



**Ltd. - International Black Sea University**  
**Quality management system documentation**

**Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms**  
**(Guidance Document)**

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## Article 1. General Provisions

1. 1 The preceding document establishes the internal quality assurance mechanisms of "Black Sea International University" LLC (hereinafter - the University).
1. 2 The quality assurance mechanisms described in this document are not an exhaustive list. Depending on the daily activities of the university, taking into account the university's mission and strategic plan, based on the action plan, it is possible to modify, cancel, and/or add new mechanisms described in this document.
1. 3 The quality assurance mechanisms described in this document provide continuous evaluation of the University's activities and resources, with the aim of their continuous development. In addition, the results of the evaluations carried out based on this document will be taken into account by all the governing bodies of the university, and further decisions for the planning and development of educational activities in the university will be made based on the mentioned results.
1. 4. To achieve the set goals, the quality assurance service uses the "plan-implement-check-develop" (PDCA) cycle approach:
1. 5. For planning (evaluation of the educational process, evaluation of individual issues identified as a result of evaluation, analysis of results), the quality service develops short-term and long-term goals, where the short-term goal may include:
  - a) Reviewing and, if necessary, modifying and developing educational programs at the beginning of each academic year/semester together with the relevant responsible persons;
  - b) Planning the development of programs based on the analysis of the results obtained during the study of the local labor market together with the responsible persons within the competence;
  - c) Recommending/planning the promotion and development of academic staff's educational and research activities and attracting new staff;

- d) Analysis of the effectiveness of teaching methods and planning the introduction of modern methods in the educational process, which includes making recommendations and involvement within the scope of competence;
- e) Based on the analysis of the results of surveys of interested parties (students, staff, graduates, employers), planning the improvement of current processes, material and human resources, and the development of educational programs in cooperation with responsible persons and making recommendations;
- f) Planning ways and means of correcting identified deficiencies based on the evaluation of the educational process and making recommendations;
- g) Assessment of compliance with authorization and accreditation standards of university and educational programs and planning of necessary measures.

1. 6. Long-term goals may include:

- a) Based on the results obtained of the research of the international employment market and in accordance with it, planning the development and changes of the programs in agreement with the responsible persons;
- b) Planning participation in international programs with the involvement of the personnel implementing the educational programs, together with the relevant services of the university;
- c) Researching the international educational space within the scope of competence and making recommendations about the educational programs of the university, taking into account the best practices;

1. 7. Implementation verification implies the distribution of relevant functions to the responsible persons and the periodic evaluation of the implementation of processes, including the periodic evaluation of the progress of the educational process, the academic performance of students, etc., to achieve the goals determined by the internal quality service. Student satisfaction research, human resource assessment, appropriate material-technical base assessment, etc. Are also carried out.

1. 8. Development involves the development of recommendations based on the analysis of the results obtained as a result of the inspection and the planning and implementation of relevant measures, including the modification of study course syllabi and/or educational programs, the

determination of activities necessary for raising the qualifications of academic and guest personnel, the improvement of material and technical bases, the implementation of additional measures, to achieve the creation of a system adapted to the interests and needs of students and other interested parties and to improve the processes and quality of education in general.

## **Article 2. Concept of quality culture**

2. 1. A quality culture is a shared system of shared values, beliefs, and norms that underpin student interests and continuously improve the quality of education, research, and institutional services. Quality culture is aimed at strengthening all aspects of university life, including recruitment and promotion of employees, and continuous improvement of their qualifications. Quality culture ensures the improvement of management style, decision-making, organizational structure, work process, and organization planning.
2. 2. The quality culture is based on the following core values:
  - a) Satisfaction of the interested party;
  - b) Involvement and authority of the employee;
  - c) Fact-based problem-solving and decision-making;
  - d) Teamwork in the organization;
  - e) Process management;
2. 3. To create and maintain a culture of quality, in coordination with the quality assurance service and the internal quality assurance service, the following should be constantly ensured in the university:
  - a) Identifying the need for change;
  - b) Determination of desired activities that respond to the institutional vision and strategy;
  - c) Conducting development-oriented activities

## **Article 3. Evaluation of the activities of academic and invited staff**

3. 1. A candidate wishing to occupy an academic position in the university, who applies for the announced vacancy, presents a report of his/her academic activity ("academic activity report"),

