

# FOCUS Audit at the

SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS IN SARAJEVO

Performance area:  
Studies, Teaching & Further Education

## Report of the Review-Team

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## Overview

Type of procedure: FOCUS Audit of the performance area „studies, teaching & further education“

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## CONTENTS

<b>I</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II</b>	<b>The Audit Procedure and Standards.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>III</b>	<b>Audit Standard 1.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>IV</b>	<b>Audit Standard 2.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>V</b>	<b>Audit Standard 3.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>VI</b>	<b>Audit Standard 4.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>VII</b>	<b>Audit Standard 5.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Audit Standard 6.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>IX</b>	<b>Key process: Curriculum Management .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>X</b>	<b>Key Process: Supporting Study Organization, Administration and Learning via the Information Systems.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>XI</b>	<b>Final Conclusions .....</b>	<b>20</b>

## I Introduction

The School of Economics and Business (SEBS) is a part of and a Faculty in the University of Sarajevo, in Bosnia & Herzegovina (B&H). The student population of SEBS is ca. 6500, and thus it is a relatively large faculty in the university. The total student population in the University of Sarajevo is ca. 40,000. According to the recent State Framework Law on Higher Education, the University of Sarajevo should become an integrated university and the process should be completed by 2010. Yet the universities in the region are still both decentralized and centralized at the same time; e.g., so far the faculties have been rather independent bodies within their respective universities, while at the national level the laws and regulations tend to provide a HE system that is overregulated but undermanaged. The universities in B&H are not under a central ministerial control for a coherent national HE policy, for instance, but they are directly or indirectly affected by thirteen different legislative bodies (incl. several Ministries of Education), and the HEIs are, in fact, rather 'independent' and thus relatively free to adopt their own policies. There are also a number of private universities in B&H, especially in Business education. In the academic education of Economics and Management, there are a total of 32 higher education institutions (HEIs) in B&H, which situation also constitutes a serious challenge to the overall quality of this field of education in the region. Yet all institutions must be licensed by the Ministry of Education in charge of the region where they exist. In SEBS, a great majority of its financing is derived from its 'own' resources', tuition fees, etc., and only a relatively small portion comes from the (cantonal) government; but still the expenditure per student remains far below the European average in corresponding institutions.

A special challenge for SEBS of course is the overall labour market situation in B&H. The unemployment rate is relatively high in the region, even compared to the European context, and the labour market is thus also rather limited, also for the graduates of SEBS. The main clients and stakeholders for SEBS are some banks and major national companies, but there seems to be a need (at the national level as well) for further internationalisation in business education in order to attract foreign businesses for local investments. Thus the demands facing SEBS in terms of its educational content and its practical relevance, its relationships with stakeholders, foreign partnerships, etc. are especially challenging in its current national and international environment. For many a problem SEBS has to find its own local solution, since even 'good' international examples may not always be directly applicable in SEBS or in B&H at large.

Bosnia & Herzegovina has been a signatory member of the Bologna Process since late 2003, and it started its full implementation in 2005, including new degree structure, credit transfer, student mobility, etc. Overall, SEBS appears to be well on the way of implementing the Bologna Process with good motivation, though still with certain constraints and shortcomings, some of them being internal, some external. These issues, as part of the accreditation process, will be further discussed in detail in this Review Team's report.

The Review Team made a short preliminary visit to SEBS on 25-26 March 2010, and it interviewed the leadership of SEBS and several of its key officials. The Team made requests for some additional information which were promptly provided. The second and final on-site visit to Sarajevo took place on 8-11 June 2010.

## II The Audit Procedure and Standards

The AQA Quality Audit provides Higher Education Institutions (HEI) with a certification of their internal quality management.

The Audit either focuses on the quality management in one single performance area (Studies, Teaching & Further Education; Research & Development; Human Resource Management & Development; Internationalisation & Mobility) or the overall quality management system encompassing all areas of the Higher Education Institution.

The AQA Audit reviews whether the quality management system is supporting a HEI to meet its quality goals and evaluates whether the QM-system is in compliance with the six AQA standards. To accomplish this review, AQA uses two assessment levels:

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### *Assessment level 1:*

Assessment of the organisation and structure of the QM-system in a selected performance area

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### *Assessment level 2:*

Assessment of evidence regarding the QM-system's effectiveness in executing and accomplishing the goals of two negotiated key processes

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The first level assessment emphasis is on the structure and organisation of the quality management in a selected performance area. For the second level assessment the HEI provides evidence that quality management has effectively executed two previously selected key processes to meet the institution's goals.

