



# QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK

Almaty, 2018

## **KIMEP University**

### **Quality Assurance Handbook**

KIMEP University is committed to maintaining its academic standards and enhancing the quality of its learning and teaching provisions as well as the quality of its educational services.

The Quality Assurance Framework provides an overview of our academic and non-academic (administrative) quality assurance processes and their interrelationships, a brief summary of information about these processes, and further links to full statements of the processes and procedures.

**For students:** the University is committed to providing a high quality learning experience. The direct contribution that students make to this by providing feedback, advice and suggestions is critical. Input from students is a key feature of all our quality enhancement and assurance processes: we need students to give us their perspective.

**For staff:** The quality and commitment of academic staff are critical to maintaining and enhancing the high quality of learning and teaching. The University fully recognizes that all staff, both academic and administrative, are continuously reflecting upon and seeking to improve practice in all areas of our work to advance learning, teaching and research in their disciplines and the quality of the student learning environment. The Quality Assurance Framework and the processes it encompasses are intended to be appropriate and meaningful vehicles to support reflection and to capture, recognize, and disseminate the excellent practice that is characteristic of our provision.

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*We value quality in our education programs and research activities:  
The Standards of Integrity and Quality – KIMEP (the Faculty code of Practice, p.59)*

## 1. KIMEP University Mission

The mission of KIMEP University is to develop well-educated citizens and to improve the quality of life in Kazakhstan and the Central Asian region through teaching, learning, and the advancement of knowledge in the fields of business administration and social sciences as well as through community service.

## 2. KIMEP University Core Values

1. An academic environment which fosters integrity, mutual trust, free exchange of ideas, lifelong learning and encourages students, faculty, and staff to reach their highest potential.
2. Intellectual and personal honesty in learning, teaching, research, and service.
3. The well-being of students, faculty, and staff.
4. An inclusive environment for students, their parents, alumni, staff, faculty, and the wider community, blind to nationality, gender, age, religion, or other factors not related to the purposes of the University.
5. The development of the future leaders of society who will embrace the highest ethical standards.
6. The University's high reputation and its important contribution to the growth of society.
7. Transparent decision making, free from favoritism, nepotism, or corruption.

## 3. KIMEP University Governance

### *The Board of Trustees*

The governing body of KIMEP University is the Board of Trustees. The main purpose of the Board of Trustees/Board of Directors is to hold the University in trust for public service. The Board is responsible for making key decisions relating to the strategic development of KIMEP University, the utilization of up-to-date international educational technologies, and the development of research activities and international academic collaboration.

### *President's Cabinet*

The President's Cabinet is the executive body of KIMEP University and consists of the President, Provost and General Deputy to the President, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Student Affairs, Vice President of Finance, Dean of the Law School, Dean of the Bang College of Business, Dean of General Education, Acting Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Executive Director of the Language Center. The Cabinet has the right to make decisions on any issues of KIMEP University operations that are not covered by legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan and are not governed (according to the Charter) by other bodies and officials of KIMEP University, including financial management, strategic planning, development of organizational structure of the institution, and resolution of departmental or programmatic issues.

## 4. KIMEP University Quality Assurance Policy Goals

The quality management system of KIMEP University has been designed with the aim of:

- enhancing the quality of education and research and maintaining high standards,

- enhancing key stakeholders' satisfaction (students, academic staff, researchers, non-academic staff, prospective employers, other organizations and institutions connected to higher education) and striving to meet their needs as best as possible;
- improving operational effectiveness.

The quality management system of the University is based upon the following documents:

- KIMEP University Strategic Plan, 2018-2021;
- "European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG2015);
- Ministry of Education and Science of RK policies and regulations;
- Independent Agency for Quality Assurance in education (IQAA, <https://iqaa>) standards;
- KIMEP University Policy for Quality Assurance in Education, revised by Academic council on December 15, 2017.

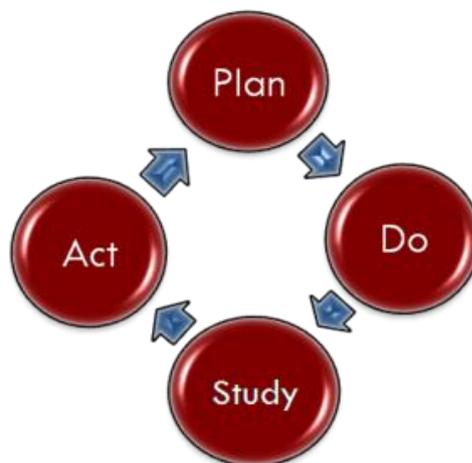
## 5. University Quality Management System and Structure

The quality management system includes both academic and non-academic areas of University functions. The task of quality management and the role of the quality handbook is to review and coordinate the operation of different subsystems that are critical to achieving quality requirements.

The process of quality assurance in each major component consists of four stages:

- (1) developing regulations and planning,
- (2) collecting data quality,
- (3) analyzing data findings and
- (4) making revisions or changes based on data analysis.

The term Quality Assurance, or QA is commonly used in many settings. KIMEP understands that quality is a 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 program quality assurance. It is embedded in each college and department, both academic and non-academic and utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data. The results of this continuous quality assurance process is

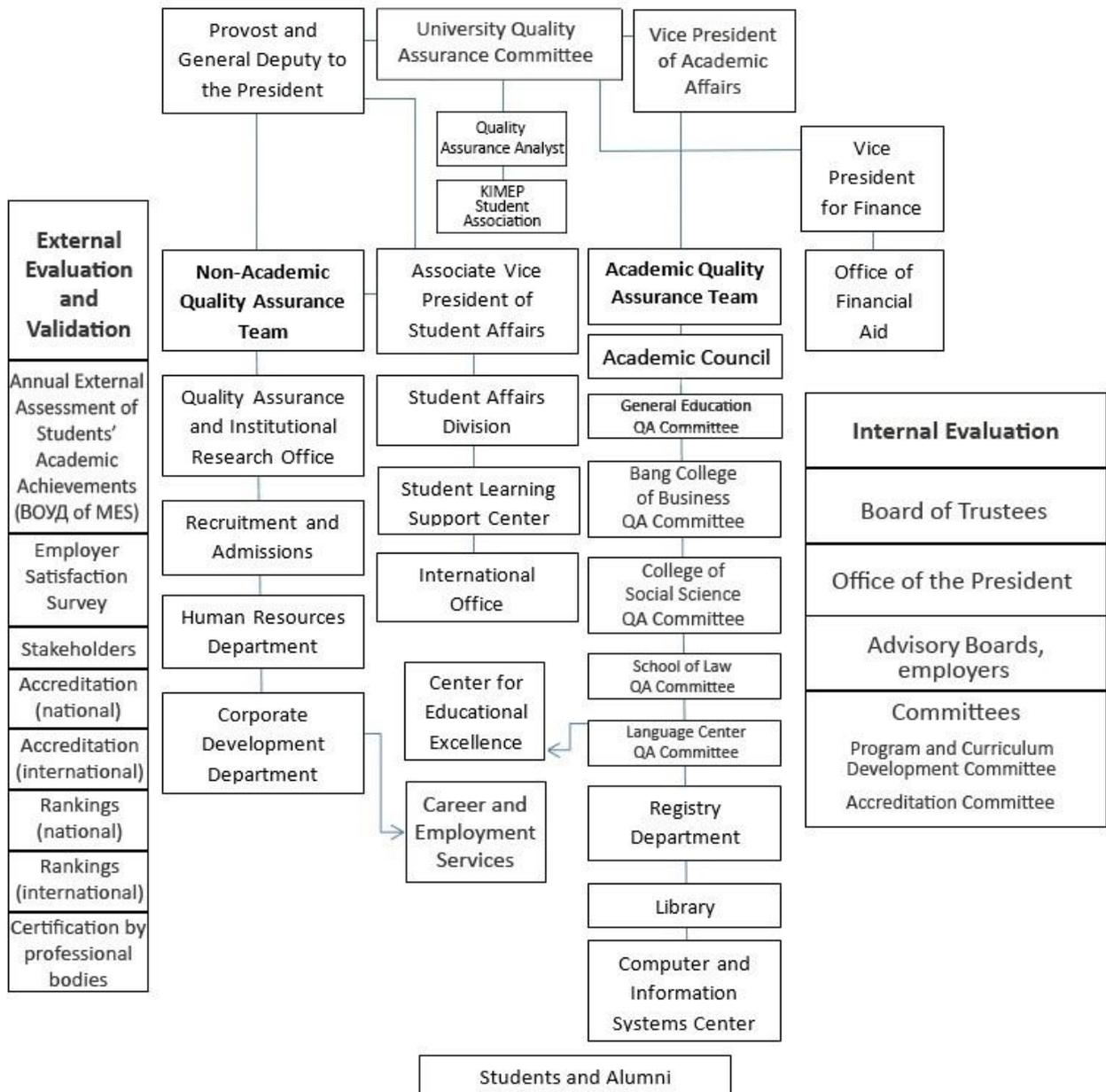
published for transparency and may benefit all internal and external stakeholders in their decision-making.

