

**QUALITY MANUAL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MARIBOR**



November 2012

On the basis of Article 80 of the Higher Education Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 32/2012, ZViS – UPB 7 (official consolidated text no. 7), as amended to 57/2012), the Criteria for the Accreditation and External Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 95/2010, as amended to 51/2012) and Articles 253 and 258 of the Statute of the University of Maribor (UM Statute – UPB10 (official consolidated text no. 10), Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia no. 46/2012), the Senate of the University of Maribor adopted, at its 15th regular session of 27 November 2012, the following Quality Manual of the University of Maribor.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Basic data

Official name: University of Maribor

Acronym: UM

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Articles of Association: 18 September 1975

1.2 Establishment of the University

The University of Maribor (hereinafter referred to as "UM") was established in 1975 as a successor of the Association of Higher Education Institutions Maribor founded in 1959. The founder of the University of Maribor is the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter referred to as "RS").

Higher education in Maribor traces its beginnings to the 19th century. In 1859, bishop Anton Martin Slomšek moved the seat of the Lavantian diocese from St. Andraž in Lavant (Austrian Carinthia) to Maribor and soon afterwards established a Slovenian seminary. The city of Maribor thus obtained its first higher education institution, which became an important focal point of religious, national, cultural and scientific thought in the Region of Štajerska. Important years were also 1863, when the two-year teacher training school was established, and 1888, when it was transformed into a four-year school.

The immediate forerunner of the present-day University of Maribor was the Association of Higher Education Institutions in Maribor, which was established in 1961 and comprised the first colleges established in the period between 1959 and 1961. The School of Economics and Commerce had the oldest tradition, followed by the Technical Junior College with departments of mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, textile technology, civil engineering and chemistry. In 1960, the Junior College of Agriculture, the Junior College of Law and the Junior College of Dentistry were established; the latter was closed in 1970. During that period, the Junior College of Organizational Studies was established in Kranj. In 1972, it became a member of the Association of Higher Education Institutions in Maribor. With six higher education institutions, Maribor became an important academic centre. In 1975, the University of Maribor was established.

1.3 Development of the University

The establishment of the University of Maribor and the expansion of research activities fostered the development of junior colleges, which were gradually transformed into colleges and later into faculties. The College of Nursing was established in 1993. Two years later, it became a member of the University of Maribor. In the same year, the former Technical College was divided into four new faculties. At the turn of the century, the University of Maribor comprised nine faculties and one vocational college. The following year, the University Library also became a member of the University. At the turn of the millennium, the University of Maribor had three new members – the Faculty of Medicine established in 2003 (the first generation of students enrolled in the academic year 2004/2005), the Ljubljana-based Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security and the Celje-based Faculty of Logistics, which opened its doors in the academic year 2005/2006.

In the academic year 2006/2007, two new members joined the University of Maribor. The former Faculty of Education split to form three new faculties – the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

The youngest members of the University of Maribor are the Faculty of Energy Technology established in 2007 in Krško and the Faculty of Tourism established in Brežice in 2009.

In 2000, Student Dormitories also became a member of the University of Maribor.

1.4 University of Maribor today

UM is the second largest Slovene university. Today, approximately 20,050 students study at one of the 17 faculties. The University has around 1800 employees. Both students and professors may use the University Library Maribor, the Leon Štukelj University Sports Centre, the Residence Hall for Postgraduate Students and Visiting Professors as well as the Student Dormitories.

UM develops and encourages high-quality scientific research conducted by professors, assistant professors, teaching assistants, early-stage researchers and students, esp. in the field of basic and applied research. UM is deeply convinced that linking education to basic research is of the utmost importance for quality assurance both at national and international level. Scientific research is conducted at faculties, institutes, in labs or at departments within the framework of projects funded by the Government of RS and international funds. Various projects are being implemented on the basis of agreements concluded between UM and economic operators as well as other international institutions. Scientific research conducted by universities should be more closely integrated into regional development. This is of

great importance to UM since Maribor and the entire Region of Podravje is, after many centuries, once again defining its own identity.

International activities and mobility are one of the most important scopes of action since they supplement the study offer and enable a higher level of quality of professors' performance. Active involvement in the European Higher Education Area is also extremely important since UM plans its further development and cultivates its international image on the basis of the Bologna Declaration.

Academic exchange is conducted on the basis of inter-university or inter-faculty agreements concluded with foreign partner institutions offering short study visits or longer exchanges lasting from one semester to one year. UM is being integrated into the European academic community in order to promote Slovene national identity and ensure competitiveness of Slovene intellectuals on the European labour market. For this reason, UM ensures academic mobility of both professors and students and participates in various networks of European universities at regional, national and European level.

UM is also a member of various international associations, e.g. European University Association (EUA), Conference of Rectors and Presidents of European Universities of Technology (CRP), Alps-Adriatic Rectors' Conference (AARC), Danube Rectors' Conference (DRC), Leveraging Education into Organisations (LEO-NET), European Network of Academic Sports Services (ENAS) and University Network of the European Capitals of Culture (UNEECC).

1.5 Environment

As articulated in its mission statement, UM is a broad-based research and educational institution committed to both excellence in education and the extension of knowledge through basic and applied research. By combining social sciences, economics, humanities, medicine, natural sciences, educational sciences, law, engineering and arts, the University promotes cooperation, competition and multidisciplinary. Knowledge and skills acquired by students have an important impact on all aspects of society at large, putting higher education at a unique position. An important strategy of the University is aimed at participating in the regionalisation of studies, which has been conducted by establishing faculties in regional centres outside the city of Maribor.

By educating and training young people, UM is increasing the population's level of education. Thus, UM is contributing both to the elimination of structural and regional disparities on the labour market as well as the increased competitiveness of the Slovene economy.

Through its library and information services at faculties and the University Library Maribor, UM provides support for educational work, scientific research and artistic work conducted at the University. Thus, UM offers the inhabitants of Maribor and its surroundings access to knowledge.

Sports activities play an extremely important social and economic role in the field of health maintenance and improvement as well as subjective well-being, which has an indirect impact on enhanced productivity.

UM cooperates with the economy more closely each year in order to facilitate knowledge and technology transfer. The University organizes meetings of economists, entrepreneurs and researchers on a yearly basis and bestows the Best Researcher award. The winner is selected by entrepreneurs.

Indirect and direct impacts of these activities:

- noticeable changes in accepting the culture of innovation
- increased competitiveness among researchers cooperating with the economy
- increased activity in the field of scientific research; a larger number of international project applications
- a larger number of conferences in the field of environmental and water protection, high technologies, nanotechnologies, etc. organized in cooperation with partner institutions in Slovenia and abroad
- increased economic growth, and consequently less unemployed people, esp. highly educated workforce

Positive impacts of these activities on the economy are evident from the transformation of the economy (from production-oriented to high-tech). UM offers support for R&D as well as knowledge transfer. The number of highly qualified staff in companies has increased considerably.

International cooperation of the University also has a positive impact on the economy since students and graduates participating in mobility programmes have the opportunity to gain new experiences in an international setting and make new contacts which may be useful later in their career. Various business contacts are also being developed among researchers and within the framework of applied international projects conducted in cooperation with partner institutions from different countries.

1.6 Organization

UM is an autonomous research and educational institutions with a unique position, ensuring scientific advancement and development of professions through various activities in scientific fields and areas of expertise and the provision of high-quality

education at first, second and third level through knowledge transfer. The University's mission is being conducted at international, national and regional level.

