go along with an action plan designed to address and improve the identified weaknesses and issues.

Criterion 4. The institution assesses and ensures activities' effectiveness and impact in the framework of monitoring and quality assessment, with the view to ensure ongoing improvement of the study program.

Criterion 5. The institution organizes periodic activities with staff and students to inform them and raise awareness on the long-term quality assurance and study program improvement.

ANNEX NO. 4

**QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR SECOND CYCLE STUDY PROGRAMS,
MASTER OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES/ MASTER OF SCIENCE/ MASTER OF ARTS/
INTEGRATED SECOND-LEVEL PROGRAM**

I. STUDY PROGRAM PROVISION

Standard I.1 The higher education institution delivers study programs in accordance with its mission and goal, aiming at preserving national interests and values, as well as in line with the development strategy, statute and its other regulatory acts

Criterion 1. The higher education institution provides study programs that do not infringe on national interests and aim to preserve and consolidate national academic and cultural values.

Criterion 2. The study program is designed and delivered in accordance with the goals and mission of the institution and field of activity.

Criterion 3. The study program is designed and delivered pursuant to and in accordance with the strategy for development, Institution Statute and Regulation, and in line with the academic fields and directions of the Institution.

Criterion 4. The study program is designed and developed in line with national development strategies, national interest and global development trends, based on the relevant national and international documentation.

Standard I.2. The study program complies with the academic field of the main and basic unit responsible for the study program at the institution

Criterion 1. The institution demonstrates it possesses the proper experience, capacities and resources in the specific academic area in order to deliver a study program in that particular area.

Criterion 2. The general and specific field of the study program must be in line with the academic and research field of the main unit, responsible for study program, according to the study program classification/codification, in line with national and European directives and instructions.

Criterion 3. The general and specific field of the study program must be in line with the academic and research field of the basic unit responsible for the study program. In case of interdisciplinary programs, at least one of the cooperative units must ensure such compatibility.

Criterion 4. In cases when the institution offers a “Master of Professional Studies” program in a specific field, not included in the institution’s profile, its quality is guaranteed by partner institutions.

Criterion 5. The higher education institution, in coordination with employers, offers further professional training to graduated students.

Standard I.3 The Higher education institution ensures cooperation relationships with institutions, companies, third parties, local and/or foreign business actors in order to deliver the study program, in the framework of professional training, scientific research and mobility

Criterion 1. The institution responsible for program development, supervision and progress ensures successful cooperation relationships within the institution through task division among staff and units, allocation of respective responsibilities and ongoing review of their work.

Criterion 2. In order to meet the objectives of the teaching and student training process, the institution establishes cooperation relations with counterpart institutions in and/or outside the country, native and/or foreign business actors.

Criterion 3. In order to deliver the study program, the institution enters into specific agreements with institutions, research institutes, companies in the relevant field to conduct professional, clinical and work practices or internships etc., and cooperates with employers to perform and supervise the practice, conduct scientific research and enable academic staff and student mobility.

Criterion 4. The unit responsible for the study program drafts periodic analytical reports in terms of benefits from cooperation agreements in the framework of study program delivery.

II. ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF SECOND CYCLE PROGRAMS

Standard II.1 The study program is organized in accordance with national legal provisions and bylaws in force and internal regulatory acts

Criterion 1. The elements comprising the study program structure, training activities, assessed in credits, are clearly defined in accordance with the national legislation in force and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Criterion 2. The study program aims to develop special skills in a wide range of professions and specialties, provide advanced knowledge in a field of study or employment, including critical understanding of academic theories and principles in the field, building advanced knowledge, skills, and competences in an academic or professional field, necessary to solve complex and unforeseeable problems in a specialized study or professional area.

Criterion 3. The study program has defined load in credits in terms of professional practice delivery and fulfillment of completion requirements.

Criterion 4. The first-cycle program Bachelor in Primary Education is supplemented by second-cycle programs "Master" in Teaching, which prepare primary education teachers. Master in Teaching programs that train lower and upper secondary education teachers are organized as second-cycle "Master" study programs according to relevant training fields.

Criterion 5 "Master" programs in the field of teaching are organized into 120 credits and 25 percent of credits must go toward general psycho-pedagogical training. "Master" programs that prepare teachers in the same teaching field should have at least 80 percent of the curriculum similar.

Criterion 6 The form of study organization, student admission, and funding in higher education institutions of special status are carried out in accordance with the law on higher education and relevant specifications provided for in the legal framework of the ministry responsible for education.

Criterion 7 Second-cycle Master's study programs that are offered in the same study field and under the same name should have a similar content level of at least 70 percent.

Criterion 8. The study program is accompanied by the relevant code, according to field of study and classifications published by the ministry responsible for education. Then, program subject codification is performed.

Criterion 9. Study programs may also be shared programs between two or more domestic and foreign higher education institutions, pursuant to the legislation in force.

Standard II.2 The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the legal requirements and quality standards prescribed for these units

Criterion 1. The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the obligations set forth in the legislation in force as regards academic organization and structure, academic staff, evaluation and accreditation.

Criterion 2. The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the obligations set forth in the legislation in force by engaging academic/administrative support staff for teaching, laboratory, clinical, etc. practice delivery.

Criterion 3. The main/basic unit responsible for the program appoints for any study program a study program coordinator, who is responsible for the study program and professional practices progress and development in line with its objectives.

Standard II.3 The study program is detailed, informative, structured and organized in accordance with the provisions and objectives of the second cycle study program

Criterion 1. The main/basic unit responsible for the second cycle study program possesses the necessary information on study program organization, structure and content.

Criterion 2. The study program contains the teaching plan, including the information necessary to determine semester subjects, teaching load of subjects/modules, and hours inside/outside the auditorium.

Criterion 3. The study program provides students with all the necessary information related to the general and specific criteria on admission, transfer, and study equivalence.

Criterion 4. The study program contains the necessary information on subject programs (syllabuses) for each subject with regard to practices, seminars or laboratory classes, as well as all the components of each program in and outside the auditorium in accordance with the approved formats.

Criterion 5. Study program content has been continuously improved and updated and in the beginning of the academic year the eventual changes are approved and the full file in Albanian and English is archived.

Standard II.4 The structure and organization of the study program complies with training objectives, the qualification level based on the National and European Qualifications Framework, learning outcomes and competences pursuant to labor market requirements

Criterion 1. Naming, activities content, subject and practice distribution enable the advancement of knowledge and skills, and/or student employment.

Criterion 2. Subjects/modules, distribution over years and terms, evaluation in credits and classes enables the achievement of study program comprehensive objectives and expected learning and scientific research outcomes.

Criterion 3. Study program design, subjects, and theory vs. practice ratio are in line with the profile of the study program and similar to related international programs. As regards the “Master of Professional Studies” program, it should provide advanced professional skills, competences and training.

Criterion 4. Division according to training activities and the ratio between theory and practice enable the achievement of comprehensive objectives, transfer of knowledge, mobility and employment upon studies completion.

Criterion 5. Syllabuses (subject/module programs) are updated on an ongoing basis to ensure acquisition of competences in accordance with labor market requirements, including the basic and support literature of recent years.

Criterion 6. The content of the study program guarantees the acquisition of intended knowledge, skills, and competences.

Criterion 7. Study program content enables the furthering of studies and/or student employment in line with labor market expectations and demands.

Standard II.5 The higher education institution encourages students and partners, and other networks and organizations to participate in the design and ongoing improvement and successful delivery of the study program in accordance with their objectives

Criterion 1. In order to improve and adapt the study program to labor market demands to the highest extent possible, responsible units consult and consider the proposals of partner institutions, graduates, and other actors from the labor market during program study design and delivery.

Criterion 2. The institution encourages and involves students and their structures in discussions, maintains contacts and regularly consults with graduates to enhance the study program and reflect when it benefits study program improvement.

Criterion 3. In cooperation with professional networks, associations, orders (especially in the field of medicine) and public and non-public institutions, the responsible unit improves, updates and adjusts the study program in compliance with proposals and latest developments in different fields.

Standard II.6 The study program guarantees guidance in the relevant field of study and scientific research

Criterion 1. The study program clearly defies main study and research priorities and objectives in line with major institution objectives.

Criterion 2. The main/basic unit encourages, coordinates and administers teaching, research or artistic activities by adhering to the academic staff academic freedom and specific study field.

Criterion 3. The study program enables, encourages and motivates students to engage themselves in studies, projects or research activities.

Criterion 4. In order to carry out study, research and scientific activities, the basic unit relies financially on the institution and manages revenues from different activities.

Standard II.7 The study program guarantees advanced knowledge, internationalization and scientific research

Criterion 1. The responsible unit supports new subject groups and scientific research projects and ensures cooperation with other research structures in order to meet study program objectives on scientific research.

Criterion 2. The unit is responsible to meet the demands for analysis, studies and projects of scientific research nature and engages the academic staff and students to meet such objectives.

Criterion 3. The responsible unit organizes conferences or activities in the field of the study program which aid staff and students in meeting objectives.

Criterion 4. The study program trains competitive professionals for the national and international labor market.

Criterion 5. The responsible unit takes into account and implements the recommendations issued by professional orders, associations and networks with regard to the competences required to obtain professional licenses, in accordance with legal acts relevant to the field.

Criterion 6. The study program for regulated professions complies with national legal acts and international recommendations issued in European Union directives and regulations (*e.g. Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EU*).

III. TEACHING, LEARNING, EVALUATION AND COMPETENCES

Standard III.1 The higher education institution guarantees the learning process and professional and scientific training through best student-centered methods and practices that ensure outcome achievement

Criterion 1. Forms of teaching, learning and knowledge transmission are lectures, seminars, lab classes, course assignments/essays, professional and clinical practices, open lectures and any other form approved by the institution.

Criterion 2. The academic staff respects and responds to the variety and needs of students by offering alternative teaching and learning forms, means, methods, and opportunities.

Criterion 3. The institution supports the academic staff in improving didactic competences and in compliance with expected learning outcomes.

Criterion 4. The academic staff involved in program teaching is competent in regards to explaining knowledge and concepts, utilizes various interactive teaching methods and holds student-centered discussions, promotes students' creative and critical thinking, as well as their autonomy and responsibility.

At the same time, it guides, supports and helps build relationships of mutual respect between them.

Criterion 5. The unit responsible for study program delivery assesses and improves teaching forms and methods periodically, by including students in the process and reflecting their opinions and suggestions.

Criterion 6. The institution organizes structures/units at the institutional level promoting the continuous improvement of teaching, coordinating and cooperating with the main/basic units in the framework of the teaching quality improvement. The responsible structures and units support the

experimentation and development of new innovative teaching methods, deliver continuous academic staff training for teaching skill improvement and implementation of new methods.

Standard III.2 The institution drafts regulations and special procedures on testing and assessing professional competences and skills and guarantees their implementation

Criterion 1. Knowledge and professional skill testing and assessment criteria and manner are set forth under the Study program regulation/Institution regulation/special regulation, and are made public and known to students.

Criterion 2. Students are informed about knowledge and professional and scientific skills testing methodology as foreseen in subject/module syllabuses by the subject/module head, at the beginning of the academic year.

Criterion 3. Knowledge and professional and scientific skill testing and evaluation are done in different forms and ways, by enabling each student to demonstrate his/her knowledge and competences acquired.

Standard III.3 The institution guarantees a fair and transparent evaluation based on each student's merits, including the appeal process

Criterion 1. Knowledge and professional skill testing and evaluation are done throughout the academic year and are reflected in the final evaluation, foreseen in subject/module syllabuses by the subject/module head.

Criterion 2. The institution has in place electronic testing and evaluation systems, preventing different forms of abuse and increasing transparency.

Criterion 3. The final subject evaluation is performed pursuant to the syllabus and legal basis in force.

Criterion 4. Knowledge and professional skill evaluation is accompanied with comments/feedback (if necessary) and advice on the learning process to help the student improve in the future.

Criterion 5. The responsible units and academic staff prevent/do not tolerate plagiarism and cheating during exams and assignments.

Criterion 6. The results of knowledge and professional skill examinations are merit-based and announced on time in accordance with the provisions of the applicable regulations.

Criterion 7. The institution guarantees student rights to be informed on the evaluation and request an evaluation review in line with the rules included in the statute, regulations and evaluation procedures.

Criterion 8. Any request and complaint is reviewed by the evaluation commission and then by the ad hoc commission. The procedure adopted must be transparent for parties involved, documented and archived.

Standard III.4 The study program guarantees the enhancement of students' creativity and practical skills, and aims at developing students' advanced professional and scientific competences

Criterion 1. The study program must ensure advancement of students' knowledge and development of their professional and specific scientific skills.

Criterion 2. The study program guarantees the development of specific skills in the field of information technology, including as well human, social, communication, and interaction (including foreign language) resources.

Criterion 3. Student's competences and skills, introduced in the study program and syllabi of each subject, are analyzed and reviewed at the end of the subject. The academic staff highlights prominent matters and guides students on their implementation and completion requirements.

Criterion 4. Teaching is competence based, in order to provide students with the opportunity to further develop their competences in laboratories and professional practices. The academic staff support group discussions and work with regard to the interpretation and resolution of certain problems/issues; foster an appropriate climate for the development of innovative ideas, advanced research and scientific studies and support them; combine teaching forms with cooperative institutions to enable and increase student mobility.

Criterion 5. The academic staff, both active and under contract, delivers open lectures and seminars on new scientific and technological developments within and outside the scope of the study program structure.

Criterion 6. The institution promotes the development of innovative ideas, advanced research studies by students, providing them with financial support.

Standard III.5 The institution pursues a clear procedure with regard to completion requirement fulfillment by students in the study program and provides students with the necessary documentation

Criterion 1. The institution drafts a specific procedure on completion requirements prior to their realization and publishes it.

Criterion 2. The responsible structures and academic staff assist students by providing the necessary information, instructions and materials in the framework of completion requirements.

Criterion 3. The ad hoc commission for the final exam administration is based on the testing of knowledge acquired throughout the academic years, including all subjects/modules based on their relevance and specific weight.

Criterion 4. The academic staff/diploma mentor guides and assists students in selecting their diploma thesis topics. The mentor assists the student in producing and processing the relevant results, as well as in drafting the final thesis according to approved instructions. They ensure quality of results and either approve or disapprove whether or not the thesis is complete and should be presented to the panel.

Criterion 5. The institution assists students in carrying out measurements, analyses, and tests in or outside institution premises, according to the specific topics and scope of study.

Criterion 6. At the end of the general final exam or diploma defense, the student is evaluated with a mark.

Criterion 7. Upon study completion, the student is provided with a diploma and its supplement as approved by the ministry responsible for education. Upon concluding their studies, a full official copy of the study program is made available to the student.

Criterion 8. Pursuant to the legislation in force, the institution retains a copy of the students' documentation and issues attestations to the student, on a case-by-case basis, if required

Standard III.6 In the case of the “Master of Professional Studies” study program, the institution follows a clear knowledge implementation procedure through laboratory, professional and clinical practices and internships

Criterion 1. In the context of teaching and skill acquirement, the responsible units guarantee premises in and outside the institution, which are appropriate for carrying out the laboratory and professional practices.

Criterion 2. Through cooperation and partnership, the institution ensures the performance of clinical practices and internships in contemporary forms and technology, with the aim of acquiring professional knowledge and competences in the best way possible.

