

# EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT

## Forestry

An evaluation of the quality of the bachelor program Forestry at University of Banja Luka

*August 2012.*

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## **Part I**

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## **General**

## **1. Introduction**

In accordance with its mission, the assessment panel (henceforth: the panel) presents its findings and its evaluation of bachelor program Forestry at University of Banja Luka in this report.

This report can serve as a basis for the accreditation of the programme. This report is in accordance with the ESABIH guidelines, the panel assessed 7 criteria and 24 indicators. The marks can be adapted at the grading scale of the HEA.

## **2. The Assessment Panel**

### **2.1 Composition**

The assessment panel is composed in conformity with the ESABIH guidelines.

The panel assigned to evaluate the bachelor program Forestry at University of Banja Luka Chairman: Josep Grifoll, AQU Catalunya

Expert 1: Ignacio Romagosa, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza and University of Lleida,

Expert 2: Franc Andrejaš, University of Tuzla

Student member: Bojan Tešić, University of Tuzla

The assessment of bachelor program Forestry at University of Banja Luka was accompanied and supported by Nenad Marković, quality assurance coordinator at University of East Sarajevo. He was appointed as secretary of this assessment.

### **2.2 Task Description**

Based on the programme's self-evaluation report (SER) and the interviews that were conducted

during the assessment visit, the assessment panel will provide the following in its report:

- An evaluation of the criteria and the indicators as defined in the ESABIH framework;
- An all-encompassing evaluation of the programme;
- A formulation of recommendations to bring about quality improvement in the programme.

### **2.3 Working Method**

The assessment of the bachelor program Forestry at University of Banja Luka is conducted in conformity with the guidelines of the ESABIH project.

The panel's procedure is characterised by four identifiable phases:

- Phase 1 Preparation
- Phase 2 Visit to the institution of higher education
- Phase 3 Reporting

#### **Phase 1 Preparation**

Every panel member studies the self-evaluation report and its appendices.. The panel members also provide an individual checklist that lists all their questions, their temporary evaluation and their argumentation. The secretary creates a synthesis out of these lists. Following that, the synthesis is thoroughly discussed and provided with arguments.

Based on the discussion and the panel members' questionnaires; the secretary finally makes an inventory of the key points and priorities that should be kept in mind during the interviews and the inspection of materials.

### Phase 2 Visit to the higher education institution

ESABIH consortium group provides a visit schedule template that can be adjusted to the specific situation of a certain programme if necessary. The visit schedule is included as appendix.

During the assessment, the panel interviews a representative group of all the programme's stakeholders, it studies additional information and it visits the institution to be able to assess the

students' accommodation and available facilities. The panel uses the checklists' and questionnaires' synthesis for further interviews.

The visit schedule contains a few consultation meetings that allow the panel members to exchange their findings with each other and to come to mutual, more definitive evaluations.

At the end of the assessment visit, the panel's chairperson gives an oral report on the panel's experiences and findings, without uttering any explicit value judgments with regard to its contents.

### Phase 3 Creation of the assessment report

Based on the self-evaluation report, the checklists and the motivations, the secretary draws up a draft of the assessment report, in dialogue with the chairperson and the other panel members.

This draft assessment report describes the panel's evaluation and the motivation per criterium and per indicator. In addition to that, points of attention and possible recommendations for improvement are formulated if found necessary or desirable by the panel members.

The draft assessment report is sent to the study programme for the verification of factual errors and for the formulation of possible remarks with regard to the report's content. reaction on the report is then discussed by the assessment panel .

## 2.4 Forming an Opinion

In the first phase, the panel establishes an evaluation per indicator. Afterwards, the panel establishes an evaluation per criterium, based on the evaluation of the indicators that make up that criterium.

The criterium's evaluation always gives an overview of the indicators' evaluations. In case of a compensation of indicators, the evaluation on criterium level is followed by a motivation and the weighting factor that was used by the panel to come to an evaluation on criterium level. In all other cases, the motivation of the evaluation on criterium level refers to the indicator's argumentation.

All evaluations and weightings follow the decision regulations as formulated in the ESABIH guidelines'. At indicator level, the panel grants one of the following scores from this quadruple scale: 'unsatisfactory', 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent'. The score 'unsatisfactory' indicates that the programme does not comply with the generic quality demands for that indicator. The score 'satisfactory' implies that the generic quality demands are met.

The score 'good' indicates that the quality of the programme stands above the generic quality demands that are related to that indicator. The score 'excellent' implies that the quality of the indicator can be seen both nationally and internationally as an example of best practice. The panel

intends to motivate every score given to the evaluated indicators as adequately as possible, taking

into account the assessment criteria as formulated in the ESABIH framework.

On the basis of the indicator scores, the panel gives a summarising evaluation at criterium level. A

positive evaluation means that the generic quality demands of a specific criterium are met, whereas a negative evaluation indicates that they are not.

Lastly, the panel will make a judgement on the overall quality of the programme at the end of

These marks can be adopted to the future grading scale of HEA.

## **Part II**

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# **Assessment Report**



## General information

The University of Banja Luka has been established on 7th November 1975. At the time the University consisted of five faculties: Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Technology, Mechanical Engineering, Law and Economics, as well as three higher schools. The other faculties were founded later: Medicine in 1978, Agriculture in 1992, Forestry in 1992, Philosophy in 1994, Architecture and Civil Engineering in 1995, Natural Sciences and Mathematics in 1996, Academy of Art in 1999 and Physical Education and Sports in 2001. The Faculty of Philology, Faculty of Political Sciences and Faculty of Mine Engineering have been established in 2009. Today the University of Banja Luka is integrated university, and it has 16 faculties with 52 licensed study programs. University has around 600 professors, 400 assistants and 450 administrative staff members currently employed at the University. At present there are around 17.000 students at the University. The number of students that obtained their degree is as follows: more than 19.000 graduates, 700 specialists, 650 M.A. degree holders and 300 PhD holders. Most of the faculties of the University of Banja Luka, as well as university halls of residence with student dormitories, restaurants, recreation centers, student clubs and the University Computer Center are situated in two campuses, located close to the river Vrbas and not far from the city center.