UM provides higher education and enables citizens of the Republic of Slovenia to exercise their constitutional right to university education by implementing the National Higher Education Programme as a public service. UM operates in accordance with the principles of autonomy ensuring freedom of research, knowledge transfer and creative expression, independent organizational arrangements, development and adoption of degree and research programmes, study arrangements, appointment and selection of university teachers and researchers as well as other entitlements in accordance with the law.

UM ensures the development of science, art and professions and transfers knowledge from the field of natural sciences, engineering, technology, health sciences, agriculture, social sciences, humanities and arts. In addition, UM exercises powers conferred by public law.

In accordance with the Statute of the University of Maribor, the following faculties and institutions have been established either as "university members" or "other university members":

1. FACULTIES (university members)

- Faculty of Economics and Business
- Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
- Faculty of Energy Technology
- Faculty of Civil Engineering
- Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering
- Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences
- Faculty of Logistics
- Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
- Faculty of Organizational Sciences
- Faculty of Mechanical Engineering
- Faculty of Tourism
- Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security
- Faculty of Health Sciences
- Faculty of Arts
- Faculty of Medicine
- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Law

Other institutes (other university members):

- University Library Maribor
- Student Dormitories Maribor

1.7 Management

UM is represented by the Rector. In his absence, duly authorized vice rectors may act on his behalf. Vice rectors are in charge of the following fields: academic affairs, scientific research, quality development, computer science, finances and student affairs.

The University is managed by the Chief Secretary in cooperation with assistant secretaries and heads of departments.

University members are represented by deans. In their absence, they are replaced by vice deans with the same rights and obligations. The activities of professional services are coordinated by chief secretaries of university members.

Other university members:

- University Library Maribor performing tasks within the framework of internal organizational units; its bodies are the Expert Council and the director
- Student Dormitories Maribor with the following bodies: director, Student Council of Residents and Expert Council

In accordance with the Higher Education Act, the University has the following bodies: Rector, Senate, Management Board and Student Council.

2 Quality Assurance

UM is aware that quality, constant improvements and meeting the expectations of clients is a prerequisite for long-term development and existence. The University is constantly improving the quality of its services and aims to deliver a solid financial performance. This is achieved by:

- organizing fundamental, management and supporting processes
- monitoring and controlling these processes
- providing resources
- measuring the efficiency of processes
- constantly introducing improvements to processes

Undoubtedly, every university must constantly strive for quality improvement in the broadest sense. At the same time, we need to be aware of the fact that quality must be recognized by external institutions. In modern society, concern for the quality of higher education is one of the top priorities. Quality improvement also became a permanent task of the signatory states of the Bologna Declaration.

UM has introduced a quality management system as an integral part of the planned changes as well as development and modernization of the University and its

members. The quality management system controls procedures in the field of a high-quality teaching and learning processes and enables constant improvements of fundamental and supporting processes. The main goals of the quality management system are presentations, education, communication, introductions, motivation and the creation of a “culture of quality” at UM. Quality should no longer be delegated from the top since it must be fostered by each individual participating in these processes at various levels representing UM – a University with a strong culture of quality.

University members have set up webpages providing information on various activities concerning quality management. Webpages on quality management contain data, information and documents, such as quality management strategies, annual work plans of quality assurance committees, action plans, self-evaluation reports, composition of quality assurance committees, minutes of meetings of quality assurance committees, results of surveys conducted among students, graduates and employees, rules on conducting surveys, workshops and discussions, newsletters, links, etc.

2.1 Quality assurance guidelines

Quality development at UM focuses on comprehensive support for the accomplishment of the University's mission and strategy as well as maintenance and improvement of quality of the educational process, scientific research and other processes conducted at the University. We will take into account the guidelines laid down in the National Higher Education Programme of the Republic of Slovenia 2011–2020, the Research and Innovation Development of Slovenia 2011–2020, EU strategies and recommendations of other international organizations.

UM is developing an efficient system, methods and tools for monitoring institutional and programme quality as well as internal and external quality with regard to:

- monitoring the management and decision-making policy
- ensuring the autonomy of work of university teachers and the non-discriminatory position of students
- internationalization of higher education
- monitoring the development of graduate and postgraduate programmes
- establishing ties and cooperating with the economy and society at large
- monitoring the infrastructure required for the development of higher education
- providing professional support for internal and external evaluations of degree programmes and carrying out improvements

2.2 Quality Assessment Committee

The Committee was established in 1997. During this period, it was called the Internal Quality Assessment Committee. In 2000, the Committee was renamed the Committee for Assessment of the Quality of Higher Education, which changed its name to Quality Assessment Committee (QAC) in 2003. Since then, this body is a permanent committee of the Senate of the University of Maribor.

The Committee keeps the Senate of the University informed of its findings, decisions, viewpoints, proposals, opinions and possible solutions. The Committee is responsible to the Senate for its work. It discusses and decides on issues relating to quality management at the University and its members, monitors self-evaluation procedures and evaluations of the University and its members and proposes effective solutions to the Senate. In addition, the Committee promotes, coordinates and monitors activities related to quality management conducted at the University and its members and cooperates with the national evaluation body and similar committees established by other Slovene universities.

The Committee acts in accordance with the Higher Education Act, the Statute of the University of Maribor, the Criteria for the Accreditation and External Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programme adopted by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and the Rules on Self-Evaluation, the Evaluation of the University and its Members and the Composition of the Quality Assessment Committee. The Committee uses the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Senate of the University. The Committee may also adopt its own rules of procedure, which must be in line with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Senate of the University of Maribor.

Article 264 of the Statute of the University of Maribor states that "The Quality Assessment Committee of the University monitors and conducts institutional and programme evaluations of the quality and efficiency of educational work, scientific research and artistic work conducted by university members and the University as a whole".

Evaluation procedures, self-evaluations of the University and its members, the composition and number of members of the Quality Assessment Committee shall be laid down in a general act adopted by the Senate of the University.

The Committee compiles an annual report on the activities and results in the field of quality management, which is discussed by the Senate and other bodies and published on the University's website.

The Committee meets at regular sessions, or if necessary, at meetings by correspondence. Each year, the Committee compiles a report on the activities and results in the field of quality management at UM. Organizational, administrative and

technical services required for the work of the Committee are provided by the relevant professional service of the University.

The Committee has 25 members: one representative per university member, one representative of administrative staff and five student representative appointed by the University's Student Council. Committee members from the ranks of university teachers and other employees in higher education are appointed for a period of four years, whereas student representatives are appointed for a period of two years. The chairman is appointed by the Senate of the University following a proposal of the Rector.

Each committee member may have an alternate appointed by the proposer of the committee member. If the committee member is absent, the alternate with full voting rights may attend meetings of the Committee.

The Rector, vice rectors, deans and vice deans, directors of other university members as well as management boards of other institutes or university members cannot be appointed committee members.

Basic objectives of the Committee:

- apply a comprehensive concept of quality management in higher education;
- conduct permanent self-evaluations of the University and its members on a yearly basis;
- monitor the effects of activities for quality improvement at UM and its members;
- report to the Senate of the University on a yearly basis.

The Committee cooperates closely with the national evaluation body and working groups of university committees in charge of quality. Occasionally, committee members attend discussions on quality in Slovene higher education. For a number of years, the chairman and her colleague have also been attending international professional and scientific meetings organized in Slovenia and abroad.

