Private Higher Educational Establishment-Institute
"Ukrainian-American Concordia University"

APPROVED

Rector

_____ O. O. Romanovskyi

July 19, 2023

CONCEPT

OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT-INSTITUTE "UKRAINIAN-AMERICAN CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY"

Developed on the basis of the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)", adopted by the Ministerial Conference on May14-15, 2015

Discussed and approved at the meeting of the UACU Academic Senate on July 19, 2023, Minutes No. 7

Kyiv – 2023

Providing quality higher education is the main objective and key performance indicator of the Private Higher Educational Establishment-Institute "Ukrainian-American Concordia University" (UACU). The UK's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) identifies "quality" as follows:

"Academic quality describes how well the learning opportunities available to students help them to achieve their award. It is about making sure that appropriate and effective teaching, support, assessment and learning opportunities are provided."

Thus, the concept of "quality of higher education" has an integral multifaceted meaning, which includes teaching aids as well as the provision of the necessary professional knowledge, skills and means of productive activity of the recipient of higher education and reflects the ability of UACU to meet the needs of students and society. The main indicator of "quality of higher education" is "educated human capital", which forms the "added value" of a UACU graduate received by a student during their studies, which constitutes the difference between a student's professional qualities and competitiveness in the labor market before and after studying at UACU. Conclusion: "quality of higher education" is a common product, an outcome of harmonious mutual activity (co-operation) of two stakeholders, i.e. the one who teaches (a higher education institution) and the one who studies (a student). It is the effectiveness of such co-operation and the interest of the stakeholders that the end result of such a harmonious mutual activity, which reflects the "quality of higher education", depends on.

I. THE CONCEPT OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AT UACU. DEFINITION OF STANDARDS FOR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

1.1. The policy and principles of internal quality assurance in higher education

UACU has a public quality assurance policy that is part of its strategic management. This policy is developed and implemented through appropriate structures and processes with the involvement of external stakeholders.

This policy and the corresponding processes and procedures constitute the basis of a coherent institutional quality assurance system that forms the cycle of continuous improvement and promotes the accountability of UACU. It supports the development of the culture of quality within which all structural units take responsibility for quality and get involved in quality assurance at all levels of UACU's statutory activities. It is essential that this policy has a formal, official status, is accessible to the general public and open for discussion and improvement. It is also essential that the policy of internal quality assurance in higher education is extended to all Ukrainian and international students and non-degree-seeking students of UACU enrolled in full-time and online forms of studies, Ukrainian and

foreign scholars and instructors involved in the educational process, as well as all UACU staff. In order to increase efficiency, quality assurance policy should reflect the link between R&D, learning, teaching, practice and internships, as well as take into account both the Ukrainian national context and the institutional context of the UACU and its strategic approach. The formulated policy has to support:

- Organization of a quality assurance system;
- All structural units as well as management, individual instructors and students in assuming responsibility for quality assurance;
- Academic integrity and freedom, watching for any manifestation of academic fraud or dishonesty;
- Prevention of any manifestations of intolerance or discrimination against students or instructors;
- Involvement of external stakeholders in quality assurance.

The policy is put into practice through a set of internal quality assurance processes and procedures enabling the participation of various stakeholders within UACU. The ways to implement, monitor and review the policy are determined by the leading UACU scholars and instructors, with the possible involvement of students and non-degree-seeking students.

The quality assurance policy also covers all aspects of UACU's activity that are subcontracted or performed by other parties.

1.2. Design and approval of programs/curricula

UACU has its own procedures for the development and approval of programs and curricula. UACU programs and curricula are developed in accordance with the set goals and expected learning outcomes. The qualification obtained as a result of mastering the program/curriculum is clearly articulated and explained, and corresponds to the relevant level in the national qualifications framework for higher education and, accordingly, in the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area.

Curricula underlie UAUC's educational mission. They provide students with academic knowledge and skills, in particular those that have wide application and contribute to students' personal development and future careers.

