Committed to Excellence

KIMEP UNIVERSITY

KIMEP University's policy
for quality assurance in education

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KIMEP University is the oldest and largest US-style University in Central Asia. It is an independent, not-for-profit educational institution serving a multicultural and multinational student body.

The KIMEP University's quality assurance policy complies with the international approaches to quality assurance in higher education, including requirements of the quality assurance in U.S. higher education, and "European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG) as well as the national educational policy formulated by Ministry of education and science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

KIMEP University's quality assurance policy is a direct outgrowth of the University's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan where it is stated that its vision for the future is to become a "World Class" university. The University's plan for quality assurance can now be fully operationalized while at the same time recognizing that the colleges and departments comprising the University are at different places in their readiness and ability to implement aspects of the policy based on their prior history. As a result, the various colleges and departments of the University continue to move at different speeds during the implementation process as the necessary human and physical infrastructure are being developed and put into place.

The term Quality Assurance, or QA is commonly used in some settings. KIMEP understands that quality is dynamic and a continuous process that may be better captured by terms such as CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) which implies that quality is a continuous ongoing process much like the continuous iterations of the P-D-S-A (Plan-Do-Study-Act) popularized by W. Edwards Deming during the 1950s.
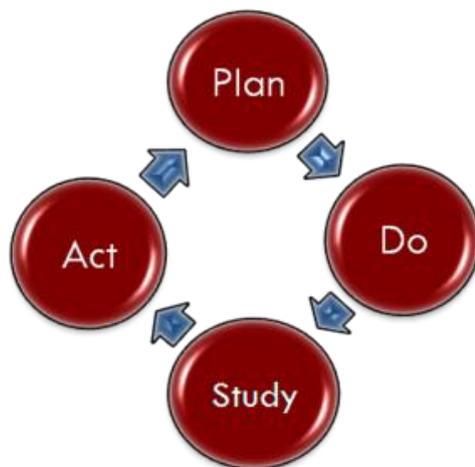
KIMEP has established a framework for effective quality assurance that is compatible with the mechanisms for both institutional, departmental, and programme quality assurance. It is embedded in each college and department, both academic and non-academic.

Purpose of quality assurance

The purpose of the quality assurance policy is to establish a common set of core values for quality assurance within the field of education for the entire university and across the different departments and main academic areas.
The quality assurance policy contains both the university's overall vision for education and learning, including principles for quality assurance, as well as a number of objectives for this work. The quality assurance policy must support KIMEP University's strategy in the field of education and also contribute to quality assure and further develop the degree programmes at KIMEP University.
The quality assurance system must provide documentation for KIMEP University's educational activities. It must also contribute towards enabling the study programme directors and the boards of

studies make decisions based on a sound basis with a view to further developing the quality of the university's degree programmes.

Quality assurance is defined as the total of all activities and methods aimed at systematically and purposefully developing and documenting the quality of the university's efforts in the field of education.

KIMEP University offers both practitioner-oriented and research-based degree programmes that are characterised by their strong academic professionalism. The good study environment is constantly in focus as an important element in student learning. Teaching practices and forms are constantly developed to maximise student learning outcomes, involvement and motivation.

The university's graduates are innovative and capable of transforming knowledge and ideas into action in the national and international labour market of the future.

The university's graduates are active alumni who view their education as a foundation for life-long learning.

Principles for quality assurance

Quality assurance at KIMEP University is based on KIMEP University's vision for education and learning, and is supported by the following principles:

☐ Overall responsibility for quality assurance and its documentation lies with the programme/department chair or associate dean overseeing the programme, and is carried out in collaboration between the academic management, staff and students.

☐ Quality assurance starts with the meeting between the students and the academic staff, who are the primary participants in the quality assurance and the development of the degree programmes. The university is characterised by having highly qualified staff, for whom quality assurance is an integral part of the activities of the university.

☐ Going forward, quality assurance is founded on professionalism, dialogue and knowledge sharing. Quality assurance supports a systematic and sustained development of quality within the entire field of education and it also contains sufficient retrospective focus to meet the legislative requirements regarding documentation.