Faculty of Forestry in Banja Luka was established in 1992. Faculty of Forestry in Banja Luka functions as an organizational unit at the University of Banja Luka. Faculty of Forestry in Banja Luka currently employs 11 doctors and 14 masters of science. During the 19 years of work of Faculty of Forestry within the University of Banja Luka, 444 forestry engineers have graduated, nine specialists in the field of forest protection, 2 MSc, 2 PhD.

Faculty of Forestry in Banja Luka is included in the network of research centers, which were established under the auspices of the International Forest Institute - EFI (European Forestry Institute International), based in Joensuu in Finland, aimed at the affirmation of projects in the area of forest policy and economics. The faculty is a member of an international consortium of the Faculty of Forestry of South East Europe (COPPFORSEE), formed in 2008, with the intention to address problems of coppice forests in the area. Faculty of Forestry in Banja Luka each year implemented a significant number of research and development projects through the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management. These one-year projects are funded from the revenues set aside for expanded forest reproduction. Two to three one-year research and development projects are financed through the Ministry of Science and Technology, and approximately the same number is realized by cooperation of the Faculty and JP "Šume Republike Srpske". Faculty of Forestry published two annual issues of the journal "Bulletin of the Faculty of Forestry, and is co-editor is SEEFOR.

From school-year 2007/08, the Faculty has begun implementation of a study program in the first cycle of studies on the Bologna process and the concept of study 3 + 2 + 3. This year the program completed the first generation of students under the new curriculum. From school-year 2010/11, the Faculty of Forestry organized master degree program Forestry for students who are in previous education gathered 240 ECTS respectively finished Faculty of Forestry under the old syllabus. On master study 49 students is enrolled. Teachers and assistants employed at the University conduct classes in one of the languages of the constituent nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina after their choice. Students at the University can take exams in any language of the constituent nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina after their choice. All

students who have completed four years of secondary education in our country and abroad are eligible for BSc program at the Faculty of Forestry in Banja Luka. Degrees in foreign countries must be certified by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Ranking of students is based on success achieved during secondary education and found the entrance exam from biology, chemistry and mathematics.

Students from the Faculty of Forestry have been involved in international exchange students, and likewise, Faculty of Forestry has repeatedly hosted students from Poland, Turkey, Macedonia as part of this exchange. Faculty of Forestry has an agreement with the Forestry Faculty of Belgrade, Biotechnical Faculty of Ljubljana and other scientific and educational institutions in the region. Faculty of Forestry is co-editor of SEEFOR.

Since the beginning of the Faculty total number of enrolled students is 2141; currently, in the first year of study there are 115 students, in the second year 133, third year 55 and number of advanced university student is 165.

## Criterion 1. Educational Objectives

### Indicator 1.1 Level and Orientation

Assessment criteria:

The educational objectives are focussed on getting the student to possess general and specific competences mentioned by the study programme. Graduates should have basic knowledge, skills and attitudes that are defined and planned by educational objectives. Students must have an understanding of the scientific-disciplinary basic knowledge that is specific for a certain domain of science, a systematic knowledge of the core elements of a discipline, including the acquisition of a coherent, detailed knowledge partly inspired by the latest developments of the discipline, and knowledge of the structure of the field of study and the connection with other fields of study.

The educational objectives are focussed on getting the student to master general competences such as:

- Obtaining and processing information;
- Ability to reflect critically and to be creative;
- Ability to perform leadership tasks;
- Ability to communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions;
- An attitude of life-long learning.

The educational objectives are also focused on getting the student to master general scientific or (academic) competences such as:

- A research attitude;
- Knowledge of research methods and techniques;
- Ability to collect relevant data that can influence the judgment of social, scientific and ethical questions;
- Ability to appreciate uncertainty and ambiguity;
- The limits of knowledge and the ability to problem guided initiating of research.

The educational objectives are focused on getting the student to master the specific competences of the domain and the scientific field of the study program.

### The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 1.1

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that is positive the fact that first cycle of academic study has described learning outcomes and key competences, giving to students general and specific competences in the study field and showing concern for student-centred learning. Also, the panel appreciates that every course has defined learning objective within syllabus. However, the learning outcomes description for the whole programme is an issue to be developed further and to make it clearer for third parties understanding.

The panel appreciates good teaching plan for bachelor program available for all students.

## Recommendations for improvement

The panel recommends that faculty must make an effort to meet their academic community with mission, vision, goals and competences of study program.

The panel advises study program to take into consideration international dimension of study program.

The panel advises study program to take into consideration learning objectives of each curricular units in re-definition of learning outcomes of study program.

The panel recommends introduction of leadership and entrepreneurship competences in the new 4 years curriculum.

## Indicator 1.2 Domain Specific Demands

Assessment criteria:

The educational objectives (mentioned as the end qualifications of the student) join the demands that are set by (foreign) colleagues and the relevant work field for an education within the domain (field of study/discipline and / or professional practice). They are in line with the regulations. The end qualifications for bachelor's degrees and master's degrees are derived from the scientific disciplines, the internationally performed research and the courses that are considered to put research into practice in the relevant professional field.

- General study programme objectives (desired final qualifications of the graduates at study programme level) and their genesis;
- Alignment of the objectives with the bachelor's/ master's competences in the Bologna declaration and European Qualification framework;
- Attention for the international dimension in the study programme's objectives;
- Attention for academic/professional/artistic skills in the objectives;
- Familiarity with the objectives among students and staff involved in the study programme;
- Profiling the study programme with regards to domestic and/or foreign study programmes in order to determine the study programme objectives and (including recent and imminent developments) to make the comparison with the own vision on the vocation/discipline;
- Alignment of the objectives with the professional regulations/legislation;
- Alignment of the objectives with the needs and wants of the intended work field;
- Genesis of the discipline-specific objectives.