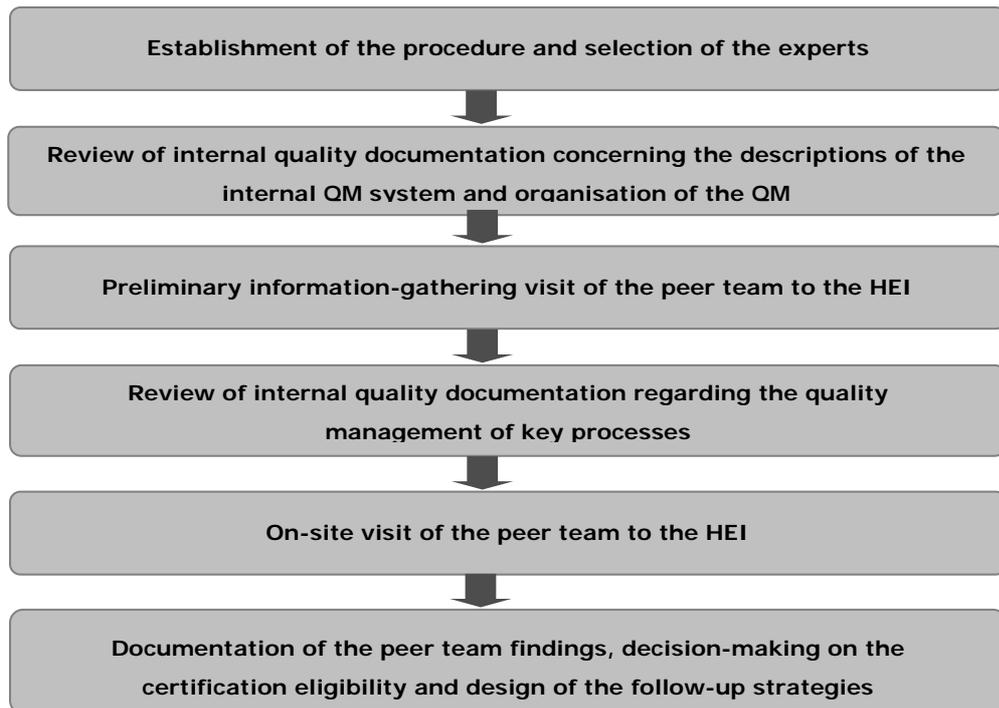
The assessment is made against six audit standards which describe the main requirements for internal quality assurance and for an established quality management system.

- 1. The HEI possesses a strategy for quality and integrates this strategy into its steering mechanisms.**
- 2. Quality assurance and development are a part of the leadership's responsibilities.**
- 3. The HEI clearly defines and makes transparent the assignments of responsibilities and duties, and it also provides easy access to information needed for achieving its goals.**
- 4. Procedures for internal quality assurance are established and the quality management system supports the core processes of the HEI.**
- 5. Monitoring and information systems are an integral part of the quality management system and facilitate regular reporting.**
- 6. A quality management system includes the systematic participation of the different stakeholders.**

The School of Economics and Business (SEBS) opted for a FOCUS Audit in the performance area of Studies, Teaching & Further Education and proposed the two key processes 'Curriculum Management' and 'Supporting Study Organization, Administration and Learning via the Information Systems' for in-depth assessment.

AQA nominated four experts who participated in the team of reviewers.

The review went along the following steps:



The information visit at SEBS took place on 25-26 March 2010 and the site visit on 8-11 June 2010. AQA provided the review team with support throughout the preparation of the review, the site visit and the drafting of the report.

### III Audit Standard 1

#### **HEI possesses a strategy for quality and integrates this strategy into its steering mechanisms.**

The overall mission, vision, goals, and strategy of SEBS are described in various documents. The School's aim is to remain the leader in B&H in the field of higher management education, developing "creative, high-quality and esteemed experts and leaders". Strategic quality objectives are set (cf. Strategic Plan 2009-2011, March 2009) for the various elements of the SEBS education system and are worked-out into a detailed action plan concerning educational scientific process, human resources, business policy, physical capacities, and stakeholder relationships. Goals regarding implementation of ISO, AQA, EPAS, and AACSB accreditations in the coming few years are ambitious, but not unrealistic, and do strongly enhance the desire to achieve and to belong to the group of highly respected business schools in the region. (SEBS has been awarded the ISO 9001:2008 Certificate in March 2009 by Bureau Veritas, for the management system standards.) In the SEBS strategic plan for 2009-2011, the introduction of the system of QM based on the requirements of the ISO 9001 standards is one of the main issues.

The international dimension of the school is still modest, but is fostered by investing in international relations, e.g., by offering joint programs with respectable overseas schools.

The SEBS strategy has been developed in consultation with all internal and external stakeholder groups and is broadly and clearly communicated. The Review Team observed strong commitment by all stakeholder groups to the strategy of the School. The School has established the Office for Quality Management, in 2008, employing two specialists supporting the quality management and assurance processes. Currently, the impression is not that quality issues are seen as the sole task of the Quality Office only, but quality seems to be 'lived' and acted upon throughout the School. However, the situation should be carefully monitored, so that the interface between the Office of Quality and the rest of the School remains active and also interactive, for the maximum benefit of the functions of the School.

There appears to be a strong and active link between SEBS and the regional business community and the alumni. Guest lecturers, projects, internships, and jobs are provided in a systematic way to SEBS students and graduates. However, engagement of SEBS student body and students at large in the decision making and activities of the School itself is in need of improvement and strengthening, and so far it is more or less limited to a small group of students who are on the Dean's list, and/or are otherwise part-time employees of SEBS.

The school's strategy is regularly reviewed and adjusted, while the overall mission and vision is stable. This provides a sound and sustainable strategic platform, from where periodically new objectives and goals can be identified. Many projects are defined and carried out within a rather short time period, and thus their relevance for the implementation of the long-term strategy may be left a bit open. The projects and outcomes are annually reviewed by the leadership of the school. However, while the strategy is clear and many projects and activities are defined, concrete definitions of measurable quality objectives are often lacking. The

self-assessment report does not explicitly show measurable quality objectives nor any Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The targets do seem to be in the minds of the relevant people, but they are not made explicit. E.g., target course evaluation scores are not explicitly described, nor are the yield rates, nor are the expected levels of learning outcomes.

