



BISLA
Liberal Arts College

BRATISLAVA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS
BRATISLAVSKÁ MEDZINÁRODNÁ ŠKOLA LIBERÁLNYCH ŠTÚDIÍ
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Internal evaluation report on the implementation of the internal system of the higher education institution

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List of abbreviations

- FTE – Full-time equivalent
 HIP – Habilitation and inauguration proceedings
 IER – Internal evaluation report on the implementation of the university's internal system (according to paragraph 4 § 24 of Act No. 269/2002 Coll.)
 IQAS – Internal quality assurance system
 HEI – University (Higher Education Institution)
 SAPCH – Scientific-artistic-pedagogical characteristics
 PRFSP – Person responsible for the study program
 TPPS – Teacher providing a profile subject
 SAAHE – Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education

1. Basic information about the university

1.1. Name of the college

Bratislava International School of Liberal Studies (BISLA)

1.2. Address

Grösslingová 53
Bratislava
811 09 Bratislava

1.3. Legislative-legal anchoring

Private school / non-profit organization

1.4. Statutory officers

Doc. Samuel Abraham, PhD.

1.5. Contact person (contact for IQAS assessment purposes)

František Novosád – novosad@bisla.sk or Dagmar Kusá – kusa@bisla.sk

1.6. Structure of the university, workplaces and locations (with a link to the website, related regulation, or composition)

One faculty – Faculty of Liberal Studies at Grösslingová 53, Bratislava. www.bisla.sk

1.7. History (milestones, a timeline sufficiently showing the main milestones)

A university with the legal form of a non-profit organization.

Bratislava International School of Liberal Studies (Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts – BISLA) with its seat in Bratislava received state approval for its operation and accreditation of the bachelor's degree in political science in June 2006 and started its activities in September 2006. Political sciences are studied at BISLA in connection with a wide range of social sciences and humanities: philosophy, social anthropology, history, sociology and art theory. At the same time as BISLA, the Bratislava Institute of Humanities (BIH) was established, which organizes public discussions and lectures on key intellectual, social and political issues of Slovakia and Europe.

BISLA students are mainly Slovak citizens, but those interested in studying at the university from abroad are equally welcome. BISLA has several foreign students. Teaching takes place in English with the aim of preparing BISLA graduates to continue their education both in Slovakia and anywhere abroad, or for jobs that require a bachelor's degree. The study program is based on seminars in small groups, lectures and a training (tutor) system, as well as on gaining working experience while studying. The main emphasis is on continuous intellectual interactions between students and between students and teachers, both during and outside of the classroom. As a university and as an intellectual community, BISLA also operates in the field of scientific research and scientific publication.

BISLA is a small college in terms of number of students and faculty. It obtains resources for its activities from grants, tuition fees and other private contributions.

BISLA strives to continuously strengthen its background as a private university through close cooperation within the emerging European network Colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences (ECOLAS), in the creation and activities of which it actively participates.

Preparations for the establishment of BISLA lasted a whole decade, as the founders were active in the civic association Society for Higher Learning (VVS). Since 1996, VVS has created a wide network of academic and non-academic experts who provided teaching and a training system in a three-year supplementary educational program intended for talented and motivated students of Slovak universities. This additional education program avoided the tradition of narrow specialization characteristic of undergraduate education throughout Central and Eastern Europe.

Since 2002, VVS has established a program for Roma university students, with the aim of helping to overcome the isolation and marginalization of this minority. In 2006, Roma students of VVS founded their own magazine AMENCA, which is the first Roma student magazine in the world.

Since 1996, VVS has also published the Slovak-English magazine Kritika&Kontext , in which Slovak and foreign experts debate current intellectual issues.

1.8. The context of the internal system of the higher education institution (according to the needs and specifics of IQAS UNI). For example:

- **field, regional, research, cultural and other specifics affecting the internal system of the university**
- **specific needs and expectations of internal and external stakeholders**
- **university demography and its development**

BISLA has developed an internal quality assurance system. The system serves as a criterion for assessing the study program as a whole and individual courses. Regularly, after the end of the semester, the Quality Council evaluates the course of teaching and the results achieved in individual courses.

Doc. Samuel Abraham, PhD. is responsible for developing and ensuring the quality of the study program, who together with the teachers, regularly evaluate the progress and results of the teaching process during the established working hours, paying special attention to the compatibility of compulsory and compulsory optional subjects.

At the end of each semester, the management of BISLA prepares an offer of mandatory optional and optional subjects. Students also participate in the preparation of the selection of subjects. For example, students wanted economics and psychology to be given more attention in the curriculum. The management of BISLA provided courses dedicated to economics and psychology. In the same way, students choose courses in language training. Currently, there is a course in Japanese and Spanish, in previous semesters courses in French, Norwegian, Chinese and Russian have been held.