## The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 1.2

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that overall curriculum is in line with the international references for Forestry.

The panel thinks that's important to have the domestic partnership with the Universities/ faculties in the neighborhood countries, and it represents a good start for the international orientation.

The panel's opinion on defined general objectives of study program is positive.

The panel has a positive attitude towards direction of general objectives of study program to development academic and professional skills of students.

The panel holds the opinion that a strategy for internationalization should be settled in a near future.

The panel thinks that study program should include recent and imminent developments in scientific area in order to fit study program's objectives.

The panel asks attention for introducing of international dimension in study program objectives.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends promotion the use of foreign languages through the programme.

Also, the panel recommends the use of new technologies, particularly GIS (Geographic information system).

The panel recommends that study program should have strategy for internationalization as soon as possible.

The panel recommends introducing international dimension in study program objectives.

The panel recommends the inclusion recent and imminent developments in study program objectives.

### **Opinion on Criterion 1, Educational Objectives: Opinion 1**

Based on the opinions of:

Indicator 1.1, level and orientation: opinion 1.1,

Indicator 1.2, domain specific demands: opinion 1.2,

the assessment panel holds the opinion that generic quality, concerning criterion 1, is present in the study programme.

The Criteria “Educational Objectives” is assessed positively with **satisfactory**. **Criterion 2. Curriculum**

### **Indicator 2.1 Correspondence Between Objectives and the Content of the Programme**

Assessment criteria:

The programme is an adequate realization of the end qualifications of the education, as to level, orientation and demands specific for the domain. The end qualifications are adequately translated towards the learning objectives in (parts) of the programme. The content of the programme offers students the possibility to achieve the end qualifications.

- Translation of the objectives in the curriculum;
- Level (bachelor, master) and content of the study programme components;
- Presence of inter-disciplinary elements;
- International dimension in the study programme/internationalisation of the curriculum (policy, participation rate, cooperation forms, international contacts, etc.);
- Degree to which recent advancements in education at home and abroad have found expression in the curriculum;
- Procedures for curriculum revision and innovation;
- Participation of relevant stakeholders in curriculum development, revision and innovation.

#### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 2.1**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that study program offers basic skills and competences for the labor market.

The panel appreciates that faculty has awareness of the need to update the programme from 3 to 4 years, to achieve the learning objectives.

The panel appreciates commitment of academic staff for faculty and sustainability of study program.

The panel thinks that is positive for faculty and study program existence of procedure for study program revision which is in accordance with Statute of University.

The panel asks attention for introducing more interdisciplinary courses and definition of prerequisites courses in study program.

The panel feels that study program must improve the internationalization of the study program with research, mobility, participation in international projects,...

The panel determined that there should be much more participation from all the stakeholders in the process of revision of the study program.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends enhancement of international dimension of study program with the introduction of modern foreign texts books and introducing more interdisciplinary courses and definition of prerequisites courses within the study program.

The panel advises study program to put more effort in incorporating advances in education in the curriculum.

The panel recommends enhancement of participation of involved parties and stakeholders in improvement and innovation.

The panel advises (the study program) to establish strategy for mobility.

## **Indicator 2.2 Demands Professional and Academic Alignment**

Assessment criteria:

The development of knowledge by students when there is an interaction between the education and the scientific research within relevant disciplines. The programme matches with the developments in the relevant scientific discipline(s) by demonstrable connections with topical scientific theories. The programme guarantees the development of scientific research skills. With certain courses, there are demonstrable connections with the topical practice of the relevant professions.

- Attention in the curriculum for knowledge development;
- Attention in the curriculum for skills that support professional functioning;
- Attention in the curriculum for work field experience: interaction with professional practice, attitude, content, level and guidance of practical training final projects, etc.;
- Alignment with recent (international) developments in the field/discipline and professional practice (among other things, as researcher);
- Research alignment of the study programme; among other things: feedback of (own) research to the study programme, active involvement of students in research within the study programme;
- Attention in the curriculum for development of research skills – conveying the research attitude – research skills. Interaction between study programme and academic services.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 2.2**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel appreciates attention in the curriculum for work field experience.

The panel appreciates attention for the development of professional skills in the final paper.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel advises study program to focus not only on local public employers.

The panel recommends that faculty establish internships at national and international level.

### Indicator 2.3 Coherence Programme

Assessment criteria:

Students take a coherent course programme with regard to content.

- Sequential structure and coherence of the curriculum in terms of the standard process;
- Harmony of the curriculum in the cooperation with other university departments and institutions;
- Relation between the curriculum and flexible learning process.

#### The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 2.3

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that the study program is coherent according to international standards.

#### Recommendations for improvement

The panel recommends that faculty should have more links with other faculties of the university in order to share resources and improve training.

The panel advises study program to remove courses with just 2 ECTS in the new curriculum.

The panel advises study program to re-organize optional courses into modules.

### Indicator 2.4 Workload

Assessment criteria:

The actual amount of study hours per academic year is being checked and reaches the standard of 60 credits.

- The study programme fulfils the formal requirements with regard to the size of the curriculum for bachelor and master;
- It is possible to follow the programme adequately since factors that hinder the learning process are being eliminated as much as possible;
- Study time measurements and follow-up;
- Agreement between estimated and actual study time;
- Spread of the study time in the study programme;
- Presence of factors obstructing or promoting study and any steps.

#### The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 2.4

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The bachelor contains 3 academic years of 60 credits each. This means that, in total, a study programme of 180 credits is organized. By this, the study programme is in line the formal requirements with regard to the minimal duration of a bachelor's curriculum.