Criterion 3. Professional and clinical practices and internships carried out during studies are converted into credits and are documented in special documents, supplemented with the trainer's opinion and respective evaluation.

IV. HUMAN, FINANCIAL, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND LOGISTICS RESOURCES FOR STUDY PROGRAM DELIVERY

Standard IV.1 The academic and academic support staff covering the study program meet the quantitative standards and have the proper and adequate academic qualifications, in line with the field of the program to guarantee teaching standards in the study program.

Criterion 1. The full-time and part-time academic staff and support academic staff engaged in delivering the study program meet the legal requirements in force on the appropriate academic qualification for managing the program, and managing and covering the program subjects/modules. There are research areas in compliance with the study program and its modules nature and characteristics.

Criterion 2. The full-time academic staff should cover the academic load of the study program in compliance with the legal framework in force.

Criterion 3. The institution should guarantee and demonstrate the sustainability of the academic staff involved in the study program during the accreditation period, including employment contracts and coverage with social and health insurance.

Criterion 4. The institution follows recruitment and evaluation procedures based on the announced general and specific criteria that ensure the selection of staff with the appropriate level of qualification, and in accordance with the nature, structure, modules and the study program content.

Criterion 5. The institution ensures and guarantees the engagement of appropriate and adequate academic support staff to carry out lab classes and maintain labs and other teaching premises, according to the specific nature of the study program being delivered.

Criterion 6. Every academic year, the institution collects, stores and updates data on the staff engaged in the study program. These data include the academic staff involved in the program and the person responsible for organizing the study program, academic staff engagement in each academic semester and year, as well as the workload of the support and administrative staff.

Criterion 7. The institution, by entering into cooperation agreements with other higher education institutions, business representatives and companies, makes available adequate, appropriate, and qualified staff to instruct, mentor and supervise students during their internship, diploma thesis development and other specific activities, depending on the nature of the study program.

Criterion 8. The supervisory staff at the reception premises, who is engaged with developing internships pursuant to agreements, should help students in meeting obligations/drafting the final internship report, and participating in their internship evaluation process.

Standard IV.2 The Higher Education Institution makes available the learning premises and the appropriate infrastructure for the delivery of the study program teaching process and practical training, according to the nature and field of the study program.

Criterion 1. The institution provides adequate and appropriate teaching facilities, depending on the number of students and study groups, in accordance with the specific nature of the study program and respective modules.

Criterion 2. Learning premises such as classrooms, labs, studios and the like are equipped with electronic and information technology devices that guarantee the realization of the theoretical and practical teaching process through the use of contemporary teaching and learning methodology and technology.

Criterion 3. Laboratories, studios, ateliers or other premises, according to the specific nature of the study program, contain the necessary equipment and tools to meet module requirements, theoretical and practical training, and the overall study program objectives.

Criterion 4. The institution provides at least one information technology lab, equipped with professional software appropriate to the nature of the study program provided.

Criterion 5. The institution guarantees, with its available capacities and/or in cooperation with other institutions and entities (certified through special partnership agreements), that the premises are adequate, appropriate and tailored to internships and other practical activities. In cases of study programs in the field of medicine, the institution should provide hospital and health post facilities that have the necessary capacities.

Standard IV.3 The study program should comprise the necessary and updated literature to support teaching, and it should provide support learning premises (a library, special premises)

Criterion 1. The required and recommended literature made available to students in the language of the study program (physical and digital) guarantees the acquisition of necessary knowledge and information, foreseen under the study program.

Criterion 2. The responsible unit should report whenever literature is updated with publications from recent years.

Criterion 3. The institution makes available the academic library to students, guaranteeing students equal access to the study program.

Criterion 4. The library should be equipped with physical literature such as: sufficient required textbooks, recommended literature, both in Albanian and foreign languages, necessary, sufficient and appropriate books or journals to cover all modules and courses according to each study program specifics.

Criterion 5. The institution should enable the adequate conditions for students' free and equal access to online libraries for each study program field.

Criterion 6. The library should be equipped with computer software and other technical equipment, enabling unrestricted use by all students.

Criterion 7. The library hours (opening hours) should be in line with the teaching process hours, but also appropriate with student number and needs, as well as its capacity.

Criterion 8. The library and the responsible units of the program monitor and report on the library's physical and online literature (the main titles provided for the program) quality, update, and level of use by the academic staff and program students. Moreover, they provide information on the use of study halls, by highlighting how effective the efforts to enrich the physical and online literature of the

library have been. They also provide data on needs for other literature and the performance of the academic staff.

Standard IV.4 The Higher Education Institution has an internal institutional management system, which is made available to the management, information and monitoring of academic, financial and administrative activity for the study program

Criterion 1. The institution has in place a management system for the management of all student-related information and activity from enrollment up to graduation from the study program.

Criterion 2. The internal management system manages the information, documentation and activities of academic staff, academic assisting staff, administrative staff and partners engaged in the program implementation.

Criterion 3. The management system provides dedicated access to information and documents for all study program staff and students.

Criterion 4. The management system has integrated platforms and modules that enable interactive communication and information exchange between the academic staff and students.

Criterion 5. The management system guarantees real-time monitoring of academic and administrative staff activity and enables individual and real-time reporting to governing bodies and authorities.

Criterion 6. Information related to the study program, academic staff, and various activities is published on the website in at least two languages, one of which is Albanian.

Standard IV.5 The Higher Education Institution guarantees the necessary financial support for the implementation of the teaching/research process, study program progress and students' support

Criterion 1. The institution drafts a financial report on the costs of the basic units that are in charge of a study program, and the financial support plan required for the study program progress for at least one full cycle study program.

Criterion 2. A funding plan for the basic unit in charge of a study program should include funding for human resources made available to the program implementation, operating costs for the maintenance of premises and teaching process support technologies, library and literature enrichment costs, and access to online libraries, financial obligations, national or international grants received and service contracts on the study program, projects, and other items.

Criterion 3. The institution conducts an annual audit, assesses and documents its financial situation and its financial effectiveness.

Criterion 4. The institution reports up to the level of the unit responsible for the study program regarding the realization of the approved budget for the previous year.

Criterion 5. The institution guarantees financial sustainability and capacities of the basic unit to develop and progress with the study programs. Where there is a need to improve the financial situation, the institution plans ad hoc interventions and eventual diversification of the study programs financing.

V. STUDENTS AND THEIR SUPPORT

Standard V.1 The Higher Education Institution drafts, follows and implements policies and procedures on students admission, selection, progress, transfer, recognition, knowledge assessment and graduation in the study program

Criterion 1. The institution develops and implements policies and procedures that cover the full study program academic cycle, from enrollment to graduation, in accordance with applicable legislation and its own regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. Policies and procedures from enrollment to graduation guarantee equality and equal rights to all study program applicants and students.

Criterion 3. At the start of each academic year, the institution drafts and publishes special criteria for the selection of candidates to be admitted to the integrated study program. The institution cooperates with structures established in the framework of the State Matura, and pursuant to the relevant law and instructions.

Criterion 4. Student selection criteria and procedures, progress throughout the study course, transfer, recognition of previous or part-time studies, knowledge assessment and graduation are easily understandable and accessible to the public.

Criterion 5. Prior to the start of each academic year, the institution instructs the public and interested parties on study program general and specific criteria and requirements.

Criterion 6. The institution drafts and publishes at the start of each academic year, special criteria for the selection of candidates with disabilities, from minorities and marginalized groups.

Criterion 7. The institution drafts and publishes at the start of each academic year the criteria for the selection of candidates from other countries.

Criterion 8. The institution drafts assistance/scholarship policies for groups in need and with the aim of enhancing the quality of admissions in priority programs for the institution and the country's economic development.

Standard V.2 The Higher Education Institution makes available to the students of the study program detailed and comprehensive information on the academic progress, recognition, and knowledge assessment up to the studies completion and graduation.

Criterion 1. The institution provides full and detailed information on the criteria and procedures for student academic progress and passing from one academic year to the other.

Criterion 2. The institution informs students about diploma recognition procedures and criteria regarding previous qualifications or part-time studies.

Criterion 3. The institution informs students about the criteria and procedures on knowledge and skills assessment during the study program.

Criterion 4. The Higher Education Institution informs students about study program graduation criteria and procedures.

Criterion 5. Before the start of and throughout each academic year, the higher education institution publishes special guidelines and organizes open briefings to inform potential students and current students about the study program.

Standard V.3 The Higher Education Institution provides students with detailed and comprehensive information on training objectives, structure, organization, study program content, expected learning outcomes and employment opportunities

Criterion 1. The students are thoroughly informed on study program structure, organization and duration.

Criterion 2. The institution provides students with the necessary information and documentation on modules/course, content and training activities.

Criterion 3. The institution informs students on employment opportunities, as well as institutional support for career counseling and labor market.

Criterion 4. Students are provided with extensive and up-to-date information on the teaching process development and organization, logistics, infrastructure and services for its realization.

Criterion 5. Information about the study program is provided through the internal information management system and should be easily accessible even to distance students.

Standard V.4 The Higher Education Institution collects, manages, updates and stores detailed data about the number and profile of students attending the study program, from their university admission to graduation, as well as their employment data

Criterion 1. The institution produces and maintains annual statistics on the number of students and alumni in each study program.

Criterion 2. The institution generates annual statistics on the number of students enrolled in the study program until their graduation, withdrawals from the program, dropouts before the end of the program, or failures to successfully complete the academic year which the study program is delivered in.

Criterion 3. Student's statistical data are managed by the internal information system and must be secured and easily verifiable by authorized persons.

Criterion 4. The institution issues acts to support the periodic control of all units responsible for management (academic secretariats, internal information management system, etc.), assesses and records the state and accuracy of the information and documentation related to students and their activities.

Criterion 5. The basic unit should develop periodic analytical reports on incoming and exiting students' profile and quality, as well as their employment rate, along with appropriate measures to improve these indicators.

Standard V.5 The Higher Education Institution includes and engages students in decision-making and advisory bodies, in the framework of drafting, approving, reviewing and improving the study programs, teaching methods and the quality of provided resources and services.

Criterion 1. The institution envisages students and/or their representatives' involvement and engagement in decision-making and advisory bodies, according legal acts and HEI's own regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution should ensure that students and/or their representatives' involvement in decision-making, advising or evaluation of the academic process is realistic, concrete, productive and with easily verifiable and measurable results.

Criterion 3. The responsible unit guarantees student involvement in drafting, reviewing and improving the study program on a regular basis and includes their suggestions and contributions during joint meetings with the departments, through questionnaires, at focus group discussions, etc.

Criterion 4. Students have the opportunity to give their input on equality and fairness of the knowledge assessment process, including their right to appeal with the responsible body/unit/lecturer the result, assessment, and evaluation awarded.

Standard V.6 The Higher Education Institution has special units and procedures for student admission, induction, counseling, complaints and issues management, which are permanent and easily accessible by students.

Criterion 1. The institution has a special units and procedures which ensure student information and assistance, in accordance with legal provisions and HEI's regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution has set up and introduced a special system for student information, counseling, progress and assistance in matters related to the teaching process and study program.

Criterion 3. The institution provides students with career counseling. The Career Counseling Office/Unit continuously and periodically welcomes students, providing specific information and guidance in terms of completing the learning process, selection and induction regarding internships in other institutions, and advice on the labor market.

Criterion 4. The Career Counseling Office/Unit follows-up with students after graduation, by collecting, processing and storing data on the level and quality of the study program students' employment, and makes them available to students and relevant bodies and authorities.

VI. STUDY PROGRAMS' QUALITY ASSURANCE

Standard VI.1 The Higher Education Institution pursues a clear policy to guarantee and promote the quality of teaching and develops special guidelines designed for teaching methods development and monitoring

Criterion 1. The institution designs guidelines at the institutional level for the development and use of different and innovative teaching methods based on the field of studies, subjects/modules.

Criterion 2. Structures responsible develop monitoring mechanisms and periodically evaluate teaching and innovative skills of academic and academic support staff.

Criterion 3. The institution guarantees student inclusion in the periodic assessment of teaching methods, and knowledge check , including complaint handling opportunity.

Criterion 4. structures responsible for monitoring and teaching quality assurance make public evaluation results.

Criterion 5. The institution, through its assessment mechanism and results reached, promotes examples of good practice, encourages and prompts the academic staff to further improve teaching.

Standard VI.2 The Higher Education Institution drafts and implements transparent policies and procedures on the study program quality assurance within the framework of internal quality assurance system.

Criterion 1. The institution has in place policies, structures and procedures for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), in accordance with applicable legal and sub-legal provisions and with institutional regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution has established and uses the Internal Quality Assurance System and implements an institutional strategy for continuous quality improvement, including students, external partners and experts.

Criterion 3. The Institution uses appropriate quality assurance tools and indicators. External Quality Assurance in Higher Education is carried out through external accreditation evaluation processes, analytical and comparative evaluations, as well as other processes that promote and improve study programs quality.

Criterion 4. The institution uses clear and measurable indicators in teaching and research, with the aim of reflecting the situation, achievements, and weaknesses that are stipulated in institutional regulatory acts. The institutions employs qualitative indicators to promote and encourage the best achievements in the study program.

Standard VI.3 The Higher Education Institution periodically monitors and evaluates the study program through the special units, in order to achieve training objectives and the intended learning outcomes

Criterion 1. The Higher Education Institution uses formal and documented processes and mechanisms for periodically reviewing, approving and supervising the second cycle study program, to the service of its accreditation. During this process, the institution identifies achievements and weaknesses, motivates best practices and attainments, and it develops the improvement measures plan.

The results of these assessments are documented and put forward to the study program responsible and decision-making authorities.

Criterion 2. Evaluation reports should include expected outcomes, evaluations results, motivation of best practices and achievements, and measures taken to address gaps and to further improve quality, as well as encouragement of the best achievements in the performance and research conducted by the academic staff and students.

Criterion 3. In the framework of evaluating study program realization, progress and quality, the institution employs direct methods such as: assessment of teaching quality; didactics, curricula, learning evaluation; parallel assessment of student examinations or assignments; observations in the auditorium during exercises/practice; local or standardized tests; results achieved in interinstitutional or national tests, such as state exam for regulated professions, etc.

Criterion 4. In the framework of study program realization, performance and quality evaluation, the institution uses indirect assessment methods and instruments such as: students, graduates (alumni), and academic staff's surveys and interviews; academic and administrative assistance, employers and institutions that cooperate for the study program delivery and other parties involved in conducting the assessment of knowledge and competences acquired during this program.

Standard VI.4 The Higher Education Institution includes the academic units, academic staff and students in the study program IQA process, and informs interested parties on the results and the subsequent measures

Criterion 1. The institution should provide for and guarantee the involvement of internal and external actors, interested in continuously ensuring and improving the study program in internal quality policies and procedures.

Criterion 2. The institution defines the specific responsibilities and tasks of main units, individuals, students and other parties engaged in the study program internal quality and guarantees the responsible performance of these tasks.

Criterion 3. During the study program assessment and quality assurance, it is important to guarantee the inclusion of the main and basic unit in charge of the study program, academic, support academic and administrative staff, and study program students.

Criterion 4. Internal actors inclusion and engagement in the continuous assessment procedures should observe the academic integrity and avoid any kind of discrimination or inequality against staff and students.