*In summary, the strategy for quality and quality assurance is there, and so are the commitments, actions, mechanisms and tools in the management to make the strategy happen. Additional attention by the School is needed especially regarding setting of the objectives, measurable goals and KPIs, in order to further enhance a fully fledged quality cycle. In addition, a stronger engagement by the student body and the students at large seems to be a still somewhat unused asset through which SEBS can make valuable further developmental steps.*

***In relation to Audit Standard 1, SEBS is showing partly Considerable Development.***

## IV Audit Standard 2

### **Quality assurance and development are part of the leadership's responsibility.**

The top management of SEBS includes the Dean and four Vice-Deans. The Academic Council includes all faculty members and representatives of teaching assistant and students. The SEBS Managing Board meets monthly, and it has three members appointed by the Cantonal Government and two from inside the School. The Supervisory Board is composed of three members, appointed by the Cantonal Government. The everyday business of SEBS is run by the School's Administration, headed by the Dean and assisted by four Vice-Deans. SEBS has taken several efforts and steps to implement the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), based also on the guidelines of the State Agency for Quality Assurance. (The Senate of the University of Sarajevo has also adopted several 'Rule Books', following the ESG, especially for teaching and studies. Though, it was recognized that full integration of the University is still an unfinished process.)

The SEBS Office for Quality Management has been in existence since late 2008, though in terms of quality management the situation in the entire University is very mixed; the Review Team also obtained an impression that SEBS could be one of leading faculties in the University for the steps it has taken towards Quality Management, while some other faculties might even try to 'copy' it. This SEBS Office for QM, with a full-time personnel of two, is supported by the Quality Management Committee, chaired by the Dean. For the size of SEBS Faculty, the Office for Quality Management is reasonably well staffed and financed, especially considering that the whole QM process in SEBS is still in a learning phase.

SEBS has produced a good series of documents related to Quality Management, including Quality Manual, Quality Policy, Resource Management, etc. etc.

SEBS has also produced a special document, the Code of Conduct, in 2009, that governs the activities of the School, incl. services for teaching through the three cycles, research, market research, business consulting, accounting, etc, and thus it is virtually covering close to every aspect of the School. It is also noteworthy that the School is placing a special emphasis on the adherence to ethical issues and standards in all its activities. However, one could also express a minor concern that the School has produced a long array of rule books and other documents related to overall administration and quality assurance at large; then, how much of it can be put into actual practice in the everyday work of the School. Anyway, this development of quality culture takes time, but at least the School has taken good steps towards it.

The School is also implementing the quality assurance system of the ISO 9001:2008 standard, also by training a number of persons in the top and middle level management to conduct internal audits. Besides, there has been a tradition in SEBS, at least since 2005, of running annual strategic planning sessions.

The Review Team obtained the impression that the leadership, especially in terms of the Dean and the Vice-Deans, is fully committed to promote the Quality Assurance systems in

SEBS. The Dean apparently has a strong interest in these issues, simply because also of the important role SEBS is playing in B&H in relation to attracting foreign companies and foreign business investments. Also, the division of duties between the four Vice-Deans seems appropriate, covering, respectively, Academic Affairs, Scientific Work and Research Projects, Finance, and Students and Mobility.

*Although there is no question about the leadership's stated responsibility and clear commitment to promoting the Quality Assurance in SEBS, yet the actual practices and true impacts still need time for full impact. The time span since implementing the major steps towards QA system has been rather short, and, also by experience from elsewhere in Europe, it really takes time for a true culture of quality to develop throughout the Faculty. Also, measurable quality objectives are often either lacking or poorly defined. The SEBS leadership's shows clear commitment towards Quality Assurance, though the awareness and everyday practices of QA among the staff still need time to develop to full effectiveness.*

***As a summary, and despite of some shortcomings mostly related to and a consequence of the short time span the quality assurance systems have been in practice and implemented, the Review Team is of the opinion that in relation to Audit Standard 2, SEBS clearly shows Considerable Development.***

## V Audit Standard 3

**HEI clearly defines and makes transparent the assignments of responsibilities and duties, and it also provides easy access to information needed for achieving target goals.**

At the institutional or the University level the responsibility for Quality Assurance lies with the Academic Senate and the Rector, who are supported in their work by the QA Committee and the Quality Assurance Office; by law the University of Sarajevo is an integrated university, though the process of integration is still ongoing. The Senate of the University has produced several Rule Books on the various cycles of studies, a Rule Book on examinations, etc. At the Faculty level the overall responsibility for Quality Assurance lies with the Dean, who is supported by the Vice-Deans, and in SEBS, by the Office for Quality Management. The QM Committee includes both the officers of the Quality Office who are under the direct authority of the Dean and the representatives of the School management. Moreover, in SEBS, the Quality Office is in place and in charge of supporting the coordination and implementation of QA standards and activities. Its duties and responsibilities are clearly defined.