*Regulation and planning* ensures that the quality management system is well-coordinated and complete, and terms of reference and responsibilities are well-defined. Regulation also ensures the anonymity of respondents and easy access to findings.

*Assessment of satisfaction* with certain activities or resources means that end users are requested to give feedback in terms of outcomes of certain activities or resources. This activity in its narrow sense comprises procedures to collect and analyze data in terms of satisfaction (such as student satisfaction or academic staff satisfaction, etc.), and in its broader sense it covers procedures to collect data in relation to any activity or any resource.

University citizens (students and faculty) and external stakeholders (prospective and former students, employers and government) can reasonably expect to be regularly informed in relation to the operational effectiveness and efficiency of the university. The university stakeholders are provided opportunities to voice their opinion and to make comments. Under regulations, a framework is provided to ensure access to results.

### Quality management structure of KIMEP University



The University Quality Assurance Committee was set up by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs by Order # 127/1 dated August 28, 2018 and was intended to develop, coordinate, monitor and review the tasks and activities in terms of quality management and quality assurance of the University.

The purpose of the Committee is:

- to establish principles, quality standards and regulations in terms of education, research and administration of the University;
- to develop the quality control strategy of the University and elaborate a methodology for monitoring;
- to monitor how quality principles are applied and quality policy objectives are achieved; and
- to coordinate the quality management of the University.

The Committee operates under the supervision of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The main responsibility of the Committee is coordination in terms of quality management and quality assurance across the University. It intends to provide support to university and faculty leadership to fulfil their quality commitments – by involving other stakeholders – as best as they can. The Committee is not a decision-making body; it only takes positions and provides recommendations in regard to university quality issues. Activities, operation and operational regulations are defined by the Committee itself. Sub-committees are set up to provide support to priority quality areas.

Within the framework of the quality management system the following fields are given priority:

- quality assurance of study and research programs
- quality assurance of institution management
- quality assurance of support infrastructure in relation to teaching, learning and research
- quality assurance of human resources

### **Academic Council**

The Academic Council is the collegiate body of KIMEP University that gives faculty members and students of KIMEP University a formal mode of communication to express to the VPAA and to the President's Cabinet the considered recommendations of the faculty and students. The purpose of the Academic Council is to manage general academic affairs, oversee academic quality assurance and curriculum review, and develop recommendations for further approval by the President's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees.

The Chair of the Academic Council and Academic Council meet regularly to decide academic policies and procedures and to advise the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

The Council has qualified competence in:

- Preliminary approval of new academic programs of KIMEP University and making recommendations for further approval by President's Cabinet and Board of Directors / Board of Trustees;
- Development of faculty hiring plans and preliminary approval of professional development plans for faculty and researchers for further approval by the President's Cabinet;
- Participation in discussions on budget, strategic planning, enrollment and Faculty Code of Practice;
- Participation in development and use of KIMEP University Catalog to be further approved by President's Cabinet;
- Conferment of academic degrees to students who have completed educational programs of their choice; and
- Conferment of honorary degrees and academic titles.

**Advisory Board** serves in an advisory role to the deans and its members and are essential advocates for the school. Advisory board members are representatives of alumni, business communities, NGOs and advise Colleges on issues related to business education, relations with the business community, and the main initiatives of the University. The primary functions and tasks of the Board are as follows:

- Ensuring effective feedback between business/executive education of KIMEP and the business community;
- Bringing KIMEP's business education in compliance with the needs of the business community;
- Ensuring that the graduates of the University are ready to make a positive contribution to the work of employer organizations; and
- Overseeing and evaluating the efficiency and relevance of education programs offered by KIMEP to ensure compliance of academic programs with tasks set.

The list of candidates for Advisory Board membership is presented by Corporate Development Department (CDD) to the deans and then approved by the College Council.

### ***KIMEP University Administration***

KIMEP's chief executive officer is the President.

Senior administrative officers of KIMEP University include the Provost and General Deputy to the President, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Vice President of Finance and the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs.

The *Provost and General Deputy to the President (PGDP)* leads the Non-Academic Quality Assurance Team. The PGDP ensures stable functioning of all areas of academic process; submits improvement proposals; organizes university management based on the latest achievements in equipment and technology, as well as local and international expertise in the field of education; oversees all University matters - academic and economic operations, as well as innovative and strategic operations of the University; and resolves all matters of financial, economic, operating and business nature.

The *Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)* leads the Academic Quality Assurance Team. The VPAA is responsible for all operations of the university related to academic leadership, curriculum, and personnel management for the academic division, as well as budget planning and fiscal management for the academic division.

The *Vice President of Finance (VPF)* develops and implements strategic improvements in financial management, risk mitigation, and financial reporting processes, and monitors operational activity of financial aid distribution to ensure compliance with University policies and budget demands.

The *Associate Vice President of Student Affairs (AVPSA)* is responsible for developing appropriate programs and services to increase student retention, including new student orientation, academic advising, and learning support services.

The *Dean/Executive Director* coordinates the assessment and development of academic programs within the School/College/Center, preparing and revising, as necessary, academic program plans for the School/College/Center. The academic programs are directed by the deans of the Bang College of Business, the College of Social Science, the Law School, General Education, and the Executive Director of the Language Center, who are collectively responsible for KIMEP's non-degree, foundation, bridging, undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs.

The *Chair of the department* submits new courses, major revisions of existing courses, and deletion of courses proposed by the department for action by college executive committee and by the dean. In academic matters, the department chair takes initiatives and supervises the program. Decisions are made on a collegial basis through department committees. The chair organizes the teaching schedule with the support of the Program Coordinator and seeking consent by faculty members. The program curriculum is regularly updated to comply with Ministry of Education and Science requirements, meet higher academic standards and to increase attractiveness of the program. Activities within an academic year are analyzed and documented on a regular basis and reported to the dean. The results of program reviews inform discussions within departments.

*Academic Administrators* ensure timely completion of all required reviews and reconciliations, including faculty teaching and merit reviews, college or unit reviews, program reviews, and administrative reviews.

The *Director of the Library* and *Director of Computer and Information Systems Center* are concerned with the quality of academic resources for students.

## 6. Academic Quality Management

Teaching and learning is the primary focus of QA policy.

### *Quality assurance of study programs*

The main components of a QA system for teaching and learning relate to the enhancement of academic programs: the monitoring of student assessments, academic staff, and student support structures; and enhancement of doctoral studies, distance learning programs, and academic support services.

The academic structure of KIMEP University ensures the appropriate oversight of all colleges and academic affairs departments, programs and curriculum, faculty, budget, and assessment strategies. Each college or academic division is responsible for creating their own continuous quality improvement process to include annual and cyclical program reviews. Annual program reviews are not limited in scope to particular program learning outcomes but also include overviews of curriculum, faculty, finances, market analyses, student learning, and program effectiveness. Full program reviews take place every 3-5 years and incorporate thorough assessments of similar information in addition to an overview of all program learning outcomes and student learning assessments.

Information from both annual and cyclical reports is used to make revisions to the curriculum and program effectiveness, and to determine market needs, student interest, and financial impact. Both types of program review are completed in the fall semester following the academic year in which data was collected and analyzed. After completion, program reviews are sent to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the institutional Program and Curriculum Development Committee for review and feedback. In instances of major issues or revisions, program reviews are presented to the Academic Council and the President's Cabinet.

The college/department Quality Assurance Committee reviews course management forms, student evaluations and other surveys and grading patterns with the aim of providing feedback to individual faculty members. It also monitors implementation of its recommendations. The

Program and Curriculum Development Committee, receiving input from the QA Committee and Advisory Board, reviews the different elements of the program with the aim of further developing the program. Regular program reviews consider all available evidence. The college QA Committee reviews grading patterns across the college and the implementation of recommendations. The Academic Council coordinates catalogue changes affecting more than one department.

### **6.1. Course and Program Design and Approval**

The University's procedures for the design and approval of new courses and programs exist to ensure academic standards are set at the appropriate level. The University's excellent reputation relies on this and, therefore, it is essential that these procedures are both robust and effective. They ensure that consideration is given to:

- availability of resources;
- coherence and academic standards of constituent courses;
- standardization and appropriateness of awards offered on completion of proposed programs;
- relevance and appeal of programs and courses for potential students; and
- compatibility with other programs and courses offered and the strategic objectives of the leading School as well as the University as a whole.