Criterion 5. Partners and/or external experts, who are related to the study program, or can provide valuable expertise and input about the program quality and improvement should actively participate in the assessment and internal quality assurance processes

Standard VI.5 Policies, processes and activities for the study program Internal Quality Assurance should be made public, transparent, and effective, with the view to establish an Internal Quality Assurance Culture

Criterion 1. The policy, strategy, organization and activities within the framework of study program Internal Quality Assurance system are transparent and are made public to all students and parties concerned.

Criterion 2. The Higher Education Institution publishes the results of the study programs assessment, by observing the academic freedom and ethics, as well as the legislation on personal data.

Criterion 3. The assessment results should go along with an action plan designed to address and improve the identified weaknesses and issues.

Criterion 4. The institution assesses and ensures activities' effectiveness and impact in the framework of monitoring and quality assessment, with the view to ensure the ongoing study program improvement.

Criterion 5. The institution organizes periodic activities with staff and students for their information and awareness-raising on the long-term study program quality assurance and improvement.

ANNEX NO. 5

QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR THIRD CYCLE EXECUTIVE MASTER'S DEGREE STUDY PROGRAMS

I. STUDY PROGRAM PROVISION

Standard I.1 The Higher Education Institution provides study programs in accordance with its mission and objectives, aiming at maintaining national interests and values, and in compliance with its development strategy, statute, and other regulatory acts.

Criterion 1. The Higher Education Institution provides study programs that do not contradict national interests and aim at preserving and consolidating national academic and cultural values.

Criterion 2. The study program is designed and delivered in accordance with the goals and mission of the institution and field of scientific activity.

Criterion 3. The study program is drafted and provided in compliance with the institution's development strategy, the main/basic unit's scientific development strategy, and the institution's statute and regulation according to its academic fields and orientations.

Criterion 4. The study program is drafted and development in compliance with the national strategies on higher education development, public interest and global development trends, based on the relevant national and international documentation.

Standard I.2 The study program is in line with the academic field of the main and basic unit in charge of the study program at the institution

Criterion 1. The institution demonstrates that it has the proper experience, capacities and resources in the specific academic field in order to deliver a study program in that particular field.

Criterion 2. The general and specific field of the study program must be in line with the academic and research field of the main unit that is in charge of the study program, according to the study program classification/codification, in line with the national and European directives and instructions.

Criterion 3. The general and specific field of the study program must be in line with the academic and research field of the basic unit that is in charge of the study program. In case of interdisciplinary programs, at least one of the cooperative units must ensure such compatibility.

Standard I.3. The Higher Education Institution ensures cooperation relationships with institutions, companies, third parties, local and/or foreign business actors in order to deliver the study program, in the framework of professional training, scientific research and mobility

Criterion 1. The institution responsible for program development, supervision and progress ensures fruitful cooperation relationships within the institution through task divisions among staff units, respective responsibilities allocation and their work continuous analysis.

Criterion 2. In order to meet the objectives of the students teaching and scientific process, the institution establishes cooperation relationships with counterpart institutions in and/or outside the country, native and/or foreign business actors.

Criterion 3. For purposes of delivering the study program, the institution signs special agreements with the industry and professionals' networks for students to have practice classes as foreseen on subjects' syllabuses, scientific research project, and the diploma.

Criterion 4. The unit responsible for the study program periodically drafts analytical reports in terms of benefits from cooperation agreements in the framework of study program delivery.

11. STUDY PROGRAMS ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Standard II.1 The study program is organized in line with the national legal and sub-legal provisions in force and internal regulatory acts

Criterion 1. Elements that comprise the study program structure and training activities that are evaluated in credits are clearly defined, in compliance with the national legislation in force and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Criterion 2. The study program aims at ensuring the acquisition of in-depth knowledge, professional abilities, skills and competences that respond to the market needs and facilitate students' employment or employees professional growth.

Criterion 3. The study program contains information on the credit load of all subjects/modules, including the credits of completion requirements.

Criterion 4. Studies organization, students' admission, and financing of higher education institutions with a special status are carried out in compliance with the Law on Higher Education and relevant specifics, which are defined on the instruction of the minister responsible for education.

Criterion 5. Study programs that are offered in the same study field, cycle and under the same name, should have similar content level, at least at the rate of 70 percent.

Criterion 6. Study programs are associated with the relevant code, according to the study field and classifications that have been made public by the ministry responsible for education. The program subjects codification is carried out further.

Criterion 7. Study programs can be joint programs between two or more higher education institutions, at the national or international legislation, in compliance with the legislation in force.

Standard II.2 The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the legal requirements and quality standards for such units

Criterion 1. The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the obligations stipulated by the legislation in force on the organization and the academic structure, academic staffs, assessment and accreditation.

Criterion 2. The main/basic unit responsible for the study program meets the obligations stipulated by the legislation in force, by engaging the support academic/administrative staff to carry out practice classes according to the subjects' syllabuses, lab and clinical classes, study and research projects, etc.

Criterion 3. The main/basic unit responsible for the program appoints for any study program a study program coordinator, who is responsible for the study program and internship progress and development in line with its objectives.

Criterion 4. The main/basic unit responsible for the program establishes the study program board (an advisory body), which is built for the study program and consists of the academic staff, students, policymakers, and labor market representatives. During its activities, the advisory board helps in maintaining the curricula quality and adaptation to labor market demands.

Standard II.3 The study program is detailed, informative, structured, and organized in accordance with the training provisions and objectives of the study program

Criterion 1. The main/basic unit responsible for the study program has the necessary information on study program organization, structure and content.

Criterion 2. The study program contains the lesson plan, including the necessary information on how subjects are distributed across semesters, subjects/modules academic load, and classes in and outside the auditorium.

Criterion 3. The study program provides students all the necessary information related to the general and specific criteria for admission, transfer and studies equivalence.

Criterion 4. The study program contains the necessary information on course programs (syllabuses) for each subject, practice classes, seminars or lab classes, as well as all the training components of each program in and outside the auditorium in accordance with the approved formats.

Criterion 5. Study program content has been continuously improved and updated and in the beginning of the academic year the eventual changes are approved and the full file in Albanian and English is archived.

Standard II.4 The study program structure and organization is in line with the training objectives, qualification level in accordance with the National and European Qualification Framework, learning outcomes, competences in line with labor market demands

Criterion 1. Naming, activities content, subjects and internships distribution enable the advancement of knowledge and skills for further studies, and/or student professional promotion.

Criterion 2. Subjects/modules, distribution over years and terms, evaluation in credits and teaching classes enables the achievement of study program comprehensive objectives and expected learning outcomes and scientific research.

Criterion 3. Study program structure, subjects, and theory vs. practice ratio is in line with the profile of the study program and aligned with similar international programs.

Criterion 4. Division according to training activities and the ratio between theory and practice enable the achievement of training objectives, studies transfer, and mobility.

Criterion 5. Syllabuses (subject/module programs) are continuously updated in order to obtain competences in compliance with labor market demands, including recent required and recommended literature.

Criterion 6. The content of the study program guarantees the acquisition of target knowledge, skills and competences.

Criterion 7. The study program content enables the furthering of studies and/or student employment in line with labor market expectations and demands.

Criterion 8. The study program should be a combination of theoretical and scientific training activities and practice classes, which enable practical innovative solutions to problems that institutions/organizations are faced with.

Standard II.5 The Higher Education Institution encourages the inclusion of students and partners, networks and other bodies in the drafting and continuous improvement of the study program and its successful delivery in line with its objectives

Criterion 1. For purposes of improving the study program content and to better adapt to labor market demands, while drafting and progressing with the study program, the responsible units consult and consider the propositions of the advisory board, partner institutions, alumni, and other actors of the labor market.

Criterion 2. The institution encourages and includes students and their bodies in discussions, keeps in touch and consults alumni on how to improve study programs.

Criterion 3. The responsible unit improves, updates, adapts, and reorganizes the study program in compliance with the latest propositions and developments in different fields, in cooperation with the program advisory board, professionals' networks, and public and private organizations.

Standard II.6 The study program guarantees guidance in the field of studies and scientific research

Criterion 1. The study program clearly defines main study and research priorities and objectives in line with major institution objectives.

Criterion 2. The main/basic unit encourages, coordinates and administers teaching, research or artistic activities by adhering to the academic staff academic freedom and specific study field.

Criterion 3. The study program enables, encourages and motivates students to engage themselves in studies, projects or research activities.

Criterion 4. In order to carry out study, research and scientific activities, the basic unit financially relies on the institution and manages revenue from different activities.

Standard II.7 The study program guarantees in-depth knowledge, internationalization, and scientific research

Criterion 1. The responsible unit supports subject groups and scientific research projects and ensures cooperation with other research structures in order to meet the study program objectives on scientific research.

Criterion 2. The unit is responsible to meet the demands for analysis, studies and projects of scientific research nature at the local, national, or regional level, and it engages the academic staff and students to meet such objectives.

Criterion 3. The responsible unit organizes conferences or activities in the field of the study program to aid staff and students in meeting the objectives.

Criterion 4. The study program trains competitive professionals for the national and international labor market.

III TEACHING, LEARNING, EVALUATION AND COMPETENCES

Standard III.1 The Higher Education Institution ensures learning processes and professional and scientific development through the best student-centered practices and methods that guarantee outcomes attainment

Criterion 1. Forms of teaching, learning, and knowledge transmission are lectures, seminars, lab classes, course assignments/essays, projects, and practice classes foreseen by subjects syllabuses, and any other form approved by the institution.

Criterion 2. Teaching forms and methods ensure knowledge acquisition and advanced methods for professional development in relation to their study field and application.

Criterion 3. The academic staff respects and responds to students' diversity and needs, by providing alternative forms, manners, methods, and opportunities for teaching and learning.

Criterion 4. The academic staff in charge of teaching in the program is competent in explaining notions and concepts, uses different interactive teaching methods and student-centered discussions, encourages students' creative and critical thinking, autonomy and responsibility for purposes of finding practical solutions.

At the same time, the academic staff ensures mentorship, support, and mutual respect relationships.

Criterion 5. The institution supports the academic staff with improving didactic competences, in compliance with the expected learning outcomes.

Criterion 6. The institution organizes structures/units at the program and institutional level promoting the continuous improvement of teaching, coordinating and cooperating with the main/basic units in the framework of the teaching quality improvement. The structures and responsible units support experimentation with and development of new innovative teaching methods, continuously train the academic staff for purposes of their teaching skills improvement and their implementation.

Standard III.2 The institution drafts regulations and special procedures for professional knowledge and skills testing and assessment, and guarantees their implementation.

Criterion 1. Professional knowledge and skills testing and assessment criteria and manner are set forth under the study program Regulation/institution's Regulation/special regulation, and are made public and communicated to students.

Criterion 2. Students are informed knowledge and professional and scientific skills testing methodology as foreseen in subject/modules syllabi by the subject/module head, in the beginning of the academic year.

Criterion 3. Knowledge and professional and scientific skills testing methodology testing and evaluation is made in different forms and ways, by enabling each student to demonstrate his/her knowledge and competences acquired.

Standard III.3 The institution guarantees a merit-based fair and transparent evaluation process, including the complaints procedure

Criterion 1. Testing and assessing scientific knowledge and professional skills takes place during the academic year and is reflected on the final evaluation, as foreseen by the subjects/modules syllabuses from the head of the subject/module.

Criterion 2. The institution implements evaluation systems, which guarantee a high integrity, ethics, and transparency level.

Criterion 3. The final evaluation of the subject contains continuous assessment, which includes the components of the students' assignments/projects portfolio, etc., as well as partial and final exams.

Criterion 4. Professional knowledge and skills evaluation is associated with feedback (if necessary) and advice on the learning process to help students improve in the future.

Criterion 5. The responsible units and academic staff avoid/do not tolerate plagiarism and cheating during exams and assignments.

Criterion 6. Professional knowledge and skills check results are merit-based and are timely announced according to provisions under the relevant regulations.

Criterion 7. The institution guarantees students' rights to be informed on the evaluation and request on evaluation review in line with the Statute rules and the evaluation procedure.

Criterion 8. Any request or complaint is revised by the evaluation committee and if the students is unclear, procedures foreseen by the study program regulation are followed. The pursued procedure must be transparent to the parties involved, documented and archived.

Standard III.4 The study program delivery guarantees students' creative and practical skills enhancement, and it aims at developing in-depth professional and scientific competences of students

Criterion 1. The study program should ensure scientific knowledge advancement, professional skills development, critical thinking skills acquisition, and new application ideas evaluation and synthesis in the specific study field.

Criterion 2. The study program guarantees the development of specific skills in communication, interaction, decision-making, and in the field of information technology.

Criterion 3. Student's competences and skills, introduced in the study program and syllabi of each subject, are analyzed and reviewed at the end of the course. The academic staff points out the most important issues and guides students throughout their implementation and final test.

Criterion 4. Teaching is performed through practical competences, aiming at students' further advancement, and it enables students to develop the skills that they acquired during lab and practice classes

Criterion 5. The academic staff supports group discussions and work in interpreting and solving problems/issues; establishes the right climate for developing innovative ideas, and supports advanced research and scientific studies; combines teaching forms with collaboration institutions to ensure students' mobility and create new employment and professional career opportunities.

Criterion 6. The full-time and part-time staff has open classes and seminars on the latest developments in science and technology, in the framework of extracurricular activities related to the study program.

Criterion 7. The institution promotes the development of innovative ideas, advanced research and scientific studies, by providing financial support.

Standard III.5 The institution pursues a clear student graduation procedure in the study program and provides students the necessary documentation

Criterion 1. The institution develops and discloses a special procedure for the completion requirements before they are carried out.

Criterion 2. The responsible structures and academic staff assist students by providing the necessary information, instructions and materials for purposes of meeting their obligations.

Criterion 3. The diploma thesis mentor assists students in methodological orientation, academic writing criteria fulfilment, and ethical integrity preservation in research according to the approved guidelines. They ensure quality of results and either approve or disapprove whether or not the thesis is complete and should be presented to the panel.

Criterion 4. The institution assists students in carrying out measurements, analyses, and tests in or outside institution premises, according to the specific topics and field of study.

Criterion 5. Upon concluding their studies, the student is provided with a diploma and its supplement as approved by the ministry responsible for education. Upon concluding their studies, a full official copy of the study program is made available to the student.

Criterion 6. In compliance with the legislation in force, the institution retains a copy of the students' documentation and issues attestations to the student, on a case-by-case basis, if required.

IV. HUMAN, FINANCIAL, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND LOGISTICS RESOURCES FOR STUDY PROGRAM DELIVERY

Standard IV.1 The Higher Education Institution pursues transparent legal procedures on recruiting, evaluating and selecting staff, and it has the primary responsibility for the quality of the staff that covers the study program

Criterion 1. The institution drafts and implements procedures for academic staff recruitment, in accordance with the applicable legal basis and the institution's internal regulations, and it discloses them publicly

Criterion 2. The institution follows recruitment and evaluation procedures based on the announced general and specific criteria that ensure the selection of staff with the appropriate level of qualification, and in accordance with the nature, structure, modules and the study program content.

Criterion 3. The institution is committed to providing the staff with the appropriate environment and equal opportunities for performing their tasks professionally.

Criterion 4. The institution is committed to provide staff who administers the study program with continuous training and further professional development.

Criterion 5. The institution organizes specific programs regarding innovative teaching methods and use of new technologies for the further professional qualification of the academic and scientific research staff.

Standard IV.2 The academic staff covering the study program meets the quantitative standards and has the proper and adequate academic qualifications, in line with the field of program to guarantee teaching standards in the study program

Criterion 1. The full-time and part-time academic staff that covers the study program holds the title “Professor”.