- the involvement of the quality assurance service in the evaluation process is determined by the university's "rule of appointment of persons involved in the educational and scientific process".
- 3.2. The activities of the university's academic and invited staff are evaluated by the university's internal quality assurance service, semesterly and annually.
  - 3.3. Academic and guest staff performance assessment is carried out by the internal quality assurance service based on the results of student surveys, implementation of the educational process (lectures, observation of lectures, production of electronic system (SMART, SIS), academic performance of students, evaluation of exams, etc.) and Based on the results of the evaluation of their academic/scientific activities. In addition, the survey of students and evaluation of the educational process is carried out on a semester basis, according to the indicators given in the "Semester and Annual Evaluation of Academic and Inviting Staff".
  - 3.4. The academic/scientific activity of the academic staff is additionally evaluated at the end of each academic year, based on their published works (article, thesis, journal, books, etc.), participation in scientific events (conferences, symposiums, congresses, etc.), seminars and projects. , as well as according to the various events implemented in the university, "based on the scientific-pedagogical activity report, with the points indicated in it. The evaluation and analysis of the quality of the research/creative activity of the academic and scientific staff of HEI, as well as the scientific research units, and the effectiveness of the research activity is carried out by the vice-rector in the research field.
  - 3.5 The evaluation of the scientific activity of invited personnel is carried out every two years according to the "Scientific Activity Report (for invited personnel)". The assessment is carried out by the internal quality assurance service. Based on the data analysis, the quality assurance service and the human resources service plan the activities necessary for the professional development of the personnel.
  - 3.6. The internal quality assurance service conducts a survey of students at the end of each semester and evaluates the conduct of the educational process based on the results of the said survey. The student survey is carried out based on the form of an "Evaluation of the educational course - student questionnaire". The analysis of the results of the survey is carried out through the form "Evaluation of the course and the lecturer by the student".

#### **Article 4. Evaluation of processes in the university**

4. 1. The internal quality assurance service evaluates the ongoing processes in the university and presents the results to the vice-rector in the field of quality.
4. 2. For quality assurance purposes, the Internal Quality Assurance Service together with the Chancellery and Human Resources Management Service conducts academic and inviting staff satisfaction surveys.
4. 3. If necessary, the internal quality assurance service gives recommendations related to the ongoing processes at the university based on the research results.
4. 4. The internal quality assurance service evaluates the progress of the educational process and activities aimed at the development of the quality of the educational process, which means the school representatives (dean, head of the program, collegial evaluation) in accordance with the pre-established schedule/if necessary, the course and periodicity of attendance and evaluation of lectures, the activities carried out in the presence of recommendations and other. assessment.
4. 5. One of the tools for the development of the quality of the educational process is the observation of lecture/practical/laboratory learning. The "lecture observation" form is used to evaluate the component.
  - 4.4. 1 Obligatory objects of observation are: newly hired lecturers (in the first semester of teaching), and lecturers rated by students with 3.5 or fewer points (if at least 10% of students from the group participate in the evaluation), Also, it is possible to become the objects of observation of the lecturers to whom the issue to be studied is raised by the students/lecturers/lecturer himself/school.
  - 4.4. 2 Observation of teaching contributes to the system of quality assurance of teaching, but, as a rule, it does not involve the accumulation of points in terms of activity evaluation, and the evaluation of the observational component does not affect the evaluation of the teacher (the person implementing the component).
  - 4.4. 3 Observations are made:

- a) Activity carried out for quality development; through random selection of teachers without special basis;
- b) At the teacher's request, for qualified advice or support;
- c) On the basis of the information obtained from the conducted studies, which requires additional research.

4.4. 4 The teacher is informed in advance, at least one week before, that it is planned to observe the lessons conducted by him/her, without specifying the date and the lesson. It is also possible in specific cases - to study the issue and/or based on the lecturer's request, observation of the lecture can be performed without prior informing the teacher in such a way as not to interfere with the teacher in the process of teaching.

4.4. 5 The member of the observation group can be the vice-rector in the field of study, the dean, the head of the program, the head of the quality assurance service/the head of the internal quality assurance service/the (internal) quality assurance service manager, academic and invited staff who are familiar with the observation procedure and evaluation criteria. Depending on the specifics of the component, the member of the monitoring team can also be an external invited specialist.

4.4. 6 The members of the monitoring team are selected by the dean and the head of the program and agreed with the head of the internal quality assurance service. The list of selected candidates and the information about the planned observation (observable course, period, identity of the members of the observation group) are sent to the internal quality assurance service. The Internal Quality Assurance Service is authorized to request a change if:

- a) The qualification of the member of the observation group is not sufficient for the assessment or does not correspond to the goals of the assessment of the problem;
- b) There may be a conflict of interest, etc.