### **6.2. Quality of Courses**

As courses are the building blocks of the program, it is essential that the quality of courses is kept under review. This is done as part of annual program review that is completed in the fall of each year which analyzes the previous academic year. However, each semester the program managers, as well as the Program and Curriculum Development Committee and the University Quality Assurance Committee, conduct the following:

- Syllabus review
- Course management
- Grade review

Consideration of proposals is informed by consultation with key stakeholders to provide externality and *objectivity*: students, external examiners and employers, professional/statutory/regulatory bodies and industry/professional partners where appropriate.

### **6.3. Course management**

KIMEP has a long-standing policy stipulating that faculty submit a course management form at the end of each semester for each course. College-level course quality management ensures that:

- course syllabi provided to students:
  - have accurate and adequate information; and
  - embody learning process and assessment methods that prepare and enable students to demonstrate the achievement of the Learning Outcomes at the required academic standard.
- teaching practices in the classroom are of acceptable rigor; and
- the assessment of students is transparent, fair, and reasonable.

This requires that the College course quality management process is consistent, transparent, and rigorous, to demonstrate the achievement of academic excellence in teaching and learning.

Colleges have to be able to demonstrate that acceptable standards have been achieved and sustained with respect to:

- program design and curriculum development;
- course syllabus design and development;
- assessment of student success;
- academic staff (teaching and research performance);
- teaching and learning methods;
- learning resources;
- student support services;
- teaching and learning facilities;
- information systems for:
  - students;
  - academics; and management; and
- information made available to the public.

#### **6.4. Faculty Responsibilities for Syllabus Information**

Faculty members will post on the L-drive a course syllabus one week before class begins unless rescheduling and changes of instructor occur, in which situation, the course syllabus must be provided/posted on the L-drive by the last day of the add/drop period as scheduled by the Registrar. The syllabus must clarify how attendance and participation affect, if at all, the student's course grade. The syllabus must identify fixed dates for examinations and fixed due dates for graded assignments. First and second midterm exam dates as well as the final exam date must follow the Academic Calendar and final exam schedule provided by the Registrar.

Faculty members are strongly encouraged to use a daily written record for student attendance and to clarify how participation will be evaluated, in addition to communicating criteria at the beginning of the semester for evaluating any graded assignment.

Faculty members have a responsibility to meet every class period according to the Registrar's class schedule during the semester or term.

Information on academic regulations and Course and Program Approval procedures is provided by the VPAA Office.

#### **6.5. Program review**

Effective program assessment is fundamental to developing a program management system built on the principles of continuous improvement. An effective system has four stages:

- planning for review;
- implementing review;
- analyzing review results; and
- implementing changes.

Programs are reviewed every academic year. Obtained data is analyzed and, if needed, curriculum is amended.

Over the year the college/school/center committee, departmental committee, and the Program and Curriculum Development Committee and as well as Quality Assurance committee carry out regular reviews and evaluations of programs with participation of key faculty members, invited

professors, industry leaders, graduates and current students. Program objectives and methods of training are reviewed annually by the Academic Council, which serves as grounds for continuous adjustment and introduction of regular minor changes into educational programs, thus ensuring that a program provides current knowledge to full-time and part-time students, and provides services in business, public and non-profit organizations.

For the continuous process of analysis, improvement and necessary changes in educational programs, the Academic Council and the Quality Assurance Committee function at the level of departments/schools/centers.

These committees should conduct the following monitoring procedures on a regular basis: analysis/adjustment of syllabi and educational and methodological component of programs; analysis of the compliance of goals and objectives of programs and disciplines to set tasks; expected skills and competences, assignments and methods of evaluation; analysis of dynamics of results/assessments of students; adoption of collegial decisions to introduce or modify components of educational programs; and analysis of data received as a result of surveys on satisfaction of students with their academic programs.

Minutes of discussions and decisions of committees are kept on (L-drive: <https://www2.kimep.kz/aspnet/l-drive/default.aspx> L:\CSS Academic Policies).

All KIMEP academic programs undergo annual analysis. Design of new or revision of existing programs always begins with the specific academic program. If a change is very minor, then it can be integrated into the program. Significant changes, agreed upon at the program level, are sent for consideration of the appropriate college committee. The committee considers change, and either approves it or sends it back to the program. If approved, recommended change is included in the agenda of the Program and Curriculum Development Committee and then sent to the Academic Council, which, in most cases, approves a change. If a request contains introduction of a new program and major, then it is sent to the President's Cabinet/Board of Directors for final approval.

Work to improve program quality is carried out under the guidance of the following committees/councils:

- College Committees on relevant programs (undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate) are responsible for overseeing and monitoring the quality and content of all documents related to the educational process and teaching issues, approval of new and endorsing adjustments to previously approved curricula, syllabi and other educational documents;
- The Program and Curriculum Development Committee reviews the findings of the College Curriculum Committee
- Academic Council of KIMEP University defines University's policy in the field of academic quality;
- The Office of Quality Assurance and Institutional Research (QAIR) provides an analysis of surveys of all categories of students, faculty, administrative staff, employers and other external partners on various aspects of University life.

In addition, the general management of educational and methodological work is carried out by the college dean/school dean/director of a center, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the President of KIMEP University. Content of programs and requirements to program majors are developed by the committees of respective programs. Revisions are submitted to the

Institutional Program and Curriculum Development Committee for discussion, and if approved, sent to the Academic Council of the University for approval. All academic programs of KIMEP University are credit-based. The University has developed credit policies, as well as a grading system, which are published in the annual catalog of KIMEP University.

Continuous review to improve the quality of academic programs is conducted systematically. Work on the introduction and implementation of proposals for improving quality of programs is carried out annually in the spring semester. Changes become effective after the final approval by the Academic Council of KIMEP University starting the following academic year and are stated in working curriculum and a Catalog for the following academic year.

The curricula for new academic year are adjusted annually. Changes are made based on program reviews including feedback from students and changes in the State Mandatory Standards of Education (GOSO). The College council is authorized to propose adjustments to the programs after a thorough discussion of proposals. Faculty regularly analyze current curricula and initiate changes in the sequence of disciplines by determining prerequisites for certain courses. Since changes are being made publicly (during college council meetings) faculty have the opportunity to discuss and take into account student performance and feedback from them. After discussion changes are reviewed and approved by the Academic Council of the University they are published in the annual catalog, which is available on the website of KIMEP University at <https://kimep.kz/about/publications/> .

The main aspects of program content are annually provided in the Catalog, including: courses - general education, major and minor required; sequence of study; system of prerequisites; grading scale; degree requirements; and major program requirements.

Additional procedure for self-assessment of the quality of courses taught is the end-of-semester faculty self-report following the Course Management Form. The purpose of this procedure is for the faculty to analyze students' progress in each studied discipline and faculty self-analysis for positive and negative experience during teaching followed by suggestions to improve teaching methods and content of discipline.

The activities of Course and Program Design and Approval, Student Feedback and Student Representation happen on a continuous basis throughout the year (*Faculty Code of Practice, KIMEP University, Effective 1 August 2015*).

#### **6.6. Learning outcomes of the study programs**

Intended competencies of study programs have to be detailed and allocated to different subjects. They are linked to the National Qualification Framework (NQF) as well as the Lisbon Convention. It is the responsibility of the colleges that competencies are aligned across subjects. Questions related to learning outcomes are included in the student satisfaction survey, graduating students' survey, and alumni survey to recognize level of their satisfaction with the competence development of each subject. Labor market representatives are requested through Employers' Satisfaction Survey and BAB to define what competencies the market requires and these lists should be compared and contrasted with those that the university offers. Graduates are asked to evaluate the relevance of competencies their programs are intended to have developed.

Student learning outcomes for the current year are evaluated as part of the annual review of programs. The procedure includes data analysis, evaluation of learning outcomes by courses and certain learning outcomes by programs selected for evaluation annually. After three years of program analysis all tasks, learning outcomes by courses and programs are analyzed, evaluated and revised as needed. Students are informed of changes through college and program employees or employees of the communications department. All changes are also reflected in the Catalog of educational programs.

### **6.7. Program/Course Evaluation**

The University encourages faculty/staff to use a variety of mechanisms to obtain student feedback to promote ongoing dialogue between students and staff and to minimize over-reliance on one particular mechanism. However, the most commonly used method of gathering student feedback is through regular surveys (Faculty Teaching Evaluation Survey, FTES; Student Satisfaction Survey). Among them, there are different types of review.