Criterion 2. The general and specific academic and research area of the academic staff covering the study program is in line with the study program and its modules nature and specifics.

Criterion 3. The institution shows an optimal human resources commitment in meeting the study program objectives. The full-time academic staff should cover the academic load of the study program in compliance with the legal framework in force.

Criterion 4. The institution should guarantee and demonstrate the sustainability of the academic staff involved in the study program during the accreditation period, including employment contracts and coverage with social and health insurance.

Criterion 5. The institution ensures and guarantees the engagement of adequate and appropriate academic support staff to carry out lab classes and maintain labs and other teaching premises, according to the specific nature of the study program being delivered.

Criterion 6. The institution follows recruitment and evaluation procedures based on the announced general and specific criteria that ensure the selection of staff with the appropriate level of qualification, and in accordance with the nature, structure, modules and the study program content.

Criterion 7. The HEI drafts a cooperation agreement with institutions/students’ employment organizations, which help in developing modules’ practice classes.

Criterion 8. The institution, by entering into cooperation agreements with other higher education institutions, business representatives and companies, makes available adequate staff to instruct, mentor and supervise students during their internship, diploma thesis development and other specific activities, depending on the nature of the study program.

Standard IV.3 The Higher Education Institution makes available the learning premises and the appropriate infrastructure for the delivery of study program teaching process and practical training, according to the nature and field of the study program

Criterion 1. The institution provides adequate and appropriate teaching facilities, depending on the number of students and study groups, in accordance with the specific nature of the study program and respective modules.

Criterion 2. Learning premises such as classrooms, labs, studios and the like are equipped with electronic and information technology devices that guarantee the realization of the theoretical and

practical teaching process through the use of contemporary teaching and learning methodology and technology.

Criterion 3. Laboratories, studios, ateliers or other premises, according to the specific nature of the study program, contain the necessary equipment and tools to meet module requirements, theoretical and practical training, and the overall study program objectives.

Criterion 4. The institution provides at least one information technology lab, equipped with professional software appropriate to the nature of the study program provided.

Criterion 5. The institution guarantees, with its available capacities and/or in cooperation with other institutions and entities (certified through special partnership agreements), that the premises are sufficient, appropriate and tailored to the development of internships by subject/module and other practical activities. In cases of study programs in the field of medicine, the institution should provide hospital and health post facilities that have the necessary capacities.

Standard IV.4 The study program should comprise the necessary and updated literature to support teaching, and it should provide support learning premises (a library, special premises)

Criterion 1. The required and recommended literature, made available to students in the study program language (in hard copy or soft copy), guarantees the acquisition of knowledge required for the study program (documented according to the APA style both in the syllabuses, and the academic staff curriculum vitae).

Criterion 2. The responsible unit should report whenever literature is updated with publications from recent years.

Criterion 3. The institution makes available the academic library to students, guaranteeing students equal access to the study program.

Criterion 4. The library should be equipped with physical literature such as: sufficient required textbooks, recommended literature, both in Albanian and foreign languages, necessary, sufficient and appropriate books or journals to cover all modules and courses according to each study program specifics.

Criterion 5. The institution should enable the adequate conditions for students' free and equal access to online libraries for each study program field.

Criterion 6. The library should be equipped with computer software and other technical equipment, enabling unrestricted use by all students.

Criterion 7. The library hours (opening hours) should be in line with the teaching process hours, but also appropriate with student number and needs, as well as its capacity.

Criterion 8. The library and the responsible units of the program monitor and report on the library's physical and online literature (the main titles provided for the program) quality, update, and level of use by the academic staff and program students. Moreover, they provide information on the use of study halls, by highlighting how effective the efforts to enrich the physical and online literature of the library have been. They also provide data on needs for other literature and the performance of the academic staff.

Standard IV.5 The Higher Education Institution has an internal institutional management system, which is made available to the management, information and monitoring of academic, financial and administrative activity for the study program

Criterion 1. The institution has in place a management system for the management of all student-related information and activity from enrollment up to graduation from the study program.

Criterion 2. The internal management system manages the information, documentation and activities of academic staff, academic assisting staff, administrative staff and partners engaged in the program implementation.

Criterion 3. The management system provides dedicated access to information and documents for all study program staff and students.

Criterion 4. The management system has integrated platforms and modules that enable interactive communication and information exchange between staff and students.

Criterion 5. The management system guarantees real-time monitoring of academic and administrative staff activity and enables individual and real-time reporting to governing bodies and authorities.

Criterion 6. Information related to the study program, academic staff, and the various activities is published on the website in at least two languages, one of which Albanian.

Standard IV.6 The Higher Education Institution guarantees the necessary financial support for the implementation of the teaching/research process, study program progress and students' support

Criterion 1. The main/basic unit drafts the budget plan for the study programs and the plan on the necessary financial support for their progress.

Criterion 2. The main/basic responsible unit budget plan for study programs should include funding for human resources, operating costs for premises maintenance and teaching process support technologies, library and literature enrichment costs, and access to online libraries, financial obligations, national or international grants received, and service contracts for the study program delivery, projects, and other items.

Criterion 3. The institution reports up to the level of the basic unit responsible for the study program regarding the realization of the approved budget for the previous year.

Criterion 4. The institution conducts an annual audit, assesses and documents its financial situation and its financial effectiveness.

Criterion 5. The institution guarantees financial sustainability and capacities of the basic unit to develop and progress with the study programs. Where there is a need to improve the financial situation, the institution plans ad hoc interventions and eventual diversification of the study programs financing.

V. STUDENTS AND THEIR SUPPORT

Standard V.1 The Higher Education Institution drafts, follows and implements policies and procedures on students admission, selection, progress, transfer, recognition, knowledge assessment and graduation in the study program

Criterion 1. The institution develops and implements policies and procedures that cover the full study program academic cycle, from enrollment to graduation, in accordance with applicable legislation and its own regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. Policies and procedures from enrollment to graduation guarantee equality and equal rights to all study program applicants and students.

Criterion 3. In order to be admitted to a “Executive Master’s” (EM) study program, the candidate should have completed at least a study program in the second cycle (“Master of Science” or an integrated study program of the second cycle), he/she should be a professional in the field, have a proven professional experience of over two years, be proficient in a foreign language according to the

specifications of the legal framework, and he/she should meet the institution's admission criteria academic standards for the relevant study program, which are made public before the start of admissions.

Criterion 4. Student selection criteria and procedures, progress throughout the study course, transfer, recognition of previous or part-time studies, knowledge assessment and graduation are easily understandable and accessible to the public.

Criterion 5. Prior to the start of each academic year, the institution instructs the public and interested parties on study program general and specific criteria and requirements.

Criterion 6. At the start of each academic year, the institution drafts and publishes special criteria for the selection of candidates with disabilities, from minorities, etc.

Criterion 7. The institution drafts and publishes at the start of each academic year the criteria for the selection of candidates from other countries.

Criterion 8. The institution drafts assistance/scholarship policies with the aim of enhancing the quality of admissions in priority programs for the institution and the country's economic development.

Standard V.2 The Higher Education Institution makes available to the students of the study program detailed and comprehensive information on the academic progress, recognition, and knowledge assessment up to the studies completion and graduation.

Criterion 1. The institution provides full and detailed information on the criteria and procedures for student academic progress and passing from one academic year to the other.

Criterion 2. The institution informs students about diploma recognition procedures and criteria regarding previous qualifications or part-time studies.

Criterion 3. The institution informs students about the criteria and procedures on knowledge and skills assessment during the study program.

Criterion 4. The Higher Education Institution informs students about study program graduation criteria and procedures.

Criterion 5. Before the start of and throughout each academic year, the higher education institution publishes special guidelines and organizes open briefings to inform potential students and current students about the study program.

Standard V.3 The Higher Education Institution provides students with detailed and comprehensive information on training objectives, structure, organization, study program content, expected learning outcomes and employment opportunities

Criterion 1. The students are thoroughly informed on study program structure, organization and duration.

Criterion 2. The institution provides students with the necessary information and documentation on modules/course, content and training activities.

Criterion 3. The institution informs students on employment opportunities, as well as institutional support for career counseling and labor market.

Criterion 4. Students are provided with extensive and up-to-date information on the teaching process development and organization, logistics, infrastructure and services for its realization.

Criterion 5. Information about the study program is provided through the internal information management system and should be easily accessible even to distance students.

Standard V.4 The Higher Education Institution collects, manages, updates and stores detailed data about the number and profile of students attending the study program, from their university admission to graduation, as well as their employment data

Criterion 1. The institution produces and maintains annual statistics on the number of students and alumni in each study program.

Criterion 2. The institution generates annual statistics on the number of students enrolled in the study program until their graduation, withdrawals from the program, dropouts before the end of the program, or failures to successfully complete the academic year which the study program is delivered in.

Criterion 3. Student's statistical data are managed by the internal information system and must be secured and easily verifiable by authorized persons.

Criterion 4. The institution issues acts to support the periodic control of all units responsible for management (academic secretariats, internal information management system, etc.), assesses and records the state and accuracy of the information and documentation related to students and their activities.

Criterion 5. The main/basic unit should develop periodic analytical reports on incoming and exiting students' profile and quality, as well as their employment quality rate, along with appropriate measures to improve these indicators.

Standard V.5 The Higher Education Institution includes and engages students in decision-making and advisory bodies, in the framework of drafting, approving, reviewing and improving the study programs, teaching methods and the quality of provided resources and services.

Criterion 1. The institution envisages students and/or their representatives' involvement and engagement in decision-making and advisory bodies, according legal acts and HEI's own regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution should ensure that students and/or their representatives' involvement in decision-making, advising or evaluation of the academic process is realistic, concrete, productive and with easily verifiable and measurable results.

Criterion 3. The responsible unit guarantees student involvement in drafting, reviewing and improving the study program on a regular basis and includes their suggestions and contributions during joint meetings with the departments, through questionnaires, at focus group discussions, etc.

Criterion 4. Students have the opportunity to give their input on equality and fairness of the knowledge assessment process, including their right to appeal with the responsible body/unit/lecturer the result, assessment, and evaluation awarded.

Standard V.6 The Higher Education Institution has special units and procedures for student admission, induction, counseling, complaints and issues management, which are permanent and easily accessible by students.

Criterion 1. The institution has a special units and procedures which ensure student information and assistance, in accordance with legal provisions and HEI's regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution has set up and introduced a special system for student information, counseling, progress and assistance in matters related to the teaching process and study program.

Criterion 3. The institution provides students with career counseling. The Career Counseling Office/Unit continuously and periodically welcomes students, providing specific information and

guidance in terms of completing the learning process, selection and induction regarding internships in other institutions, and advice on the labor market.

Criterion 4. The Career Counseling Office/Unit follows-up with students after graduation, by collecting, processing and storing data on the level and quality of the study program students' employment, and makes them available to students and relevant bodies and authorities.

VI. STUDY PROGRAMS' QUALITY ASSURANCE

Standard VI.1 The Higher Education Institution pursues a clear policy to guarantee and promote the quality of teaching and develops special guidelines designed for teaching methods development and monitoring

Criterion 1. The institution designs guidelines at the institutional level for the development and use of different and innovative teaching methods based on the field of studies, subjects/modules.

Criterion 2. The responsible structures develop monitoring mechanisms and periodically evaluate teaching and innovative skills of academic and academic support staff.

Criterion 3. The institution guarantees student inclusion in the periodic assessment of teaching methods, and knowledge check , including complaint handling opportunity.

Criterion 4. The structures responsible for monitoring and teaching quality assurance disclose evaluation results publicly.

Criterion 5. The institution, through its assessment mechanism and results reached, promotes examples of good practice, encourages and prompts the academic staff to further improve teaching.

Standard VI.2 The Higher Education Institution drafts and implements transparent policies and procedures on the study program quality assurance within the framework of internal quality assurance system.

Criterion 1. The institution has in place policies, structures and procedures for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), in accordance with applicable legal and sub-legal provisions and with institutional regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution has established and uses the Internal Quality Assurance System, and it also implements an institutional strategy for continuous quality improvement, including students and external partners and experts.

Criterion 3. The Institution uses appropriate quality assurance tools and indicators. External Quality Assurance in Higher Education is carried out through external accreditation evaluation processes, analytical and comparative evaluations, as well as other processes that promote and improve quality.

Criterion 4. The institution uses clear and measurable indicators in teaching and research, with the aim of reflecting the situation, achievements, and weaknesses that are stipulated in institutional regulatory acts. The institutions employs qualitative indicators to promote the best achievements.

Standard VI.3 The Higher Education Institution periodically monitors and evaluates the study program through the special units, in order to achieve training objectives and the intended learning outcomes

Criterion 1. The institution uses formal and documented processes and mechanisms for periodically reviewing, approving and supervising the study program to the service of its accreditation. During this process, the institution identifies achievements and weaknesses, motivates best practices and

attainments, and it develops the improvement measures plan. The results of these assessments are documented and put forward to the responsible and decision-making authorities for the study program.

Criterion 2. Evaluation reports should include expected outcomes, evaluations results, motivation of best practices and achievements, and measures taken to address gaps and to further improve quality, as well as encouragement of the best achievements in the performance and research conducted by the academic staff and students.

Criterion 3. In the framework of evaluating study program realization, progress and quality, the institution employs direct methods such as: assessment of teaching quality; didactics, curricula, learning evaluation; parallel assessment of student examinations or assignments; observations in the auditorium during exercises/practice; local or standardized tests; results achieved in interinstitutional or national tests, such as state exam for regulated professions, etc.

Criterion 4. In the framework of evaluating study program realization, progress and quality, the institution employs indirect assessment methods and tools such as: surveys and interviews with students, alumni, academic staff, academic support and administrative staff, employers and institutions that cooperate for the study program delivery and other parties involved in conducting the assessment of knowledge and competences acquired during the program.

Standard VI.4 The Higher Education Institution includes the academic units, academic staff and students in the study program IQA process, and informs interested parties on the results and the subsequent measures

Criterion 1. The institution should provide for and guarantee the involvement of internal and external actors, such as the Program Board, experts of the area, representatives of cooperative organizations or industry representatives, interested in continuously ensuring and improving the study program in internal quality policies and procedures.

Criterion 2. The institution defines the specific responsibilities and tasks of units, individuals, students and other parties engaged in the study program internal quality assurance and it guarantees the responsible performance of these tasks.

Criterion 3. During study program quality assessment and assurance, it is important to guarantee the inclusion of the main and basic unit responsible for the study program, academic staff, academic support and administrative staff, and study program students.

Criterion 4. Internal actors inclusion and engagement in the continuous assessment procedures should observe the academic integrity and avoid any kind of discrimination or inequality against staff and students.

Criterion 5. Partners and/or external experts, who are related to the study program, or can provide professional expertise and input about the program quality and improvement should actively participate in the assessment and internal quality assurance processes.

Standard VI.5 Policies, processes and activities for the study program Internal Quality Assurance should be made public, transparent, and effective, with the view to establishing an Internal Quality Assurance Culture.

Criterion 1. The policy, strategy, organization and activities within the framework of the study program Internal Quality Assurance system are transparent and are made public to all students and parties concerned.

Criterion 2. The Higher Education Institution publishes the results of the study programs assessment, by observing ethics and academic freedom, as well as the legislation on personal data.