The study program and the compilation of the current schedule are also discussed at the Academic Senate, which formulates recommendations for supplementing optional subjects. The members of the Senate also find out their interest in subjects in the form of a questionnaire. The subjects offered at BISLA are also enriched with a mandatory three-credit internship, where students acquire practical skills from a professional experience. Experts from various fields also offer optional subjects at BISLA, either in the length of one semester, or short-format courses, so-called pop-up courses, which are a particularly suitable form for imparting practical skills and experience in a workshop format.

1.9. The process of harmonizing IQAS UNI (a timeline and a brief evaluation of individual steps and results are sufficient).

BISLA creation and implementation of the internal quality system (structure in points):

BISLA has developed a long-term development plan. In the past four years, the management of BISLA has focused primarily on the consolidation of the bachelor's study program with the premise of preparing studies at the master's level. The study program as well as all its individual courses are in line with the strategic goals of BISLA.

BISLA also developed, in cooperation with the participating students, a set of goals and outputs from the study program as well as a measurement showing how individual subjects at BISLA meet the strategic goals, educational outputs and qualifications.

See the section with documents regarding the implementation of the process:
<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>

2. Quality assurance policies

- 1. Describe and evaluate how, by implementing your own IQAS, you fulfil Article 2 of the standards for the internal system. The self-evaluation in preparation for external evaluation, as well as the initial implementation of IQAS at the university, is an opportunity to re-evaluate and specify the mission of the university and its strategic goals.**

2.1. Responsibility for the quality of the education provided

- 2. Explain the way of applying quality assurance policies in the strategic management of higher education institutions. List the procedures by which the HEI ensures that workplaces, structures and individuals have adopted and understood the quality policies and objectives and accepted their responsibility for achieving them.**

The internal system of securing studies at BISLA was developed and controlled by the Quality Council established by the decision of the Rector of BISLA on December 1, 2021. The Quality Council ensures that the pedagogical and creative activities of all teachers and employees of BISLA are in accordance with the long-term intention of the school and the profile of the graduate. The quality council determines the powers, scope and responsibility of school officials as well as individual teachers for the quality of teaching in individual courses as well as in the study program as a whole. The Quality Council regularly, after the end of each semester, submits proposals and reports to the academic senate about the study program, academic staff, the quality system and other relevant matters related to the quality and level of BISLA. These reports contain specific measures aimed at raising the level of the university and ensuring the fulfilment of BISLA's long-term goal. doc. Samuel Abraham, PhD. is responsible for developing and ensuring the quality of the study program together with the teachers, as they regularly evaluate the progress and results of the teaching process during the established working hours, paying special attention to the compatibility of compulsory and compulsory optional subjects. BISLA has developed an internal quality assurance system. The system serves as a criterion for

assessing the study program as a whole and individual courses. After the end of the semester, the Quality Council regularly evaluates the course of teaching and the results achieved in individual courses.

2.2. The mission of the college

Describe the mission of the university and its specifics. Describe how the mission is enforced in the internal system of the college.

Evaluate the fulfilment of the mission (especially in the area of quality assurance of higher education).

BISLA aims to provide its students with a quality education that will become the basis of their professional career, personal well-being, as well as their awareness of moral values and ethical standards, which are a prerequisite for them to become responsible citizens in their community, whether local or global. BISLA follows the tradition of modern liberal studies, which we believe offer the best approach to education and teaches each student the intellectual skills necessary to develop them into creative thinkers, successful in the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century and skilled in navigating today's politically and culturally diverse world.

BISLA advocates for the development of liberal studies in Europe as the most effective way of investing in a bachelor's degree – time, effort, student skills on the one hand, and finance and benefits provided by governments and corporations on the other. BISLA is primarily a teaching institution ("teaching college"), with an emphasis on student learning. The philosophy of liberal studies is based on the diversity of students and their needs, and their advancement is the main mission of this school. This also stems from the rich support system for students developed in our Teaching and Learning Centre, as well as the equally important wide range of extracurricular activities, internships and volunteering. Access to teachers and mentors, participation in long-term projects and research, involvement in community life and practical application of knowledge during studies are demonstrably linked to successful employment of graduates after graduation and a higher degree of satisfaction with life and work placement. BISLA pays particular attention to this full-fledged fulfilment of the potential of bachelor's studies outside of teaching itself and achieves excellent results in the placement of graduates.

BISLA creates all the prerequisites for its students to succeed in a diverse world, to bring long-term solutions to local and global problems and to contribute to the healthy and democratic development of a society that respects peace and sustainable development and well-being.

BISLA's leadership is shaping the study program in accordance with the belief that the real mission of education is not only to secure a career. Education is important for education itself, as a tool to live a meaningful life, to understand what is happening in the world and to build a relationship and draw energy from the art and culture that our civilization has produced over the millennia.

<https://www.bisla.sk/accreditation/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/study-program/>

2.3. Strategic goals of the university

Explain how the achievement of strategic goals is ensured in the environment of higher education institutions, on all components, levels of higher education institutions. List the main strategic goals in the field of higher education and evaluate their fulfilment, or

provide a link to another document. Explain specifically how the study programs fulfil the mission and strategic goals of the university, or provide a link to another document with such an assessment.