☐ External stakeholders are involved on an ongoing basis as part of the evaluation and development of quality assurance.

☐ The prerequisite for successful systematic quality assurance is that the specific objectives contained in related sub-policies are interpreted, clarified and carried out by the involved parties at all levels of the organisation on the basis of a clear division of responsibilities.

Academic Quality Assurance

The academic structure of KIMEP University was created to ensure appropriate academic oversight of all Colleges and academic-related departments, programmes and curriculum, faculty, budget, assessment strategies, programme reviews, and quality assurance. See Addendum 1 for Academic Affairs Organizational Chart.

Each KIMEP College or Academic Division is responsible to create their own continuous quality improvement process. This process includes annual and cyclical programme reviews, which incorporates reviews of programmes, programme faculty, financial, curriculum, assessment reports, and program effectiveness. As stated, there are two types of programme reviews. Annual programme reviews generally are limited in scope to particular program learning outcomes, although they contain valuable information regarding partial programme and curriculum overview, an overview of faculty, a financial overview, student learning overview, program effectiveness, and an executive summary. Full programme reviews take place every 3-5 years and incorporate much of the same information as the annual programme reviews but also include an overview of all programme learning outcomes and

student learning assessments. This information in both the annual and full programme review are used to make revisions to the curriculum and programme effectiveness and help determine the market needs, student interests, value added, and financial impact. Both types of Programme Reviews are completed in the fall semester of the following year that the data was collected and analysed. After they are completed the program reviews are sent to the VPAA and the Curriculum Review, Quality Assurance, and Admission and Scholarship Standing Subcommittee for review and feedback. In instances where there are major issues or revisions they should be presented to the Academic Council and the President's Cabinet. Please see Addendum 2 for further information regarding information required for programme reviews.

Oversight and Process of Academic Quality Assurance

Various departments as well as the Academic Council oversee the academic quality assurance process at KIMEP University. The office of the VPAA oversees the overall structure of each College and academic department to ensure that a viable QA process is undertaken by each college and academic department. However, this office relies on information from Deans, with additional review by the Academic Council, and the Office of Quality Assurance and Institutional Research.

The process for general academic quality assurance and decision-making includes various committees that review all significant revisions of academic polices and major changes in procedures. Many items begin with individual faculty or groups of faculty bringing attention to a particular issue. That issue may be taken to their respective Dean to discuss in the weekly Dean's meeting (members include the VPAA, Deans, and the Director of the Language Center) and held on Tuesday afternoons in the VPAA's office or may be taken directly to Academic Council which generally meets every other Friday afternoon in Hall #237 in the Valikhanov Building. Minutes of these meetings are readily available and distributed to members of the respective committees for their approval. If an academic issue is taken to the Dean's meeting prior to going to the Academic Council, either the respective Dean or VPAA will take this issue to the Academic Council for their review, input, and possible approval. In many cases where the decision has negligible effect on the operations of the University or does not conflict with KIMEP policies, the Academic Council has final approval. However, in other instances, the decision of the Academic Council is taken to the President's Cabinet which generally meets each Monday afternoon at Hall 1 in the Dostyk Building. The President's Cabinet can either approve the Academic Council's decision or not approve their decision. If the President's Cabinet and/ or Board of Directors/Board of Trustees reject a motion passed by the Council, the President's Cabinet and Board of Directors/Board of Trustees shall return it to the Council stating in writing the reasons for disagreeing. If the Council reaffirms a motion rejected by the President's Cabinet and Board of Directors/Board of Trustees and does so by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, the motion is then sent to the President's Cabinet and Board of Directors/Board of Trustees for reconsideration and for further approval by President's Cabinet and Board of Directors / Board of Trustees.