Criterion 3. The assessment results should be accompanied with an action plan designed to address and improve the identified weaknesses and issues.

Criterion 4. The institution assesses and ensures activities' effectiveness and impact in the framework of monitoring and quality assessment, to ensure the ongoing study program improvement.

Criterion 5. The institution organizes periodic activities with staff and students for their information and awareness-raising on the long-term quality assurance and study program improvement.

APPENDIX NO. 6

QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR THIRD CYCLE "DOCTORATE" STUDY PROGRAMS

I: GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Standard I.1 The third cycle doctoral study program is provided by higher education institutions that meet legal criteria applicable in the Republic of Albania.

Criterion 1. The doctoral program is offered either by universities or academies accredited in the Republic of Albania.

Criterion 2. The doctoral program that is offered in cooperation with other higher education institutions, in or outside the country, must be accredited in the place of origin.

Criterion 3. The doctoral program is licensed in compliance with sub-legal acts in force and is approved by order of the minister responsible for education.

Criterion 4. The doctoral program is designed by the institution through internal transparent procedures and is approved in compliance with the institution's statute, regulation and other organizational acts.

Standard I.2 The third cycle doctorate study program is provided in line with the institution's scientific research and development strategy.

Criterion 1. The doctoral program is tailored and drafted in accordance with the institution's own development strategy.

Criterion 2. The doctoral program research field is in line with at least one of institution's academic activity fields.

Criterion 3. The doctoral program has clearly defined its name, organization, structure, content, aim and objectives, harmonized with those of the providing institution(s).

Criterion 4. The doctoral program is drafted and offered with the view to promoting local and/or national economic scientific development by integrating in its content national development strategies, national interest and international research and development trends.

Standard I.3 The third cycle doctorate study program aims to meet the country's current and long-term needs for researchers and scientists

Criterion 1. To design the doctoral program, the institution, the responsible unit or research group, carries out studies and analyzes on the situation, developments, needs, and priorities in the general and specific field of the doctoral program, which become part of the draft proposal before program opening.

Criterion 2. The doctoral program has clearly defined objectives for training researchers with in-depth scientific knowledge, skills and competencies in the field of research and application and in line with the country's requirements and needs.

Criterion 3. The doctoral program is designed and harmonized with similar programs offered by domestic or foreign partner institutions, guides, EU directives, international institutions and organizations with which our country is a partner or cooperates, with the view to increasing cooperation in the scientific research area.

Criterion 4. With the view to increasing international cooperation, mobility and engagement with the program and foreign researchers' academic activities, the doctoral program can be partly or fully carried out in the English language.

Standard I.4 The doctoral program is structured in accordance with the academic field of the unit responsible for the program

Criterion 1. The doctoral program is organized at the level of the basic unit or main unit responsible for its progress and advancement.

Criterion 2. The responsible unit possesses the proper profile, experience, capacities and resources in the specific academic area in order to deliver the doctoral program.

Criterion 3. The general and specific field of the study program must be in line with the academic and research field of the basic unit, responsible for the study program, according to the study program classification/codification, in line with the national and European directives and guidelines.

Criterion 4. When the program is offered in cooperation with other institutions, the general and specific field of the doctoral program is in line with the academic and research field of the responsible units in the respective institutions.

II: DOCTORAL PROGRAM ORGANIZATION, STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

Standard II.1 The program organization is based on specific doctoral program regulations and guides

Criterion 1. The unit responsible for the doctoral program organization and development, defines in detail the rules of organization and functioning of the doctoral program and updates them in order to improve its quality.

Criterion 2. The program organization elements, responsibilities, rights and obligations are laid down in its regulation and other acts adopted by the institution.

Criterion 3. The responsible unit drafts and approves manuals, guides or models serving as example to the other elements that should be included in the draft proposal.

Criterion 4. The responsible unit drafts and approves guides, models for also reporting and assessing doctoral candidates' achievements during the entire academic year and study period.

Criterion 5. The responsible unit drafts and approves guides on drafting the doctoral thesis, referrals, presentations, plagiarism check.

Criterion 6. The institution and the responsible unit prepare plagiarism-related measurable indicators based on the field of research and study, as well as related references, ensuring that the level of similarity between the doctoral thesis and research works is less than 30%.

Standard II.2 The doctoral program content is organized in accordance with legal and sub-legal acts in force as well as with the guidelines of the European Higher Education Area

Criterion 1. The doctoral program may include theoretical training courses up to 30 ECTS, which are completed during the first year of the program.

Criterion 2. The regular doctoral program duration is 3 to 5 academic years and not longer than twice its regular duration.

Criterion 3. The program content, organization, review and monitoring align with similar examples in European Higher Education Area institutions.

Criterion 4. If the doctoral program includes theoretical training, the courses focus on structuring in-depth scientific research, qualitative and quantitative methods of data processing, research ethics, and writing scientific papers and dissertations.

Criterion 5. If the doctoral program includes theoretical training, the courses include advanced knowledge of theoretical debates, research approaches, interdisciplinary collaborations, and latest developments in the doctoral student's field of study.

Criterion 6. When applied, doctoral theoretical training courses are evaluated through theoretical exam(s) in the respective field of study, arranged by the program academic staff. The theoretical training knowledge assessment procedure, as well as rights and obligations are defined in the doctoral program regulation.

Criterion 7. In the program improvement framework, the responsible unit has the right to change the theoretical training content of the doctoral program, document the procedure and inform the ministry responsible for education.

Standard II.3. The doctoral program is organized based on research and development projects and is harmonized with national development strategies and scientific research priorities

Criterion 1. The doctoral program is part of the institutional policy on research and development, and it is structured as a long-term research and development project in the specific field.

Criterion 2. The doctoral project can be designed on the individual initiative of the academic staff, the basic unit's research group, the institution or as a proposal by external partners with whom the institution cooperates.

Criterion 3. The main and specific field of study/research is selected in such a way as to be part of the field of study of the responsible unit.

Criterion 4. The responsible unit's draft proposal is reviewed by the Standing Committee for awarding the "Doctor" scientific degree.

Criterion 5. The candidate seeking admission to the doctoral study program drafts the individual project for a specific research area which is included in the doctoral project and broadly analyzes it in the application documents.

Standard II.4 Candidate application, selection and admission criteria are determined by the responsible unit ensuring their transparency

Criterion 1. The unit responsible for the doctoral program determines the application criteria related to foreign language(s), admission GPA, the field of study and the study programs for which the candidates are admitted, the application documents, etc. and makes them public.

Criterion 2. Candidates employed as academic staff at the institution or other higher education institution, as research staff at a research institution and who meet the legal and specific criteria defined in the study program, apply and are admitted to doctoral programs.

Criterion 3. Candidates applying to pursue the doctoral program prove that they have in-depth theoretical knowledge in the relevant field of study, skills and competencies such as creative thinking, research related problem solving skills, competence to manage the complexity of research and propose new ideas in the research area.

Criterion 4. The responsible unit approves individual candidate research projects only for those disciplines, the field of which is included in the approved doctoral program field.

Criterion 5. The responsible unit approves additional admission criteria such as interviews, references, tests or exams as well as other additional documents made public in advance.

Criterion 6. The responsible unit determines the specific criteria that the candidate must meet to transfer studies to the study program, according to the field of research, and makes them public in advance.

Criterion 7. The responsible unit determines the number of doctoral students based on a thorough analysis of hosting capacities which are verified, certified and made public by the ministry responsible for education.

Criterion 8. Doctoral studies are carried out at the responsible unit as part of an approved scientific research project and with funding provided by the project or institution's financial resources.

Standard II.5 The unit responsible for the doctoral program administers the entire necessary documentation for each doctoral candidate from application, admission up to study completion

Criterion 1. The responsible unit keeps both in electronic and paper format the entire applicant documentation in the application phase.

Criterion 2. The responsible unit keeps both in electronic and paper format all the documentation of applying and winning candidate selection and decision-making process, and guarantees transparency in the decision-making and appeal processes.

Criterion 3. The responsible unit keeps both in electronic and paper format the data of all doctoral students regarding their academic and scientific research activities throughout the entire duration of their studies.

Criterion 4. The responsible unit keeps both in electronic and paper format the doctoral student's reports, official communications, and progress assessment reports.

Criterion 5. The responsible unit makes available to students the electronic anti-plagiarism system as well as other self-check mechanisms with the view of eliminating plagiarism and complying with intellectual property rights.

Criterion 6. The responsible unit periodically compiles reports on the progress of the doctoral program and students individually and informs the Standing Committee for the award of the "Doctor" scientific degree.

III: SOURCES IN SERVICE OF THE PROGRAM

Standard III.1 The structures responsible for the development and support of the doctoral program have clearly defined tasks and responsibilities in the regulatory acts and integrate their activities in the program

Criterion 1. The unit responsible for the organization and development of the doctoral program ensures the fulfillment of academic standards and provides the infrastructure necessary for the completion of the scientific research project.

Criterion 2. The responsible unit aligns doctoral candidates' academic, scientific research and creative activities with the view of completing the scientific research project.

Criterion 3. If the responsible institution meets legal obligations and quality standards, it may offer more than one research project in the research field it covers.

Criterion 4. In cases where the research fields overlap in two or more basic units, one of the basic units is assigned the responsibility for delivering the candidate's research program, in agreement between them, and afterwards they coordinate the activities for the program.

Standard III.2 The responsible unit ensures the necessary academic, administrative and support staff for conducting the program and achieving its objectives

Criterion 1. The academic staff engaged in the doctoral program belongs to the "Professor" category with a long experience in the research area of domestically and internationally recognized partner universities. They possess a rich research and publishing activity and highly rank in their respective field of study in indexed databases of international level.

Criterion 2. The mentor(s) holding the academic title "Professor" can mentor no more than 3 doctoral students at the same time, and those with the academic title "Associate Professor" no more than 2, inside and outside the institution.

Criterion 3. The criteria for the mentor selection are defined in the study program regulation and other acts of the responsible unit. These acts also define the modalities for changing or replacing the mentor in cases when it is necessary and reasonable.

Criterion 4. The responsible unit ensures that each mentor has the capacity to guide the doctoral student through the research activities and respective didactic tasks.

Criterion 5. The academic staff of the doctoral program is actively engaged in the field of research, projects, speeches, scientific publications, journals, books or monographs, etc. and includes the mentoring student in these activities.

Standard III.3 The mentor is responsible for the progress of studies, research work and continuously supports the student to achieve the objectives

Criterion 1. The mentor is responsible for guiding, advising, assessing student's needs as well as developing and monitoring the student's research work progress.

Criterion 2. The mentor is the guarantor for the doctoral student's scientific research project completion by providing his experience, the necessary instructions and continuous support in fulfilling the goal and objectives.

Criterion 3. The scientific mentor works to update the student's didactic knowledge and skills in the field of study and includes him/ her in academic teaching activities in the first and second cycle programs offered by the institution.

Criterion 4. Doctoral program academic staff and mentors are selected by the responsible unit following consultations with the Standing Committee for the award of the "Doctor" scientific degree.

The approval of the scientific mentor is based on the compatibility of his/her field of study, achievements and doctoral student's project.

Criterion 5. The lead mentor and the other mentor (when the doctoral program is offered by more than one institution) ensure that doctoral students receive adequate support and guidance to facilitate their achievement.

Criterion 6. The responsible unit ensures that the mentor has sufficient time and provides the necessary support to the doctoral student.

Criterion 7. In cooperation with the student, the responsible unit ensures continuity of his/her mentoring in case of replacement of the mentor for various reasons.

Criterion 8. The meetings between the mentor and the doctoral student are formal and documented and serve to assess the doctoral student's progress reports.

Criterion 9. The scientific mentor gives the continuous assessment conclusions on the scientific research doctoral project and based on the progress, approves the subsequent activity plan.

Criterion 10. The scientific mentor ensures the completion of all jury panel comments and recommendations when the dissertation is returned for further completion.

Standard III.4 The responsible unit guarantees the necessary infrastructure and logistics for the doctoral program

Criterion 1. The unit responsible for the doctoral program has sufficient facilities at its disposal to carry out its proper functioning.

Criterion 2. Students admitted to the study program, have the necessary conditions to carry out the academic and scientific research study program.

Criterion 3. The doctoral program has at its disposal a library rich in scientific publications and in electronic form as well as a complete IT infrastructure.

Criterion 4. The responsible unit provides adequate logistical support to conduct scientific research and publishing activities.

Criterion 5. In areas that require carrying out doctoral work in research laboratories, the responsible unit provides for certified laboratories or cooperates with other partner institutions outside the institution to carry out scientific research work.

Criterion 6. Research involving laboratory research is supported by a sufficient laboratory basis in the institution or partner institution for a period of at least 6 months.

Criterion 7. The responsible unit makes available the electronic information management system to the doctoral program for managing the reports, communications, the doctoral student's progress and assessment reports.

Criterion 8. The responsible unit provides adequate capacities for mentoring the doctoral students up to the end of the program and monitoring the doctoral student's progress by maintaining constant contact with the mentor, as well as ensuring regular reporting throughout the program.

Standard III.5 The institution provides partnerships and cooperation with those institutions that support the student's scientific research activity

Criterion 1. The responsible unit secures agreements with higher education institutions, research institutes, inside and outside the country, that support the exchange of academic staff and doctoral students, as well as other academic and research activities.

Criterion 2. The responsible unit ensures the engagement with the doctoral program of academic staff from at least one European Union, OECD or G20 member state university as scientific supervisor, lecturer or as doctoral students' scientific collaborators.

Criterion 3. The responsible unit secures agreements with at least one European Union, OECD or G20 member state university that delivers exchange programs of academic staff and doctoral students for at least a period of 3 months.

Criterion 4. The responsible unit secures agreements with international institutions that ensure the engagement of doctoral students in joint research projects. In the case of Albanological sciences, such cooperation can also be with a Higher Education Institution or research center in Kosovo and in Albanian lands.

Criterion 5. The institution establishes the necessary mechanisms for carrying out joint doctoral study programs with counterpart universities in the region or in one of the European Union, OECD or G20 member states.

Standard III.6 The institution responsible for the doctoral program demonstrates financial sustainability and provides the appropriate means of financing and supporting students

Criterion 1. Through financial audits and reports, the institution demonstrates a positive performance and sustainability in the generation and use of financial revenue.

Criterion 2. Through the institution, projects or funding from other entities, the responsible unit provides the necessary funds for conducting the scientific research project.

Criterion 3. The doctoral program is supported by an adequate research budget.

Criterion 4. In the doctoral program framework, the responsible unit ensures revenues from services to other entities and uses them for delivering the program.

Criterion 5. The doctoral study program's financial budget distribution structure is in line with the institution's policy and research needs.

Criterion 6. External funding obtained for scientific research purposes are indicators of high level research activity and are administered for the progress of the respective study program.

Criterion 7. Modalities for the use of revenues from projects and services to other entities are regulated by special acts of the main unit and approved by its administrator.

Criterion 8. The use of funds allocated for the delivery of the doctoral program is subject to continuous reporting and auditing.

Criterion 9. Admitted candidates can benefit from funding provided by the institution, secondary income or self-financing for doctoral studies.

IV. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, ACHIEVEMENTS AND RESULTS

Standard IV.1 Continuous improvement of the theoretical level and promotion of research work are part of scientific research activities plan

Criterion 1. The level of scientific research development helps the student to successfully complete the study program.