The strategic objectives are clearly defined in the strategic plan for 2009-2011 and they cover rather extensively the major activities of the School. They can be summarized as: continuous improvements of educational and scientific processes and outcomes; increasing the capacities of the School's human resources; sustainable business policy; enhancing the School's facilities; better relations with the school founder and business community, etc. Action plans and a series of indicators related to these objectives have been developed and the responsibilities for their monitoring have been assigned; yet concrete definitions of measurable quality objectives often remain obscure. A series of tools for the achievement of the strategic goals have been developed and they include the registrar application, the distance learning application, the Moodle-based courseware, the e-library, the e-English online learning platform, the surveys and performance data on stakeholder satisfaction, and the periodic reports of the Curriculum Committee, as well as the Internal Review and the Internal Audit.

The implementation of the strategic goals seems to be well imbedded in the administration, but it also seems to be project-based, through a series of activities aiming at implementing different objectives on a step by step basis. This kind of approach has been in place since 2005, and though it has had the disadvantage of not being comprehensive enough, it seems to have produced several visible improvements through the years.

SEBS collects a large set of information about students, faculty, external stakeholders, etc., and this information is also available to the relevant organizational units. In some cases the information is available only to the Faculty management that can then use it to request other decentralised units to take action. The SEBS self-evaluation report clearly indicates the periodicities at which the different types of information are collected. The Review Team's visit made it clear that there is an everyday and lively, but yet not always formalized, information flow between different departments and between the different administrative levels of the School. This may be an advantage now in the rather small and shallow administrative structure of SEBS, but in the longer term there is need for more formal and organised links.

*It is apparent that the persons involved in Quality Assurance management have easy access to the information needed to monitor the achievement of the objectives, and they are in fact responsible for the development of the necessary indicators, for the review of the data obtained and for their presentation to the School Management. However, as stated earlier, the definitions of measurable quality objectives are often lacking or are poorly expressed. Moreover, since the implementation of strategic goals is done through a large variety of projects, the danger is that the overall approach to QA is not clear throughout the School, which may hamper the division of responsibilities and duties within the QM system at large. The information flow between different departments and between the centralized and decentralized level of the School could benefit from more formal links.*

***In summary, it appears that SEBS has achieved Considerable Development, but only partly, with regard to Audit Standard 3.***

## VI Audit Standard 4

### **Procedures for internal quality assurance are established and the quality management system supports the core processes of the HEI**

The SEBS Office for Quality Management is in charge and supporting the implementation of QA standards, with responsibilities e.g., for reviewing the quality management policy and procedures in compliance with ESG and national legislation, reviewing and monitoring academic standards, and providing counselling and institutional reviews. It is also responsible for organizing institutional reviews and administering the process of external auditors or evaluators for program and business operations, as well as managing the process of internal quality audit. It also deals with the issues related to curriculum contents and curricular developments at large, as well as those related to the undergrad studies, and also to the graduate and doctoral studies. The Office has also arranged regular training in Quality Management to the staff of SEBS. The Office personnel has participated in a few training seminars also abroad.

Through the Quality Policy the School has set up a system of meeting the needs and expectations of its service users and of the stakeholders, usually involving evaluations and direct contacts and interviews. Also, the SEBS employees are to supervise their own processes and report on them regularly. The Office for Quality Management will then review the key information and brings it forward to the School's Management for further action. The data obtained are analyzed rather regularly. An Internal Audit, performed periodically, is used to assess the efficiency of the system of Quality Management. Generally, such an Audit covering the entire School is performed annually, but control audits may be run as required. The procedures for remedial and preventive actions (against 'problems') seem to be a central part of the consequences of the internal audits.

SEBS has also introduced regular SWOT analyses for each area of its core processes, covering especially Studies and Teaching, and Further Education. Apparently this has led also into further modifications of the quality criteria used, also to help to meet better the qualifications of the standards and indicators of ESG. Further areas covered by Quality Management deal with the planning of the teaching process as well as duties of the teaching staff. External evaluations of teaching are conducted as required by the local law, but also by the specific needs of SEBS itself, involving expert teams from the region and/or from foreign universities. These evaluations are a bridge towards further internationalization, for which SEBS has clear needs and motivation. Overall, there seems to be good amount of flexibility in the procedures for internal quality management, and the specific nature and the environment of this School are well taken into account.

The new curriculum planning and design was introduced in 2005, as a direct response to the Bologna Process. This also includes attendance to and learning from the trends in HE in both Europe and overseas. This process also included development of new program objectives and program outcomes. Among the program objectives, important targets include also research skills and commitment for lifelong learning. Among the outcomes, it is noteworthy that SEBS has made a strong case of including the generic or 'soft' skills in its curricula, which apparently is a direct response to the needs of the labour market. The School has

already entered the process for both EFMD/EPAS and AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business). It was again the impression by the Review Team that SEBS could further benefit from increased use of measurable goals and KPIs.

The Bologna Process also calls for a new degree structure, and SEBS has already introduced the concept of '3+2+3'. Also, MBA/EMBA programs have been offered, partly with foreign collaborations, and taught in English.

The processes related to the overall student services, starting with their admission into SEBS, and ending with issuance of certificates seem to be under a relatively well working quality assurance system, though the direct roles of students need to be addressed and strengthened, as also described elsewhere in this report. Also, the new PhD/DBA program needs sharpening about the expectations related to it; though it is a three-year program, yet all its students are working part-time. Overall, the business contacts and connections of SEBS still need to be intensified, though, admittedly, SEBS is already in the process of further developing and solidifying its Alumni Association. Of course, the existing Student Career Centre apparently also serves well towards this very purpose.