The panel thinks that study program is in accordance with law and the Bologna process.

The panel appreciates the cooperation between teachers, students union and management team.

The panel thinks that faculty should estimate of workload of individual courses from the students perspective.

The panel thinks that faculty should establish measures for follow up activities for estimation workload of students and academic staff.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends that faculty establish measure system for follow up activities for estimation workload of students and academic staff and to do an analysis of existing workload of students and academic staff.

The panel recommends that the faculty should consider the possibility of including in the study program annual subjects when the discipline requires a follow up throughout the forestry year cycle.

## **Indicator 2.5 Coherence of the Organisation of the Learning Process and Contents**

Assessment criteria:

The structure and the content of the curriculum are coherent and it is in line with modern didactic approaches (new teaching methodologies, innovations in teaching, etc.). The quality of the educational resources is high and there is an alignment of the learning resources with the didactic concept and the objectives (at study programme level).

- The didactic concept is in line with the objectives;
- The work forms are aligned with the didactic concept. Work forms used (lectures, working groups, project work, practical work, self-study, workshops, etc.);
- Alignment of the didactic work forms with the objectives, the didactic concept and the characteristics of the student intake;
- Attention for recent educational developments at home and abroad in the didactic concept and its elaboration;
- Variation of educational forms;
- Educational resources used and quality (syllabi, guides, courses, teaching and learning aids, etc.): Alignment of the learning resources with the didactic concept, the objectives (at study programme level and study programme component level) and the characteristics of the student intake.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 2.5**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of

Equipped classrooms with projector and computer connections, allows teachers to deliver lectures with modern didactic methodologies.

The panel has a positive attitude towards good relations between students and academic staff during teaching process.

The panel thinks that practical work cannot be adequately carried out in the available labs at the faculty.

The panel thinks that more importance should be given to the use of computer resources in the areas related to data management, data analysis, graphical representation etc.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends that faculty should ensure more needed books for students needs.

The panel advises the study program to create at least one course in English in order to improve and develop the international dimension and mobility.

The panel recommends of introduction of virtual learning environment (such as Moodle).

## **Indicator 2.6 Master's Thesis**

Assessment criteria:

Before obtaining the master's degree students have to make a final project, by which the student has to prove his/her analytic and synthetic capability or independent problem solving capability on academic level or his/her artistic capability. The final project reflects the general critical reflection of the student's intentions to do research.

- Place/relative weight of the master's thesis in the study programme;
- Content and concept of the master's thesis;
- Preparation for the master's thesis;
- Guidance of the master's thesis;
- Cooperation between students and researchers;
- Cooperation between students and the professional field;
- Orientation of the (proposed problem of the) master's thesis to the actual academic/professional context;
- Assessment of the master's thesis.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 2.6**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that faculty seems to address, in an integrated manner, the real interests of the profession.

The panel thinks that the work load estimation for final thesis (5 ECTS) is low compared with the time devoted by the students (3 months).

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends to the faculty to re-analyze the number of ECTS points for final thesis.

The panel advises to students that they need to work on final thesis in cooperation with private and public potential employers.

## Opinion on Criterion 2, Curriculum: Opinion 2

Based on the opinions of:

Indicator 2.1, correspondence between objectives and the content of the programme: opinion 2.1,

Indicator 2.2, demands professional and academic alignment: opinion 2.2,

Indicator 2.3, coherence programme: opinion 2.3,

Indicator 2.4, workload: opinion 2.4,

Indicator 2.5, coherence of the organization of the learning process and contents: opinion 2.5

Indicator 2.6, master's thesis: opinion 2.6

the assessment panel holds the opinion that generic quality, concerning criterion 2, is present in the study programme.

The Criteria "Curriculum" is assessed positively with **satisfactory**.

## Criterion 3. Staff

### Indicator 3.1 Quality of the Staff

Assessment criteria:

The staff is qualified for the educational, organizational realization of the programme. They are also qualified to take care of the content of the programme.

- Human resources policy (including recruitment, determination of tasks, appointments, promotions, evaluation procedure, advice and decision making bodies);
- Impact of substantive, educational and didactic qualities in the recruitment and promotion, evaluation and monitoring of the staff;
- Policy with regard to the staff for educational activities;
- Factors obstructing the pursuit of a good human resources policy;
- Professionalization (life-long learning approach) of the staff;
- Expertise of the teaching/academic staff (substantive, educational and didactic);
- Involvement of the teaching/academic staff;
- Technical, administrative and organisational expertise of the staff;
- Introduction and guidance of staff and equal opportunities policy.

#### The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 3.1

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that the teaching staff of faculty seem qualified for the general purposes of the programme.

The panel supports intention of academic staff of faculty for additional professional specialization.

The panel appreciates satisfaction of students and employers with education provided by the Faculty.

The panel has a positive attitude towards election of academic staff in accordance with Statute of University.

The panel thinks that faculty needs to establish human resource strategy.

#### Recommendations for improvement

The panel advises study program to establish of human resources strategy with clear targets for academic staff development, cooperation between academics and the professional field and for international mobility of the Faculty teachers.

### Indicator 3.2 Demands Professional/Academic Alignment

**Assessment criteria:**

For some courses it is necessary that a sufficient amount of staff members have knowledge and insight with regard to the profession. The course matches with the following criteria with regards to the effort of staff made within a professional, academic education:

- Professional experience and knowledge of the professional practice among the staff with educational or education-supporting tasks;
- Research expertise and research activity in the practice and the development of the arts;
- Range of specialisations among the staff with research tasks;
- Educational contribution from the professional field and the staff's international contacts, including feedback with regards to the study programme, the participation in international networks and the partnerships with domestic and foreign partner institutions.

**The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 3.2**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

According to the evidenced collected during the site visit there is a connection between the academic field and the nearest professional environment. This is positive; but at the same time it represents a limitation for further developments; particularly, because the closest professional environment, at the moment, is mainly covered by a small group of public firms operating locally.