Criterion 2. Doctoral students participate in envisaged doctoral activities outside of their research work such as lectures, seminars, interdisciplinary debates, organized within the doctoral program, as well as attend doctoral students' presentations and research projects despite not being directly related to the student's research area of interest.

Criterion 3. The main unit provides promotion mechanisms and support for students with the view of participating in scientific activities, inside and outside the country, in their field of activity.

Criterion 4. Doctoral students participate in research activities, projects and other responsible unit activities.

Criterion 5. Doctoral students are encouraged to develop their communication and didactic skills by engaging in teaching in the first and second cycle study programs.

Standard IV.2 Doctoral students' academic and scientific activity is an integral part of the institution activities and helps to increase the scientific research performance at institutional level

Criterion 1. Students are given the opportunity to participate in the institution's various research activities closely related to the specific field in which they pursue doctoral studies.

Criterion 2. Students are given the opportunity to apply new research methodologies to the benefit of the institution.

Criterion 3. Doctoral students are supported with the view of engaging academic staff and students from the institution or partner institutions in their research work.

Criterion 4. The institution establishes the appropriate support mechanisms for promoting students' achievements, patenting the results, and further developing their innovative ideas.

Criterion 5. The institution includes doctoral students engaged in activities outside the doctoral program, steering bodies and working groups.

Standard IV.3 The institution prioritizes the internationalization of doctoral program studies

Criterion 1. The doctoral program enrolls doctoral students from Kosovo and Albanian lands, as well as the Albanian Diaspora.

Criterion 2. The doctoral program allows the enrollment of doctoral students from other countries.

Criterion 3. The doctoral study program encourages the mobility of foreign students at the provider institution.

Criterion 4. The doctoral study program enables the development of at least one biannual international scientific event arranged by the responsible unit (symposium, conference, congress) which encourages the participation of foreign researchers.

Criterion 5. The institution supports students' participation in international events where the doctoral program research results are presented.

Criterion 6. The institution supports the publication of research papers of scientific mentors, doctoral students and doctoral program academic staff.

Standard IV.4 The student proves the carrying out of scientific research activities and the fulfillment of scientific obligations for obtaining the "Doctor" degree

Criterion 1. Doctoral students' final assessment is based on their scientific research product accomplished throughout the duration of the doctoral studies.

Criterion 2. The student demonstrates that through scientific research, he/she has brought forth original scientific products, scientific papers of a high scientific level, some of which have or are to be published in national and international scientific journals.

Criterion 3. The mentor and the doctoral student ensures the fulfillment of obligations related to the work's individuality and elimination of plagiarism in accordance with the criteria set out in the regulatory acts of the responsible unit.

Criterion 4. The student demonstrates high level research activity through cited publications, abroad publishing and research activities, international presentations, participation in scientific activities, projects, etc.

Criterion 5. The student demonstrates that he/she has met the basic criteria that are required prior to dissertation defense, such as:

- Having delivered at least 3 (three) speeches, as first or second author, when the first author is the scientific mentor, 2 (two) of which have been held in international scientific activities (symposium, conference, congress), in one of the European Union, OECD or G20 member states, accepted on a preliminary scientific assessment basis and published in the “Proceedings”, indexed with the ISBN or ISSN code;
- Having published at least 3 (three) scientific articles in scientific journals, of which 2 (two) have been published or accepted for publication in indexed journals of OECD, EU or G20 countries, with an editorial board, where, at least, in one of them as first author and in the other as second author.

Criterion 6. The student submits and presents the complete research work to the jury panel established by the responsible unit as a prerequisite for the final defense before the jury panel approved by the Standing Committee for awarding the “Doctor” scientific degree, guaranteeing the academic quality of the dissertation.

Criterion 7. In the event of non-fulfillment of obligations, the student completes the comments and recommendations, and presents them to the jury panel of the responsible unit within a 3-month period.

Standard IV.5 The student prepares the dissertation for obtaining the “Doctor” degree and the necessary documentation and submits it to the jury panel

Criterion 1. The Standing Committee for awarding the “Doctor” scientific degree approves the jury panel for the dissertation defense, which comprises members from the “professor” category of the doctoral study related field and at least one of them must have a PhD or more by a European Union, OECD or G20 member state institution.

Criterion 2. The candidate prepares the dissertation according to the format approved in the third cycle study regulation. The dissertation should bring forth theoretical and/ or empirical innovations in the relevant field of research, as well as contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge.

Criterion 3. Prior to submission, the dissertation is approved by the scientific mentor and the responsible unit, which assesses it according to the regulatory acts specifications and together with the supporting documentation passes for review by the Standing Committee for awarding the “Doctor” scientific degree.

Criterion 4. The Standing Committee ensures the quality of scientific research work, the fulfillment of the objectives set by the candidate and the legal academic obligations for obtaining the doctoral degree.

Criterion 5. The Standing Committee for awarding the “Doctor” scientific degree ensures the fulfillment of obligations related to the work’s individuality and elimination of plagiarism in accordance with the criteria set out in the regulatory acts of the responsible unit.

Criterion 6. If the Standing Committee for awarding the “Doctor” scientific degree favorably evaluates the dissertation, the summary approved by the scientific mentor together with the

responsible unit's reports and assessments, the student may proceed with the presentation before the jury panel.

Criterion 7. More detailed procedures for obtaining the "Doctor" scientific degree are defined in the Higher Education Institution statute, the third cycle study regulation as well as the regulation of the Standing Committee for awarding the "Doctor" scientific degree.

V. DOCTORAL PROGRAM QUALITY ASSURANCE

Standard VI.1 The institution and responsible unit drafts and implements transparent policies and procedures specific to the doctoral program quality assurance within the framework of internal quality assurance system and structures.

Criterion 1. The institution has in place policies, structures and procedures for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), in accordance with applicable legal and sub-legal provisions and with institutional regulatory acts.

Criterion 2. The institution has established and introduced the Internal Quality Assurance System and implements an institutional strategy for continuous quality improvement, which includes students and external partners and experts.

Criterion 3. The institution uses the proper quality assurance instruments, and the External Quality Assurance in Higher Education is realized through external accreditation assessment processes, analytical and comparative assessments, as well as other processes that promote and improve quality.

Criterion 4. The Institution has drafted a clear policy and follows periodic procedures to ensure and improve the quality of the study program it delivers, within the IQA framework. They aim to create a quality culture at the institutional level, the constituent units and all institutional internal actors.

Standard V.2 The institution and responsible unit periodically monitors and reviews the doctoral program with the view of ensuring the achievement of training objectives and targeted learning outcomes

Criterion 1. The institution establishes a special unit for monitoring, reviewing, and supervising the doctoral program.

Criterion 2. The institution uses formal and documented processes and mechanisms for periodically reviewing, approving and supervising the doctoral program.

Criterion 3. The institution has set measurable quantitative and qualitative indicators for the doctoral program, in the framework of the program quality assessment.

Criterion 4. The institution uses assessment methodology, measuring instruments and evaluation instruments for the study program progress and success.

Criterion 5. The results of these assessments are documented and forwarded to decision-making authorities responsible for the study program.

Criterion 6. The assessment reports should include the expected results, the assessment results and the measures taken to address shortcomings and the ongoing quality improvement.

Standard V.3 The Institution and responsible unit uses assessment procedures, methodologies, and measuring instruments for the study program opening, development, and progress, graduation and entering the labor market

Criterion 1. The doctoral program internal review is periodically carried out by the relevant internal quality assurance unit. The Higher Education Institution incorporates this information in the

institutional self-assessment procedure within the accreditation or periodic self-assessment framework.

Criterion 2. To carry out the review, the institution uses various dedicated and adequate methods and instruments, in line with the academic study program nature and scope.

Criterion 3. In the framework of assessing the doctoral program completion and quality progress, the institution uses direct quality assessment methods.

Criterion 4. In the framework of assessing the doctoral program completion and quality progress, the institution uses indirect assessment methods, such as surveys and interviews of students, graduates, academic staff, scientific researchers, mentors and partners.

Criterion 5. In the framework of continuous program improvement, assessment mechanisms include stakeholders, institutions that cooperate in the implementation of the study program and other parties engaged with assessing the knowledge and competencies acquired by this program.

Standard VI.4 The institution includes academic units, staff and students in the doctoral program IQA process, and informs interested parties on the results and the subsequent action plan

Criterion 1. The institution should provide for and guarantee the involvement of internal and external actors, interested in continuously ensuring and improving the doctoral program in internal quality policies and procedures.

Criterion 2. The institution defines the specific responsibilities and tasks of the units, individuals, students and other parties engaged in the study program internal quality assurance, and guarantees the responsible performance of these tasks.

Criterion 3. During the study program assessment and quality assurance it is important to guarantee the engagement of the main and basic unit responsible for the study program, academic staff, academic and administrative assistants and study program students.

Criterion 4. Internal actors inclusion and engagement in the continuous assessment procedures should observe the academic integrity and avoid any kind of discrimination or inequality against staff and students.

Criterion 5. Partners and/or external experts, who are related to the study program, or can provide valuable expertise and input about the program quality and improvement should actively participate in the internal review and quality assurance processes.

Criterion 6. Monitoring the academic progress of the doctoral program and quality assurance is part of the activity of the unit responsible for the Standing Committee for awarding the “Doctor” scientific degree and the IQAU.

Standard V. 5 Policies, processes and activities for the study program Internal Quality Assurance should be made public, transparent, and effective, with the view to establishing an Internal Quality Assurance Culture

Criterion 1. The policy, strategy, organization and activities within the framework of study program Internal Quality Assurance system are transparent and are made public to all students and parties concerned.

Criterion 2. The institution and responsible unit publishes the results of the study programs assessment, by observing ethics and academic freedom, as well as the legislation on personal data.

Criterion 3. The assessment results should be accompanied with an action plan designed to address and improve the identified weaknesses and issues.

Criterion 4. The institution assesses and ensures activities' effectiveness and impact in the framework of monitoring and quality assessment, with the view to ensuring the ongoing study program improvement.

Criterion 5. The institution and responsible unit organizes periodic activities with responsible academic staff and students for their information and awareness-raising on the long-term quality assurance and study program improvement.

APPENDIX NO. 7

QUALITY STANDARDS FOR THIRD CYCLE "LONG-TERM SPECIALIZATION" STUDY PROGRAMS

AREA 1. GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF LONG-TERM SPECIALIZATION PROGRAM

Standard I.1: The third cycle long-term specialization study program in the field of medicine is delivered by higher education institutions that meet legal criteria in force in the Republic of Albania

Criterion 1: The long-term specialization program is offered by a university institution, accredited in the Republic of Albania

Criterion 2: The long-term specialization program that is offered in cooperation with other higher education institutions, in or outside the country, must be accredited in the place of origin.

Criterion 3: The long-term specialization program is designed by the responsible basic units/services of the institution through internal transparent procedures and is approved in compliance with the institution's statute, regulation and other organizational acts.

Criterion 4: The long-term specialization program includes theoretical and practical training in the specialty field, which is carried out simultaneously at an accredited university, and a hospital institution or a health institution accredited by the state authority responsible for the accreditation of health institutions.

Higher education institutions must have developed and accredited/ re-accredited integrated second cycle programs in the field of medicine at the time of offering a third cycle program.

Criterion 5: The long-term specialization program is carried out full-time and includes participation in the medical activities of the departments/ services where the training is provided, in line with established procedures and under the responsible authority or entity's supervision.

Standard I. 2. The long-term medical specialization program is delivered in accordance with the institution's development strategy

Criterion 1: The long-term specialization study program is designed and delivered in line with and pursuant to the institution's development strategy.

Criterion 2: The long-term specialization program has clearly defined its name, organization, structure, content, aim and objectives, harmonized with those of the providing institution(s) and in line with the Albanian Qualification Framework.

Standard I. 3: The long-term specialization study program aims at meeting the country's current needs for specialists in the field of medicine

Criterion 1: The long-term specialization study programs in the field of medicine aim to meet the labor market demands with the needs for specialists in the field of medicine.

Criterion 2: The total number of residents and the number of those who attend this study program each year is determined in accordance with state health development policies and hosting capacities of the structures engaged in the training network (depending on the number of staff, hosting capacities, etc.).

Standard I. 4: The study programs are tailored to the study level.

Criterion 1: The long-term specialization program includes theoretical and practical training in the specialty field, which is carried out simultaneously at an accredited university and at a hospital institution or a health institution purposefully approved and accredited by the Ministry responsible for health.

Criterion 2: The long-term specialization program is carried out full-time and includes participation in the academic, clinical/ diagnostic activities of the departments and/ or services where the training is provided, in accordance with the regulation of long-term specialization programs in the field of medicine.

Standard I.5: The third cycle long-term specialization study program in the field of medicine aims at meeting the country's needs for specialists in the field of medicine.

Criterion 1: To design the long-term specialization program, the responsible basic unit/ service carries out studies and analyzes on the situation, developments, needs, and priorities in the general and specific field of the program and/or state policies on the development of the field of medicine, which become part of the draft proposal before program opening.

Criterion 2: The long-term specialization program has clearly defined objectives for the training of residents in the field of medicine with in-depth research knowledge, as well as clinical/ diagnostic skills and competencies in the relevant fields of medicine, in accordance with the country's requirements and needs.

Criterion 3: The long-term specialization program is designed and harmonized with similar programs offered by domestic or foreign partner institutions, guidelines, EU directives, international institutions and bodies with which our country is a partner or cooperates.

Criterion 4: With the view of increasing international cooperation, mobility and engagement of foreign specialists/ professionals with the program academic activities, the program may be partially or fully delivered in one of the EU languages.

Criterion 5: The long-term specialization study programs in the field of medicine aim at meeting labor market demands with the needs for specialists in the field of medicine.

Criterion 6: The total number of residents and the number of those who attend this study program each year is determined in accordance with state health development policies and hosting capacities of the Higher Education Institutions and health structures engaged in the training network (depending on infrastructural and academic/professional hosting capacities, etc.).

Standard I. 6: The organization of the long-term specialization program is in line with the academic field and specialty-based.

Criterion 1: The long-term specialization program is organized at the level of the basic unit or service (integral department part) that is responsible for its progress and performance.

Criterion 2: The responsible unit has the adequate profile, experience, capacities and resources in the academic and medical specialty field in order to deliver the specialization program.

Criterion 3: The study programs are based on clear professional objectives and are integrated with clinical/ diagnostic activities.

Criterion 4: The specific field of the long-term specialization program matches the academic specialty field of the responsible unit (department/ service) for the study program, according to the study program classification/ codification in line with national and European directives and guidelines.

Criterion 5: When the program is offered in cooperation with other institutions, the specific specialization program field matches the academic specialty field of the responsible unit(s) in the respective institutions.

AREA 2. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION, STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

Standard II.1: The program is organized pursuant to special long-term specialization program regulations and guidelines

Criterion 1: The main unit responsible for the organization and delivery of specialization programs, thoroughly lays down the rules of organization and operation of specialization programs and updates them for quality improvement purposes.

Criterion 2: The program organization elements, responsibilities, rights and obligations, are laid down in the long-term specializations regulation and in other acts approved by the institution.

Criterion 3: The institution drafts and approves guidelines and models for residents' reporting, assessment and achievements throughout the academic year and studies.

Standard II. 2. The long-term specialization study program content is organized in line with legal and sub-legal acts in force as well as with the European Higher Education Area guidelines

Criterion 1: For the completion of long-term specialization study programs, the student must accumulate not less than 120 credits and the regular duration of these study programs may not be less than 2 academic years, pursuant to the law on regulated professions, and the provisions in Appendix 1.