### **6.8. Student Feedback**

KIMEP University is committed to the principle of student engagement in quality matters at all levels. We rely on the feedback from our students to guide us and to confirm that the improvements we make translate into enhancement of the student learning experience. The University and the KIMEP Student Association (KSA) work to maintain an effective and *coherent* system of student representation that facilitates the participation of students at all levels.

Effective student feedback relies on engagement of both staff and students and, as such, the University places a number of expectations on the two groups.

Staff are expected to:

- explain the purpose of collecting feedback, the methods that will be utilized, how the feedback will be analyzed, how and when the findings will be considered, and how actions taken as a result of the findings will be communicated;
- encourage students to reflect on their learning experience;
- communicate responses to students and staff; and
- communicate matters of interest and importance arising from feedback from students onwards to School, College, Center and the University.

Students are expected to:

- reflect on their learning experience;
- provide feedback on their learning experience and other relevant/associated matters
- engage with Student Representatives/KSA; and
  - check the Student Portal, notice boards, relevant websites, and their University e-mail account for communications from faculty, staff, and KSA.

### **6.9. Quality of teaching staff**

The President's Cabinet is responsible for hiring new faculty. When hiring employees, KIMEP University gives preference to instructors with higher academic degrees and ranks, as well as those with practical experience. Many faculty members are engaged from the international academic community since KIMEP University offers curriculum mainly in English.

Fundamental principles of the University's personnel policy are the engagement of talented and highly qualified professionals, as well as the provision of equal opportunities of employment

regardless of origin, nationality, religion, age and gender (<http://intranet/hr/policy2015/eng/ENG%20HR%20Handbook.doc>).

Recruitment is carried out by announcing a competition to fill a vacant position in mass media, as well as on **HR section** of the University web-site (<https://hr.kimep.kz/en-US/Home/JobSearch>).

The main requirements are: professional competence, fluent English, teaching and research experience; priority is given to instructors with PhD.

In addition to teaching, faculty Job Descriptions include the following duties: research work; participation in Department and College committees; advising students; participation in events organized by employees of KIMEP University.

Personnel policy governing search, selection, hiring, as well as professional development for faculty is set out in the Academic Provisions section of the Faculty Code of Practice of KIMEP University and HR policies (<https://www.kimep.kz/ext/faculty/Documents/2015.pdf>, <https://kimep.kz/about/files/2018/02/17-06-2016-Faculty-Code-of-Practice-June-2016-final-revised.pdf> ).

After being hired instructors usually do teach not more than three disciplines in their first semester. This practice gives new employees to adapt to new working conditions and helps train them. During an academic year faculty members have a variety of opportunities for professional development.

#### ***6.10. Evaluation of the Teaching staff/Monitoring the quality of academic staff performance***

At the end of each academic year, college deans prepare annual faculty evaluations. A form is used which covers all professional and teaching aspects of faculty members. This form evaluates teaching load, research activities (research publications, publication of textbooks, teaching aids, educational and methodological developments, participation in conferences with reports and speeches, scientific research, participation in projects, obtained grants and patents), professional development (organization and participation in professional development courses, workshops, seminars, etc.), administrative work and extracurricular activities (participation in the University and college committees, carrying out special assignments, organization of university and college events, etc.).

The faculty evaluation procedure is set out in the Faculty Code of Practice (<https://kimep.kz/about/files/2018/02/17-06-2016-Faculty-Code-of-Practice-June-2016-final-revised.pdf> , paragraph 38, page.49). The Department of Academic Affairs has developed this procedure. Responsibility for complying with the requirements of the procedure and deadlines for submitting results is upon college deans. Each faculty member conducts a self-evaluation and submits supporting documents that cover three criteria: research work, teaching activities, and participation in administrative work of their college. Documents are considered by college committees. Based on the evaluation outcome, namely based on rating for three evaluation criteria, the following categories are formed: A, B, C, D. Annually President's Cabinet approves annual bonuses (allowances to official salaries) for faculty members of each category. Documentation on annual faculty evaluation is kept in colleges.

Faculty members are regularly reviewed by deans, deputy deans and Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Regular seminars are held to improve the quality of teaching and peer classroom observation. At the end of each semester faculty members complete the Course management form.

Requirements on conducting research work are determined in the criteria for promotion, annual forms of evaluation, policy on awards for publications and the requirements for applying for grants for travel to conferences.

After faculty evaluation is completed, deans submit evaluation results with their recommendations to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. KIMEP University has implemented a system of material incentives for faculty for certain publications. According to this system, the amount of remuneration will depend on where an article/book is published. This can be either local publications recommended by the MES or international publications with a non-zero impact factor.

The Faculty Code of Practice contains specific faculty dismissal procedures. Faculty employment contract can also be terminated at any time during an academic year based on one or more of the following conditions or circumstances:

- Absence in class without approved leave/relevant supporting document;
- Termination of operations of KIMEP University (liquidation of a legal entity);
- Faculty member turns out to be unsuitable for position due to lack of qualifications or for health reasons that does not allow performing job duties (after sick leave);
- Absence of faculty member at workplace for more than two months due to temporary incapacity to work (with the exception of maternity leave and other long-term disability provided for legislation of Kazakhstan);
- Combination of punishable disciplinary reasons;

Other conditions specified in the legislation of Kazakhstan.

### **6.11. Quality of research**

The quality assurance system of the research programs contains mechanisms, regulations and feedback processes that allow research activities to be focused on priority areas. In addition, in the framework of this system research activities can satisfy the high quality requirements. University and faculty regulations concerning research projects and employment regulations regarding requirements for researcher positions are also important.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviews research applications and data request forms submitted involving human subjects; ensures that research is carried out according to guiding principles of respect for autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice; and reviews dissertation topics of doctoral students involving research on human subjects. The IRB is chaired by the VPAA and consists of the Chair of Academic Council and representatives from each college with sufficient research expertise.

### **6.12. Student representation in University quality processes**

The University's arrangements for the involvement of students in University quality processes are inclusive at all levels and are thoroughly embedded. Representatives of student government arrange individual meetings with the President's Cabinet and are voting members of Academic Council and of all relevant University-wide policy or strategic committees (the Institutional Budget Committee; Tender Committee; Student Affairs Disciplinary Committee,

Customer Service Performance Evaluation of Administrative staff); and on College, School, and Center committees.

Representatives of the Student government are members of various committees, beginning with department committee: CSS College Council, Disciplinary Committee and Quality Assurance and Enhancement; BCB College Council, Integrity Committee, and Accreditation/Self Study Steering Committee. Representatives of the Student Government are also members of the Academic Council and participate in the development of course content, give recommendations on designing the schedule, academic calendar, etc.

The KIMEP Student Association appoints 2 student representatives in Academic council as full members with voting rights for a term of one academic year.

Students are involved in internal monitoring by participating in a variety of institutional studies – scheduled or requested by individual units. Various groups are actively involved in external monitoring, including employers, parents of students, and University alumni. Students are informed about the results of conducted surveys through the Student Portal, where not only reports are posted, but also infographics through which the students are notified about main indicators.

### 6.13. External Review of University's programs

In 2006, KIMEP began to create advisory boards for its programs. Their responsibilities are to review programs to ensure they are current while also advising academic management on new course and/or programs that should be added or deleted. The core aim is to receive independent input from parties concerned with the delivery and improvement of the system. Other mechanisms for external review include:

- **Students, Alumni relations**, important for course and program review since their career tracks provide a useful indicator of program relevance for graduates once they complete their studies. They can also provide an informed, independent source of opinion for suggestions on how to improve the current program.
- **Academic partners**, particularly those with which KIMEP University has dual degree arrangements, as they are critical sources of informed external opinion on the University's degree programs.
- **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Employers**, key consumers of the KIMEP University 'product'. Their views are feedback into program review systems via the regular employer survey discussed in the 'outputs' section of this document and via their role in advisory boards at the national level, the performance of KIMEP University is evaluated in the form of institutional and program rankings administered by the Independent Quality Assurance Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan (IQAA; <https://iqaa-ranking.kz/en/>). Since 2008, the University has been evaluated by IQAA on an annual basis. The Agency also organizes and conducts the institutional accreditation of Kazakhstani higher education institutions (<http://iqaa.kz/en/>). In 2018, KIMEP University successfully passed institutional re-accreditation (valid till 2023) by IQAA.

External evaluation at the international level is carried out independently (*Webometrics* by Cybermetrics Lab, Spain, <http://webometrics.info/en>) or upon the University's request (*World Universities Ranking* by QS; *Multi-dimensional* ranking by U-Multirank agency, <https://www.umultirank.org/>). In June 2017, KIMEP University applied to QS Agency for participation in *World University*, *Graduate Employability* and *EECA* Rankings. Annual

submission of data at institutional and field levels to U-Multirank project has been arranged since 2013.