Educational programs:

- Are developed in accordance with the general program goals, which are consonant with UACU's strategy, and have clearly identified expected learning;
- Are developed considering the requests and expectations of students and other stakeholders;
- Are developed with the involvement of external experts and benchmarks;
- Reflect the four objectives of higher education according to the European Council, incl.:
- − preparation for active citizenship;

- employability;
- personal development;
- research for knowledge base expansion;
- Enable a smooth learning curve of a student;
- Indicate the expected student workload according to the model of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS);
- Contain, where appropriate, structured information on internship opportunities (internships in Ukraine and abroad, other stages of the program that are not undertook at UACU and allow a student to gain experience in the field related to the educational program);
- Are subject to the formal institutional approval procedure.

1.3. Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment

UACU provides the delivery of programs that encourages students to actively participate in the creation of the educational process, and such assessment of students that reflects this approach.

Student-centered learning and teaching play an important role in stimulating student motivation, self-reflection and involvement in the learning process. It is necessary to develop the structure and methodology of curricula, use innovative technologies and quality evaluation of results.

The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching at UACU provides for:

- Respect for and attention to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning trajectories;
- The use of different ways of presenting the material, where appropriate;
- Flexible use of various pedagogical methods and techniques;
- Regular evaluation and adjustment of the modes and delivery and teaching techniques;
- Encouraging in students and non-degree-seeking students a sense of autonomy, while ensuring proper guidance and support from the instructor;
- Developing of mutual respect in the relations of students and non-degree-seeking students with instructors;
- Availability of appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.

Given the importance of assessment for the advancement of students and for their future careers, the procedures for assessment quality assurance in UACU are based on the following guidelines:

- Instructors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field;
- The criteria for and method of assessment as well as criteria for marking are published in advance;

- The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process;
- Where possible, assessment is carried out by more than one examiner;
- The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;
- Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures. At the same time, the announcement of assessment results at UACU is confidential (at a student's request);
- A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.

1.4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

UACU will consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification. Providing conditions and support that are necessary for students to make progress in their academic career is in the best interest of the individual students, programs, UACU and the system of higher education. It is essential for UACU to have fit-for-purpose admission, recognition and completion procedures, particularly when students are mobile within and across higher education systems, for applicants from abroad, etc.

It is important for UACU that access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner. Enrollment is accompanied by the induction to the UACU, the program and learning conditions.

UACU has the established procedures to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression and provides for the processes and tools to exercise them.

UACU considers fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning to be an essential condition for ensuring the students' progress in their studies and promoting their mobility.

Appropriate qualification recognition procedures at UACU rely on:
- UACU's practice for recognition of prior qualifications is in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention;
- UACU cooperates with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC center with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country.

Graduation from UACU represents the culmination of the students' period of study. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.

1.5. Teaching staff

UACU's international teaching staff is highly competent. The Founders and governing

bodies of UACU apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching faculty. The instructors play an essential role in creating a high quality student experience and enabling the acquisition of knowledge, competences and skills. The diversifying student population and stronger focus on learning outcomes require student-centered learning and teaching and the role of the teacher is, therefore, also changing.

Thus, UACU's faculty ensures the delivery of programs that encourages students' engagement in the learning process and the assessment of outcomes that reflects this approach.

UACU has primary responsibility for the quality of their staff and for providing them with a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively. Such an environment:

- Sets up and follows clear, transparent and fair processes for staff recruitment and conditions of employment that recognize the importance of teaching;
- Offers opportunities for and promotes the professional development of the international faculty and their internships at the world's leading partner universities of UACU;
- Encourages scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research;
- Encourages innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies.

1.6. Learning resources and student support

UACU has appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensures the provision of adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support.

In order to create a good higher education experience, UACU provides a range of resources to assist student learning, incl.: physical resources (library, study facilities and IT infrastructure); support in the form of Ukrainian and foreign tutors, counselors and other advisers; information resources and e-libraries of UACU, its Founders and partner institutions.

Support for students is of particular importance at UACU in facilitating the mobility of students within and across higher education systems. When allocating, planning and providing the learning resources, supporting student mobility and participation in joint educational projects and programs, the needs of a diverse student population (such as students of different ages, students with different workloads, part-time, employed and international students, students with disabilities), and the shift towards student-centered learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account.

Student support activities and facilities for their learning process may be organized at UACU in a variety of ways depending on their needs. However, the internal quality assurance system in UACU ensures that all resources are accessible and fit for purpose, and that all staff and students are informed about the resources and services available to them.