Academic Council
The purpose of the Academic Council of KIMEP University (the "Council") is to manage the academic affairs of KIMEP University. The Council has qualified competence a expressly provided by Article 6.4 of the KIMEP University Charter. The Council has explicit authority for Preliminary approval of new academic programs of KIMEP University and developing recommendations for further approval by President's Cabinet and Board of Directors. The Academic Council also is responsible for the oversight of academic quality assurance and curriculum review through the Curriculum Review, Quality Assurance, and Admission and Scholarship Standing Subcommittee. College Deans, Director of the Language Center, the Registrar, Director of the Admission and Financial Aid Office, and Deputy to the President for Student Recruitment & Admission shall have representation on his committee, directly or by proxy, and provide administrative support for the

committee. Others with expertise in QA, assessment, and CQI will also be appointed by the Chair of the Academic Council in consultation with its members.

This subcommittee reviews curriculum to ensure alignment with the National Qualifications Framework, to ensure that each program submits viable program reviews, and also oversees the academic CQI process. The function of the committee shall be to evaluate, analyze, and determine the appropriateness of any new programs or courses, or of changes in existing programs, criteria to established for quality assurance controls over all matters of academic import, and to make recommendations concerning admission and scholarship, including additional criteria and student enrollment rules not covered by State standards for each major. The Chairperson of the subcommittee shall have the discretion to determine that a proposed change is sufficiently minor that it does not require full review by the subcommittee and the Council.

Please see Addendum 3 for further details regarding the Academic Council and its standing subcommittees.

The Office of Quality Assurance and Institutional Research

Although the Office of Quality Assurance and Institutional Research deals with development of the systems for assuring the quality of activity by developing practices of evaluation and internal reviews of KIMEP University, the Academic Council provides the monitoring of the academic Continuous Quality Improvement process. In addition, QAIR aims to ensure regular quality monitoring of academic activity and educational milieu, utilizing feedback from faculty, students, staff, alumni, employers and other stakeholders for revealing aspects that require further enhancement.

QAIR's primary areas of responsibility include:

- conducting regular surveys among students, faculty, staff, alumni and their employers;
- providing KIMEP University's top management with analytical data on academic activity and educational milieu;
- providing external organizations: state authorities, partner HEIs, agencies for ranking of HEIs, national and international accreditation agencies etc. with information on activity of KIMEP University;
- developing cooperation with local and international partners for the purpose of experience exchange and general strategies determination for development of academic quality.

QAIR began its activity in the area of institutional research and assessment in January 2005 from studying the international experience. In spring 2005 the first student satisfaction and alumni surveys were conducted and the regular teaching evaluation survey was introduced being accompanied with detailed reports to KIMEP University's top management and academic community. From AY 2005-06 elaboration and implementation of KIMEP University's faculty and staff satisfaction surveys has begun.

QAIR regularly analyzes evaluations and feedbacks from:

- students on academic activity efficiency with regard to all courses studied (Faculty Teaching Evaluation Survey) and servicing level of support units (Student satisfaction Survey);
- faculty members on working conditions, possibilities for professional development and quality of management of KIMEP (Faculty Satisfaction Survey);
- graduates on quality of knowledge and skills gained, satisfaction with academic and support services (Graduating Student Exit Survey);

- alumni on quality of their professional qualifications and employment conditions (KIMEP Alumni Survey);
- Employers on quality of academic training and professional skills of alumni (Survey of KIMEP University Alumni Employers').

In addition to the above QAIR conducts focus groups, as well as number of specialized surveys upon requests including prospective students, first-year students, students' parents and other stakeholder surveys. Reports of QAIR surveys are available to KIMEP University's community and wide public via Survey results link.

QAIR actively cooperates with the Bologna Process and Academic Mobility Center of the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) of RK and the Independent Quality Assurance Agency of Kazakhstan, regularly submitting KIMEP University's information to national HEIs ratings undertaken by these agencies on annual basis. QAIR prepares and presents regular quarterly, semiannual and annual reports in the frames of HEIs monitoring conducted by the Department of Graduate and Post-graduate Education of MES of RK.

Sub-sections regarding Quality Assurance

Quality assurance in the field of education is divided into five sub-sections:
 1) Recruitment and admission,
2) Structure and process,
3) Development of education, teaching and learning environment,
4) Study environment and
 5) The relation between the degree programmes and the labour market. A range of objectives specifying common values for quality assurance have been formulated for each sub-section.

