By virtue of the Article 12, paragraph 1, item 14) of the Law on Higher Education ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia" No. 88/2017, 27/2018 and 73/2018), The National Council of Higher Education, at its session held on 28 January 2019, has issued the following

**REGULATIONS**

**on Standards and Procedure for Accreditation of Study Programmes**

Article 1

The present Regulations set forth the standards and procedure for accreditation of study programmes.

The standards, referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article are annexed as an integral part hereof.

Article 2

All HEIs in the Republic of Serbia shall be subject to the procedure of accreditation od study programmes.

Article 3

The accreditation procedure shall be performed upon a submission of an application by a HEI.

On behalf of a HEI an application referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be submitted by its management body, upon a previously passed decision by an expert body.

An accreditation application shall be submitted to the National Entity for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (hereinafter: the National Accreditation Body) in a form determined by the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (hereinafter: the Accreditation Commission).

Article 4

An accreditation application shall be supported with the documentation prepared according to the related instructions for accreditation of study programme.

Article 5

The Accreditation Commission shall set:

1. instructions for preparation of documents for accreditation of study programmes of first and second level;
2. instructions for preparation of documents for accreditation of doctoral academic study programmes;
3. instructions for a Peer-review panel on the assessment of study programmes of first and second level;
4. instructions fora Peer-review panel on the assessment of doctoral academic study programmes.

The National Accreditation Body shall publish the instructions referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article on its website.

Article 6

The Management Body of a HEI in accordance with the Law shall guarantee:

1) that the internal regulations of a HEI are in accordance with the Law;

2) that the documentation for accreditation of study programme is in accordance with the standards and related instructions for accreditation;

3) that the data in the documentation for accreditation of study programme are accurate.

Article 7

An accreditation application with the supporting documents shall be submitted to the National Accreditation Body, whose administrative and professional service shall verify the accuracy of an accreditation application referred to in Article 4 of the present Regulations.

If an accreditation application is accurate the National Accreditation Body shall issue a confirmation to a HEI that valid application has been submitted.

If an accreditation application is not accurate, the National Accreditation Body shall issue a conclusion by which it instructs a HEI to provide supplementary documents to the application within 30 days from the date of receiving the conclusion by the higher education institution.

If a HEI fails to complete the application within the deadline referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article, the National Accreditation Body shall reject the application.

Article 8

In order to obtain finding of facts relevant for the evaluation of study programme and to make a decision on the application, the Accreditation Commission shall form a Sub-commission, consisting of at least two members from the corresponding scientific-educational or artistic-educational field.

A Sub-commission shall determine the proposal of the composition of a Peer-review panel for accreditation of study programme consisting of:

1. Three peer-review experts selected from the list of professors at HEIs established by the National Council,
2. One student from the list of students determined by the Student Conference of Serbian Universities or Student Conference of Academies of Applied Studies Serbia,
3. One expert for specific area proposed by appropriate organizations of employers, professionals or professional associations, labour markets, chambers.

In case of accreditation of study program of doctoral studies, at least one reviewer must be a teacher, a scientist or an artist employed at a higher education institution or a scientific institution from abroad who meets the criteria for a mentor on that study program in accordance with the standards referred to in Article 12, paragraph 1, point 14) of the Law on Higher Education.

Members of a Sub-commission and a Peer-review panel for the accreditation of study programme must not be in a conflict of interest, especially if they or their close relatives are employed by the institution or if they are in any business relation with the subject of the accreditation procedure.

A Sub-commission shall submit a proposal referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article to the Accreditation Commission, which submits the final proposal to the Director of the National Accreditation Body.

The Director of the National Accreditation Body shall appoint a Peer-review panel and its president for accreditation of a study programme after obtaining a signed conflict of interest statements from all members of the proposed Commission.

The Director of the National accreditation body shall also appoint the Coordinator from the administrative and professional services of the National Accreditation Body.

A decision on the appointment of a Peer-review panel for accreditation of a study programme is published on the website of the National Accreditation Body.

Members of a Peer-review panel are entitled to compensation for their work, in accordance with the act of the National Council for Higher Education.

Article 9

A Peer-review panel for accreditation of a study programme shall determine relevant facts for making a decision on an application for accreditation through the site visit of which the Coordinator notifies the HEI no later than 15 days prior to the planned visit.