2.2.1 Duties

The Committee informs the Senate of the University of its findings, viewpoints, proposals and opinions on a regular basis. The Committee is responsible to the Senate for its work. It discusses and decides on matters from the field of quality management and promotes, cooperates and monitors activities for quality assurance at the University and its members. In addition, it monitors self-evaluation and evaluation procedures of the University and its members.

The Committee defines the starting-points for its activities to be conducted in the current academic year in the annual work plan. On the basis of discussions about

the annual work plan, the Committee prepares a proposal of activities for quality improvement, including priorities to be conducted by bodies of the University and its members in the coming year. The proposal is submitted to the Senate of the University for adoption.

By 15 January each year, the Committee prepares an annual report on the activities and results with regard to quality monitoring and assurance at the University. The annual report is discussed by the Senate and other bodies of the University. The report is published on the University's website.

2.2.2 Quality indicators

The Committee adopted uniform quality indicators. Data from existing databases must be used to the greatest extent possible, while gradually setting up an additional database enabling the evaluation of faculties and the University (assessment of the current situation and comparison with other universities around the world) and encouraging the achievement of certain objectives and identifying where there is room for improvement.

Uniform quality indicators may be used for internal records and an overview of the current situation. In addition, they constitute a valuable source of information for prospective students. The University is introducing several new indicators showing possibilities for participation in scientific research, publications, career prospects of graduates, etc. Uniform quality indicators will also contribute to quality improvement and encourage awareness of the importance of a common culture of quality and promote its creation at UM.

The purpose of quality indicators:

- providing information on the current situation at the University (faculties)
- enabling institutions to use benchmarking
- enabling comparison with similar institutions
- providing stakeholders with relevant information
- contributing to transparency of the University's operation

Evaluation procedures and the assessment or calculation of individual quality indicators per se should not be understood as a method of quality promotion and assurance, but rather as an important tool on the path towards higher quality. They provide an opportunity for contemplation and show advantages and possible weakness and where there is room for improvement.

The majority of uniform quality indicators can be calculated on the basis of various data gathered from existing databases, e.g. Computer Centre of the University of Maribor, AIPS (Academic Information Subsystem), Slovenian Research Agency, SICRIS (Slovenian Current Research Information System), COBISS (Cooperative Online

Bibliographic System & Services), Tax Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia, etc.

Uniform quality indicators at UM are classified into the following eight groups:

- students
- facilities and equipment
- studies and teaching
- international activities
- research and development
- academic performance
- labour market (employment) and connection with the profession
- assessment of the location and a comprehensive assessment of the University (faculties)

2.3 Quality Development Centre

In August 2011, the Quality Development Centre of the University of Maribor (hereinafter referred to as "QDC") was established. The Vice Rector for Quality Development oversees and coordinates the activities of the Centre. In accordance with the staffing structure at UM, the Centre has three employees: the head of the Centre, the head of the Quality Development Office and an independent adviser for quality development.

The Senate of the University approved the QDC's work programme for the period 2011-2015, which includes the following categories:

- quality monitoring
- quality development by activity
- projects
- quality development at university members
- internationalization and quality development
- other activities

Objects of QDC for the period 2011–2015:

- quality improvement and raising awareness of the importance of quality in accordance with national and international recommendations and standards
- supplementation and improvements of existing instruments and introduction of new instruments, methods and levers for more efficient quality monitoring, assessment and assurance
- introduction and testing of quality indicators by individual educational activities
- arrangement and unification of databases of university members and their integration into a new database for the needs of various stakeholders at UM and further processing and analysis of quantitative data

- introduction of new contents and activities in accordance with global guidelines and trends as well as care for permanent education
- improved communication and flow of information among UM leadership and leaderships of university members in order to ensure both a comprehensive understanding of key educational activities as well as conditions for strengthening existing advantages and minimizing possible weaknesses
- familiarisation with on-going activities in the field of quality monitoring, assessment and assurance as well as internationalization of higher education in Europe and elsewhere
- examination and selection of international associations for UM's active participation in processes conducted on the basis of European initiatives
- active participation in international events, on-going projects and discovery of new possibilities for international cooperation in order to enable quality improvement
- on-going education and training of committee members and acquisition of experiences and examples of good practice in the field of quality development and assurance in higher education

An extremely important task of QDC is to promote and manage activities in order to build a culture of quality. These processes will involve both employees and students, foster trust and affiliation with the University, ensure increased transparency of information at all levels and unify the internal public's view on the University. QDC will encourage dialogue between the academic and the student community and their participation in the creation of certain segments of quality assurance and development.

QDC will focus on fields important for the accomplishment of UM's vision and strategy. These fields will also contribute to the increased quality of the University's development. QDC activities will focus on analysing the current situation, preparing reports, setting up databases for the needs of various stakeholders at UM as well further processing and analysing of data. QDC will face a considerable challenge when raising awareness of the importance of cooperation between employees and students in the evaluation of educational work and scientific research conducted at UM.

The work of QDC will be based on examples of good practice of leading universities as well as professional evaluations of all processes and activities at the University. Among other things QDC will also monitor knowledge transfer. In order to be as efficient as possible, QDC will cooperate with other Slovene universities.

In cooperation with owners of these processes, QDC will define indicators and criteria for individual fields and systematically collect and analyse data and provide useful information on the situation with regard to leadership and owners of processes,

2.3.1 Office for Quality Development

The Office for Quality Development operates within the framework of QDC and is in charge of professional support. Documents on quality management at UM are published on its website. The Office was established in March 2006 following one of the recommendations of EUA's expert group, which conducted a follow-up external institutional evaluation in November 2004.

Duties of the Office:

- managing and organizing the implementation of projects in the field of quality management in higher education
- performing professional tasks in accordance with national criteria
- developing evaluation systems at the University and ensuring their transfer
- performing professional tasks for QDC
- providing technical support to leaderships of university members with decisions related to the Office's area of work
- preparing material for meetings of university bodies
- formulating reports and conducting analyses

On the basis of the above mentioned duties, the following tasks have been defined:

- encouraging committees of the Senate of the University and its members to include activities related to quality improvement into their work plans
- applying the concept of comprehensive quality management in higher education
- collecting information and gaining practical experiences in the field of quality management in higher education on the basis of international projects
- carrying out instructions for the implementation and monitoring of institutional self-evaluations conducted by university members
- preparing annual self-evaluation reports
- improving methods of institutional and programme self-evaluation of UM and its members
- identifying goals for quality improvement by university members on the basis of an analysis of self-evaluation reports and adopting corrective measures
- monitoring the realisation of the action plan for minimizing possible weaknesses
- encouraging discussions on self-evaluations reports of university members at meeting of their bodies and the bodies of the University
- assessing self-evaluation reports of university members
- preparing material for meetings of QAC and the Senate of the University
- preparing minutes of meetings of QAC and the Senate of the University
- training members of QAC and committee members of university members in charge of quality and expanding their knowledge
- cooperating with local and foreign experts on quality management

The Office for Quality Development communicates and cooperates with professional services of the University and its members, the national evaluation body and with

working groups of university committees in charge of quality. The Office operates on the basis of the legislation of the Republic of Slovenia, the Statute of the University of Maribor and other legal acts of the University, the Rules on Self-Evaluation, the Evaluation of the University and its Members and the Composition of the Quality Assessment Committee and the Criteria for the Accreditation and External Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes adopted by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Documents on quality management at UM are published on the Office's webpage entitled *Quality at UM* (<http://www.uni-mb.si/podrocje.aspx?id=439>) within the framework of the website of the University of Maribor, where documents of the Committee, related material and links to foreign associations in charge of quality in higher education are available to the general public.

