

Terms of Reference

Position	National Consultant for drafting the monitoring methodology of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA)
Code of recruitment procedure	QAIN – 009
Project / Program title	Quality, Accountability, Integrity, and Transparency in Higher Education Project (QAIN)
Activity code and name	QAIN – Drafting the Monitoring Methodology of KAA
No. of working days	10 days
Period of engagement	6 th of April – 31 st July, 2020

Purpose of the consultancy

The purpose of this consultancy is to support the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) towards a feasible practice of monitoring of higher education providers based on the ESG 2015 and based on the experience and advice of international experts. Experts will work closely with the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA), the State Council of Quality (SCQ), the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI), representatives of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), civil society representatives, and other relevant parties. Experts will work on drafting a monitoring methodology (monitoring standards), which will be applicable to all accredited HEIs in Kosovo. This document primarily will contribute to the fulfilment of KAA's mission provided under the Law on Higher Education, but it will also support KAA in regaining its ENQA and EQAR membership.

Project Description

The QAIN project is funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), and aims to align the Kosovo higher education system with the international standards of quality, accountability, integrity, and transparency. The long-term impact of this project is to improve the quality and the competitiveness of the higher education sector, to contribute to social and economic development of the country. A specific action for the support involves measures to build the KAA's monitoring capacities, as well as to support the full implementation of the methodology.

Detailed description of the tasks

A local expert will be hired to support the international expert in carrying out the drafting of the KAA's monitoring methodology (standards), which will be an agreed upon document by the KAA's State Council of Quality (SCQ). The drafting procedure will follow ESG guidelines and other best European practices in the field of quality assurance, while ensuring the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in its design and approval.

The monitoring methodology should aim at least the following purposes:

- Define the role/ concept about the monitoring system in Kosovo, as well as the basic principles the system should be based on

- Collect and analyse the perception of HEIs and other relevant stakeholders concerning the monitoring system to be applied in Kosovo
- Ensure that the monitoring system to be applied in Kosovo is fit for purpose and responds to the needs of the higher education sector in Kosovo
- Set clear and measurable standards on monitoring for HEIs and their study programs
- Determine the responsibilities of the respective bodies/mechanisms for the implementation of the monitoring methodology
- Align the Kosovo monitoring model to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the Higher Education Area (ESG) 2015

This engagement includes the following tasks:

- 1) Initial Skype meeting with the QAIN T team and with the international expert to clarify the specific questions and to discuss the format and the way of cooperation and work-share for the service delivery
- 2) In collaboration with the international expert and KAA/QAIN T, coordinate the administration of a survey to assess the perception of HEI's over a) the definitions of concepts in monitoring, b) the desirable concept of the monitoring system in Kosovo, c) the perceived impact that monitoring system will have in Kosovo, and d) other relevant issues
- 3) In collaboration with the international expert, conduct individual and group interviews with the KAA staff/SCQ to assess KAA's current capacities to monitor higher education institutions, as well as to identify shortcomings and needs for training and additional support
- 4) Review the results of the survey
- 5) Coordinate a public consultation process with all relevant domestic stakeholders to collect inputs about the draft methodology. The aim is to consult a broader range of stakeholders in HE in Kosovo and receive legitimate contributions from the Minister of Education, SCQ members, representatives of EC, embassies, HEIs, the civil society, etc., on the monitoring system to be applied in Kosovo. The workshop/ conference will be used as a data collection instrument that will bring additional contributions to the draft methodology
- 6) In coordination with the international expert, KAA, and QAIN T, revise the monitoring methodology to incorporate the input from the public consultation. Once the draft version of the methodology reflects the contributions of HEIs, as well as of the relevant stakeholders through the conference/ workshop, the updated version will be open for public consultation for 30 days. At the end of the public consultation, any additional input deemed relevant will be also included in the monitoring methodology

Expected outputs

- Hold an initial consultation with the international expert and the key stakeholders
- Coordinate the survey administration among HEIs in Kosovo in cooperation with the international expert, KAA/ QAIN T
- Conduct individual and group interviews with KAA/SCQ representatives in collaboration with the international expert
- Review the results of the survey
- Act as a speaker and coordinate the public consultation with all relevant domestic stakeholders to collect inputs into the draft methodology. The local expert will draft the minutes of the consultation process and will compile and submit to the international expert a summary that will include all the remarks and recommendations collected from the public consultation process.
- The local expert will also collect the remarks and recommendations received during the 30-day public consultation, and will submit a summary of comments to the international expert upon the conclusion of this period.

Qualifications

- Excellent knowledge of both internal and external quality assurance in higher education
- Excellent knowledge of European Standards and Guidelines (ESG 2015) and other relevant policies of the European Higher Education Area
- MA/PhD degree or equivalent in social sciences, education, quality assurance in higher education or another relevant field
- At least 7 years of experience in the area of quality assurance in higher education
- Knowledge of the quality assurance system and higher education context in Kosovo
- Proficiency in writing research summaries, analysis, and reports
- Excellent knowledge of English language

Role of QAIN in the work tasks

- Provide the expert with the necessary conditions and materials to perform the tasks stipulated in this document
- Brief and organise online sessions for preparation and feedback
- Provide any terms of reference in guidance of the expert's tasks
- Contribute to the arrangement of all mission related preparations, such as arrangement of meeting schedules, participation at meetings, and introduction to the QAIN project during meetings. This also includes a debrief of the main actors, such as KAA, MESTI etc., at the conclusion of the expert's work
- Own the intellectual property over the documentation produced by the expert
- Formally acknowledge, where appropriate, the expert's authorship of the documentation produced

Reporting

- The consultant reports to the Project Manager, Drilon Krasniqi.