

AGENCY FOR CONTROL AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION
MONTENEGRO

BETTER ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS
THROUGH QUALITY ASSURANCE

BAQUAL

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Better Academic Qualifications through Quality Assurance

- Acronym: BAQUAL
 - Project duration: 24 months, from May 2020 to May 2022
 - Key activity: improving the qualifications systems
 - Project funding: Erasmus+
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- Project budget: EUR 125,858.75
 - ACQAHE budget: EUR 34,962.25

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Participants:

- Ministry of Science and Education, Republic of Croatia (coordinator);
 - Agency for Control and Quality Assurance of Higher Education Montenegro (partner);
 - Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Northern Macedonia (partner).
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- The three countries participating in the project will provide mutual support in the exchange of experiences.

About the projects' idea

- **First phase:** developing a proposal for a qualification standard, by improving existing or developing a new study programme or a lifelong learning programme.
- **Second phase:** developing curriculum of a new study programme or a lifelong learning programme.
- **Third phase:** conducting an external evaluation of the programme in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

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Project aims and activities

- **The Project aim** is to benefit from the transfer of the competences gained among partners. This should ultimately increase the quality of study programmes, integrate the countries' higher education better within EHEA and consequently prepare students for their future careers.
- **Activities:**
 - ✓ regular meetings of partners, as well as of national working groups in order to prepare draft proposals for qualification standards;
 - ✓ 3 workshops;
 - ✓ study visits.

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ACQAHE in BAQUAL



- Developing the idea – the most challenging part.
- Final idea is to develop a lifelong learning program: Professional development and training of academic staff for pedagogical work.
- National Working Group Formed in December 2020 (experts from HEIs and agency staff).
- Since December 2020 National Working Group has regular meetings.
- In the beginning of 2021 the Working Group has prepared Initial draft of the Initiative for the development of qualification (special training program for lifelong learning purposes, 30 ECTS).
- The regulatory framework for the development of VI-VIII qualifications in Montenegro: Law on Higher Education, Law on National Framework of Qualifications, Rulebook on Development of VI-VIII Qualifications.

Initiative for the development of a qualification for a lifelong learning program: Professional development and training of academic staff for pedagogical work

- **Outcomes:**

- Plans and develops curriculum;
- Plans, organizes and implements the curriculum;
- Applies new technologies in learning and teaching;
- Communicates and cooperates with all participants in the teaching process;
- Directs and manages the independent work of students in the role of mentor;
- Trains students to apply advanced academic writing skills;
- Evaluates the work of students and self-evaluates the quality of teaching;
- Develops ethical standards through the teaching process;
- Continuously improves pedagogical skills.

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Proceeding with the Initiative

- ACQAHE has made several consultations with the representatives of HEIs in Montenegro in order to decide who would be relevant partner in the realization of the project – by implementing the lifelong learning module, and thus who would formally proceed with the Initiative for the development of this qualification.
- University of Montenegro, as the largest and only public university in Montenegro, expressed the willingness to implement the lifelong learning module.

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Research part

- Decision on conducting research on the current teaching competences in the field of HE in Montenegro, among:
 - ✓ students;
 - ✓ university teachers and;
 - ✓ management of the HEIs in Montenegro (coordinated interviews).

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Research part

- National Working Group from ACQAHE has prepared 2 questionnaires both for students and teachers, as well as sketches for the coordinated interviews with the heads of HEIs;
- Questionnaires for students and teachers included similar topics in order to get a picture of how equally or differently similar questions were perceived from both parties;
- Coordinated interviews with the management of the HEIs were supposed to provide another point of view (wider one) on the same questiones.

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Questionnaires

- The questionnaires, both for students and teachers were prepared and distributed in google forms.
- Topics covered included:
 1. Curriculum;
 2. Planning and the organisation of the classes;
 3. Evaluation of students's work;
 4. Mentoring;
 5. Assesment of teachers' qualities;
 6. Impact of the pandemic on education sector.

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Scope of the research

- The survey began on May 24, 2021 and lasted 2 weeks.
- Thanks to good coordination among HEIs, there was:
- 535 completed questionnaires by students;
- 208 completed questionnaires by teachers.
- During July 2021, ACQAHE members of the National Working Group conducted interviews with the management of all 7 HEIs in Montenegro (4 universities and three independent faculties).
- Processing all of the data is planned for the current month.
- Further steps and activities will be defined based on the results of the study.

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Challenges and future plans



- Final product of the research would be adoption of the Analysis on the current teaching competences in the field of HE in Montenegro.
- The Analysis will be published on the ACQAHE website, and it will represent the basis for the future policies in this field.
- Draft of the Initiative for the development of a qualification for a lifelong learning program, accompanying with the Analysis, will be delivered to the Council for Qualifications by the University of Montenegro. The Council can decide whether to adopt or refuse the Initiative.
- If adopted, National Working Group will proceed with the preparation of the Elaborate of lifelong learning program.
- ACQAHE will coordinate the evaluation process of the application of development the lifelong learning program.
- Implementation of the lifelong learning program at the University of Montenegro –final phase, and deliverable of the Project.

Thank you.

<https://www.baqual.hr/project>

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