The panel concludes that faculty needs to improve national/international contacts/business community and be more involved in national/international networks with different partner institutions.

The panel thinks that faculty should increase educational contribution from the professional field.

The panel thinks that faculty needs to establish electronic database for research activities of academic staff.

**Recommendations for improvement**

The panel advises management of faculty to improve their teaching/ research contacts on the national and international level.

The panel recommends establishing electronic database for research activities of academic staff.

The panel recommends increasing educational contribution from the professional field.

**Indicator 3.3 Quantity of Staff**

**Assessment criteria:**

A sufficient amount of staff is being appointed to organize the course with the desired quality. Human resource policy is organized in a good and proper way. Recruitment policy is based on good selection of staff.

- Size of the workforce;
- Size of the workforce in proportion to the number of students;
- Ratios between the various categories of staff;
- Number and percentage of visiting professors;
- Age structure;
- Share of the various staff categories in education and research.

**The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 3.2**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that the number of teaching staff is sufficient to cover the study program.

The panel thinks that faculty should increase number of researches.

The panel's opinion on review of different data about teaching staff is positive.

**Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends to faculty improve research activities in generally.

**Opinion on Criterion 3, Staff: Opinion 3**

Based on the opinions of:

Indicator 3.1, quality of staff: opinion 3.1,

Indicator 3.2, demands professional/academic alignment: opinion 3.2,

Indicator 3.3, quantity of staff: opinion 3.3,

the assessment panel holds the opinion that generic quality, concerning criterion 3, is present in the study programme.

The Criteria "Staff" is assessed positively with **satisfactory**.

## Criterion 4. Students

### Indicator 4.1 Assessment and Testing (Learning Assessment)

Assessment criteria:

By means of assessments, tests and exams, students have been adequately tested. The learning assessment is in accordance with the proclaimed learning objectives (parts) of the programme.

- Student guidance during assessment;
- Organisation of tests and examinations;
- Various assessment standards with regards to the objectives of the study programme components and the study programme as a whole: concept, orientation of the evaluation to the (integrated) tests of knowledge, insight, skills and attitudes, degree of difficulty;
- Criteria and method of the assessment by the evaluators;
- Criteria and method of the assessment by the examination committee;
- Transparency of the assessment: Familiarity of students with the requirements connected to the evaluation;
- Familiarity of students and staff with the assessment procedures;
- Quality assurance of examination matters.

#### The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 4.1

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that students seem motivated and satisfied with the training, and they seem to have a good educational atmosphere.

The panel appreciates that students are well informed about the assessment procedures.

The panel also appreciates that criteria and methods are defined in the published teaching plan.

The panel supports the areas of improvement identified in the self-evaluation report.

#### Recommendations for improvement

The panel recommends improving quality assurance of test procedures.

### Indicator 4.2 Practical Training

Assessment criteria:

The practical training enables students to acquire practical experience. Students develop professional skills and attitudes required for the independent practice under guidance and under conditions of increasing independence. The training is the result of an independent study on a problem that is relevant to the study programme and the field of action. The results of the training reflect the student's reasoning capacity, the information processing and critical reflection capacity and the competence in applying solution strategies in problem situations from professional practice.

- Place/relative weight of the practical training/thesis in the study programme;
- Contents and concept of the practical training;
- Preparation for the practical training;
- Guidance in the practical training;
- Assessment of the practical training.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 4.2**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that field work is in the core of the practical training.

The panel appreciates that faculty is fully aware of the limitations in house practical training.

The panel asks attention for new labs and computer rooms in the faculty.

The panel appreciates openness of labor market for receiving students for practical training.

The panel thinks that faculty needs to involve practical training as obligatory with appropriate number of ECTS points.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends to faculty to develop a scientific teaching base for practical training.

The panel recommends inclusion of practical training in the curriculum.

The panel recommends to faculty to make more emphasis on the use of computer in practical training.

## **Indicator 4.3 Conditions of Admission**

Assessment criteria:

Content of the programme fits in with the qualifications of the incoming students. Admission procedures are clear and transparent.

- Internal procedures for admission of students;
- Characteristics of the student intake and related policy;
- The curriculum is in line with the preliminary training;
- Specific activities with regard to the alignment between the preliminary training and the study programme.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 4.3**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel puts forward existence of procedure for admission of students that is accordance with Statute of University.

The panel thinks there is a too high number of graduated students for labor market needs.

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### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends establishing a balance between graduated students and needed of labor market.

### **Indicator 4.4 Student Involvement in the Improvement of the Teaching/Learning Processes**

Assessment criteria:

The institution evaluates the curriculum and the teaching processes itself by introducing student enquiries and satisfaction questionnaires. Student representatives are involved in the decision making process and in the managerial structures.

- Handling the results of enquiries;
- Influence of students on curriculum;
- Participation of students in different decision making bodies and influence on managerial structures.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 4.4**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel appreciates participation students in statutory councils in accordance with Statute of University.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends actively involving students in processes of quality assurance. The panel advises faculty to develop students survey about quality of teaching process and to discuss about results of students survey on the regular basis at the teaching council and to suggest actions for improvement of this procedure.

### **Indicator 4.5 Measures for Promoting Mobility, Including the Mutual Recognition of Credits**

Assessment criteria:

The existence of bilateral and multilateral agreements with domestic and foreign institutions for the exchange of students. Participation of institution and students in different exchange programs.  
Existence of ECTS and/or internal credit system

- Existence of bilateral and multilateral agreements in the country and abroad;
- Existence of student exchange programs;
- Acceptance of credits gain during exchange programs;
- Existence of ECTS or other credit systems.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 4.5**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel appreciates existence of bilateral and multilateral agreements with faculties at the national and international level.