Major work to ensure the quality of academic programs has been carried at the college-level. All undergraduate and graduate programs of the Bang College of Business (BCB) received accreditation from the Asian Forum on Business Education (2013); the Bachelor in Accounting and Audit program was recognized by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA, 2016), and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (2017).

Both undergraduate and graduate public administration programs offered by College of Social Sciences (CSS) were accredited by European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (2012). KIMEP University Department of Journalism & Mass Communication undergraduate and graduate programs were accredited by American Communication Association (2014).

In 2018, all 26 KIMEP University programs were accredited by FIBAA for the period of five years, under conditions.

#### **6.14 Quality of Academic Services**

##### **Library**

The KIMEP University Library advances teaching, studying and research by offering high-quality services based on the needs of the University community. It supports the University's basic mission by acquiring needed materials and making them available, providing instructions for utilizing them, and developing discipline-specific expert services.

The Library is a versatile learning environment which integrates the traditional and online sources of information into a modern information environment. The Library develops its services in dialogue with the scientific community and students to meet the changing information needs of its customers. The Library's new service model emphasizes services that support research and teaching and professional development of students, faculty and administrative staff.

The Library also develops its facilities so that they are adapted to the changing ways of conducting research, teaching and studying. The Library provides facilities in which different levels of silence are taken into consideration and increases the transformability and multi-functionality of customer facilities.

The Library is a member of national and international networks in its field and provides the shared services of the networks to its customers. The Library supports the information needs of the surrounding society by operating as the largest scientific library in Kazakhstan which is open to the public. The operations and services of the Library are described in more detail on University website.

##### **IT services**

The Computer and Information Systems Center (CISC) of KIMEP University is the unit responsible for IT services. The aim of IT Services is to advance research, teaching and studying by offering high-quality, easy-to-use and internationally competitive services. The operations

and the development of the IT Services are based on strategy-led planning and developing the services in close collaboration with the rest of the University community.

The customer base of the IT Services includes University personnel, students and the University's various stakeholders. IT Services is in charge of University-wide information technology investments including software licenses. Furthermore, IT Services is responsible for educational technology investments to a significant extent. IT Services are based on a continuously developed and a well-controlled IT infrastructure and the ensuring of information security. The available IT services are presented on the Intranet.

CISC undertakes support for academic and administrative units by providing access to modern information resources. For this purposes KIMEP University uses mostly own developed information systems and legally acquired licensed software or "open source" software (conditionally free software) when necessary. To ensure access to various informational resources the CISC programs have developed the Student Portal, which provides students with a unified access points to the informational resources such as e-mail, LMS MOODLE, file servers, academic calendar, as well as to online services, such as Online Registration System, Career and Employment Services and etc. Online Registration System of KIMEP University allows students to register online for the courses selected during the registration period, to check all the necessary information including classes schedule for the next semester, the payment made for dormitory residence, personal academic standing, to file requests to the registrar's office, to the dormitory, etc. Part of these services is additionally implemented as mobile applications for students, developed for Android and iOS platforms.

The administration of colleges forms the schedule of classes for the next semester via the Registrar's Office online system. The automated registration system is integrated with automated systems of other units – the 1C Accounting automated system, the AMLIB Library automated system, and admission and financial aid offices databases. During the periods defined by the Academic Calendar, faculty members input the data on results of midterm exams, and at the end of semester, the course final grades into the registrar's office database using the Online Registration System. To manage the faculty services "Faculty Portal" was developed, allowing faculty members to place the syllabi of their courses taught, information on their publications, data on involvement into research projects and scientific conferences, their biographies, as well as to gain access to assessment of their work during the previous semesters upon results of online student surveys.

The work of the admissions office of the university is supported via the "Applicant Portal", which allows filling in the applicants' questionnaire, uploading copies of documents necessary for admission, and taking a sample and a real English entrance test. Data on admitted students are sent to the Registrar's Office database. For the purposes of reporting the Accounting Office uses 1C: Enterprise software. CISC programs have developed on-line systems to monitor the payments, Online Budget Management Tool and the Online Contract Management Tool.

HR works with online system developed in-house, through which the information on vacancies is advertised and the CVs of candidates and copies of necessary documents are accepted. Besides the one mentioned above, the university has a number of online services in operation: "Online Student Assessment of Faculty Performance", "Online Student Government Election", "Dormitory Database", Online Reference Book", Library Automated System (Amlib) and others.

The university database is the basis for all university information systems. The main sources of information for the university database are the above-mentioned automated online systems. The self-developed online systems interact directly with the university database, and the information needed from outsourced systems such as 1C accounting system or AmLib library system is imported when it is necessary.

The information required by the Ministry of Education and Science of The Republic of Kazakhstan (MES of RK) is transferred from the university database into the database of MES of RK via the Internet in compliance with the schedule set by MES RK.

CISC programs continue to work on expanding the functionality of online services and mobile applications. They are focused on the development and improvement of online work spaces for students, faculty and administrative departments.

Library and IT services are evaluated by the Student Satisfaction Surveys.

## 7. Data Collection on Quality and Satisfaction

KIMEP University monitors the level of satisfaction with educational programs and services by various stakeholders including “consumers” of the final product – employers and external partners. The main responsible unit for data collection is the institutional research processing unit – the Office of Quality Assurance and Institutional Research (QAIR). Its mandate and areas of responsibility are outlined in *KIMEP University Policy for Quality Assurance in Education* (effective from August 1, 2013; revised on December 15, 2017).

To ensure the relevance of the institutional research activities to the needs of the University and its key stakeholders, data collection is organized using different methods and constantly updated instruments. Community members (students, staff and faculty) are invited to contribute. The frequency of data collection depends on the nature of the project, and long-term studies are arranged to analyze assessed aspects over time.

Another important source of data is reports from the Learning Support Center (LSC) on focus groups conducted with freshmen students, both local and international.

### 7.1. Participation of Current Students in Quality Assessment

The Learning Support Center (LSC) conducts focus groups to grasp different groups’ of students opinions about their ‘First Year Experience’ at KIMEP University and to learn about their experience with the admission process, arrival, orientation program and workshops, registration process, general education courses, LSC academic support and tutoring programs, and dormitory, medical and sport center services (local and Central Asian freshmen students; international students; Almaty residents, non-Almaty residents, students with reduced study loads). The interviews are based on a check list (developed by LSC staff and revised by the Office of QAIR) and conducted in a conversational format. The focus groups questionnaire covers broad aspects: Admission to KIMEP; Financial Aid; Learning Support Center advising; registration process; academic issues (by colleges, schools and centers); educational infrastructure (security system; dormitory; library; dining facilities; sport center, etc.). A detailed description of students’ concerns related to academic issues is referred to Vice President of Academic Affairs; and those related to educational infrastructure and services to relevant units and departments.

The level of student satisfaction with academic and non-academic experience is investigated via the **Student Satisfaction Survey** which provides a picture of the overall effectiveness of KIMEP University's services. It is conducted annually (in the spring semester) among all registered students via the Student Portal and included the performance of all units connected to the student experience.

To accommodate the growing demand for detailed and reliable information on student opinion, the survey questionnaire undergoes changes on an annual basis. QAIR combines contributions from all assessed units and gives the data to top management for consideration and approval. The full survey report is submitted to the University's management and disseminated among KIMEP University's community via intranet (for staff and faculty) and the Student Portal.

The results of the survey provide useful and comprehensive information to:

- monitor the effectiveness of the University's performance and highlight specific strengths and challenges;
- facilitate continuous quality improvement efforts;
- expand student involvement and enhance collaboration between students and staff;
- identify where additional study may be required; and
- guide decision-making and action planning.

Once the Student Satisfaction Survey results are released, in order to demonstrate to students that their feedback is valued, the departments and units are expected to produce and submit Summary and Response reports that address student's recommendations and concerns and if necessary, to ensure their responses are targeted and result in a real improvement to the learning experience. Summary and Response plans should be submitted to the appropriate Vice President within 4 weeks of the director receiving the survey results. The Summary and Response reports are submitted to the Quality Assurance Analyst and posted on the student portal after the analyst's review.

To provide a measure of assurance of the teaching quality at the University level, the **Faculty Teaching Evaluation Survey (FTES)** is conducted. Each semester, it collects valuable feedback from all students on their perceptions of the instructional effectiveness, quality of teaching and their learning experience for each course in which they are enrolled.

The survey is conducted from the first day of examination period till the seventh day after the last day of examination period. Feedback about each course is collected after the corresponding exam ends. Evaluation for pass-fail courses is available the next day after the end of classes. The State Examination and internship courses are not assessed by the survey.