It is apparent that introduction of the Quality Assurance practices has streamlined and re-structured the overall management of the School in a new way, but its full implementation will take some more time for full efficiency.

***As a summary, it is apparent that the procedures for internal quality assurance are relatively well established and the quality management system supports the core processes of SEBS, though there still exist issues that need strengthening and further development. The general impression of the Review Team is that as regards Standard 4, SEBS shows a partly Advanced System.***

## VII Audit Standard 5

### **Monitoring and information systems are an integral part of the quality management system and facilitate regular reporting.**

SEBS is utilising the University of Sarajevo's ISSS information system that provides performance data to the senior leadership team of the Faculty. The system tracks students from enrolment to graduation, and these data include entry and enrolment, subject selection and enrolment, as well as personal and demographic information. In addition, SEBS is conducting regular end-of-semester evaluations of teaching, and the results are analysed by individual teachers and provided to senior management for follow-up as appropriate.

Also, SEBS is using the Moodle as its learning management system and this provides data relating to student enrolment, submission of grades, student-SEBS communications, and it also supports 'online office hours', and the monitoring of these. Moodle analytics provide data relating to student and teacher use of the Learning Management System (LMS), including the number of log-ons, and it allows also senior management to follow up the part of staff who have not been active in the online learning environment. Only staff registered to teach subjects can access Moodle subject sites, although if there are some concerns about the quality of what is occurring in an online course site, it is possible for that course site to be monitored.

It appears that senior management have sufficient data to make informed decisions about the entry level of students, their progress, the quality of teaching, and the research activity and the outputs of the academic staff.

The systems for gathering data and passing it to the responsible officer(s) are in place and appear to be functioning effectively. Many of these systems have been only recently introduced so it remains to be seen how well the systems function on a cyclical basis and how effectively the longitudinal data are used and will be used. The use of data to support decision making relating to academic matters and to the student experience as well as the systematic monitoring of performance against targets are still developing but has a sound base. The processes related to the ISO accreditation are established and appear to be operating, though no direct evidence for this was available to the Review Team.

SEBS should ensure that there are robust procedures for ensuring the integrity of data and the collection process. This may be a special function where the Internal Audit could play a greater role, also providing assurance that the data collected are kept secure and only relevant data are collected.

It would also be helpful still to expand the number of persons who have easy access to certain performance data so that, for example, heads of departments could use information that could help them in curriculum development and in enhancement of departmental activities.

SEBS is encouraged to continue to adopt and to monitor the range of quality indicators that they have identified in their Strategic Planning Report (2009), and to ensure that the information system captures relevant data, stores them securely, and ensures their availability to those authorised to access. It is critical that the information system is accessible to those who need it, and that it provides those data that the School has identified as critical to measuring and monitoring quality. Of course, it is important (in any kind of an organisation) to find a proper balance of the information needs and supply to the leadership vs. to the needs and supply to the staff and stakeholders. An open and efficient system would require that the latter are more important for successful management of a HEI.

*It is recommended to set targets for retention and progression between semesters and from cycle one to two, and integrating data to provide a full picture of the students' progression and student journey. Also, it is advisable to develop interventions at key points in the student experience where they are most vulnerable.*

*Also, it is advisable to set targets for active use of the online environment, not only to monitor the time online; the Learning Management System (LSM) in use should provide useful data relating to student learning behaviour that could assist in increasing student retention and improving performance.*

***In summary, the monitoring and information systems are an integral part of the quality management system in SEBS and they do facilitate regular reporting. The systems clearly indicate Considerable Development in relation to the Audit Standard 5.***

## VIII Audit Standard 6

**A quality management system includes the systematic participation of the different stakeholders.**

SEBS lists as its main stakeholders the staff and the management itself, the students and the alumni, outside employers, and, in a way, also some invited external consultants, all of whom could be involved and positively interact in the development of the SEBS studies, teaching and further education. Several questionnaires and surveys have been directed to the students, the alumni and the staff, which indicates that SEBS wants to be an active player and company with all its stakeholders. It is noteworthy, also, that SEBS has established, several years ago, the Student Career Center which can also serve as an important and useful link towards the labour market.

However the level of active participation by the different stakeholder groups is variable, and it seems that this is a consequence of the fact that the procedures and tools for communicating and for receiving regular feedback are not always consistently working or efficient mechanisms for them do not exist. For instance, the teacher with the best teaching performance is publicly awarded a prize, but there seems to be little awareness about the specific actions taken to improve the quality of teaching and student learning at large outside 'the best teachers' category. Thus, greater transparency regarding the results and consequences of these procedures is advisable. Also, a general report of these evaluations is available on the web, but it was not apparent how widely it was used and known among the stakeholders at large, including the students and the alumni.

The feedback from the Business Advisory Board as well as from the alumni apparently is taken into consideration, and also used to improve the teaching provision. However the main role of the Business Advisory Board seems to be related to the internship opportunities for the students, which is of course important in the current labour market situation in B&H. But it could also be involved in providing feedback on other issues related to the provision of teaching and student learning; e.g., SEBS is already using the Diploma Supplement, but its contents could be further developed, also in cooperation with the outside stakeholders.