The panel thinks that faculty should make effort to offer courses in English or whole semester in English language in order to attract foreign students.

The panel thinks that faculty should make effort towards promotion of exchange program among students.

According to the panel faculty needs to establish database of exchange students.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel advises faculty to completely use strengths of existing agreements in the way of students mobility.

The panel advises faculty to develop an integrated policy to enhance student mobility.

The panel recommends that faculty establish database about exchange students on national and international level.

## **Indicator 4.6 Coaching of Students**

Assessment criteria:

Coaching system is introduced. The coaching and the providing of information meet the students' needs.

- Existence of coaching system and regular consultations;
- Way of coaching students.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 4.6**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

During the interview with the students and teaching staff, it appeared that there is a good communication between them.

The panel appreciates availability teachers to students for consultation, that is also in accordance with Statute of University.

The panel thinks that the strategy for coaching the students in the study programme is limited and it has a traditional orientation, therefore there are opportunities for connecting student coaching considering the Bologna Framework. The point is that the faculty should be proactive in increasing the chances for students to achieve transversal competences, which are necessary for successful participation in society: manage their own learning, learning preference, access and manage their own learning, the social and interpersonal relationships and communication, motivation,

etc. These competences cannot be learned for a week, a month,...their acquisition is continuous process during a study period for student.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends to the faculty to develop coaching system of acquisition of transversal competences to students.

The panel recommends establishing of tutor system on the each study year.

## **Indicator 4.7 Information, Consultation and Complaint System**

Assessment criteria:

- Way of handling students' complaints;
- Measures for student support;
- Information and advice during the study programme by the study programme/central services;
- Communication of educational objectives as well as education and examination regulations;
- Organisation and guidance of international student exchange (including guidance for and integration of foreign students).

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 4.7**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel appreciates existence of regulation about complaining system.

The panel thinks that communication of educational objectives as well as education and examination regulations is adequate (through the Faculty and university website, bulletins).

The panel thinks that university/ faculty should establish position of student ombudsman in order to protect the right of students. The main tasks of Student Ombudsman should be: assist to students in accomplishing the expeditious resolution of their problems and concerns; provide confidential and informal assistance to students; advocate for fairness; act as a source of information and referral.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends forming position of student ombudsman in order to protect the right of students.

The panel advises faculty to improve information system for students about complaining system, procedure, etc.

### **Opinion on Criterion 4, Students: Opinion 4**

Based on the opinions of:

Indicator 4.1, assessment and testing: opinion 4.1,

Indicator 4.2, practical training: opinion 4.2,

Indicator 4.3, condition of admission: opinion 4.3,  
Indicator 4.4, student involvement in the improvement of the teaching/learning  
process: opinion 4.4,  
Indicator 4.5, measures for promoting mobility, including mutual recognition of credits:  
opinion 4.5  
Indicator 4.6, coaching of students: opinion 4.6,  
Indicator 4.7 information, consultation and complaining system: opinion 4.7,  
the assessment panel holds the opinion that generic quality, concerning criterion 4, is  
present in the study programme.  
The Criteria "Staff" is assessed positively with **satisfactory**.

## Criterion 5. Means and Facilities

### Indicator 5.1 Material Aspects

Assessment criteria:

Housing and facilities are adequate to realize the programme. Teaching tools are adequate for introducing new teaching methodologies and for introducing innovations in teaching process.

- Policy on premises and facilities;
- Size and quality (= degree to which they are geared to the objectives of the study programme) of lecture halls;
- Practical rooms and laboratories;
- Library facilities; books and periodicals;
- Self-study centres;
- Computer facilities;
- Study programme-related research infrastructure;
- Student and teacher facilities;
- Accessibility of the facilities;
- Size of the available financial resources.

#### The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 5.1

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

At the moment, educational spaces at the Faculty represent an obstacle to enhance the quality of the programme. The panel thinks that the lab space, computer room and library are not adequate for teaching and research activities.

#### Recommendations for improvement

The University of Banja Luka should urgently develop a plan to improve the facilities of the Faculty of Forestry.

#### Opinion on Criterion 5, Means and Facilities: Opinion 5

Based on the opinions of:

Indicator 5.1, material aspects: opinion 5.1,

the assessment panel holds the opinion that generic quality, concerning criterion 5, is present in the study programme.

The Criteria "Means and Facilities" is assessed positively with **unsatisfactory**.

## Criterion 6. Internal Quality Control

## Indicator 6.1 Evaluation Results

Assessment criteria:

The course is being evaluated periodically through usage of different testable targets. Systematic measures to follow up on the teaching process are introduced. Quality structures are established and the quality of teaching within the study programme is permanently monitored.

- Description of the quality policy and of the approach of the internal quality assurance;
- Existence of quality structures;
- Depersonalised summary of the measured results of the study programme;
- Dynamics of evaluation procedures;
- Usage of results obtained during evaluation process.

### The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 6.1

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel appreciates existence of quality assurance structure at University and Faculty level, and participation of teaching staff, students and non teaching staff.

The panel's opinion on existence of some documentation of quality assurance is positive, and monitoring procedures are in place.

The panel thinks that even though the university has defined a policy for QA that is not seemed to have reached adequately at the faculty level.

The panel thinks that students survey at the end of each semester could be very good evaluation tool for faculty.

The panel thinks that electronic students survey would be very useful for the faculty.

### Recommendations for improvement

The panel recommends better Involvement of staff, students and management team in quality assurance.

The panel recommends to the faculty continuous work on creation quality assurance documentation.

The panel advises the faculty to improve the way they use the results and outputs of evaluations.

The panel recommends to the faculty to continuous collects data about drop out rate, time of completion of grade, employability rate of graduates, passing rates, and so on.