3 Quality Manual

The quality management system at UM is being set up in order to accomplish our mission, achieve various objectives in the field of quality improvement and build a culture of quality. We have laid down principles in order to meet the needs of various stakeholders participating in educational, research and supporting processes and ensure, to the greatest extent possible, the quality of processes and activities to the benefit of all stakeholders.

The Quality Manual represents an instrument laying down procedures, competences, work methods and measures for quality monitoring and improvement at UM. The Manual was designed for all employees of UM.

The Quality Manual is an internal umbrella document laying down the organization, responsibilities and the quality management system at UM. All other internal regulations and instructions governing the pursuit of activities at UM are subordinated to this document. Together they constitute the documentation on the quality management and operation system.

The head of the Quality Development Office at UM is responsible for the preparation of the Quality Manual and its amendments. Proposals for amendments are discussed and adopted by the University's Quality Assessment Committee. A valid copy of the Manual is available on UM's website.

3.1 Purpose and scope

The Quality Manual represents umbrella procedures at UM. It was designed for both the internal and external public. The content lays down arrangements for all fields required by the standard (system, management, resources, implementation of

services for clients, i.e. students and other towards which obligational responsibilities exist, analyses and improvements). Each chapter lays down the responsibilities for a particular field. The Manual also defines connections between processes and owners of processes.

The operational and quality management system is controlled by means of documented procedures.

The documentation is classified into four levels:

- Quality Manual
- procedures
- operating instructions and forms
- external documentation, records, standards

Procedures lay down various processes (fundamental, management and supporting processes) and the requirements for their implementation.

Operating instructions include detailed guidelines for various activities conducted within the framework of these processes if necessary for the achievement of the desired level of quality. Forms are designed for recording data on processes, events, etc. External documentation is related to documents, such as legislation (Higher Education Act, etc.), regulations (e.g. occupational safety, etc.), documentation of clients, etc.

3.2 Mission and vision

The documents entitled "Mission" and "Vision" adopted by the Senate of the University of Maribor at its regular session of 29 May 2012. In 2009, the Senate of the University adopted the motto *Create your future*.

MISSION

The University of Maribor is based on honesty, curiosity, creativity, freedom of spirit, cooperation and the exchange of novel findings in the field of science, art and education. Concerned about mankind and sustainable development, the University of Maribor increases the wealth of knowledge, raises awareness, strengthens humanistic values and promotes the culture of dialogue, quality of life and global justice.

VISION

The University of Maribor endeavours to become a globally recognized innovation ecosystem where both employees and students will play an important role in shaping the future of society.

3.3 Management responsibility

UM is represented by the Rector appointed by the Senate of the University for a period of four year. The Rector bears the primary responsibility for quality assurance at the University. Operators and custodians of processes are responsible for the quality of the work done, consistent adherence to the principles of quality and continuous improvement.

Responsibilities and powers are laid down in various documents, the most important one being the Statute of the University of Maribor, which lays down the responsibilities and competences of both university bodies and employees with special powers. In accordance with the Statute, responsibilities, powers and competences are laid down in detail in the organizational chart and the General Act on the Organization and Staffing Structure of the University of Maribor and its Members. On the basis of these documents, individual operators assume responsibilities in accordance with decisions or agreements. All employees of the University of Maribor are familiar with the responsibilities and powers of management.

3.3.1 Quality of management and decision making

UM is managed by the Rector in cooperation with the Senate, the Management Board and the Student Council. Together they execute the strategy for the development of UM in accordance with the adopted mission. They must assume responsibility for the decisions issued. Special attention must be paid to policy issues concerning management and decision-making, which must be in accordance with national and European higher education standards, the agreed policies, national legislation and the Statute.

The quality management system in the field of management and decision-making includes the following:

- monitoring of the quality of academic management of the University and its members
- participation of students and employers in evaluation procedures conducted at UM
- preparation of annual reports on institutional quality assurance evaluations for university bodies
- cooperation and management of international programme evaluations and programme accreditations of university members
- cooperation with the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and implementation of the Agency's decisions
- monitoring of European trends, challenges and perspectives of quality assurance: implementation of the ENQA Strategic Plan 2011-2015, the activities of the expert group for the implementation of the Bologna Accords (Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG)) and the decisions of the Bologna Ministerial

Conference (2012), issues concerning quality assurance of the European higher education system

- preparation of relevant material for the Rectors' Conference of the Republic of Slovenia and the needs of relevant national authorities and international institutions
- dissemination of information on the achievements concerning quality assurance on UM's website, in various publications or at seminars, workshops and conferences
- implementation of recommendations issued by the European Commission for the creation of a common European Research Area (ERA), esp. the principles of the European Charter of Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers to which the Rectors' Conference of the Republic of Slovenia acceded in November 2008 by signing the declaration

3.3.2 Commitment

The management of the University demonstrates its commitment to quality assurance and the achievement of planned operational results by:

- fulfilling UM's vision
- pursuing a clear and measurable quality policy
- establishing clear goals in the field of quality assurance
- continuously monitoring the attainment of the quality objectives
- emphasizing the importance of an appropriate attitude towards all employees and by endeavouring to increase employee satisfaction
- raising awareness of the importance of quality for clients among employees in accordance with the legislation, regulations, etc.
- ensuring all kinds of resources

In addition to guaranteeing the results of processes, the heads or owners of processes are also responsible for continuous improvements (organization, technology, competence of operators). In order to achieve these improvements, they set goals (both at the level of the post and the employee), introduce relevant measures and define measurement parameters (assessment – survey on training, recognition of new knowledge, application of knowledge, value of the application of new knowledge) showing the extent to which the goals were achieved. They set these goals independently and in support of achieving the objectives of the University of Maribor, which were formulated in order to achieve the University's mission.

In their working environments, all heads are developing conditions for teamwork. They ensure that employees are aware of key principles laid down in the quality policy. Leaders serve as role models for the application of these principles. In addition, they contribute to the personal and professional development of each team member, enhance members' sense of responsibility in term of setting and

achieving the team's goal and create foundation for common learning actions, thus promoting competition within the team.

The task of the head of fields, units and processes is to ensure:

- clearly defined, and if necessary documented requests for results and work methods;
- clearly defined, and if necessary documented requests for the method of checking compliance with the requirements;
- conditions for the implementation;
- monitoring and appropriate recording of all deviations;
- discussions on deviations, decision-making and the introduction of improvement measures (elimination of causes for inefficient solutions or dissemination of highly efficient solutions).

When performing these tasks, they adhere to common rules as well as professional and ethical values. They serve as role models to for colleagues through their responsible and creative attitude towards rules, norms and ethics.

3.3.3 Focus on clients

UM focuses heavily on the interests of clients - first and foremost, students, and then also universities, other higher education institutions, ministry in charge of higher education, local and foreign institutions from the field of higher education and similar organizations.

The management of the University must ensure that the needs of clients are defined and met, which means that we:

- are very familiar with clients' needs, possibilities and requests;
- stick to agreements and meet expectations;
- determine and take into account clients' (dis)satisfaction;
- aim to determine and understand future needs of clients.