4.4. 7 Observations are carried out by at least 2 persons.



- 4.4. 8 Observers based on the results (monitoring report) will develop appropriate recommendations for quality improvement and submit them to the dean no later than 5 working days along with the reports, which are also provided to the internal quality assurance service. The results of the observation are also provided to the quality assurance service.
- 4.4. 9 Following the principle of confidentiality, the dean of the school provides the teacher with the results of the observation.
- 4.4. 10 If no agreement is reached between the members of the observation group regarding the results of the observation, a new observation with new observers is appointed by the internal quality assurance service. The results obtained are final.
- 4.4. 11 If the results of the observation are negative or include recommendations, the teacher must plan the activities to be carried out by him to solve the identified problem implement the recommendations in the observation feedback letter, and provide it to the dean no later than 7 working days after receiving the results. Activities will be reviewed by the Dean, Program Head Head of Internal Quality Assurance, and Head of Quality Assurance. If necessary, after a reasonable period of time, the observation of the classroom will be repeated.
- 4.4. 12 The teacher can disagree with the opinions of the observation group and cite the facts confirming his position in the letter. The teacher can also request a repeat observation if:
- a) The teacher believes that due to a special reason, the object of observation was different from the usual one.
  - b) The teacher disagrees with the observers' evaluations.
- 4.4. 13 In the case specified in article 4.4.12 of the regulation, the teacher, indicating the reason, applies in writing to the internal quality assurance service to conduct additional observation within 5 working days from the notification of the results. The internal quality assurance service together with the dean and the

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program leader will consider the written appeal and in case of sharing the arguments and the reason, will set an additional observation date within 3 working days from the receipt of the application.

4.4. 14 Additional observations may be made:

a) In the case defined by subsection "a" of clause 4.4.12 of the regulation, additional observation can be carried out by the same observers. The result of the repeated observation will have the same force as the result of the first observation; In case of such repeated observation, the teacher is not informed in advance.

б) In the case defined by subsection "b" of Clause 4.4.12 of the Regulation, additional observation can be carried out by two observers, one of whom will be a member of the first observation group (selected by random sampling) and the second, a new observer. Repeated observations will be final and binding.

4.4. 15 The internal quality assurance service will inform the report of observation groups and letters of observation feedback to the vice-rector in the field of quality, and the vice-rector in the field of study, and as necessary, meetings will be organized to discuss the issues raised and plan activities for further improvement. It is possible to invite teachers to the meetings. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, general problems will be discussed at the meetings, without disclosing the identity of specific lecturers.

4.4. 16 Attendance of colleagues, dean, and program head at the classes can also be carried out with the mutual agreement of colleagues and without prior agreement with the internal quality assurance service if there is a desire for mutual attendance. The results of the assessment are provided to the internal quality assurance department.

4.5. At least once every three years, at the end of the academic year, the students of the final course, through specially designed questionnaires, evaluate the relevant educational programs, study/research components, and the lecturers implementing them, according to the "Program Evaluation - Student Questionnaire" document.

4. 6. At the end of each semester, the Internal Quality Assurance Service provides a student survey and, based on the results of the said survey, evaluates the students' satisfaction with the university's human (academic and inviting staff) and material resources, offered services, etc.
4. 7. Internal Quality Assurance Service according to this document, based on the summary of the results of the surveys conducted on the evaluation of the activities of the academic and guest personnel, to analyze the implemented educational and other academic processes and their further improvement, to plan appropriate activities, these results are reported to the dean of the respective school and, if necessary, discussed individually with academic and inviting staff.
4. 8. The quality assurance service of the university, at the beginning of each academic year, together with the heads of the programs in the university, discusses the development plan of the relevant material resources for the implementation of the educational programs according to the "material resource" form. Results/analysis of student and other stakeholder surveys processed by the internal quality assurance office are also discussed
4. 9. The quality assurance service periodically, together with the heads of the programs in the university, reviews the compliance of the human resources (academic, guest, scientific personnel) relevant to the implementation of the educational programs with the target marks determined by the methodology of the student quota planning established by the university.
4. 10 The internal quality assurance service conducts a survey of academic and inviting staff and evaluates the conduct of the educational process based on the results of the said survey. The survey of academic and inviting personnel is carried out based on the form "Academic and Inviting Personnel Questionnaire".
4. 11 The results of the 11 above-mentioned surveys and the measures implemented based on them, as well as the recommendations related to development, are reported by the quality assurance service and the internal quality assurance service to the relevant responsible persons and, if necessary, the management board, are discussed by them, and further educational and related activities are planned to improve other current processes at the university.