Criterion 2: The regular duration of long-term specialization programs in the field of medicine is according to Appendix 1 and the maximum duration cannot exceed more than twice the regular duration of long-term specialization.

Criterion 3: The program content, organization, review and monitoring align with similar examples in European Higher Education Area institutions.

Criterion 4: Long-term specialization study programs include at least 80% of the total ECTS for clinical/ diagnostic and professional activities, according to the respective specialization, and 20% for organized theoretical studies distributed over the years according to a pre-defined program at the beginning of the study program.

Criterion 5: The courses ratio (referring to the total ECTS) determined in the study program consists of:

60% specific courses;

30% field-related courses;

5% basic training, interdisciplinary or integrative courses and other activities;

5% final examination etc.;

Not more than 15% of the total annual courses must be elective courses, as per the legal framework in force;

Criterion 6: At the end of each year, a theoretical and practical course evaluation exam is held, which is evaluated with a grade. The annual course assessment is carried out by a committee composed of at least 2 (two) lecturers. Among them, at least one of them must be a full-time lecturer in the respective field, while the second lecturer is an experienced specialist in the respective or similar field according to the developed modules.

Students who are 5 times unfavorably assessed receive a certificate for the developed modules, together with the accumulated credits and interrupt the long-term specializations studies.

Criterion 7: At the end of the specialization program, the student undergoes a final exam that includes practical and oral testing of the student and/or diploma thesis presentation.

The student final assessment committee comprises 5 full-time field, or of similar field specialists at the HEI that offers the specialization, with an experience of at least 10 (ten) years in the respective field. The committee chair should be a full-time lecturer in the respective field, responsible for the long-term specialization program in this field.

Some of the basic knowledge for which the applicant is tested during the final exam, are:

- a. Development of critical sense regarding different clinical situations;
- b. Links between various fields of medicine;
- c. Problem-solving skills developed during clinical work;
- d. Competence to manage the complexity of clinical situations and to provide solutions in emergency cases.

Criterion 8: In the program improvement framework, the responsible unit has the right to change the theoretical training content of the specialization program, and document the procedure pursuant to applicable legislation.

Standard II.3: Student admission to a long-term specialization study program in the field of medicine

Criterion 1: The student admitted to the long-term specialization study program in the field of medicine has completed the integrated program of integrated second cycle university studies of 5 years (300 ECTS) in Pharmacy and Dentistry and 6 years (360 ECTS) in General Medicine, at a program-related accredited university and has obtained the “Master of Science” degree. Students graduating in the same programs abroad, must present the diploma and the license to practice the profession recognized by the responsible state institution.

Criterion 2: The candidate who applies to continue the third cycle study program, for long-term specialization in the field of medicine, is subject to an competitive admission to test knowledge in the relevant field of study.

Criterion 3: Student assessment for admission to a study program is carried out with cumulative points by assessing at least the following elements:

- average grade (final grade according to the typology of the diploma he/she has) for up to 30% of the total points,
- general written testing for 30-40% of total points,

- specific written testing according to the specialization program for which the student competes for 40-50% of the total points.

Criterion 4: The candidate applying to the third cycle long-term specialization program must have successfully completed the state exam in the respective profession or have acquired the right to practice the profession in the Republic of Albania or abroad (recognized in the Republic of Albania).

The student may reapply to compete in another specialized program at an HEI pursuant to the legal provisions in force. The student's ECTS accumulated for theoretically organized studies may be recognized if deemed appropriate for the field of the new program to which he or she has applied.

Criterion 5: The minimum criteria to qualify in the selection of the long-term specialization study program are reflected in the regulation of long-term specialization study programs in the field of medicine and approved by the Academic Senate.

Criterion 6: The applicant may learn the regulation of long-term specializations approved by the HEI Academic Senate, minimum admission criteria, through the official website of the HEI and/or main unit, before being admitted.

Standard II. 4: Drafting and adoption of the long-term specialization program regulation

Criterion 1: The regulation is drafted in line with specialization standards in the field of medicine and legal and sub-legal acts in force.

Criterion 2: The regulation enters into force at the beginning of each academic year and is updated every new academic year. If there are no changes, the latest updated regulation remains in force.

Criterion 3: Updates to the long-term specializations regulation apply to the specialization cycle that begins for the first time with the updated regulation up until its completion. If necessary, changes to subsequent regulations should explicitly exclude the already commenced specialization cycle.

Criterion 4: The regulation is proposed by the Main Unit that delivers the specialization program and approved by the HEI Academic Senate.

Standard II. 5: The regulation lays down the criteria and the method of selecting the steering bodies of specialized programs and tutors.

Criterion 1: The regulation clearly reflects the criteria and the method of selecting the specialization program director, in line with the specifications in these standards.

Criterion 2: The regulation lays down the criteria and the method of selecting the responsible doctor/tutor for each resident as well as related duties.

Standard II. 6: The regulation clearly defines the method of student admission to the specialization program

Criterion 1: The regulation sets out the application criteria (level of studies completed, duration and degree required, etc.) as well as the exclusion criteria if any.

Criterion 2: The regulation clearly defines the documentation that must be submitted by the candidate for application purposes, the manner of submitting the documentation and the deadline.

Criterion 3: The regulation clearly defines the maximum points that the candidate can accumulate and the points awarded to the candidate for each met criterion as well as the maximum and minimum points that can be given to the candidate during each test.

Criterion 4: The regulation clearly defines the specialization candidate's application and competitive admission, as well as the deadlines for documentation submission.

Criterion 5: The regulation clearly defines how testing and related procedure is carried out.

Criterion 6: The regulation clearly defines the assessment method for each candidates' testing and submitted documentation, which is stored according to the procedures provided in the regulation.

Criterion 7: The names of the approved specialization programs for the academic year, the number of residents to be admitted for each specialization program and the payable fees for each specialization are published at least 2 weeks before the application start date.

Criterion 8: The testing evaluation method must be specified in the regulation and published at least 2 weeks before the application start date.

Criterion 9: The regulation clearly specifies the manner and deadlines for the announcement of the test results and the final list of winners, as well as the place and date of result announcement.

Criterion 10: The regulation clearly lays down the form of entering into a contract with the winning residents.

Standard II. 6: The regulation provides for the specialization program teaching process elements

Criterion 1: The specialization program regulation provides for the form of attendance, maximum of allowed absences and related reasons, maternity leave, and how to make amends for absences, etc.

Criterion 2: The specialization program regulation provides for procedures of transfers to or from other specialization programs, or to or from other institutions that offer specialization programs in the field of medicine.

Criterion 3: The specialization program regulation provides for the criteria and the manner of resident's suspension, extension or dismissal from the specialization studies.

Criterion 4: The regulation provides for the cases when the specialization can be carried out at another institution that is not part of the Albanian training network, the duration of this period and the body that approves such procedure. These institutions must be accredited to carry out the specialization program in the respective country.

Standard II. 7: The regulation provides for the student's professional practice notebook.

Criterion 1: The regulation provides for the student's professional practice notebook, how to complete and replace it in the event of loss. The student carries the notebook until the completion of the specialization cycle and graduation.

Standard II. 8: The regulations provide for the annual tests and final examination procedures as well as the diploma format.

Criterion 1: The regulation lays down the method of residents' annual course testing and final examinations, the minimum and maximum points, the test type, etc.

Criterion 3: The regulation specifies the cases of justified absences during testing and how to retest in such cases.

Criterion 4: At the end of long-term specialization studies, the graduate is awarded a specialization diploma. The diploma must be signed by the HEI rector and respective faculty dean

Standard II. 9: Resident's rights and obligations.

Criterion 1: The regulation should provide for the resident's rights and obligations.

Criterion 2: The regulation defines the residents' insurance typology and method during the specialization. It should provide for the insurance policy type and coverage amount.

Criterion 3: The regulation provides for those cases when the resident may suspend the specialization and the maximum period allowed, as well as the procedures for withdrawing from the specialization.

Criterion 4: The regulation defines plagiarism-related measurable indicators for the work on the diploma, as well as related references, ensuring that the level of similarity of the diploma work is less than 30%.

Standard II. 10: The main unit responsible for the specialization program administers all the necessary documentation for each resident beginning from the application, admission to completion of studies

Criterion 1: The main unit keeps both in electronic and paper format the entire applicant documentation in the application phase.

Criterion 2: The main unit keeps both in electronic and paper format all the documentation of applying and winning candidate selection and decision-making process, and guarantees transparency in the decision-making and appeal processes.

Criterion 3: The main unit keeps both in electronic and paper format the data of all residents regarding their experimental academic and scientific research activities throughout the entire duration of their studies.

Criterion 4: The main unit keeps both in electronic and paper format the resident's reports, official communications, and progress assessment reports.

Criterion 5: The main unit makes available to students the electronic anti-plagiarism system as well as other self-check mechanisms with the view of eliminating plagiarism and complying with intellectual property rights.

Criterion 6: The main unit periodically compiles reports on the specialization program progress.

AREA 3. SOURCES IN SERVICE TO THE LONG-TERM SPECIALIZATION PROGRAM

Standard III. 1: The responsible unit ensures the necessary academic, administrative and support staff with the view of carrying out the program and meeting its objectives

Criterion 1: The academic staff engaged in the long-term specialization program belongs to the professor category (professor, associate professor), the lecturer category (Dr/ Phd), who are engaged with clinical/ diagnostic work with at least 10 years of experience.

Criterion 2: Each specialization program determines:

A leading figure, the specialization program officer/ director. The specialization program officer/ director must be a full-time lecturer in the relevant field, have at least the "Associate Professor" title and not less than 10 years of experience in practicing the profession. This figure is proposed by the responsible base unit and is approved at main unit level.

Criterion 3: The academic staff of the long-term specialization study program comprises:

i. full-time academic staff with academic degrees and scientific degrees, not less than 50% of the lecturers covering the study program. At least 1 (one) full-time lecturer, of the professor category, must belong to the program's field of study.

ii. academic staff, who practice the profession in the university health structures as defined by the legislation in force, not greater than 50% of the professors that cover the study program. This academic staff must have didactic-formative experience and professional-clinical diagnostic experience.

The teaching activity carried out by the training network health structures staff requires the prior approval of the health structure director.

The teaching activity carried out by university health structure staff, requires in any case, the prior approval of the relevant HEI, where the university health structure is an integral part thereof.

iii. part-time academic staff, for special disciplines, not more than 10% of the lecturers covering the study program, with whom a contract is concluded, according to the study program structural needs;

Criterion 4: The long-term specialization study program has a program director/officer. The specialization program director/officer must be full-time academic staff. The specialization program director/officer is also member of the basic unit/service responsible for the long-term specialization program. The specialization program director/officer is chosen among the basic unit assembly members, with a simple majority (50%+1). The program director/officer at a HEI may not be charged with the responsibility of directing another study program carried out at other HEIs;

Criterion 5: The responsible unit ensures adequate capacities for supervising the resident.

The resident's supervisor is: the academic supervisor and clinical/diagnostic supervisor.

The maximum number of students that an academic/clinical-diagnostic supervisor may supervise is pursuant to the legal framework in force.

The resident's supervision is assigned to, in the capacity of supervisor, a lecturer (academic supervisor) and/ or a health structure staff member of the training network (clinical supervisor/ tutor) of the study program, who supervise the resident throughout the specialization period and are responsible for managing, advising, assessing student's needs, as well as for carrying out and monitoring the student's work.

The supervisor's specialty field should match the resident's specialization program field. The clinical supervisor/ tutor has a professional experience of at least 10 years (ten years) with clinical experience in the relevant clinical field and has at least the "Doctor" scientific degree. The maximum number of residents that can be supervised by the academic/ clinical supervisor is 3 (three).

The clinical supervisor/ tutor is a full-time staff member of one of the training network structures and has a cooperation contract with the HEI that offers the program. When the tutor is not part of the full-time staff of the structure that offers the specialization program, the resident is also assigned an academic supervisor, who is a full-time academic staff member of the institution. The clinical director decides on the assignment of the clinical supervisor and his clinical supervision accounts for working hours.

The teaching activity is carried out in parallel with the assistant/ professional activity, in line with the study program requirements. When the teaching activity is carried out at the premises where such study program is delivered by the university health structures staff, it requires the prior approval of the relevant structure director;

Standard III. 2. The institution ensures the necessary infrastructure and logistics in the framework of the long-term specialization program

Criterion 1: The institution has a permanent location, which implies central administrative facilities and teaching activity facilities. Such facilities must be available to the institution for not less than 6 years.

Criterion 2: The institution must have adequate infrastructural and technological capacities. It possesses administrative and clinical structures, sufficient for the activities provided for in the specialization study program as per the specific standards attached herein (Appendix 2).

Criterion 3: The institution has accredited health structures for conducting various clinical diagnostic, professional and didactic activities. These structures are accredited pursuant to the legal framework in force.

Criterion 4: The institution may organize joint long-term specialization study programs with one or more institutions, recognized/ accredited pursuant to the legislation in force.

Standard III. 3: The institution may offer foreign language study programs, with qualified academic staff.

Criterion 1: The institution, which offers foreign language study programs, meets the same standards set for HEIs that offer specialization study programs in the field of medicine in the Albanian language.

Criterion 2: Academic staff engaged in foreign language teaching hold internationally recognized language certificates, pursuant to the legal framework in force.

Standard III. 4: Engaged structures should hold envisaged general and specific standards

Criterion 1: Central and secondary structures hold general standards in line with the infrastructural, technological, organizational and assistant capacity according to the following criteria and according to the specific criteria provided for in Appendix 2:

- a. Infrastructural capacity: adequate spaces for exercising provided functions;
- b. Technological capacity: equipment needed to perform the envisaged functions;
- c. Organizational capacity: necessary professional competences;
- d. Assistant capacity: specific clinical intervention amount and typology.

Criterion 2: All facilities (e.g. lecture halls, libraries, secretariats, etc.) meet general standards.

Criterion 3: The basic structure is equipped with the necessary facilities/equipment:

- didactic secretariat
- scientific library rich in publications, and in electronic form
- complete IT infrastructure.
- research and didactic laboratories (if provided for in Appendix No. 2)
- health posts and assistant structures (with the necessary technological equipment according to the specialty)
- hospital facilities with beds (when envisaged in the specific specialty standards according to Appendix 2)

The aforementioned facilities must ensure safety and hygiene standards and have no architectural barriers that impede access to the various activities provided for by the study program.

Criterion 4: Each specific specialization program meets the specific standards according to the typology of specialization (e.g. specific laboratories, services, in-patient hospitalization, etc.) according to Appendix 2. Specific standards are divided into:

- a. base: standards that must necessarily be met by both the base structure and the secondary/ satellite structures.
- b. secondary: standards that, in order to meet the accreditation criteria of the structure, must be met by both the central and secondary structure or by other HEI structures as per a certain percentage envisaged for accreditation. If neither the basic or the secondary structure meet the standards, they must be met by the complementary structures whereby there is a cooperation agreement.
- c. general services: are operational services that the structure which comprises either the central or secondary structure to be accredited must have.

Criterion 5: The institution that offers specialization programs ensures that it possesses adequate capacities for health, support and administrative staff in the central and secondary structures to cover the needs of the offered specialties, based on the capacities.