With regard to UM's mission, we aim to achieve a higher level of operation than the one laid down in the vision. The clearly defined vision recognized by all employees contributes to the following:

- employees' awareness of common goals (with regard to everyday communication)
- common starting points for development management
- goals that the employees set for themselves with the help of superiors and conditions for the attainment of these goals contributing to the achievement of UM's vision;
- adoption of methods of measurement of the field on which we wish to exercise influence for each goal separately (determination of the current

situation); methods of measurement is validated by determining and confirming the current situation;

- regular monitoring of the implementation of measures and results with regard to the achievement of goals, and if necessary introduction of new measures

3.3.4 Quality policy

The quality policy incorporates fundamental orientations and goals with regard to quality. This policy, which includes key aspects of quality contributing to the achievement of UM's vision, reads "Quality is considered the achievement of development goals of clients (university members, students, employees, the region)". Quality also means meeting both requirements and expectations. The management must make sure that all employees are familiar with the quality policy and that they understand it.

Goals of the quality policy:

- meeting or exceeding clients' requests, needs and expectations
- constant improvements of the quality management system
- constant informing, training and motivating of employees at all levels and increasing their level of satisfaction

In order to enhance quality in the broadest sense and fulfil UM's vision, the following priority principles are of the utmost importance:

- independence and responsibility of each individual with regard to both personal development and development of the University
- cooperation, the culture of communication and trust at all levels displaying the spirit of the University

Heads must ensure that:

- employees are well aware of the quality policy;
- the goals of improvements are set in accordance with the quality policy;
- clear agreements on the providers of activities for the attainment of these goals are reached;
- the implementation of activities is closely monitored and that results are assessed (with respect to the goals set);
- above-average results and achievements are recognized and that the approaches yielding these results are being disseminated;
- efficient communication with employees is established in order to achieve the goals.

3.3.5 Operational planning and the quality management system

The management must make sure that quality objectives are set for relevant

positions and levels within UM. Quality objectives must be concrete, measurable and in line with the quality policy. Operational objectives are defined in the annual operational plan. The management is responsible for its preparation and the familiarization of employees. The annual operational plan contains:

- starting points (results from the previous year, market requirements, etc.)
- operational plan
- requirements for the realization, control points, etc.

Each year, concrete and measurable quality objectives are formulated within the framework of the operational plan and on the basis of the mission statement, vision and the quality policy. With regard to the results, these goals focus both on internal and external clients.

The attainment of objectives is monitored on a regular basis although it is officially checked when preparing the annual report to be presented to the Senate of the University. Annual reports contain objectives and assessments of the level of their attainment. The attainment of objectives is monitored in order to introduce corrective measures in a particular field.

When defining objectives, the University is well aware that objectives for both the development of personal competencies (abilities) and working conditions (possibilities) are required.

Quality requirements are an integral part of the annual operational plan and are defined on the basis of:

- the adopted quality policy
- an analysis of requests and expectations of clients
- an analysis of processes and improvements
- technological requirements

The management must ensure the implementation of the quality management system both in order to attain quality objectives and maintain the integrity of the quality management system when planning and implementing changes.

The quality management system is planned in two stages. First, both the manner of development and the adherence to rules and agreements are defined and implemented. Secondly, the manner of managing changes and development is defined and implemented.

Various activities relating to the maintenance of the quality management system (resources, technology, etc.) are also laid down in the annual operational plan.

3.3.6 Management's representative in charge of quality

The management appoints its representative who is responsible and authorized inter alia for the following:

- the establishment, introduction and maintenance of the quality management and assurance system
- constant improvements to the quality management system
- provision of an independent assessment of the elements of the quality management system
- reporting to the management on the implementation of the quality management system, along with various requests and recommendations for improvement
- raising awareness of the importance of clients among employees

The management's representative is the Vice Rector for Quality Development, whose powers are evident from the decision on the appointment.

4 Provision of Resources

The management is obliged to ensure resources for the implementation of the quality policy, operational objectives, constant improvements to the quality management system and an increased level of satisfaction of all stakeholders. The management must ensure staffing, financial, material, information and other resources, including an appropriate infrastructure and working environment. The provision of resources is both planned (annual operational plans) and continuous (depending on operational needs).

4.1 Human resources

UM is aware of the importance of human resources quality for further development. It is clear that operational objectives and the quality policy cannot be achieved without educated, qualified, competent and motivated employees.

Job descriptions, the required level of education, work experiences, required knowledge and skills as well as responsibilities are laid down in the staffing structure. General acts regulating the field of human resources are described in the Academic Personnel Manual of the University of Maribor, in which conclusion and termination of employment contracts, rights and obligations deriving from employment, salaries, promotions, training, etc. are also laid down. All recruitment procedures, esp. of researchers, take into account the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

The management monitors staffing shortages and envisage the personnel situation in the work programme prepared within the framework of the personnel plan. Staff recruitment is conducted on the basis of job advertisements/interviews and in accordance with the Employment Relationship Act.

Employees are obliged to perform their duties professionally, efficiently, conscientiously, responsibly and in a timely manner, i.e. in accordance with their responsibilities, various requirements laid down in internal documents and the instructions of superiors. Employees are obliged to consider the national legislation as well as valid and binding legal acts. In addition, they must familiarize themselves with novelties and amendments to regulations and act in accordance with code of conduct of the profession and must therefore attend vocational training.

UM employs appropriate appointment procedures laid down in the Criteria for the Appointment of Faculty Ranks for University Teachers, Researchers and Other Employees in Higher Education. The appointment procedure is performed by the relevant professional service of the Rector's Office in accordance with the existing legislation, which ensures close control over the conduct of the procedure and fast processing of applications.

The management is obliged to ensure constant and systematic vocational training in order to enable employees to gain new experiences from their area of work. For this purpose, an annual training plan is formulated, which contains the following:

- plan of staffing shortage
- professional qualifications required
- training required

Training contents must be brought in line with the requirements of the University and the wishes of employees.

The annual training plan is an integral part of the University's work programme.

Quality assurance and monitoring require the following:

- assurance of internationally comparable criteria for the appointment of faculty ranks and appointment procedures in accordance with characteristic of scientific disciplines
- analyses of UM's staffing structure
- staffing projections for the development of the support system for early-stage researchers, teaching assistants and assistant professors
- evaluation of study programmes in accordance with the staffing level and actual needs
- consideration of European directives for the free movement of workers

The principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers must be adhered to and incorporated into the

formulation and utilization of comprehensive of human resources and other strategies. The implementation of the Charter and the Code represent one of the quality criteria.

4.2 Infrastructure

An adequate infrastructure is one of the requirements for the provision of high-quality services. The management of the University ensures and maintains the following infrastructure in order to attain operational and quality objectives:

- facilities and equipment (mechanical and electrical engineering, etc.)
- processing equipment (software and hardware),
- information system
- support services

UM performs preventive, corrective and major maintenance and repair. Executives of organizational units are responsible for the maintenance of facilities, infrastructure registers and control over the maintenance of infrastructure. The head of UM's Computer Centre and selected suppliers are responsible for the maintenance of computer equipment and the information system. Administrators of fixed assets in organizational units are responsible for the examination of documentation on fixed assets.

UM set up an information system in support of work processes with relevant documentation and communication both at UM and outside.

Special attention is paid to the purchase of teaching equipment and aids, which largely depends on earmarked funds allocated by the founder. Such equipment and other types of infrastructure are purchased in accordance with the instructions of the relevant ministry and the Public Procurement Act.

The use and distribution of financial resources are evident from the annual work programme and the financial plan adopted by the Management Board of the University. The Rector is responsible for the preparation of these documents, which are drawn up by the relevant professional services. The Assistant Secretary for Accounting and Finances and the chief accountant are responsible for the preparation of final accounts, which constitute an integral part of the final report.