## Indicator 6.2 Measures for Improvement

#### Assessment criteria:

The results of evaluation are the starting point for a strategic and operational approach in the introduction, the improvement and the development of demonstrable measures necessary for the realization of the educational objectives. Improvement measures are based on threats and weaknesses noticed during the evaluation process.

- Degree to which past targets were achieved;
- Degree to which the targets for the future are well founded;
- Improvement actions in the study programme (allocation of resources, designation of responsibilities and powers, planning and monitoring project management);
- Special attention for the response to findings and recommendations of the former assessment visit and results of student evaluations.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 6.2**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel appreciates of clear identification of areas for improvement in the self evaluation report.

Based on available information from self evaluation report and from interviews with different groups the panel thinks that it would be good for faculty to have an formal improvement plan with the actions, with the responsibility for implementation, a timetable for implementing the actions, the milestones at least for the next year.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends creation of Strategic plan with clearly defined strategic objectives.

The panel recommends establishing system of quality assurance at the faculty level.

### **Indicator 6.3 Involving Co-workers, Students, Alumni and the Professional Field**

#### Assessment criteria:

Co-workers, students, alumni and the professional field are being involved in the internal quality control.

- Performance of the boards and assessment panels involved in the internal quality assurance (including the student participation);
- Involvement of the staff in decision-making and evaluations as part of the internal quality assurance;
- Involvement of students in decision-making and evaluations as part of the internal quality assurance;
- Involvement of graduates and the professional fields in educational evaluations and curriculum innovations;
- Contacts between the study programme and the graduates/professional field.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 6.3**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that students and staff have been active in developing the self-evaluation process.

The panel asks attention for establishing a regular quality assurance team involving students, staff alumni, co-workers and employers at the faculty level.

During the interview with the students, representatives of work field and management team, the panel concludes that faculty and graduated students have interest to establish alumni association.

The panel feels that faculty should establish Center for developing career and advising students, that will help students of the Faculty in the development of knowledge and skills that will be of importance in employment; to assist in gaining work experience while studying and learning about the world of business, and to prepare students for successful transition to the next level of career development after graduation.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends that faculty needs to take main role in process of establishing of alumni association and center for development career and advising students.

### **Opinion on Criterion 6, Internal Quality Control: Opinion 6**

Based on the opinions of:

Indicator 6.1, evaluation results: opinion 6.1,

Indicator 6.2, measures for improvement: opinion 6.2,

Indicator 6.3, involving co-workers, students, alumni and professional field,

the assessment panel holds the opinion that generic quality, concerning criterion 6, is present in the study programme.

The Criteria “Internal Quality Control” is assessed positively with **satisfactory**.



## Criterion 7. Results Achieved

### Indicator 7.1 Realized Level

Assessment criteria:

The realized end qualifications are in accordance with the pursued competences as for level, orientation and domain specific demands.

- Degree to which objectives are achieved;
- Quality of the master's thesis;
- Quality of the practical training;
- Realisations in terms of internationalisation of the education: participation of students (number and percentage of students, ratio of incoming vs. outgoing students) and staff in international exchange programmes;
- Preparation of the graduates for entry into the job market;
- Content of the programme and level of employment;
- Satisfaction of the graduates about their employment;
- Appreciation for the graduates by the professional field;
- Satisfaction of the graduates about the study programme

#### The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 7.1

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

Based on available information the panel thinks that employers are satisfied with graduated students from the faculty, with skills and knowledge that graduated students got during the study period and with study program generally.

The panel appreciates that graduated students are satisfied with study program.

#### Recommendations for improvement

The panel advises the faculty to prepare their graduates for future work in public/private companies or self-employment by offering different courses for this purpose.

### Indicator 7.2 Educational Output

Assessment criteria:

Target figures are being set for the educational output in comparison with other relevant courses. The educational output meets these target figures.

- Policy of the study programme with respect to the study progress;
- Target figures used and their comparison to other relevant study programmes;
- Pass rates and discussion;
- Analysis of student advancement;
- Diploma supplement;
- Average study duration and assessment;
- Results of study into the study programme's failures and dropouts.

### **The opinion of the assessment panel: Opinion 7.2**

The assessment panel formed an opinion based on the determination of and on the consideration of the following:

The panel thinks that they are fully aware of the low academic performance.

The panel thinks that the faculty should harmonize among departments the way of collecting information.

The panel thinks that areas for improvement should be establishing of monitoring system of particularly first year students, and establishing policy to prevent drop outs.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The panel recommends that faculty establish a regularly system of monitoring different analysis of study program.

The panel recommends reconsideration of admission policy with university and other statements.

### **Opinion on Criterion 7, Results Achieved: Opinion 7**

Based on the opinions of:

Indicator 7.1, realized level: opinion 7.1,

Indicator 7.2, educational output: opinion 7.2,

the assessment panel holds the opinion that generic quality, concerning criterion 7, is present in the study programme.

The Criteria "Results Achieved" is assessed positively with **satisfactory**.

## Global Opinion

The assessment panel based its opinion and its motivation on the following sources:

- The study programme's self-evaluation report (SER) and its appendices, the conducted interviews with all parties concerned,
- The available documents during the assessment visit,
- The requested documents,
- The study programme's reaction on the assessment report.

The external assessment panel believes that the self-assessment document was well prepared, with a good in depth analysis that will undoubtedly be a useful tool for the Faculty. They are fully aware that the main limitation of this program is the lack of adequate spaces which represents an obstacle to enhance the quality of the programme. The panel believes that the lab space, computer room and library are not adequate for carrying out modern teaching and research activities. New or improved facilities would allow for a stronger use of IT technologies both as an educational tool (i.e. a virtual learning environment) and as a key specific content in many basic and forestry subject matters in the curriculum. They should also enhance student and faculty mobility, and to this end use of foreign languages through the programme should be promoted.