The Alumni Association is lately becoming very active and is currently involved in the creation of an alumni database, which should further solidify the role and participation of the alumni in SEBS affairs.

Over the years various external consultants have been employed by SEBS (e.g., Prof. Paul Verhaegen, Prof. Adri Mejdram, Prof. Maks Tajnikar). Their reports and opinions apparently have been taken into consideration by the SEBS management, and thus several corresponding actions have been taken to follow their advice.

The engagement of students in quality assurance and development of the SEBS seems to represent an area where a lot remains to be done. Students questionnaires are filled by students though not in a fully systematic way. The students in the Dean's List have some level of participation in the development of SEBS, including participation of one of them in

the Curriculum Development Committee, with opportunities for focus groups with members of the school management, and with opportunity to work part-time in positions of responsibility in some of the SEBS offices. However, the concept of student representation and participation in quality assurance in SEBS seems to be somewhat an 'elitist' type of process. Though there apparently is a strong culture of student involvement but it is reserved for the best performing students mostly, and not based on a wide representation which would ensure attendance to the interests of the student community as a whole.

Learning about the quality management systems at large should be a part of the students' general skills, since the graduates in most cases meet such demands anyway when entering the labour market.

*It is clear that there is a willingness of the SEBS management to involve students as well as other stakeholders in the quality assurance work and in the overall development of SEBS, but it would be greatly helped by the establishment of more systematic processes which would make possible their involvement independently from the current management will and supervision. The reviews of the students' evaluations should be, in principle, in public domain and processed by the relevant organizational units, including student participation for further developmental actions. Moreover, the student questionnaire forms could start with an explanation of the effects of the questionnaire results and their relevance for students themselves.*

*The school could involve more the student union and students at large in the quality assurance process, for example, by also including an elected student representative in the QM Committee of SEBS. In fact, this would allow students to provide feedback on the program as a whole and not only on single teaching modules.*

***In summary, the implementation of this Audit Standard 6 appears only partly in Development, which is related both to the needs for deeper student participation, and also for the fact that there is need for better transparency regarding the results of quality assurance and the measures taken for enhancement, not only towards the students, but also towards all stakeholders at large.***

## IX Key process: Curriculum Management

On a general level, SEBS has been implementing the Bologna Process systems since 2005. The School has developed programs at the first cycle (Bachelor), the second (Master) and the third (Doctorate), following the 3+2+3 system. For the Bachelor, this has led to a first curriculum set-up in 2005, with small adjustments in 2007, and a more drastic renewal is foreseen in 2010. Considerable attention is given to improving the international dimension of the curricula, establishing closer connections to the business community, and improving students' 'soft skills'. This is primarily driven by the needs and expectations of future employers, and it is consistent with the School's overall strategy to remain the prime supplier of the future leaders for the regional business community. The curriculum reforms are driven by a dedicated committee, proposals are being processed through the School's decision making bodies, and up to the Senate of the University.

SEBS apparently is the leader in the field, according also to its strategic goals for the second cycle, the Master's. The School has developed a portfolio of Master level programs building on specific SEBS expertise in the departments. Currently, new programs are created, e.g., in the field of finance, that cater to the needs of students and business. It is also evident that the second Bologna cycle is clearly still in development in B&H and in the region. Like in most other European countries, both the institutions, students and the employers are still shaping the 'master' landscape, which is a rather fragmented market concerning its contents (specializations vs. general), target groups (age groups vs. working experience) and didactical approach (fulltime vs. part time vs. modular vs. Distance Learning). The SEBS self-assessment report provides information about the current Master portfolio and its quality objectives, which appear to be rather 'supply driven', largely based on what already existed in the pre-Bologna era and on the internal resources. It still lacks a clear 'demand driven' vision and a strategic plan for developing the second Bologna cycle in all its aspects, ranging from pre-experience, specialized programs to post-experience executive education modules, either delivered by SEBS alone and/or by a consortium of several institutions.

As to the third cycle, the doctorate, SEBS initiated a new PhD/DBA program, commencing in 2009, with a cohort of approximately 20 students. Compared to the old system at the School of producing the dissertation during a lengthy process of both working, studying, researching and writing, the new 'American' style program is aimed at training and delivering high quality PhDs to the market much faster. However, at the moment, exactly how this new program will live up to its expectations seems not very clear to the current students nor to the management itself of the School. Most students do the PhD program beside their regular job, thereby having considerable less time to invest in the actual dissertation compared to full time PhD students at other research institutions. The students themselves seem not to be sure yet if they will pursue an academic or a business career. Currently, the program seems to be tailored more toward a DBA kind of population, but unfortunately, in B&H the DBA is not yet an officially recognized degree. Perhaps this can be circumvented by collaborating with overseas partners (e.g., in the UK) that are qualified of issuing a DBA degree. The doctorate part of the curriculum management of SEBS is most clearly still in the early developmental phase.

While SEBS is in the process of further implementing the Bologna Process, its current programs are run quite professionally, with high attention levels towards quality assurance and

management. Support units and staff prove to be conscient of quality aspects of their work, and they set targets for improvements each year. A plan-do-check-act cycle seems to be in place in most units. Much emphasis is put on the ICT support and electronic communications. Teaching staff is highly aware of expectations for quality as well, and a quality management system is in place to stimulate the quality process. The courses are evaluated by students, the results are discussed with teachers, and plans are made for improvements. The school has two yearly 'best teachers' awards in place, including a monetary incentive, and awards the best students with a recognition on the Dean's list and the possibility of an appointment as part-time employee at SEBS.