1 Recruitment and commencement of studies
KIMEP University's objective is to attract well-qualified, talented Kazakhstani, Central Asia and international students.
KIMEP University wishes to promote a conscious and qualified choice of degree programme and give the new students a good transition to life as a student at the university. The systematic efforts to continue to work with recruitment and admission mean that:
1.1 Both local and international students are given the opportunity to make a conscious choice of degree programme based on a well-informed and impartial foundation, achieved by providing them with knowledge of the contents and requirements of the degree programmes as well as life as a student.
1.2 The university's degree programmes are communicated to potential students with consideration of the university's strategic objectives and the needs of society.
1.3 The students are offered a start to their studies, which promotes academic integration, an introduction to academic skills and supports a good study environment.
1.4 The international students are provided with knowledge of the linguistic, cultural and educational conditions upon which the teaching at KIMEP University is based.
1.5 Both local and international students have the opportunity to make a conscious choice of Undergraduate and Graduate degree programmes based on a well-informed and impartial foundation, with a particular focus on job opportunities.

2 Structure and process for academic programmes
KIMEP University's objective is to offer degree programmes with academic progression and study activity equivalent to the ECTS prescribed for the overall study programme. The degree programmes are structured so that the students have the opportunity for flexibility and mobility and thus can influence their own education with a view to strengthening learning and motivation, as well as increasing the number of students who complete programmes. The systematic efforts to continue to

work with the structure of the degree programmes, the courses offered and the courses themselves entail that:

2.1 The degree programmes are organised in such a way that there is an academic progression during the programme as a whole, while also being either practitioner-oriented and/or research-based with focus on meeting the specific educational objectives as well as the development of general academic competences.

2.2 The structure, content and context of the degree programmes are communicated to the students, such that the students have a well-informed and supervised basis on which to form an overview of relevant degree programmes and courses, and in this way, be able to make qualified decisions during the course of the study programme.

2.3 The teaching offered and requirements for study activity for the degree programmes are equivalent to the ECTS prescribed for the degree programmes.

2.4 There is a transparent and flexible practice for merit in relation to descriptions of objectives with a view to ensuring academic excellence and strengthening the mobility of students both nationally and internationally.

3 Development of education, teaching and learning environment

KIMEP University aims to offer and develop attractive research-based and attractive experiential degree programmes based on solid academic competences, affiliated with an active research environment, so that the students may be educated to the highest level while allowing them to unfold their talents. The university's learning environments must be motivational for the students and supportive of the university's degree programmes, with room for in-depth academic concentration and development. The systematic efforts to constantly develop degree programmes, teaching and learning environments at KIMEP University entails that:

3.1 KIMEP University's educational profile is developed on the basis of the university's strategic objectives while taking into account society's needs.

3.2 The study programme directors and the boards of studies, together with the academic environments, develop the academic profile and the educational objectives for the degree programmes in collaboration with the students, graduates, co-examiners, and employers through, among other things, systematic assessment of all or parts of a given degree programme.

3.3 The research-based degree programmes are organised to the greatest possible extent by active researchers based on the most relevant and latest research within the subject area, just as the students receive the opportunity to acquire and practice scientific working methods over the course of the degree programme.

3.4 The physical surroundings are developed so that they contribute to stimulate learning, and the lecturers make use of both the physical surroundings and 21st century learning environments to create attractive study and learning atmospheres for the students.

3.5 Digital learning environments will be developed with a view to supporting learning in its various phases.

3.6 The selected method of teaching provides an opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and competences that are included in the educational objectives, and which are tested at the exam. There is a balance between the clearly formulated and communicated educational objectives and the evaluation criteria that are announced in relation to the exam.

3.7 The method of evaluation used is developed on an ongoing basis and is valid, transparent and relevant, as well as motivational and part of the learning process. The students are assessed based on recognised and accessible national and international criteria, regulations and procedures, which are consistently applied in collaboration with the organisation of co-examiners.