Based on the opinions of:

Criterion 1, educational objectives and learning outcomes: opinion 1

Criterion 2, curriculum: opinion 2

Criterion 3, staff: opinion 3,

Criterion 4, students: opinion 4,

Criterion 5, means and facilities: opinion 5,

Criterion 6, internal quality control: opinion 6,

Criterion 7, results achieved: opinion 7,

the assessment panel holds the opinion that there is a satisfactory generic quality present in the study programme.

## Overview of the Opinions

	Indicator Score	Criterion Score
Criterion 1: Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes		Opinion 1
Indicator 1.1 Level and Orientation	opinion 1.1	S
Indicator 1.2 Domain Specific demands	opinion 1.2	
Criterion 2: Curriculum		Opinion 2
Indicator 2.1 Correspondence between Objectives and the Content of the Programme	opinion 2.1	S
Indicator 2.2 Demands Professional and Academic Alignment	opinion 2.2	
Indicator 2.3 Coherence Programme	opinion 2.3	
Indicator 2.4 Workload	Opinion 2.4	
Indicator 2.5 Coherence of the Organization of the Learning Process and Contents	opinion 2.5	
Indicator 2.6 Master's Thesis	opinion 2.6	
Criterion 3: Staff		Opinion 3
Indicator 3.1 Quality of Staff	opinion 3.1	S
Indicator 3.2 Demands Professional/Academic Alignment	opinion 3.2	
Indicator 3.3 Quantity of Staff	opinion 3.3	
Criterion 4: Students		Opinion 4
Indicator 4.1 Assessment and Testing	opinion 4.1	S
Indicator 4.2 Practical training	opinion 4.2	
Indicator 4.3 Condition of Admission	opinion 4.3	
Indicator 4.4 Student Involvement in the Improvement of the Teaching/Learning Processes	opinion 4.4	
Indicator 4.5 Measures for promoting Mobility, Including the Mutual recognition of Credits	opinion 4.5	
Indicator 4.6 Coaching of Students	opinion 4.6	
Indicator 4.7 Information, Consultation and Complaining System	opinion 4.7	
Criterion 5: Means and Facilities		Opinion 5
Indicator 5.1 Material Aspects	opinion 5.1	U

Criterion 6: Internal Quality Control		Opinion 6
Indicator 6.1 Evaluation Results	opinion 6.1	S
Indicator 6.2 Measures for Improvement	opinion 6.2	
Indicator 6.3 Involving Co-workers, Students, Alumni and the Professional Field	opinion 6.3	
Criterion 7: Results Achieved		Opinion 7
Indicator 7.1 Realized Level	opinion 7.1	S
Indicator 7.2 Educational Output	opinion 7.2	

## **Appendices**

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# 1. Agenda of accreditation visit to Unviersity of Banja Luka, Faculty of Forestry

Sunday, 25.03.2012.		
Time	Activity	Location
around 16:30	Arrival to Banja Luka	
17:00	Preparatory meeting for members of the accreditation panel (AP)	Hotel (where accommodated external experts)

Monday, 26.03.2012.		
Time	Activity	Location
08:30-09:00	Meeting AP with the Self Evaluation Report Team of study program Economy (SERT)	Faculty of Forestry, Bulevar Vojvode Stepe Stepanovića 75a
09:05-10:05	Meeting AP with the management team (MT)	
10:10-10:25	<i>Coffee break</i>	
10:30-11:30	Meeting AP with the academic staff (AS)	
11:40-12:40	Meeting AP with the students representatives (STU)	
12:45-13:45	<i>Lunch break for members of the accreditation panel</i>	
13:45-14:25	Meeting AP with the student services (STUS)	
14:30-15:15	Faculty tour	lecture rooms, lab work facilities, library, computer facilities etc.
15:20-16:00	Meeting AP with alumni (ALU)	
16:05-16:45	Meeting AP with representatives of labor market (RLM)	
16:50-17:50	Meeting members of the accreditation panel (AP)	
19:00-	<i>Dinner for members of the accreditation panel</i>	

Tuesday, 27.03.2012.		
Time	Activity	Location
08:30-09:00	Meeting AP with the Self Evaluation Report Team of study program Economy (SERT)	Faculty of Forestry, Bulevar Vojvode Stepe Stepanovića 75a
09:15-12:25	Meeting members of the accreditation panel (AP)	
12:30-13:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
13:40-15:00	Report to MT, SERT, AS and	

	others	
15:30	Departure	

The assessment panel requires the presence of necessary number of persons on following way mentioned in bellow table, in accordance with group that will be interviewed:

ABBREVIATION	GROUP TO BE INTERVIEWED	
MT	Management team	Minimum 4 representatives (dean, vice-dean for teaching process, vice-dean for scientific research, secretary)
STU	Students of first and second year of study	Minimum 2 representatives from each year of study
STU	Students of third and fourth year of study	Minimum 2 representatives from each year of study
SERT	SER team	Minimum 5 persons: coordinator SERT team and 4 actively involved persons
AS	Academic staff	Minimum 2 representatives from each year of study
ALU	Alumni	Minimum 3 representatives of alumni
STUS	Student services	Minimum 5 representatives: Head of student services, Head of Library, Head of Computer service, Quality officer, International officer
RLM	Representatives Labour Market	Minimum 3 representatives of Labour Market



## 2. List of abbreviations

ABBREVIATION	
MT	Management team
STU	Students of first and second year of study
STU	Students of third and fourth year of study
SERT	SER team
AS	Academic staff
ALU	Alumni
STUS	Student services
RLM	Representatives Labour Market

### **3. Curriculum vitae of members of assessment panel**

Chairman: [Josep Grifoll](#), AQU Catalunya

Expert 1: [Ignacio Romagosa](#), Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza and University of Lleida,

Expert 2: [Franc Andrejaš](#), University of Tuzla

Student member: [Bojan Tešić](#), University of Tuzla

Secretary: [Nenad Markovic](#), University of East Sarajevo