#### **Article 5. Mechanism of quality assurance in the distance learning process**

5. 1. The main principle that should be followed in implementing distance learning, is to achieve the intended learning outcomes of the educational program. For this purpose, it

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may be necessary to modify and develop training courses. The said change is included in the program according to the rules established by the university for the implementation of program changes.

5. 2. Course structure and teaching. Learning and assessment methods:

5.2.1 Before the implementation of the training course by distance learning, the training course staff and the head of the program should analyze the course structure, teaching, learning, and assessment methods described in the syllabus - to what extent it is possible for face-to-face teaching with the course structure described in the syllabus, teaching with learning methods and assessment methods of the learning outcomes planned by the syllabus achievement and evaluation of their achievement. In order to achieve the educational results defined by the syllabus, alternative ways may be offered, which should be done by ensuring the protection of students' rights. If it is not possible to achieve the planned learning results despite the changes, the mentioned training course should be implemented in the university by face-to-face teaching or a hybrid method.

5.2.2 Active student participation in the learning process - distance learning does not mean that students are involved in the learning process as passive listeners. Active participation of the student in the learning process should be ensured during the implementation of the training course. It may be necessary to change activities during both lecture and seminar work. Individual learning needs and aspirations should also be taken into account.

5. 3 Maintaining academic integrity - Teaching When selecting learning and assessment methods, attention should be paid to the difficulty of maintaining academic integrity by the student in distance learning, so that the student is evaluated based on the authenticity of his knowledge and work. To avoid the risks of violating the principles of academic integrity, there may be a need to change the evaluation methods, criteria/rubrics. The necessary preventive measures for the protection of the principles of academic honesty are determined by the lecturer implementing the training course in agreement with the head of the program, taking into account university decisions.

5. 4. Readiness of students with disabilities and special educational needs to participate in distance learning - their inclusion in the educational process should be facilitated according to their needs.
5. 5. Availability of educational materials - during distance learning, educational materials are actively used in electronic form. If necessary, printed materials are digitized. Students must have access to study materials.
5. 6. Support and development of personnel in the distance learning process: for this purpose, the relevant administrative and technical services of the university develop instructions (written or video), provide information about various necessary materials, trainings/workshops (free or funded) for effective distance learning. If necessary, meetings are organized on specific issues.
5. 7. Students and staff involved in the educational process should be provided with information regarding the issues affected by changes in the distance learning period - regulations, prerequisites, enrollment, assessment, communication methods and channels, etc.

#### **Article 6: Assessment of students' academic performance results**

6. 1. In order to evaluate the results of the students' academic performance, at the end of each semester, according to the academic results displayed in the Student Information System (SIS) for each component of the educational program, the Internal Quality Assurance Service analyzes the results of the students' academic performance.
6. 2. For the purposes of the evaluation provided for in the first paragraph of this article, according to the results displayed in the Student Information System (SIS), if 30% or more of the students registered with the lecturer implementing the component of the undergraduate educational program (when more than fifteen students are registered in the group) are evaluated as 91-100 (Friad, A) or with a maximum grade point average of 40 or less (F, failed), the internal quality assurance service, together with the head of the program and the corresponding lecturer, performs the analysis of the educational process conducted within the framework of this component, the evaluation of the quality of teaching methods and lecture courses. In such a case, observation is carried out dynamically, during several semesters.

6. 3. For master's and doctoral-level educational programs, the rule provided in the second paragraph of this article applies if the quantitative index of students specified in the same paragraph is met. If the quantitative index of students in the group is not met at these levels, as well as at the bachelor's level, the high rate of students' interception – more than 30% - is subject to assessment in small groups.

### **Article 7. Evaluation of current educational programs**

7. 1. The quality assurance service evaluates the educational programs operating in the university and their compliance with the requirements determined by the authorization and accreditation standards. Evaluation of programs is carried out by the service according to the "Educational Program Evaluation Table".
7. 2. Educational programs are evaluated by university graduates according to the "Program Evaluation - Alumni Questionnaire" by the Internal Quality Assurance Service with the involvement of the Alumni Relations Department. The internal quality assurance service presents the results of the analysis to the vice-rector in the field of quality, the quality assurance service, and the head of the program.
7. 3. Educational programs are evaluated by university graduates according to the "Program Evaluation - Alumni Questionnaire" by the Internal Quality Assurance Service with the involvement of the Alumni Relations Department. The internal quality assurance service presents the results of the analysis to the vice-rector in the field of quality, the quality assurance service, and the head of the program.
7. 4. Taking into account the results of the evaluations of the persons and students listed in this article, the quality assurance service will develop recommendations for the improvement/development of educational programs and submit them to the vice-rector in the field of quality, and the head of the program, as well as to the governing board, if necessary, to finally resolve the issue.
7. 5. In addition to the evaluations provided in this article, stakeholder participation in the program evaluation process may also include:
- 7.5. 1 A student can participate in the following evaluation mechanisms:
- a) Discussion of issues related to program implementation;

- b) Participation in focus groups;
- c) Interview with employees of quality/internal quality assurance service and others.