UACU's governing bodies and administrative office, faculty and staff have a crucial role in delivering support student services. All UACU faculty and staff are sufficiently qualified and have opportunities to develop professionally.

1.7. Information management

UACU collects, analyzes and uses relevant information for the effective management of their programs and other statutory activities. Reliable data is crucial for UACU's managing bodies for informed decision-making and for knowing what is working well and what needs attention. Effective processes to collect and analyze information about study programs and other activities feed into the internal quality assurance system. As the information gathered depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of UACU, of interest are the following data:

- Key performance indicators;
- Data on the student population;
- Student achievements and progression, success and drop-out rates;
- Students' satisfaction with their programs;
- Learning resources and student support services available;
- Career paths of graduates.

UACU uses various methods of collecting information; students and staff are involved in providing and analyzing information and planning follow-up activities.

1.8. Public information

UACU publishes clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible information about its activities, in particular its programs. This information is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public. UACU provides the following information about its activities: the programs offered; the selection criteria for these programs; the intended learning outcomes; the qualifications it awards, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used; the pass rates; the learning opportunities available to the students; and graduate employment information.

1.9. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programs

UACU monitors and periodically reviews its programs to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews lead to continuous improvement of the programs. UACU communicates any changes planned or implemented as a result of such a process to all those concerned.

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programs at UACU aim to ensure that the provision remains appropriate and to create a supportive and efficient learning environment for students.

This process includes the evaluation of the following factors:

- The content of the program in the light of the latest research in the given discipline aiming to ensure that the program is up-to-date;
- The changing needs of society;
- The students' workload, progression and completion;
- The effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students;
- The student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the program;
- The learning environment and student support services, as well as their fitness for purpose of the program.

UACU's programs are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analyzed and the program is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised program specifications are published.

1.10. Cyclical external quality assurance

UACU undergoes external quality assurance in line with the ESG autonomously, on a cyclical basis and in accordance with the Ukrainian legislation in force.

External quality assurance carried out in its various forms can verify the effectiveness of UACU's internal quality assurance, stimulate improvement and offer. It also provides information to assure UACU and the public of the quality of the higher education institution's activities.

UACU participates in cyclical external quality assurance that takes account, where relevant, of the requirements of the legislative framework in which it operates. Therefore, depending on the context, external quality assurance may take different forms and focus at different organizational levels (such as program, department or institution).

Quality assurance is a continuous process that does not end with the external feedback or report or its follow-up process within UACU. Thus, UACU has to ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.
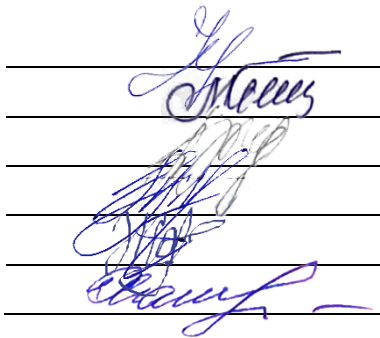
II. THE PROCEDURE FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION AT UACU

2.1 The organization of the Internal Quality Assurance System of Higher Education in UACU should be designed and function on the basis of the concept set forth in Chapter I "The Concept of Internal Quality Assurance of Higher Education at UACU. Definition of Standards for Internal Quality Assurance", in line with the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" No. 1556-VII of July 1, 2014 (Chapter V "Quality Assurance in Higher Education"), the Law of Ukraine "On Education" No. 2146-VIII of August 5, 2017 (Chapter V "Quality Assurance in Education"), DSTU (National Standards of Ukraine) ISO

9001:2015 (ISO 9001:2015, IDT) "Quality Management Systems. Requirements", conform with the document "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)", the regulations of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), as well as other prescriptive and information documents on the quality of higher education in Ukraine.

2.2. In designing its Internal Quality Assurance System of Higher Education, UACU takes into account its particular character of an international joint Ukrainian-American institution of higher education, as well as the international composition of its faculty and student population.

Developed by:	_____	Yu. Yu. Romanovska
	_____	L. I. Kondratenko
	_____	O. O. Romanovska
	_____	N. M. Chaplynska
	_____	L. V. Zharova
	_____	I. Z. Khairutdynova