By the end of each calendar year, an inventory of fixed assets, incidentals and debt claims must be compiled by inventory committees.

4.3 Working environment

The working environment is a factor that may, under certain conditions, have an important impact on the job performance of employees and their well-being. UM aims to create a working environment that will have a positive impact on health and safety at work by regularly maintaining infrastructure and by creating a culture of harmonious and ethical interpersonal relationship in the workplace. In addition, UM endeavours to ensure an attractive working environment for all employees and researchers, the latter especially by implementing the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers incorporating the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

UM ensures working conditions enabling employees and other operators to safely perform their duties. Adequate working conditions include an appropriate work place and equipment, fire safety and adequate waste management.

A positive atmosphere in the workplace is also established through flexible working hours, taking into account the relevant legislation and the collective agreement. In addition, overtime and remuneration are also taken into account. Interpersonal relationships are strengthened by organizing social events for employees.

5 Process Management and Implementation

Control over processes represents the core of the quality management system. Processes are considered an arranged and unbroken sequence of activities enabling products, services or outcomes for clients. Processes stem from the fact that, for each request of clients evident from UM's vision, all activities required in order to fulfil the request are integrated.

One-off activities of limited duration requiring special organization are managed and implemented in form of projects or tasks usually defined in annual work plans.

5.1 Process planning

UM is planning, developing and implementing processes required in order to accomplish its mission. Planning, development and implementation processes are conducted both at the level of the University and its members.

Owners of processes are responsible for managing processes. Each owner is responsible not only for the results of the process but also for continuous improvements. Indicators and criteria for different processes are defined by the Quality Development Centre in cooperation with the owners of processes. The Centre systematically collects and analyses data and provides feedback to the management and owners of processes. On the basis of feedback, owners of

processes suggest improvements with new objectives and measures for the attainment of these objectives. Objectives of processes are defined mainly in order to support UM's goals for the achievement of its vision.

5.2 Structure of processes

An adequate structure of processes ensures a link between university members and the University as a whole. In order to control the system easier, fields of processes are defined by the University and its members. Within the framework of these fields, the managing style, implementation method and IT support for individual processes are defined. Due to specific contents, the field of fundamental processes (education, scientific research) requires a high level of individuality, whereas management and administration as well as supporting processes must be the same for the entire University.

Structure of processes at UM:

1. Uniform processes at UM
 - 1.1 FIELD: UM management and administration
 - 1.1.01 UM strategic processes
 - 1.1.02 UM management processes
 - 1.1.03 UM supporting processes
 - 1.1.04 UM quality assurance
 - 1.2 FIELD: UM human resources management
 - 1.2.01 UM human resources development
 - 1.2.02 Legal procedures
 - 1.2.03 Financial management
 - 1.2.04 Public procurement
 - 1.2.05 Control of the IT system
 - 1.2.06 Control over investments
 - 1.2.07 Business cooperation with the social environment
 - 1.3 FIELD: Education at UM
 - 1.3.01 Enrolment procedure
 - 1.3.02 Accreditation and evaluation
 - 1.3.03 Conferral of certificates and titles
 - 1.3.04 Mobility programmes
 - 1.3.05 Career and lifelong learning counselling for students
 - 1.4 FIELD: Scientific research at UM
 - 1.4.01 Implementation of the scientific research policy
 - 1.4.02 Projects at national and international level
 - 1.4.03 Library services in support of scientific research and the educational process

2. Processes at UNIVERSITY MEMBERS
 - 2.1 FIELD: Management of the University
 - 2.1.01 Management processes at university members
 - 2.1.02 Supporting processes at university members
 - 2.1.03 Quality assurance at university members
 - 2.2 FIELD: Control over human resources at university members
 - 2.2.01 Human resources management at university members
 - 2.2.02 Legal procedures at university members
 - 2.2.03 Financial management at university members
 - 2.2.04 Public procurement at university members
 - 2.2.05 Business cooperation with the social environment
 - 2.3 FIELD: Education at university members
 - 2.3.01 Implementation of degree programmes
 - 2.3.02 Planning and monitoring of degree programmes
 - 2.3.03 Enrolment procedures
 - 2.3.04 Accreditation and evaluation
 - 2.3.05 Implementation of mobility programmes
 - 2.4 FIELD: Scientific research at university members
 - 2.4.01 Research work
 - 2.4.02 Projects at national and international level
 - 2.4.03 Library services in support of scientific research and the educational process

Individual processes are defined in detail by descriptions specifying

- documents forming the basis of a process
- purpose of the process
- scope of application
- activities of the process
- description of the process
- operators in charge of the process
- participants in the process
- documents required in the process
- IT support for the processes

In addition, they also specify:

- relation with other processes, including sources of information
- requests that must be met by the process and criteria for the performance and efficiency assessment
- measurement points in accordance with needs and possibilities

Detailed descriptions of processes are internal documents of the University used in order to carry out continuous quality improvements, development of IT support, etc.

The University identified multiple fields of fundamental processes, which are of the utmost importance. Their content is described in detail in the continuation. By

conducting these processes, the University is fulfilling its mission and co-shaping the quality policy and the culture of quality in higher education, esp. in the field of education and scientific research. Key processes were also identified in the field of cooperation with students and assurance of sources of knowledge enabled by library services.

5.3 Quality monitoring and assurance in the field of education

University members conduct graduate and postgraduate degree programmes brought in line with the principles of the Bologna declaration (bachelor's (first-cycle), master's (second-cycle) and doctoral (third-cycle programmes)). Due to the establishment of new faculties within the framework of UM and expansion of the study offer under existing programmes, the number of degree programmes has increased considerably. In the future, the University will pay particular attention to quality improvement in the field of education, while at the same time rationalising and merging the study offer (synergistic effects).

Development, efficient education as well as attainment of teaching objectives and development of competences laid down in degree programmes are of the utmost importance for the development of higher education. Extracurricular activities and international mobility programmes present a valuable addition to student activities since they contribute to the expansion of knowledge, competences and experiences.

Quality assurance in the field of education focuses on:

- internalization of higher education (mobility, joint degree programmes, summer schools)
- monitoring the development of degree programmes extending to the period of employment of graduates and systematic analysis of the efficiency of degree programmes
- development of inter-faculty degree programmes meeting study and employment interests (rationalization)
- independent accreditation of degree programmes
- stimulating the development of joint international degree programmes in cooperation with distinguished partner institutions
- adapting the number of enrolment places for certain degree programmes to the demand of candidates
- systematic monitoring and analysing of the adequacy of the student load (by conducting ECTS surveys showing the actual evaluation of courses and degree programmes)
- checking both teaching and learning methods, encouraging the initiatives and creativity of students (project work, international exchange, tutors, etc.) in order to increase the number of students advancing to the next year, the quality of knowledge and the competences of graduates

- internationalization of the teaching process (visiting professors, foreign students, implementation of degree programmes or their parts in a foreign language)
- introduction of systemic measures for students with disabilities
- UM's participation in achieving the goal that 15 per cent of the population aged between 25 and 64 shall participate in lifelong learning (development of training programmes)
- monitoring of active cooperation with local and regional institutions
- monitoring of the level of quality of lecture halls and other facilities with adequate equipment (information technology)
- development of an efficient support for the implementation of e-learning and distant learning
- provision of support with internal and external evaluations of degree programmes conducted by university members and making improvements

5.4 Quality monitoring and assurance in the field of scientific research

UM develops scientific disciplines that form the basis of degree programmes conducted by 17 faculties. In addition, it also develops scientific disciplines from related or interdisciplinary fields and conducts scientific research and artistic work in one or more related scientific or artistic fields, disciplines or professions. The University also conducts basic and applied research as well as development and other projects.

