

Higher Education Accreditation Agency of  
Republic of Srpska  
Reference number: 22/11  
Date: 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2011  
Banja Luka

Agency for Development of Higher Education  
and Quality Assurance of Bosnia and  
Herzegovina  
Reference number: \_\_\_/11  
Date: 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2011  
Banja Luka

## **MINUTES FROM THE MEETING BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION ACREDITATION AGENCY OF REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA AND THE AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

The meeting was attended by: PhD Miroslav Bobrek, acting director of Higher Education Accreditation Agency of Republic of Srpska, PhD sc. Nihad Fejzić, Director of the Agency for the Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of Bosnia and Herzegovina, mr Biljana Vojvodic, Chief of Higher Education Department in the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Srpska and Docent PhD Zorica Drljača, Sector for the Legal Affairs in the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The meeting was held in the premises of the Ministry of Education and Culture, starting at 11:00 a.m, ending at 13:30. After the introductory discussions, the following agenda was adopted:

### **AGENDA**

1. Considering joint activities and common issues in the future process in terms of accrediting the higher education institutions in the Republic of Srpska
2. Current cooperation issues and joint activities of two agencies

### **Ad 1.**

PhD M. Bobrek explained the proposed structure of the accreditation process, presented schematically, with the remark that the structure was composed based on the research of the European practice in institutional and program accreditation, including specifics of the higher education in Republic of Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The proposed structure is comprised of 4 phases: pre-accreditation activities, application for accreditation by higher education institution, external evaluation and issuing the decision on accreditation. Detailed scheme of the proposed structure is in an attachment to these minutes.

### **Conclusion 1.1**

The significance of the first phase (PREACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES) was stressed in the conversation, so the higher education institutions get prepared for the future accreditation process in the best possible way. In that respect, the significant role belongs to Accreditation forum as a form of public expert consultations between prominent experts in the area of quality assurance of higher education, representatives of academia and competent state institutions. The focus of these public consultations should be directed towards the analysis and evaluation of the effectiveness of conducted self-evaluation

processes with reference to standards and criteria. It is also emphasised that these activities should not lead towards the creation of stereotype and unification of the process of internal quality assurance in various higher education institutions, but to direct the higher education institutions towards emphasising their specifics and good practice. That shall contribute to the variety of approaches and higher education concepts, what is one of the principles of the European higher education space.

#### Conclusion 1.2

In the activity named FORMING THE EXPERT COMMISSION, there are joint activities of both agencies, and the following principles shall be respected in its realisation:

- When proposing the Expert Commission, the RS Agency shall perform the previous round of communications and consultations with the potential members from the expert list, as well as with the BiH Agency reference their availability, possible conflict of interests and other relevant issues,
- The decision on forming the expert commission shall be issued by the BiH Agency within 7 days from the day when the proposal was submitted to the RS Agency, stating that the experts shall sign a Contract on mutual liabilities and conditions for engaging, with the RS Agency,
- RS Agency shall appoint the Commission Secretary who shall provide administrative and technical support to the work of the Commission during and after the process of external evaluation,
- RS Agency shall sign a Contract with experts demanding their written declaration about non-existing conflict of interests,
- In September 2011, the BiH Agency shall initiate the hearing about the re-examining the criteria for appointing experts on the list, after which the need of updating the list with new experts shall be evaluated.

#### Conclusion 1.3

In cooperation with the selected institution, the RS Agency shall compose the Training plan for the external evaluation team members. The Secretary of the Commission from the Agency and at least one member of the expert Commission, who will contribute to the development of the effective External Evaluation Plan and Program, must complete the training.

#### Conclusion 1.4

During the development of the External Evaluation Plan, the expert Commission should inform the representatives of the higher education institutions about their findings and total opinion, as well as to provide their own statement about presented findings. After that, the RS Agency shall publish the Report or its shorter version on its web site so it is available to all stakeholders.

#### Conclusion 1.5

The possible evaluation models for fulfilling certain standards and criteria were discussed, and the total evaluation score for the higher education institution could come out of it. That would enable the establishment of certain threshold in the form of minimum required score for obtaining the accreditation. The variants of the evaluation scale were discussed, 1-4 or 1-5, as well as the criteria for allocation of the certain level in function of the establishment of certain phases of so-called Deming quality cycle, as applied in some

already existing evaluation models. It is agreed to conduct some additional expert consultations and adjustment.

#### Conclusion 1.6

With the aim of providing the accreditation recommendations, the BiH Agency shall determine whether the Decision on Accreditation is in accordance with the BiH Higher Education Framework Law. It is also agreed that the RS Agency shall submit the request for issuing Recommendation for accreditation accompanied by the Expert commission opinion, and the BiH Agency shall issue the recommendation on accreditation within 15 days from the day of the Request.

#### Conclusion 1.7

Some other issues reference the Higher Education Institution accreditation are supposed to be brought to terms, amongst which the most important is creating the methodology INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAM EVALUATION. This issue as well as other practical issues shall be harmonised through the expert discussion lead before the start of the accreditation process, as well as through the pilot projects which are ongoing in higher education institutions in BiH.

#### **Ad 2.**

In the discussion reference the possibilities and forms of cooperation between the two agencies, the significance of joint and coordinated activities on establishing the valid accreditation system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is stressed. It is already evident that the accreditation process in certain segments shall have various solutions in the entities, i.e. certain cantons, depending on the established and enforced legal solutions. The joint activities shall be realised through:

- Participation in joint projects such as TEMPUS, TWINING etc,
- Preparation and organisation of the joint conference in September, dedicated to the Higher education institution accreditation process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

MINUTES COMPILED BY  
Nataša Rodić

DIRECTOR OF HEAA RS

PhD Miroslav Bobrek

DIRECTOR OF HEA BiH

PhD Nihad Fejzić