Criterion 6: The institution that offers specialization programs is well-organized and has the documentation that attest to the organization and management structure as well as administrative and academic staff with the relevant titles and roles provided for each.

Standard III. 5: The training network¹ meets the minimum criteria envisaged and is suitable to offer long-term specialization programs in the field of medicine.

Criterion 1: The institution meets the minimum general requirements set out in this document regarding the training network.

Criterion 2: The institution must meet the minimum specific requirements for each specialty provided in Appendix 2 of this document with regards to the training network.

Criterion 3: The general and specific requirements are organized according to the following criteria:

- a. Adaptability of structures and equipment, with relevant general and diagnostic services and the existence of similar specialties in them
- b. Existence of sufficient number and practical procedures for a complete professional training
- c. Adequate financial resources
- d. Matching tutors, lecturers and experts
- e. Adequate organizational structure, with the necessary professional capacities
- f. Scheduling of orientation, analysis activities according to market demands and establishing a training program
- g. Student selection and assessment
- h. Efficiency and effectiveness in the various envisaged activities.

Criterion 4: The institution possesses documentation that demonstrates the composition of the training network and all structures engaged with specialization training (central/basic),

Criterion 5: The central and secondary structures engaged with the specialization training must be accredited pursuant to the legislation in force.

Criterion 6: The institution should possess documentation that clarifies the existence of general and diagnostic services included in the training of residents. The general and diagnostic services present in the health structures that are part of the training network may not be different or inferior to those provided for in Appendix 2 on the accreditation of structures.

Criterion 7: The institution possesses documentation that clarifies the existence of similar specialties in the health structures that are part of the training network, general and diagnostic services included in the training of residents (as per Appendix 2).

Criterion 8: The institution possesses documentation that specifies the number of medical services it offers for the professional training of residents (as per Appendix 2).

Criterion 9: The institution must possess documentation that describes the annual assistant activity of the structures engaged with the training network. The annual assistant activity carried out by residents in their training framework cannot exceed 30% of the total assistant activity carried out by the structures engaged with the training network (as per Appendix 2).

¹ Training network means the set of all structures involved in the activities envisaged for each specialization program: central / basic, secondary and complementary structures, etc.) and the eventual conventions with these structures and complementary ones

Standard III. 6: The unit responsible for the long-term specialization program demonstrates financial viability and provides adequate funding and student support

Criterion 1: Through financial reports and audits, the institution demonstrates a positive performance and viability in generating and using financial revenue.

Criterion 2: The responsible unit secures through the institution, projects or funding from other entities the necessary funds for delivering the specialization programs.

Criterion 3: The long-term specialization study program is supported by an adequate budget of the responsible unit.

Criterion 4: The financial budget distribution structure of the specialization study program is in line with the institution's policy and development.

Criterion 5: The use of funds allocated for the delivery of the specialization program is subject to continuous reporting and auditing.

AREA 4. RESEARCH AND CLINICAL/DIAGNOSTIC EXPERIENCE

Standard IV.1: The resident has a tutor who attends him/her throughout the entire specialization period.

Criterion 1: The student has a clinical supervisor (tutor), who has graduated and specialized in the field of the applicant's study program and who has at least 10 (ten) years of experience in the clinical diagnostic field with the "Doctor" title.

Criterion 2: The basic responsible unit/ service selects the clinical supervisors, capable of supervising the resident's clinical and research, based on the assessment of their clinical and research publishing activities, inside and outside the country.

Criterion 3: The tutor is employed full-time at one of the structures of the training network and has a cooperation contract with the institution that delivers the specialization program.

Criterion 4: Clinical supervisors work to update their knowledge and skills, based on institutional agreements, with the view of enabling exchanges of best practices and providing advice on effective student support.

Criterion 5: The clinical supervisor possesses the necessary expertise, training and instructions for his/her role in supervising the resident for carrying out specialization studies and in particular the practice/ clinical part of the program.

Criterion 6: The clinical tutor may not supervise more than 3 (three) students at the same time.

Criterion 7: The tutor's specialty field matches that of the specialization program pursued by the resident.

Criterion 8: In all cases, the student has only one identified point of contact, which should be his or her lead clinical tutor. If the lead tutor is not available, the student is informed on the potential replacement.

Criterion 9: The institution ensures that the tutor has sufficient time to supervise the resident.

Standard IV. 2. The objectives of the long-term specialization study program in the field of medicine are the continuous engagement in clinical and research work and the encouragement of students' teamwork.

Criterion 1: The student engages in clinical and research work for training and successful completion of the study program.

Criterion 2: The student participates in various clinical activities closely related to the specific specialization field of study, which help him/her to train for:

- a. Acquiring methodologies and clinical and research knowledge for independent creative activities such as: scientific articles, presentations, etc .;
- b. Independent laboratory/ clinic work;
- c. Using information resources (e.g. libraries and internet, scientific/ clinical databases) and managing information;
- d. Using modern technologies for public presentations;
- e. Acquiring advanced methods of data analysis and processing;
- f. Recognizing and acquiring specialized clinical field related terminology.

Criterion 3: The specialization program students participate in the planned study program activities outside of their clinical work.

The resident may participate as part of the audience or as a speaker in:

- a. Lectures;

- b. Seminars;
- c. Interdisciplinary debates, held in the framework of the specialization study program;
- d. Other learning opportunities such as: attending presentations of various conferences and seminars of a clinical nature.

Tutors advise students to participate in scientific activities and conferences that assist them with their work and clinics.

Criterion 4: Prior to graduation, the student must have published or have been accepted for publishing at least one scientific/ experimental research article in a scientific journal in or outside the country, whereby the percentage of article's similarity should be less than 30%. In addition, the student should have participated in not less than 2 national and/or international scientific activities in the relevant specialization field.

Criterion 5: The student acquires the proper communication skills² at professional level

Criterion 6: The student adheres to the rules of ethical and professional behavior with patients and colleagues and acquires the skills to properly communicate with others.

Student's communication skills include: the competence to clearly describe clinical cases; use of persuasive arguments and clear formulation of ideas in front of patients and colleagues; the ability to debate and support others engaged with clinical practice, supervision or demonstrations.

AREA 5. STUDENTS

Standard V. 1: The student who has completed an integrated study program in the fields of medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, meets the academic standards of the admission criteria of the respective institution and enjoys the right to enroll in long-term specialization programs in the field of medicine.

Criterion 1: The applicant who seeks to be admitted to the specialization study program undergoes the entrance examination to the specialization study program to which he/she has applied.

Criterion 2: The institution has a computerized theoretical model for determining the applicants' knowledge, capacity, skills from different aspects (operational, cognitive and relational).

Criterion 3: The institution announces in advance the program envisaged for the entrance exam and the instruments it uses to determine the applicants' knowledge, capacity, and skills from different aspects.

Criterion 4: The institution continuously reviews the admission policies and their impact on the students' further progress in the study program.

Standard V. 2. The institution has statistics on the number and data of students attending long-term specialization study programs.

Criterion 1: The institution has an annual overview of the number of graduates in long-term specialization programs, program withdrawals, as well as dismissals prior to the completion of the program or the unsuccessful completion of the academic year.

Criterion 2: The institution possesses individual data on students' academic performance since admission (previous grades e.g. student assessment in the previous study program, etc.).

Standard V. 3: The institution continuously and thoroughly informs students about the study programs.

Criterion 1: The student is informed in detail about the study program, completion deadline and program organization.

Criterion 2: The unit responsible for the assessment results informs the students.

Standard V. 4: The student has all the necessary conditions to complete the study program.

Criterion 1: The student admitted to the long-term specialization study program has the necessary conditions to complete both the academic and clinical aspects of the study program.

Criterion 2: The long-term specialization study program ensures the harmonization of the student's goals in the clinical/diagnostic and research-scientific field and, upon completion, the opportunity for professional career or employment.

Criterion 3: The student who attends long-term specialization study programs has at his/her disposal a rich scientific library with publications both in paper and electronic format, as well as a complete IT infrastructure.

Criterion 4: The student has sufficient technical support for carrying out clinical and research related activity.

Criterion 5: Research involving laboratory research is supported by adequate laboratory material.

Criterion 6: The student is insured throughout the specialization period and for all activities envisaged in the specialization program. The institution has available sufficient documentation with this regard. A copy of the insurance policy is submitted to the student once it is signed.

Criterion 7: The institution maintains a database of employed students and relevant job positions.

AREA 6. LONG-TERM SPECIALIZATION PROGRAM QUALITY ASSURANCE

Standard VI.1: The institution and the responsible unit drafts and implements transparent policies and procedures specific to the long-term specialization program quality assurance, within the framework of internal quality assurance system and structures.

Criterion 1: The institution has in place policies, structures and procedures for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), in accordance with applicable legal and sub-legal provisions and with institutional regulatory acts.

Criterion 2: The institution has established and introduced the Internal Quality Assurance System and implements an institutional strategy for continuous quality improvement, which includes students and external partners and experts.

Criterion 3: The institution uses adequate instruments for quality assurance, the External Quality Assurance in Higher Education is carried out through external accreditation assessment processes, analytical and comparative assessments, as well as other processes that promote and improve quality.

Criterion 4: The Institution has drafted a clear policy and follows periodic procedures to ensure and improve the quality of the study program it delivers, within the IQA framework. They aim to create a quality culture at the institutional level, the constituent units and all institutional internal actors.

Standards VI. 2. The institution and responsible unit continuously monitors and reviews the study program with the view of ensuring the achievement of training objectives and targeted learning outcomes.

Criterion 1: The institution establishes a special unit for monitoring, reviewing, and supervising the specialization program.

Criterion 2: The institution uses formal and documented processes and mechanisms for periodically reviewing, approving and supervising the specialization program.

Criterion 3: The institution has set measurable quantitative and qualitative indicators for the doctoral program, in the framework of the program quality assessment.

Criterion 4: The institution uses assessment methodology, measuring instruments and evaluation instruments for the study program progress and success.

Criterion 5: The results of these assessments are documented and put forward to the responsible and decision-making authorities for the study program.

Criterion 6: The assessment reports should include the expected results, the assessment results and the measures taken to address shortcomings and the ongoing quality improvement.

Standards VI. 3: The Institution and the responsible unit uses assessment procedures, methodologies, and measuring instruments for the study program opening, delivery, and progress, graduation, entering the labor market, as well as students' further studies.

Criterion 1: The internal review of the specialization program is periodically carried out by the relevant internal quality assurance unit. The Higher Education Institution incorporates this information in the institutional self-assessment procedure within the accreditation or periodic self-assessment framework.

Criterion 2: To carry out the review, the institution uses various adequate and dedicated methods and instruments, in line with the specialization program nature and scope.

Criterion 3: In the framework of program review, delivery, progress and quality, the institution uses direct methods for quality assessment.

Criterion 4: In the framework of program review, delivery, progress and quality, the institution uses indirect assessment methods such as surveys and interviews of students, graduates, academic staff, supervisors and partners.

Criterion 5: In the framework of continuous program improvements, assessment mechanisms include stakeholders, institutions that cooperate in the study program delivery and other parties engaged or that serve to assess the knowledge and competencies acquired by this program.

Standards VI. 4: The Institution engages academic units, staff and students in the study program IQA process, and informs interested parties on the results and the subsequent measures.

Criterion 1: The institution should provide for and guarantee the engagement of internal and external stakeholders, interested in continuously ensuring and improving the program's quality.

Criterion 2: The institution defines the specific responsibilities and tasks of the units, individuals, students and other parties engaged in the study program internal quality assurance, and guarantees the responsible performance of these tasks.

Criterion 3: During study program assessment and quality assurance it is important to guarantee the engagement of the main and basic unit responsible for the study program, academic staff, academic and administrative assistants and study program students.

Criterion 4: Internal actors inclusion and engagement in the continuous assessment procedures should observe the academic integrity and avoid any kind of discrimination or inequality against staff and students.

Criterion 5: Partners and/or external experts, who are related to the study program, or can provide valuable expertise and input about the program quality and improvement should actively participate in the internal review and quality assurance processes.

Criterion 6: Program academic progress and quality assurance monitoring is part of the activity of the unit responsible for the program and the IQAU.

Standard V. 5: Policies, processes and activities for the study program Internal Quality Assurance should be made public, transparent, and effective, with the view to establishing an Internal Quality Assurance Culture.

Criterion 1: The policy, strategy, organization and activities within the framework of study program Internal Quality Assurance system are transparent and are made public to all students and parties concerned.

Criterion 2: The institution and responsible unit publishes the results of the study programs assessment, by observing ethics and academic freedom, as well as the legislation on personal data.

Criterion 3: The assessment results should be accompanied with an action plan designed to address and improve the identified weaknesses and issues.

Criterion 4: The institution reviews and ensures the effectiveness and impact of activities in the monitoring and quality assessment framework, for the ongoing improvement of the study program.

Criterion 5: The institution and the responsible unit organizes periodic activities with staff and students for their information and awareness-raising on the long-term quality assurance and study program improvement.

Minimum duration of long-term specialization study programs in the field of medicine

Study program	Minimum duration of the study program	Planned ECTS according to program duration	Ordinal No. in the following tables
Clinical immunology & allergology	4	240	7
Pathological anatomy	4	240	38
Anesthesia, intensive care and intensive therapy	4	240	45
Audiology and phoniatics	4	240	46
Clinical biochemistry and laboratory medicine	4	240	39
Dermatology and venerology	4	240	8
Endocrinology	4	240	10
Hospital pharmacy	4	240	59
Clinical pharmacology	4	240	51
Gastroenterology / hepatology	4	240	11
Medical genetics	4	240	49
Geriatrics	4	240	2
Hematology	4	240	9
Cardiac surgery	5	300	35
Gastrointestinal surgery	5	300	25
General surgery	4	240	24
Oral and maxillofacial surgery	4	240	32
Oral surgery (Odontostomatological surgery)	3	180	52
Pediatric surgery	5	300	26
Plastic, reconstructive and cosmetic surgery	5	300	27
Thoracic surgery	5	300	36
Vascular surgery	5	300	37
Microbiology	4	240	40
Aerospace medicine	4	240	56
Occupational medicine	4	240	57
Family medicine	3	180	6
Physical medicine and rehabilitation	3	180	47
Internal medicine	4	240	1
Legal medicine	3	240	58
Nuclear medicine	4	240	44
Transfusion medicine	4	240	60
Emergency medicine	4	240	61
Sports medicine	4	240	3
Nephrology	4	240	16
Neurophysiopathology	4	240	18
Neurosurgery	5	300	29

Neurology	4	240	19
Child and adolescent psychiatry	4	240	20
Obstetrics-Gynecology	4	240	28
Ophthalmology / Optometry	4	240	33
Oncology	4	240	4
Orthodontia	3	180	53
Orthopedics and traumatology	4	240	30
Otorhinolaryngology	4	240	34
Clinical pathology	4	240	41
Pediatrics	4	240	23
Prosthodontics	3	180	54
Psychiatry	4	240	21
Clinical psychology	4	240	22
Diagnostic and therapeutic imagery	4	240	42
Radiotherapy	4	240	43
Rheumatology	4	240	17
Cardiology	4	240	12
Pneumology	4	240	13
Infectious diseases	4	240	14
Public Health	3	180	55
Nutrition science	4	240	50
Tropical disease	4	240	15
Clinical toxicology and addiction	4	240	48
Urology	5	300	31
Pedodontics	2	120	62
Dental therapy	2	120	63