The faculty members can see their evaluations no earlier than the *Change Grade Forms* due date. Access to individual evaluation results is granted to faculty members on password login. Chairs and deans also have access to faculty evaluations in their respective units. Access to all FTES is granted to the President and VPs. Additionally, to facilitate the analysis and quality development process, chairs and deans are delivered documents with comments to open-ended questions given to faculty members under their supervision.

Survey results help to determine particular teaching aspects requiring improvement and to promote the quality of education in the following ways:

- allow faculty member to identify stronger/weaker sides of their own performance;

- create a spirit of healthy competition among faculty members;
- serve as a feedback tool between students, faculty and academic management; and
- allow the University to closely monitor and improve the quality of teaching.

Teaching evaluations by students also play an important role for the faculty career. The results of FTES are used for assessment of faculty member's academic performance and for promotion or contract renewal and consideration of pay-raises and bonuses.

The participation of students finishing their studies is carried out via **Graduating Students Exit Survey**. It provides firsthand insight into students' past and future experiences, and this information has a range of different uses including:

- updates of program content for better attainment of the goals;
- plans for interventions to enhance students' personal development during their time at the University;
- decisions regarding postgraduate recruitment and career support efforts; and
- identification of areas where services and policy changes could provide improvements.

The questionnaire identifies graduating students' overall impressions, level of their satisfaction with program of study, academic and other services, and their future plans. The survey is conducted twice a year via online instrument that is completed by the student cohorts who have applied for graduation.

### **7.2. Participation of Graduates in Quality Assessment**

To assure the quality of professional preparation of graduates, **KIMEP Alumni Survey** collects their feedback about working experience, job performance and level of satisfaction with the quality of KIMEP University's education, which would allow identifying areas for improvement. It is conducted annually (summer) among alumni one year after graduation by means of e-mails, phone interviews, and online questionnaire.

Starting from summer 2019, Office of Quality Assurance and Institutional Research (QAIR) has introduced a new system of surveying the alumni: in order to identify changes in the career growth, representatives of three cohorts will be invited to participate in the survey: alumni of previous year of graduation along with 5- and 10-year alumni.

The survey results are reported to top management and shared with KIMEP University's employees and alumni. To facilitate program assessment efforts, numeric data and comments are broken down by programs.

The key messages are taken as the basis for the further enhancement of University's programs, services and environment in the following ways:

- provides outline for changes in program curriculum, teaching practices and educational approaches;
- allows development of sustainable strategies for long-term alumni-University collaboration;
- gives understanding on how alumni could make contributions and planning donating initiatives; and

- offers ideas for student recruitment and career services to be delivered to students and alumni.

### **7.3. Participation of Faculty in Quality Assessment**

Faculty members are involved in the assessment process through regular and on-request activities. The **Faculty Satisfaction Survey** and the **Survey on Satisfaction with Deans' Activity** are regular communication channels for faculty feedback.

The faculty Satisfaction Survey measures the level of their satisfaction with working conditions, professional development, and leadership at KIMEP University to further develop the University as a good place to work.

The survey is conducted annually (Spring semester) via online instrument and on a voluntary basis. The questionnaire is revised on an annual basis to reflect the administrative changes which took place over the last academic year (for example, new appointments in central administration). Since Spring 2016, the assessment of management by deans and directors of academic units has been conducted through a separate survey - the Survey on Satisfaction with Deans' Activity - by the request of the Office of the President or VPAA.

The report on survey results is presented to top management and KIMEP employees via an internal shared platform on the intranet.

The results provide a comprehensive, research-based picture of key aspects of the faculty experience and support in:

- identifying stronger and weaker aspects of working conditions and satisfaction dynamics in comparison with previous period;
- planning faculty recruitment and retention activities; and
- development of relevant action plans with regard to the services, recourses and processes.

### **7.4. Participation of Administrative Staff in Quality Assessment**

Feedback from all non-teaching staff members of KIMEP on their experience at work and their level of satisfaction with the university in general, workplace values and leadership, and professional development, image, etc. is gathered through the **Staff Satisfaction Survey**. The survey establishes a mutually beneficial connection between the staff and institution. The results provide the management with employees' opinions on quality performance, and that, in turn, help to improve strategic management planning and decision-making processes and to take relevant actions on further development and improvement of the working environment at KIMEP.

### **7.5. Participation of Employers in Quality Assessment**

Opinions of employers on levels of KIMEP graduates' professional preparedness in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes are sought through the **Alumni Employers' Satisfaction Survey**. The survey is conducted every 2-4 years via electronic mail, fax, post, phone calls and visits.

The survey results are shared with KIMEP top managers, faculty and staff via internal network on the intranet.

The results illustrate employers' perception of KIMEP graduates' professional quality and help to determine ways of further improving academic programs. Feedback from employers provides a perspective on educational quality and can facilitate initiatives in:

- building and managing multifaceted collaboration between the University, industry and professional bodies;
- planning of actions for improving the employability of recent graduates; and
- adjusting current study programs and developing other offerings matching the needs of employers.

### **7.6. Quality Assurance of the Educational Infrastructure**

High quality infrastructure is a prerequisite for quality education and research. IT and library services are fundamental to supporting students' studies and faculty teaching. Individual infrastructural elements (e.g. sport facilities, dormitories, medical center) are complementary to academic services.

Satisfaction with KIMEP University facilities is assessed by the following regular surveys conducted by QAIR: Graduating Students Exit Survey, Student Satisfaction Survey, Faculty Satisfaction Survey and KIMEP Alumni Survey.

Apart from the studies mentioned above the office also undertakes ad hoc surveys, reviews and analyses including several studies related to university facilities, such as:

- survey on satisfaction with catering and shopping services offered on campus;
- survey on satisfaction with dormitory facilities and services; and
- survey on international faculty accommodation.

### **7.7. Quality Management and Governance**

The purpose of the quality assurance of the management system is to pursue core activities effectively and efficiently and in accordance with the expectations of those involved. This system contains regulatory, data collection, and feedback mechanism in terms of organization, operation, goal setting, and strategy formulation of the University, the faculties and the departments, both academic and administrative. In addition, it includes mechanisms regarding the selection of leaders and major management activities. These mechanisms enable leaders to improve the operation of the University continuously. The regulatory background consists of several elements. One of the most important ones is the employment regulations which define principles and processes for selection of faculty and administrative staff members. Another essential one is the statutes in which rights and responsibilities are coordinated and coordination instruments are defined. Within the framework of the management system surveys (separate for faculty and administrative staff) are conducted in which employees are requested to voice their opinion.

Questions related to quality of the management are incorporated into different surveys conducted by QAIR as described in the earlier section. In particular, questions on the evaluation of the activities of the President and Vice-Presidents are included in the Faculty Satisfaction Survey. A separate survey is conducted annually at the end of the academic year to assess the activity of the deans (Survey on Satisfaction with Deans 'Activity).

## **8. Non-academic quality management**

The process is intended to be meaningful for the department and documents how a department/unit contributes to the mission of the University through purposeful outcomes.

The Non-academic program review process is completed on an annual basis (at the end of academic year) and is led by the Unit or Department Director, Supervisor, or Manager; supported by the Provost and General Deputy to the President (PGDP) and is administered by the PGDP Office.

The Office of PGDP oversees the strategic and working plans and annual report and develops an annual performance evaluation schedule for all non-academic departments; regularly meets with departments' directors (bi-weekly division meeting) to discuss late news and any problems with the operating processes; provides assistance to departments when they complete the department strategic and working plan and annual report; and makes recommendations to departments.

Each administrative department should complete a strategic plan with departmental goals, a mission statement, purpose, personnel, functions/services, budget, as well as annual work plan and report. Twice annually a report is made to the PGDP in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, who then issue recommendations based on the report.

The non-academic unit/department must show changes or improvements from previous academic year activity; prior departmental objectives and intended outcomes; current strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and recommendations (SOAR) analysis; and future direction with objectives and intended outcomes.

The Provost and General Deputy to the President meets with the department staff to discuss outcomes, recommendations, future objectives, and plans for improvement. Departmental objectives and plans for improvement become part of ongoing University annual planning.

All non-academic units/departments participate actively in developing the KIMEP University Strategic Plan; the University Self-Assessment report for accreditation by Quality Assurance agencies (both national and foreign); and provide data for annual ranking. Administrative units/divisions/departments have specific policies related to their activity (for example, "MCPR policies and procedures"; "Rules on organization of academic mobility program at the KIMEP University" (<https://kimep.kz/diam/rules/>); for Student Affairs division - "Equal opportunities handbook" (<https://www.kimep.kz/current/files/2014/05/KIMEP-University-disabled-students-policy.pdf>); "Mentoring and Advising Policy" (<https://www.kimep.kz/current/en/english-mentoring-and-advising-policy/>); "Special need policy" (<https://www.kimep.kz/current/en/english-special-need-policy/>), HR - "HR Policy Manual" (<http://intranet/>).