3.8 The students' assessment of the teaching and course are included in the development of these through systematic evaluation based on learning and evaluation theory.

3.9 Good teaching and teaching development is recognised, credited, rendered visible and supported by a clear salary and incentive structure for staff with educational responsibilities.

3.10 Lecturers' didactic academic skills will be shaped, maintained and advanced for student teachers, PhD students, part-time staff, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors alike, and there is focus on teaching-related skills when appointments are made.

3.11 The part-time teaching staff are assigned to full-time academic staff and KIMEP environments. The part-time teaching staff must have access to the university's activities and resources for promoting quality in the areas of teaching and education.

4 Study environments

KIMEP University's objective is to provide an attractive study environment, which contributes to attracting and retaining both Kazakhstan and international students. A good study environment entails academic and social integration, involvement, wellbeing and supports learning. The systematic efforts to continuously develop the study environment at KIMEP University entail that:

4.1 The attractive study environment is based on academic integration, which is created through dialogue between study program leadership, academic environments and the students.

4.2 The study environment is supported by a stimulating learning environment in which teaching staff and students interact.

4.3 Both local and international students participate in the academic community, just as support is provided to initiatives aimed at academic and social integration of the students.

4.4 The students are offered individual or collective student guidance and feedback on their academic performance with a view to increasing learning.

4.5 The students are offered student guidance throughout their studies, and students with special needs are also offered consultancy on resources and conditions.

4.6 The physical, social, aesthetic and digital facilities are developed, so that they support the study environment.

5 The relation between the degree programmes and the labour market

KIMEP University's objective is that degree programmes completed at the university will educate graduates for the regional, national and international labour market and provide the opportunity for attractive jobs and careers. The students must experience coherence between the content of the degree programmes and the requirements of the labour market - nationally and internationally. Graduates from KU can contribute with the most up-to-date knowledge, skills and interdisciplinary competences, all of which create value for society. The graduates are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities for continued professional development and lifelong learning offered through KIMEP. The systematic efforts to continue to work with the relation between the degree programmes and the labour market entail that:

5.1 The students' insight into and contact with a future labour market is enhanced, partly through the possibility of including a project-orientated course, and partly through the opportunity to carry out project-based assignments in collaboration with national and/or foreign private and/or public-sector enterprises as part of their degree programme.

5.2 The students are offered strong academic study programmes that provide the opportunity of entrepreneurial and interdisciplinary education and modules.

5.3 The path from education to job is facilitated by continuous offers of information and career guidance regarding completion of the study programme, and career options including information on the international labour market.

5.4 The relevance of the degree programmes in relation to the requirements of the labour market are developed on an informed basis through ongoing, published studies of the employment situation of graduates and through strengthened dialogue with students, alumni and employers respectively.

5.5 The range of continuing and further education courses offered is developed in such a way that graduates will be given the opportunity to continue their academic development in continuation of their previous degree programme or as a supplement to this.

The quality assurance policy is drawn up by the VPAA division in cooperation with the academic environments and the students. The policy was approved by the senior management team as of 17 June, 2013 and is applicable from 1 August, 2013.

Addendum 1. Academic Affairs Department – Organizational Structure

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                    │ Vice President of Academic Affairs│          │  Academic Council  │
                    └──────────────────────────────────┘          │ (representatives   │
   ┌──────────────┐                                               │ from academic      │
   │  VPAA'       │         ┌─────────────────────────┐           │ Colleges)          │
   │ Office staff │ ······· │ Associate VPAA (vacant) │ ········· └────────────────────┘
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Bang College of Business	**College of Social Sciences**	**Language Center**	**School of Law**	Registry Department	Computer Information Systems Center	Library	**Dean of General Education**
Departments:	Departments:						
- Management & Marketing	- Public Administration	World Languages and Preparatory Program			Technical Services for Educational Purposes Department		
- Accounting & Finance	- Economics						
	- International Relations and Regional Studies						
	- Media and Communications						

Executive Education Center:
Administration

Executive MBA Program

Professional Development & Certificate Program