However, broader use of and feedback on the results of evaluations is not yet implemented in the quality management system of SEBS. First, the school may want to find ways to ensure that students remain engaged enough in the schools quality management system so that they remain willing to provide reliable evaluation data. Second, reporting on course evaluations is currently done on individual courses only. The School may also construct and use management information on a higher level (curriculum, department, teacher). This type of information is not yet easily available to the management, and is not explicitly used for setting overall quality objectives.

All in all, curriculum management at the SEBS appears to show considerable development. Current programs have a clear eye on quality aspects. There is a strong drive for continuous curriculum improvements, which are taken very seriously by all stakeholders involved. Any major curriculum reform proposal must go through the highest decision making bodies. In particular, the second and third Bologna cycle programs are yet in early stages of development. The School may want to focus more on developing a clear strategy on its future position in the Master's, Doctorate and LLL markets. In addition, quality objectives may be set more explicitly at higher unit levels (curriculum, department, teacher) instead of the course level only.

***As a summary for the Key Process 1, curriculum management in SEBS follows the principles the Bologna Process, and all three cycles show partly Considerable Development, but they are not fully 'mature' yet.***

## X Key Process: Supporting Study Organization, Administration and Learning via the Information Systems

SEBS is using both the University's information system and it also collects additional data to meet the needs of the School. Much of this data collection is still in early stages, but at this point it appears to be well used by the senior management. It may be helpful to provide some of these performance data to the heads of departments to allow them to influence departmental action and intervene quickly. However, the senior management team seems to have a very 'hands on' approach and apparently is able to take full use of the information system.

In addition to the formal processes for students to register complaints, the Dean has an open e-mail line that encourages students to contact him with complaints that are then dealt with directly or referred as appropriate. In a similar manner the Vice-Deans receive e-mails directly from students. SEBS should also ensure that students' complaints are managed consistently and that full records are kept of the responses.

SEBS conducts student evaluations on teaching at the end of each teaching period (semester). SEBS has established a systematic approach to this end; while it has only been recently introduced it appears that the necessary measures are in place to ensure that this is also managed appropriately, and the security of data is guaranteed. The results of teaching evaluations are used to inform the performance of individual lecturers and teaching assistants, and they are also used to inform the development the curriculum. At the moment, the results are considered only at the level of individual teacher and it may be helpful to aggregate the results of some items/scales at the level of a course or a discipline to provide a different perspective on departmental and/or subject performance. SEBS may also wish to consider the collection of data that relate to the students' perceptions of the courses at large in addition to the performance of individual teachers. The current instrument could be quite easily separated into aspects that relate to the performance of the individual teacher and to those items that pertain to a course and its overall design.

The academic and teaching assistants with the highest student ratings are acknowledged through a Dean's award. SEBS is to be commended on this recognition of good teaching. However, there are currently few clear mechanisms by which students are informed of the actions taken in response to their feedback. It would be beneficial to institute a method by which this could be done so that students understand that their feedback is valued and put into good use.

The staff of SEBS has timely access to the data about student enrolments, subject choice and subsequent class sizes that allows managers to allocate teaching loads and ensure that there is sufficient qualified teaching staff available to meet the instructional needs each semester.

As already mentioned, the School utilises some of the data generated via Moodle that relate to student and staff use of the learning management system. At present most of the reports

relate to log-ons and time in the site, which however may provide little meaningful information about student learning or of the effectiveness of design of the learning experiences. Staff use (or lack of use) of Moodle is reported to the senior management and appropriate action taken via meeting with staff member. Moodle can potentially provide a rich set of data about the ways in which students use the online environment and the effectiveness of different activities. Analyses of some of the data could provide extensive information that could boost the development of interventions in order to assist students to learn more effectively and to minimise drop out.

Students can access the student data base/information system from home and via on-campus kiosks. This provides them with access to personal information and to select courses, to register for examinations and to communicate with the faculty. Planned developments of the ISS should deliver greater functionality that provides staff of SEBS with more information to affect their administrative decisions relating to study organisation and learning. The provision of functionality that allows user generated statistical reports would allow SEBS to develop custom-made reports that aligned directly with their quality questions and indicators.

The administration of student study processes and the organisation of study is strongly supported by the ISSS, which provides automatic reporting and standardisation of documents, also in accordance to the Lisbon Declaration and the Bologna Process. The ISSS has clearly introduced a stronger customer service ethos in SEBS and improved the quality of the services to students.

Staff are provided with regular training in the use of the technology, and proper technical support is available. Educational technology experts lead the development of the materials for the Distance Learning (DL) program.

*As the SEBS moves towards greater use of the online learning environment consideration should be given to developing a policy against plagiarism and the use of plagiarism detection software across all electronically submitted assignments supported by student education in relation to academic integrity.*

*Also, it is advisable to develop provision for an expanded range of staff development relating to online pedagogy and the encouragement of active and engaging course sites that do more than present contents/materials.*

***As a summary, for the Key Process 2, it is apparent that support to the study organization, administration and learning via the information system is functional though still in a learning phase, but it appears to be clearly in a stage of Development.***

## XI Final Conclusions

The School of Economics and Business of the University of Sarajevo (SEBS) was evaluated for its QM system in the performance area of Studies, Teaching and Further Education by the AQA Focus Audit.