Research work is conducted within the framework of research programmes and one infrastructure programme. UM is participating either as a lead partner or partner institution. Research work is also being conducted within the framework of basic research projects, applied research projects, goal-oriented projects as well as postdoctoral and other research projects.

Integration of scientific research conducted by university members into the international community ensures continuous development, permanent integration of new knowledge into courses as well as international comparability and quality of degree programmes.

UM is increasing the number of foreign researchers on exchange in Slovenia and vice versa. Research findings are evident from scientific papers, citations, patents, trademarks and knowledge transfer, licencing, spin-offs and other forms of cooperation in scientific research. Both artistic work and scientific research must become the University's excellence. In terms of institutional development, the main focus will be on the integrity of research work and teaching. UM must ensure an adequate volume of high-quality and internationally comparable research work.

Monitoring the quality of scientific research and artistic work focuses on:

- developing doctoral and research programmes
- monitoring and promoting the integration of postgraduate degree programmes
- evaluating the findings of early-stage researchers
- evaluating the effects of research groups and the National Research Programme in order to ensure quality of research excellence at UM (early-stage researchers, publications, citations, patents, innovation)
- evaluating the competitiveness of UM researchers in the European and international research area (analysis of project applications, approved projects, results)
- monitoring the quality of research equipment and infrastructure
- evaluating the achievements and excellence of artistic work
- permanent monitoring of library and information services and other professional activities
- providing support for project/research work of students, entrepreneurship and self-employment
- evaluating knowledge and technology transfer as an outcome of research work

5.5 Quality monitoring and assurance in the field of cooperation with students

In spring each year, UM organizes an Information Day in order to introduce itself to prospective students. Prior to this event, the University is being promoted at secondary schools. The enrolment procedure is conducted in accordance with the legislation.

Cooperation with students is extremely important since effective communication among university teachers, other employees and students has a considerable impact on academic performance.

At the level of UM, the Student Council of the University composed of student representatives from university members operates in accordance with the Higher Education Act and the Statute of the University of Maribor. Student representatives are appointed by other students in such a manner as to ensure equal representation of all university members. The Student Council of the University is chaired by the Vice Rector for Student Affairs, whereas student councils of university members are chaired by vice deans for student affairs. Council members meet regularly, cooperate with the management of the University and its members as well as other representatives of the academic community. Student councils discuss various issues and offer opinions on general acts, degree programmes and other proposals related to the rights and responsibilities of students. In addition, they propose students to the working bodies and committees of the University and ensure extracurricular activities.

Student representatives are also members of the Senate of the University and various permanent committees – they must account to at least one fifth of all members.

Active cooperation with students is also conducted by means of the student survey revealing students' opinions on the performance of university teachers and other employees in higher education.

5.6 Quality monitoring and assurance in the field of library services

Library services of the University are conducted by the central University Library Maribor and libraries located at faculties. These libraries form the library and information system of the University of Maribor and perform the following functions:

- information (access to documents and information)
- organization (uniform and rational organization of library and information tasks)
- teaching (user education)
- bibliographies (bibliographies of professors and other employees)
- archive (safety and protection of library material)

Students of the University of Maribor may use the uniform library system in all libraries of the University provided they possess a student ID card. The entire library collection consists of 1,415,000 units. Libraries also provide access to various electronic resources, such as magazines, journals, e-books and databases. Students, university teachers and others may access the majority of electronic resources requiring a subscription from computers of the University Library Maribor or computers located elsewhere at UM or outside (remote access).

Several years ago, the University Library Maribor developed uniform self-evaluation indicators of library services at UM. Monitoring the quality of library services focuses on:

- users and services
- library collections
- education
- development of the library's potential
- facilities and equipment
- expenses

6 Analyses and Improvements

The efficiency of the quality management system is constantly being improved by defining a quality policy and policy objectives, analysing corrective and preventive measures and proposing room for improvement (all employees).

6.1 Self-evaluations

In accordance with the Rules on Self-Evaluation, the Evaluation of the University and its Members and the Composition of the Quality Assessment Committee, all university members conduct self-evaluations on a yearly basis since 2000. They also compile reports on quality assurance. Self-evaluations are conducted in order to assess the current situation, introduce changes and propose improvements.

The self-evaluation report, which is composed of self-evaluation reports prepared by university members, is compiled by the self-evaluation group of the University. The annual self-evaluation report is discussed by the senate, expert councils of other university members and other bodies of university members, including various committees, student councils and academic councils. Self-evaluation reports for the past year must be submitted to the relevant professional service of the University by 15 January.

Self-evaluations of university members are conducted by quality committees. Relevant data is collected from undergraduate studies offices, offices for international cooperation, personnel services, libraries, the Enrolment and Information Service of the University, the Computer Centre of the University and student surveys. On the basis of these data, the above mentioned committees compile the self-evaluation report focusing on teaching activities and scientific research conducted at the faculty. The report also contains an evaluation of supporting processes.

Following a proposal of the dean, members of the self-evaluation group are appointed by the senate of the university member. In the event of other university members, members of the self-evaluation group are appointed by the expert council on the proposal of the director. Self-evaluation groups must have between five and seven members. The president is appointed by the senate of the university member.

Self-evaluation groups are composed of representatives of the main interest groups (university teachers, researchers, students, professional and administrative staff). In the event of other university members and the Rector's Office, self-evaluation groups are composed of representatives of the most important stakeholders (professional and administrative staff).

The purpose of self-evaluations in the field of education and scientific research is to continuously maintain, promote and improve the quality of educational activities. Self-evaluation at the institutional level ensures a rational and permanent basis for professional decision making, development planning and quality improvement.

Self-evaluation can be conducted at various levels – at the level of courses, degree or research programmes within the framework of organizational units, at the level of

university members or other university members, the Rector's Office or the University as a whole. In practice, a combination of self-evaluations at different levels is used.

At university members, the quality assurance process in the field of education and scientific research starts at the level of organizational units and focuses on educational activities, scientific research and professional services (programme self-evaluation). The self-evaluation process ends when programme self-evaluations are transformed into self-evaluation at a higher level (institutional self-evaluation). The joint report on institutional self-evaluation includes summaries of self-evaluation reports supplemented by inspections of both common services and the management, which includes more general fields.

In accordance with the criteria of the national evaluation body, the following aspects are being assessed during self-evaluation of the University or its members:

- integration into the environment
- activities of the institution
- documentation and concern for quality
- personnel
- students
- material conditions
- quality assurance

The self-evaluation process ends with an assessment of advantages and disadvantages of individual aspects and suggestions for quality improvement. Self-evaluation groups discuss the current situation, provide an assessment of the situation and suggest possible measures for overcoming deficiencies and quality improvement.

6.2 External evaluations

The purpose of external evaluations is to enhance the positive effects of self-evaluations. More competent and independent evaluators represent an important advantage of external evaluations.

External evaluation of the University is initiated on the proposal of the Senate of the University, whereas external evaluations of university members are initiated on the proposal of senates or expert councils of university members.

The University or university member select external evaluators. External evaluation may be conducted by the national evaluation agency, a recognized foreign agency or a relevant institution from the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). External evaluators are appointed for each evaluation procedure separately.