7.5.2 The participation of personnel participating in the implementation of the program in the evaluation process may include:

- a) Collegial evaluation of training courses to share each other's experience;
- b) Participate in the process of discussing issues related to the implementation of the program;
- c) Interview with employees of the quality/internal quality assurance service and others.

7.6. In order to develop the program, external expertise/evaluation of the program may be carried out by local or foreign experts/field specialists. Evaluation of external experts may include:

- a) Collegial evaluation of training courses to share each other's experience;
- b) Participation in discussions and discussions related to the improvement of the educational program;
- c) Collegial evaluation of the educational program;
- d) Evaluation of the educational process.

7.7. The participation of potential employers in the evaluation process may include the evaluation of the qualifications of the students/graduates participating in the program, their level of preparation for the labor market. In particular, they may assess the theoretical knowledge of students and graduates and their ability to apply it in practice.

Assessment can be carried out:

- a) Through questionnaires;
- b) Through an interview;
- c) By characterizing students;
- d) By evaluating reports of students' scientific conferences, bachelor's and master's theses, participation in various projects, etc.

7.8. Graduates of the program may evaluate the program:

- a) Through questionnaires;
- b) Through interviews, etc.

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- 7.9. Questionnaires presented as annexes to the regulation may be modified depending on the research objectives.
- 7.10 Head of the program organizes and ensures the participation of staff, employers, students, and graduates participating in the implementation of the program in the evaluation process of the program; As a result of the conducted studies, in case of necessity, taking into account the recommendations during the development of the educational program and/or for modifying the existing program.
- 7.11 The evaluation of the educational program, which implies the evaluation of the achievement of the learning results defined by the program, is carried out by the head of the educational program and all academic and guest personnel involved in the program, according to the “instructions for evaluating the learning results of educational programs”).

#### **Article 8. Evaluation of new educational programs**

- 8.1. Students, graduates, and employers are involved in the process of developing the educational program, which the university plans to implement, together with the entities defined by the university's internal acts and legislation, to whom the said program will be presented for further evaluation.
- 8.2. For the purposes of the first paragraph of this article, the evaluation of the new educational program is carried out by the students of the adjacent program (if any) according to the „Evaluation of the program – student questionnaire“, the graduates of the adjacent program (if any) – according to the „Evaluation of the program – the questionnaire of graduates“, and employers – according to the „Evaluation of the program“ – according to the employer’s questionnaire.

#### **Article 9. Individual study plan**

- 9.1. The individual curriculum is one of the mechanisms of quality assurance, which ensures that students' different requirements, special educational needs, and academic preparation are taken into account, and appropriate forms and conditions of teaching and learning are offered. At the same time, the possibility of carrying out the learning process in an adapted environment and, if necessary, provision of appropriate human resources.



9. 2. An individual study plan must be developed in case the student restores status, mobility enrollment, recognition of education, academic backwardness, special needs, student's request, and other objective circumstances.
9. 3. The rule and procedure for developing an individual curriculum is regulated by the "Regulating Rule of the Educational Process".
9. 4. The quality/internal quality assurance department makes recommendations to modify the plan if necessary.
9. 5. The individual study plan is usually made in writing, which is kept in the student's personal file, and a copy is given to the student to plan his study process.

#### **Article 10. Evaluation of the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms**

10.1. The effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms is evaluated according to the following criteria:

- 10.1. 1 Self-assessment (assessment of the quality of performance of work activities and functions, the material and human resources required for the activity, and the dynamics of the performance of the functions assigned to the work within the planned time frame);
- 10.1. 2 Based on the analysis of the evaluation of the results obtained by institutional studies, review of quality assurance mechanisms and, if necessary, develop relevant changes;
- 10.1. 3 Evaluation of the effectiveness of the changes implemented based on the response to the results obtained by institutional studies.

#### **Article 11. Final Provisions**

11. 1 This document enters into force upon its approval by the Rector.
11. 2 The vice-rector in the field of quality controls the implementation of this provision