### ***Non-academic services for students***

The Student Affairs Division supports students in achieving their educational goals. The division includes the Student Affairs Office, the Learning Support Center, the Department of International Academic Mobility, the Sports Center, the Dormitory and Residential Affairs Office, and the Medical Center.

The Office of Student Affairs closely cooperates with the student government and shows support to all student organizations and individual students in their activities. The Office

supports participation of students in inter-university events, Olympiads, conferences, gatherings, and competitions, and also is in charge of organizing various events for students and for the whole community of KIMEP University.

**The Learning Support Center (LSC)** for students started operating in 2013. Undergraduate students represent the center's main target group.

The main functions of the LSC include advising for freshmen and their parents; advising for the university students in general; holding the Freshmen Orientation and Advising Program; developing the handout materials; arranging the Freshmen Convocation Ceremony; academic support for freshmen; monitoring academic standing and attendance of students with low academic standing and involving them in the learning support program; recruitment, training and control over the tutors work; assisting the students with special needs; holding focus groups with freshmen, international students, students from Central Asian countries; annual analysis of student retention; feedback from parents; developing online tools for successful advising (consulting) and more.

KIMEP University provides multilateral support to students with limited abilities (please see the "Equal Opportunities Policy" <https://kimep.kz/current-students/student-affairs/learning-support-center/>). In the beginning of each semester the LSC coordinators meet with students of this category and discuss the necessary forms of academic support. The academic support includes extended deadlines for midterms/finals, alternative locations for taking midterms/finals, permission for audio recording of lectures, providing copies of lecture materials (presentations or notes) used in classes, the assistance of volunteer readers for students with audiovisual disabilities, audio records of classes, print materials in an alternative format, materials with increased fonts for students with visual disabilities, etc. The sports center offers a chess course for students with disabilities.

The key role in KIMEP University student life is played by the **KIMEP Students Association (KSA)** – a voluntary union of students with its own Constitution, Rules and Policies, as well as with its own budget for holding various student events. The student government is chaired by the President and his Cabinet that works for a year from the moment of inauguration.

## 9. Alumni Relations Management and Employability of Graduates

The issue of graduate employment and the linkage of KIMEP University to the labor market have been at the top of the University policy agenda for many years. There is increasing pressure on HEIs including KIMEP University to demonstrate that they deploy every means at their disposal to make sure that students get the best possible training and acquire competencies required to enter the labor market. To respond to labor market expectations, KIMEP University creates and applies tools and processes that involve employers in quality management (QM), such as through the design and review of academic programs and regular feedback from alumni and employers on the extent to which they think graduates are adapted to the demands of the labor market.

To discover whether and how QM takes into account the dimension of graduate employability, a survey asks respondents to specify the tools and processes that they use to measure and improve performance in this dimension through their QM. In KIMEP University employers and alumni are members of committees involved in the development and review process of an academic program. When tracer studies are conducted, graduates from different academic programs are surveyed at a specified interval (in a year after graduation, annually) to provide

feedback on their success or otherwise in entering the labor market and their opinion of the relevance of the program from which they graduated. Employers' survey solicit, collate, and analyze employers' appraisals of the University's or programs' graduates, in particular, collecting information about the extent to which employers think that graduates fulfil the demands of the labor market. Curriculum development and review involving relevant professions consist of employer engagement in the revision of a study program, seeking their opinions of the effectiveness of the program in relation to graduates' preparedness to work. Understanding the imperative of facilitating the link between academic programs and the labor market, internships have become an important feature of academic programs.

As of now, around 12,000 students have graduated from KIMEP. KIMEP alumni are visibly successful in their professional and personal lives. The responsible unit for Alumni Relations Management (ARM) and students support in terms of internship and employability is the Corporate Development Department (CDD). CDD ensures quality of its services to students and alumni by locating and securing external funds for institutional development and student support, annually increasing raised funds for scholarships and grants, and measuring satisfaction of employers with CDD services.

The CDD collects and analyzes regular feedback from employers and alumni-members of advisory boards at the colleges and from corporate guest speakers, invited to campus by CDD, on the level of students qualifications and quality of CDD services; regular feedback also comes from Alumni Ambassadors' meetings and from current students.

### **Career and Employment services**

The Career and Employment Services (CES) is a Bridge bringing together students and graduates of KIMEP University and the business community of Kazakhstan and abroad. The CES organizes annual job fairs and offers vast professional opportunities for all majors. The list of vacancies is freely available at the KIMEP website.

The CES offers consultations, trainings, workshops for students on professional growth opportunities, resume writing, and preparation for interviews. It invites students to on-campus company presentations, round table discussions, guest lectures, and business simulation games. It involves students in company projects, informs students about internship opportunities to gain real work experience, to apply their theoretical knowledge in the best domestic and international companies operating in Kazakhstan, to gain practical skills and knowledge from professionals in certain spheres, as well as to make contacts for their future careers.

The CES also helps employers to compose and place their advertisements of vacant positions and undertakes the preliminary selection in strict compliance with the employers' requirements.

The Career and Employment Services maintains a database of University alumni on an ongoing basis, collects employment data for graduates in their last year of studies, right after graduation, three and six months after graduation. Monitoring is carried out via telephone, e-mail, requesting data from colleagues, faculty and social networking channels.

The majority of graduates (on average – more than 60%) receive offers of employment either during study or immediately after graduating from the university, as they begin to consider

offers from companies during their final year of study already.

### ***KIMEP Alumni Association***

The Corporate Development Department (CDD) is responsible for the work of the Alumni Association. Graduates participate on campus as guest speakers, serve members of Advisory Boards at colleges, support student organizations as mentors, sponsor students from socially vulnerable groups of society, and recruit students and fresh graduates for employment.

The CDD applies new communications tools and sophisticated data for segmented marketing strategies that serve individual alumni and affinity groups, and are increasingly focused on data-gathering and analytics, updating of the alumni database. Through services, communications and programming, the CDD delivers and presents online and on-location experiences consistent with the alumni association's and University's brand experience, and works on improvement of the global alumni network. The CDD actively uses social media: through content curation, useful information is developed or repurposed strategically for all platforms, with linkages and interactivity among them.

One of the CDD's key focuses, regional programming, is popular with alumni because of the more localized access and is beneficial for University strategies for deepening engagement. The CDD supports the activities of the Alumni Association branches in the cities and regions of Kazakhstan and abroad (currently the association's branches are actively working in Atyrau, Astana and Bishkek); works with graduates as ambassadors (representatives of each class, which are an additional link between the university and the other graduates); organizes annual alumni reunions of different years in order to enhance networking between alumni; organizes regular business lunches for alumni with the participation of university management in order to receive feedback from graduates on the institutional and academic development of the university; and invites alumni to large events at the university.

In order to maintain links with graduates, the Corporate Development Department has developed an Alumni ID card, through which alumni can receive a number of benefits and services on campus — 10% discount on the Professional Development Program (PDP) trainings administered by the Executive Education Center; free access to information resources of the KIMEP library; free use of the KIMEP Sports Center; and a 20% discount on rental of KIMEP conference rooms for trainings and seminars.

The Corporate Development Department publishes an annual alumni magazine (Alumni Mag, <https://kimep.kz/alumni/>) and also carries out a newsletter for graduates on a weekly basis, which contains the latest news from the University, vacancies at KIMEP and other companies, and information on upcoming events.

The main indicator of the effectiveness of the Corporate Development Department with graduates is the establishment the Alumni Rakhmet Scholarship Fund (2011), to support talented students with financial need. Graduates provide donations to the foundation and choose recipients themselves for scholarships from the list submitted by the Department of Financial Aid (<https://www.kimep.kz/ext/donate/en-US/payment/index>).

## **10. Infrastructure and Services**

### ***Premises***

The University's Property and Facility Management maintains a facility register, which contains all the facilities administered by the University. The Board and the President's Cabinet have the right to make decisions concerning the University's facilities. The University has an *Office of Support Services* with the task of forming an overall picture of the University's new construction projects, renovation projects, and other matters concerning premises.

The Office of Support Services is in charge of acquiring, maintaining and developing the premises in accordance with decisions by the University Board and the operational and financial plan. The indicators on premises can be found in the annual report and the financial statement included in the annual report.

The deans and the heads of departments decide on the use of the premises occupied by their respective units. Premises costs are allocated to each unit.