A HEI shall provide a Peer-review panel with all required information, free access and insight into the teaching and management processes and available space, to organise meetings with teachers, students, non-resident staff, self-evaluation commission, alumni organization and to provide any other information which is relevant for the accreditation process.

Article 10

A Peer-review panel shall create a Preliminary Report in accordance with the instructions referred to in Article 5, paragraph 1, item 2, in which it shall analyse the documentation for the accreditation of a study programme and evaluate:

* whether a study programme has been prepared according to the accreditation standards;
* which standards are met, which are partially met, and which are not met;
* which areas of operation of a HEI in qualitative way are satisfactory, which are partially satisfactory and which are unsatisfactory;

Based on the analysis and assessment referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article and in Article 9, the Peer-review panel shall compile a Report and submit it to a Coordinator. A Coordinator shall further send the report to a HEI which, within 15 days from the date of receiving the Report, may submit any objections to it.

After the expiration of the deadline referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article, a Peer-review panel shall draw up a Final Report containing a quality assessment of the institution, which includes accepted remarks made by a HEI, and submit it to the sub-commission for consideration.

Article 11

Based on a report of a Peer-review panel for accreditation of study programme, a Sub–commission shall determine a proposal of a Decision on accreditation of study programme and submit it to the Accreditation Commission within 30 days from the date of the Peer-review panel Report submission.

In addition to the proposal of a Decision on accreditation, the Report referred to in Article 10 paragraph 3 of the present Regulations shall be submitted.

Article 12

In the first session after receiving a Decision on accreditation proposal, the Commission shall consider the submitted proposal, and if necessary, ask for additional explanations from a Peer-review panel, after which it shall issue a decision on accreditation.

The decision on accreditation is made in case if more than half of the total number of members of the Commission votes for it.

During the accreditation process, the National Accreditation Body:

1) issues a certificate of accreditation of a study programme;

2) issues a ruling denying an application for accreditation.

The National Accreditation Body shall issue a certificate of accreditation, or it shall issue a ruling denying an application for accreditation, no later than nine months from the date of receiving of the accurate application.

Article 13

Against the ruling denying an application for accreditation of a study programme, a HEI may file an appeal to the National Council for Higher Education (hereinafter: the National Council), through the National Accreditation Body, within 15 days from the date of receiving the decision.

The National Council shall appoint an Appeal Commission within 30 days from the date of receiving an appeal against the decision referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

An Appeal Commission appoints three reviewers from the relevant area from the list of reviewers established by the National Council.

The reviewer referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article cannot be a person employed at a HEI that filed the appeal, a person who is in conflict of interest, or a person who took part in the procedure of issuing the ruling referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

Article 14

An Appeal Commission shall, within 30 days from the date of the appointment, submit to the National Council a report and a proposal of a decision on appeal submitted to the ruling referred to in paragraph 1, Article 13.

The National Council shall, within 30 days from the submission of a proposal of an Appeal Commission, issue a decision by which it may reject an appeal or annul the first instance decision and return it to the National Accreditation Body for reconsideration.

The National Council shall reject an appeal when it finds it inadmissible, untimely, or filed by an unauthorized person.

The National Council shall deny an appeal when it determines that the accreditation procedure has been properly implemented and decision made has been in accordance with the Law and this Regulations.

If the National Council finds omissions in the accreditation procedure, it may, with appropriate instruction, annul the first instance ruling and remand it to the National Accreditation Body.

Article 15

The National Accreditation Body shall, within 30 days from the day of receiving a decision of the National Council on the annulment of the first instance decision and its remanding, make a decision in accordance with the legal understanding of the National Council.

If a HEI files an appeal against a repeated ruling of the National Accreditation Body referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the National Council shall decide on the application for accreditation within 30 days from the day of receiving an appeal.

The ruling which denies the appeal of the HEI and the ruling by which the National council decides on the application for accreditation itself, are final in the administrative procedure.

The Nacional Council shall send an appeal ruling to the Nacional accreditation Body which shall send it further without delay to the HEI.

The HEI referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article has the right to resubmit an application for accreditation after the expiration of a period of 90 days from the day of issuing the final decision of rejecting an application for accreditation.

Article 16

The present Regulations shall enter into force on the eighth day of the date of publication in the "Official Gazete of the Republic of Serbia".

President of National Council for Higher Education

Professor Bela Balint PhD