On the basis of the submitted application, the external evaluator sets a date by which the University or the university members must submit the documentation available. The external evaluator appoints the external evaluation committee, which may request the following documents:

- annual work programme of the University or its members
- annual report of University or its members
- self-evaluation report of the University or its members showing activities in the field of quality monitoring and assurance as well as overcoming deficiencies
- results of the student survey for the past three academic years prior to the external evaluation of the University or its members, the work programme referred to in the first indent also for the academic year in which the external evaluation took place
- rules of procedure for monitoring, determining and assuring the quality of the University or its members
- mission and vision of the University or its members
- strategic plan of the University or its members
- strategic plan, mission and vision of the University also if only the quality of university members is evaluated
- documentation kept by the University or its members on the basis of the Higher Education Act and other acts
- other documentation the University or its members consider necessary in order to conduct the external evaluation

Self-evaluation may be conducted as one of the steps in the implementation of the above mentioned Human Resources Strategy for Researchers.

The external evaluation committee is composed of independent experts invited by the University or its members. External evaluators are part of the academic and/or professional community.

During the visit of the evaluation committee, evaluators conduct interviews with both teaching and non-teaching staff, the management of the University or its members and students. The University or its members must provide relevant documentation requested by the committee. In addition, the management must offer the committee its assistance. During the visit, all employees in charge of individual processes must be available.

Costs of the committee's visit shall be incorporated into the financial plan and covered by the University or its members.

The external evaluation committee compiles the evaluation report by the stipulated deadline. The report is first presented to the Rector, the dean or director, who may inspect, clarify potential ambiguities and file observations by the agreed deadline. The report, along with the observations, is then submitted to the University or its members. The University or its members must inform all employees of the report and

the findings of the committee. The report is made public, and the University or its members may inform the relevant ministry in charge of higher education and other competent external institutions with the findings.

External evaluation of the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers incorporating the Charter and Code is conducted by evaluators appointed by the European Commission.

6.3 Internal evaluations

Since 2008, the Quality Assessment Committee conducts internal institutional evaluations within the framework of UM. These evaluations are part of the preparations for external evaluations conducted by expert groups appointed by the national evaluation body.

University members may use the experiences gained through internal institutional evaluations for the preparation of activities related to internal as well as external institutional evaluations.

The University designed an internal institutional evaluation model contributing considerably to the preparedness of university members for the external evaluation of quality management conducted by the national evaluation body (external institutional evaluations).

Internal evaluations represent a positive and valuable experience for evaluated university members. Employees, teaching staff and professional personnel thus have the opportunity to face the opinion of a third party on the institution's quality and potential deficiencies that may be eliminated. In addition, a change in the attitude of employees can be observed due to increased awareness of the need to improve the quality of their performance.

In terms of content and implementation, internal institutional evaluations may be similar to external ones:

- Evaluators apply the same criteria (criteria of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education).
- Higher education institutions must prepare the same documentation for both external and internal evaluators (in accordance with the criteria of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education).
- Evaluators undergo specialized training provided by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.
- One of the committee members must be a student.
- Evaluation visits at higher educational institutions are conducted in the same manner (the two-day visit includes interviews agreed in advance).
- The report of the evaluation committee is compiled in the same manner (in accordance with the criteria of the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education).

- The management of the evaluated higher education institution has the the right to file observations on the final evaluation report.
- Evaluation reports must be made public (on the webpage of the Quality Assessment Committee and evaluated higher education institutions).

The internal institutional evaluation model conducted by the QAC comprises the following procedures:

- initiation of the internal evaluation procedure
- selecting candidates for evaluators
- adopting evaluation criteria
- training candidates for members of internal evaluation committees
- appointing the internal evaluation committee
- committee's preparations for the evaluation visit
- university member's preparations for the evaluation visit
- evaluation visit
- compiling the evaluation report
- completing the internal evaluation procedure
- providing feedback
- follow-up evaluations

6.4 Measures and improvements

The main outcome of the self-evaluation process is the written self-evaluation report, which includes an assessment of the current situation and a critical analysis, an analysis of advantages and disadvantages, suggestions for eliminating deficiencies (corrective measures) and suggestions for quality improvement.

Self-evaluation reports of university members also include an analysis of the extent to which action plans from the previous academic year were accomplished. It has been established that several of the disadvantages identified were eliminated precisely because of the self-evaluation or the introduction of corrective measures from earlier action plans.

Self-evaluation reports contribute to continuous quality improvement, more effective management and administration, internal preparations for external evaluations and the provision of information requested by external evaluators. In addition to a description and critical analysis of the main aspects, self-evaluation reports also contain methods, procedures and measures for quality improvement, which could contribute to the elimination of deficiencies identified.

The self-evaluation procedure is critical and analytical and offers possibilities for solving internal issues despite the fact that they may be merely descriptive. The outcomes of self-evaluations serve as a source of information for improvements in form of action plans, which must be implemented by university members. In addition, self-evaluation results confirm some of the known facts, while identifying new problems to be solved in the future.

On the basis of self-evaluation results, senates of university members adopt a relevant action plan in order to eliminate disadvantages and strengthen the identified advantages. Senates and deans of university members monitor the implementation of action plans throughout the year. Action plans also include deadlines of activities and names of bodies or persons responsible for conducting these activities.

On the basis of self-evaluation reports of university members, the most important findings and measures for improvement, esp. the ones applying to several university members, can be emphasized.

Assessments, findings and suggestions laid down in self-evaluation reports represent a solid basis for the attainment of ambitious goals. In addition, they are useful for both teaching and non-teaching staff, students and external partners who have in common a genuine concern for quality.

Findings of the self-evaluation report include assessments accompanied by supporting documents and recommendations for quality improvement. Recommendations must be unambiguous and feasible and addressed to individuals responsible for further quality improvement.

At the end of the self-evaluation procedure, the self-evaluation group adopts clear recommendations for maintaining and further improving quality, which are based on the advantages and disadvantages identified. On the basis of the self-evaluation results, the University and its members may formulate a strategic plan for quality assurance. Decisions making on further measures and procedures for quality improvement, which follow the self-evaluation procedure, also include a timetable of future activities.

7 Links to Websites of University Members

Faculty of Economics and Business

<http://www.epf.uni-mb.si/>

Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

<http://www.feri.uni-mb.si/>

Faculty of Energy Technology

<http://www.fe.uni-mb.si>

Faculty of Civil Engineering

<http://www.fg.uni-mb.si>

Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology

<http://www.fkkt.uni-mb.si>

Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences

<http://www.fk.uni-mb.si/fkbv>

Faculty of Logistics

<http://fl.uni-mb.si>

Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

<http://www.fnm.uni-mb.si>

Faculty of Organizational Sciences

<http://www.fov.uni-mb.si>

Faculty of Mechanical Engineering

<http://www.fs.uni-mb.si/>

Faculty of Tourism

<http://www.ft.uni-mb.si/Slo/Pages/Predstavitev.aspx>

Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security

<http://www.fvv.uni-mb.si>

Faculty of Health Sciences

<http://www.fzv.uni-mb.si/>

Faculty of Arts

<http://www.ff.uni-mb.si>

Faculty of Medicine

<http://www.mf.uni-mb.si>

Faculty of Education

<http://www.pfmb.uni-mb.si>

Faculty of Law

<http://www.pf.uni-mb.si>

University Library Maribor

<http://www.ukm.uni-mb.si/>

Student Dormitories Maribor

<http://www.studentskidomovi.uni-mb.si>