The Review Team took notice that SEBS had well prepared itself for the Audit, and the self-assessment report and other documents provided were rich in information. The Team, after its first visit in Sarajevo, had requested for some additional information, which was promptly provided. Both visits by the Team, in March and in June 2010, were well organized, and the meetings and discussions conducted were open and frank and very informative. The Team met the Vice-Rector of the University, and representatives of the School's leadership, the Dean and several Vice-Deans; also persons in the Office for Quality Management; representatives of teachers and of the staff in the management; student union members; as well as several members of the SEBS alumni and people from the business world in B&H closely related to, and collaborating with SEBS.

Overall, the Team found a strong commitment by the SEBS leadership and by the staff and the administration towards developing the Quality Assurance system in the School. The execution of the Bologna Process had started already in 2005, and a special Office for Quality Management, with a staff of two, had been established in 2008. The self-assessment report provided by SEBS for this Audit describes well and in detail all the steps and measures taken so far in implementing the Bologna Process and the Quality Assurance system. The School has produced a rather extensive array of documentation for its management and quality work, though there was some minor concern by the Team as to how well the staff and administration might have adopted it, at least in spirit, in its everyday work. There was apparently a good amount of regular training provided in general management and in quality issues for both the staff and the administration at large. Also, it was noteworthy that the School has provided good use of electronic communications for its staff and students, and it was also in the process of extending its links to its alumni and other stakeholders.

The SEBS strategy has been prepared in consultation with both internal and external stakeholder representatives, and it is clearly communicated. The School has taken as its aim to be the leader in its field in B&H. There exist also strong links between SEBS and the region and its business community and the alumni. The School's strategy is regularly reviewed and adjusted, and thus it is also flexible enough in its approach to an ever changing environment. However, SEBS needs to be more explicit in its measurable quality objectives, as well as in Key Performance Indicators, and in setting learning outcomes. A stronger engagement of students is required especially in relation to Quality Management, also following the spirit and the letter of the ESG.

The SEBS leadership shows clear commitment towards Quality Assurance, yet the awareness and everyday practices of QA among its staff still need time to develop to full effectiveness. The Office for Quality Management has been in existence only for a little over a year, but it appeared to be active and efficient in its assigned tasks.

The strategic objectives have a rather extensive coverage of the school's activities; also their everyday implementation seems to be well adopted by the administration. It is also noteworthy that the School collects a large set information covering virtually all its activities. The persons involved in QA management can have easy access to the information needed for their work, though, as also noted earlier, the definitions of measurable quality objectives are often poorly described. It is also apparent that introduction of the Quality Assurance practices has streamlined and re-structured the overall management of the School in a new way, but its full implementation will take some more time for full efficiency.

SEBS is further encouraged to continue to adopt and to monitor the range of quality indicators that they have identified e.g. in their Strategic Planning Report (2009), and to ensure that the information system captures relevant data, stores them securely, and ensures their availability to those authorised to access. As an example, it might be advisable to develop interventions at key points in the students' career and experience where they are most vulnerable. The LSM system employed could be put into even better use in this sense.

The engagement of students in quality assurance and in development of SEBS activities and management at large seems to be an area where a lot remains to be done. These requirements should not only concern the 'best' students on the Dean's list, but they should involve all students, one way or another. The same call applies also for strengthened contacts and open and transparent interactions with local businesses and the alumni.

Curriculum management at SEBS appears to show good development. There is a strong drive for continuous curriculum improvements and taken seriously by the stakeholders. In particular, the second and third Bologna cycle programs are yet in early stages of development. The School may want to focus more on developing clear strategies for the Master's, Doctorate and LLL markets. And the quality objectives may be set more explicitly at higher unit levels instead of the course level only.

The administration of student study processes and their organisations are supported by the ISSS, which provides automatic reporting and standardisation of documents, also in accordance to the Lisbon Declaration and the Bologna Process. The ISSS has clearly introduced a stronger customer service practice in SEBS and improved the quality of its services to the students.

**Towards a certification decision, the Review Team is of the opinion that the Focus Audit at the School of Economics and Business (SEBS), University of Sarajevo, has shown that it can pass with conditions, as expressed in more detail in this Review Team's report.**



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Vienna, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2013

**AQA Quality Audit – proof of conditions**

Dear Prof. Šain,

At its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011, AQA's Certification and Accreditation Commission decided to confirm the award of the AQA certificate for a period of six years under conditions.

SEBS provided evidence of the timely fulfilment of the conditions. The document was assessed by a member of the review team and considered by the Certification and Accreditation Commission in its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2013.

We are glad to inform you that the Certification and Accreditation Commission decided to confirm the fulfilment of all conditions. The University of Sarajevo – School of Economics and Business is thus entitled to hold the certificate until 24<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

We would like to congratulate the University of Sarajevo – School of Economics and Business on the successful completion of this project and encourage SEBS in its ambitions to further develop its internal quality management system.

With best regards,

Dr. Peter Findlay  
Chair of the Certification &  
Accreditation Commission

Alexander Kohler  
Managing Director