### ***Equipment and Other Property***

Acquisitions are made in compliance with the Tender and Procurement Policy, the University's Financial Regulation, procurement instructions, the general terms of contract, as well as other instructions and decisions given on acquisitions.

The Presidents' cabinet, and the supervisors of the profit centers or persons named by them can make acquisition decisions. The person who has been named as the responsible leader of a project has the right to make decisions regarding the expenses of the project.

Acquisitions shall be made so that the University's overall advantage is taken into account. Before an order, agreement or other commitment concerning a product or a service is made, the person making the decision shall ensure the lawfulness and appropriateness of the expenditure, the lawfulness of the procurement procedure as well as the sufficiency of financing. The final decision is up to Tender committee. Information on procurement and tendering is available on the Intranet.

The supervisor of the unit is responsible for the proper care of the assets allocated to the unit. The Financial Services performs annual inventory of fixed assets for the University. The assets are listed according to provisions, regulations and instructions. The units maintain a register of their movable property. The register includes identification data, the quantities, the purchase prices and dates, and the locations and the depreciations.

### ***Communications***

The Department of Marketing, Communications and Public Relations (MCPR) takes care of University's profile and is responsible for external relations and communications and marketing on the University level, and develops communication methods, skills and tools. MCPR supports active and interactive realization and development of the University's stakeholder communication. Internal and external communication is developed in all operations and on all levels, in Kazakh, Russian and English.

The principles of the University Marketing policies and procedures are in compliance with national and internal legislative and regulatory requirements and based on expertise, reliability, openness, interaction, and foresight.

MCPR promotes the implementation of the objectives defined in the University's Strategy. It is the aim of the University Marketing policies and procedures that the University is visibly represented in society and is an attractive, inspiring, encouraging and interacting working and learning environment.

The Intranet pages of the MCPR have descriptions of the guides, materials, and tools in Kazakh, Russian, and English (<http://intranet/> )

## 11. Quality Assurance of Human Resources

KIMEP procedures for annual performance evaluation of quality of faculty, administrative and supporting staff, and evaluation, analyse results and measures for enhancement of quality of faculty, administrative and supporting staff work.

### 11.1. Administrative Staff Performance Evaluation

Administrative Staff Performance Evaluation is made on annual basis. The "Policy on Annual Administrative Staff Performance Evaluation" (<http://intranet/hr/policy2015/eng.>) has been developed in order to avoid a conflict of interest in the performance of official duties. An agreement on confidentiality and ethics has also been developed.

Annual Staff Performance Evaluation has the following objectives:

- to define the extent to which business and personal qualities of staff comply with set requirements;
- to identify necessary training and professional development;
- to determine management's decision to promote or transfer employee to another position, bonus payment based on the work results during evaluation period, etc.

Personnel assessment is carried in accordance with the following principles:

- Compliance with strategic goals and objectives of KIMEP University;
- Systematic and consistent evaluation process;
- Standardization of evaluation procedures and criteria
- Openness and objectivity of evaluation outcome.

Staff performance evaluation is carried out from February to March; the evaluated period is the previous calendar year. The KIMEP University employees' performance is assessed under such parameters as complexity of tasks, scope and nature of performance impact to the University outcomes at whole, features of communication with staff and clients, requirements to qualification and competencies for successful implementation of tasks identified by job description. The subject of the evaluation may include level of competence development in accordance with specifications stipulated in Job Description, and level of performance efficiency.

Evaluation results are recorded in the Staff Evaluation Form. It is signed by both parties and submitted to the HR Department. The following decisions may be made upon conducting the performance evaluation, being based on staff performance evaluation results:

- Proposal for an employee to be transferred to a different position – when evaluation outcome is unsatisfactory during two years in a row;

- Decision on bonus size (temporary raise - within the budget and financial situation of KIMEP University) based on the total score for qualification (competencies);
- Training and development plans to be prepared based on evaluation outcomes and recommendations of the supervisor and employee.

University management annually revises (increases) remuneration of staff and faculty, and sets and pays annual bonuses (bonuses to official salaries) based on the results of the performance evaluation.

The size of remuneration for faculty and administrative staff is approved annually by the President's Cabinet in accordance with the available budget for the current academic year.

***The Customer Service Performance Evaluation*** for Administrative Staff Award was introduced in 2015 to achieve the strategic goal of the University to improve the quality of services provided to students. The Policy was introduced by HR Department to recognize outstanding customer service efforts of KIMEP staff. Applications of the nominees are considered by the special commission (including students) approved by the order of the President of the University. A monetary reward is paid to each nominee.

Motivation policy for staff is represented by nominating administrative employees on the basis of employees' work with students – “Best Employee of the Year with Students”; faculty members are awarded “Best Faculty of the Year”. Nominees are encouraged both by a one-time cash prize and by recognitions letters from the University.

***Evaluation of Heads of Administrative Units*** is made on annual basis in accordance with *Policy on Annual Administrative Staff Performance Evaluation* (please see HR Intranet page <http://intranet/> ).

### ***11.2. Permanent education of faculty, administrative and supporting staff***

KIMEP University supports faculty and administrative members to further develop their professional path. KIMEP offers tuition discounts for any undergraduate and graduate programs to employees and their families and offers free English courses.

A discount for the doctoral program at KIMEP is a part of faculty benefit program. Faculty members are also allowed to earn a doctoral degree abroad while their workplace is preserved.

All faculty and administrative staff members are given an opportunity to participate in international faculty exchange programs, such as Erasmus Plus, to accelerate their research, learn innovative teaching concepts or methods, and extend professional network.

KIMEP is developing the system of permanent education of faculty through the Center for Educational Excellence (CEE, 2018), Mini MBA courses, and professional development trainings for administrative and supporting staff through Professional development and certificate program (PDCP), free of charge.

Professional courses outside of KIMEP are also subject to employees' benefit upon permission from the vice presidents of each department. In addition, to support research activities of both faculty members and staff, KIMEP annually allocates budget for participation in international conferences.

## 12. Information on Quality

### *Informing the stakeholders*

To support data-driven decision making, the survey results are made available for all members of the KIMEP community. The reports, data tables and evaluation profiles are placed at the QAIR section in the internal network – *intranet* – which is accessible on campus by faculty and staff. Also faculty can view their individual course evaluations via *Faculty Portal* on KIMEP website ([www.kimep.kz](http://www.kimep.kz)). The information for students is shown at *Surveys* section on *Student Portal* ([my.kimep.kz](http://my.kimep.kz)). In addition to this QAIR organizes open days, participates in faculty and student orientations, and shares results via student and University official publications, meetings and presentations. All these efforts aim at allowing the campus audience to gauge what the results mean, observe trends, be prepared for discussions about potential improvement projects, as well as offer its suggestions for institutional research activities.

In addition to wide dissemination of data on campus, some information is made available to groups outside the University. This is arranged through info placement on the KIMEP official web-site or participation in the rankings or/and accreditations.

### *Public Information*

Public information on quality is covered in all official communication channels of KIMEP University:

- The University website has a separate web page “KIMEP Rankings and Accreditations” with major information on KIMEP University Rankings, Accreditations, Membership and Partnership with links to the appropriate websites <https://kimep.kz/about/kimep-rankings-accreditation/>;
- Recent news is published on the website and in press releases: <https://kimep.kz/about/media-relations/>.
- Marketing, Communications and Public Relations (MCPR) actively uses social networks: Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/kimep/>), Instagram ([https://www.instagram.com/kimep\\_university/](https://www.instagram.com/kimep_university/)), LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/kimep/>), VKontakte (<https://vk.com/kimepuniversity>).

The representatives of the wider public, in addition to student, staff, and faculty, may address issues of their concern and/or their proposals through social media. All questions and/or proposals sent through feedback forms are received by the MCPR, which either answers to them on its own or sends for consideration and answering to the appropriate units of the university. MCPR also publishes brochures, leaflets, banners, posters, and produces video materials. They use outside advertising like printed and electronic advertisement which are designed within MCPR.

Stakeholders and partners are informed on current and future events on quality assurance also through the *KIMEP Times* – an independent, student newspaper. All departments, faculty and staff are responsible for creating and updating content of the University web-site.

When developing a campaign about public awareness, measurements and indicators of the success on quality awareness are presented in the reports on the strategies implementations

and policies evaluation which are posted on the website <https://kimep.kz/about/publications/>; and MCPR reports on traffic sources (internal report).

## CONCLUSION

According to the Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, ESG, “The heart of all quality assurance activities are the twin purposes of accountability and enhancement. Taken together, these create trust in the higher education institution’s performance” (<https://enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg/>).

Continuous work in the field of ensuring the quality of educational services is the main strategic priority of KIMEP University activities.