The Bratislava International School of Liberal Studies (hereinafter BISLA), in accordance with its mission, determines the following main strategic goals for the coming years:

1. The management of BISLA will strive to maintain the full number of students in the following years in all three grades in the bachelor's study program Liberal studies in the field of study Political science, i.e. 60-70 students.
2. The management of BISLA will maintain the structure of teachers so that all compulsory and compulsory optional subjects of the study program are taught by internal teachers with appropriate qualifications.
3. BISLA management will ensure that all internal teachers are involved in solving scientific research tasks through domestic and international grants.
4. The management of BISLA will insist that the main topics of scientific research at BISLA are coordinated with the courses within the study program.
5. BISLA consistently develops the strategy of building BISLA's international contacts, both in the field of teacher mobility and especially in the field of student mobility - the key priority is to ensure the possibility for BISLA students to spend part of their studies abroad, as well as to ensure the possibility for foreign interested parties to study at BISLA . The main medium of BISLA's international networking is the ECOLAS association and the Global network Liberal Arts Alliance.
6. BISLA will continue to consistently implement the criteria for assessing the quality of teaching and research, which includes a transparent system for assessing the quality of teaching and research at BISLA. An anonymous evaluation of teaching by students must also be part of these criteria. This is ensured in the form of questionnaires that students fill out at the end of each semester.
7. The management of BISLA, in cooperation with foreign partners, will ensure the development of Teaching and Learning Centre, the basic goal of which will be to increase the pedagogical skills of social science teachers. The result will also be the improvement of pedagogical practice, regular training of teachers, improvement of feedback to teachers on their pedagogical activity and its periodic evaluation and improvement.
8. To ensure that BISLA is an educational institution open to the public, especially through the organization of public discussions, seminars and meetings on topics that are important and stimulating for public discourse.

<https://www.bisla.sk/who-are-we/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/mission-and-vision/>

2.4. The structure of the internal system

Briefly explain:

2.4.1. The system and structure of formalized policies of IQAS with reference to their wording.

The internal system of securing studies at BISLA was developed and controlled by the Quality Council established by the decision of the Rector of BISLA on December 1, 2021. The Quality Council ensures that the pedagogical and creative activities of all teachers and employees of BISLA are in accordance with the long-term intention of the school and the profile of the

graduate. The quality council determines the powers, scope and responsibility of school officials as well as individual teachers for the quality of teaching in individual courses as well as in the study program as a whole. After the end of each semester, the Quality Council regularly submits proposals and reports to the academic senate about the study program, academic staff, the quality system and other relevant matters related to the quality and level of BISLA. These reports contain specific measures aimed at raising the level of quality of the university and ensuring the fulfilment of BISLA's long-term goal.

2.4.2. The system and a brief description of the IQAS structures, including senior employees, representatives of interested parties, with a link to their home pages, if they exist, or full characteristics (statutes, rules of procedure, indicating their powers, scope and responsibilities in the field of quality assurance).

The decision-making body within the internal accreditation is the Quality Council. The decisions of the Quality Council are binding for all teachers and employees of BISLA in Bratislava.

1. Quality Council:

- a) manages the course of internal quality assessment at BISLA in Bratislava,
- b) within the framework of regular internal quality assessment, processes and approves a report on internal assessment and quality assurance at BISLA in Bratislava once every two years,
- c) discusses and approves non-periodic reports on internal evaluation and quality assurance at BISLA in Bratislava,
- d) initiates changes and additions to the internal system and submits them to the rector,
- e) approves corrective measures resulting from corrective measures imposed by the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as "SAAUNI"),
- f) regularly monitors and supervises the fulfilment of standards for the study program.

2. The term of office of a member of the Quality Council begins on the day of appointment by the rector or the Academic Senate. Membership in the Quality Council ceases on the day when a member of the Quality Council ceases to fulfil the condition on the basis of which he was appointed as a member of the Quality Council; the day of relinquishing membership in the Quality Council; the day on which he was dismissed from the Quality Council by the rector of BISLA or by death.

3. The quality board consists of:

- a) academic employees (university teachers and researchers) of BISLA in Bratislava appointed by the rector of BISLA,
- b) student representatives proposed by the student section of the BISLA Academic Senate in Bratislava and approved by the BISLA Academic Senate in Bratislava,
- c) representatives of employers or BISLA graduates approved by the Academic Senate of BISLA.

2.5. Resources for the functioning of the internal system of the higher education institution

Characterize the mechanisms for ensuring sufficient personnel, financial and material resources for the functioning of the Higher Education Institution, which correspond to the size of the university and the scope of educational, creative and other related activities. Assess them as well as the sufficiency of resources. Evaluate the structure and number of employees, or provide a link to another existing document.

The private university is financed by private funds, which are made up of sources from abroad, donations, contributions from the state budget in the scope of - social scholarship, incentive scholarship, contribution for student stays abroad, Erasmus + program and tuition fees from school students.

The support professional staff, with its competence and number, meets the needs of the students and teachers of the study program. Despite the small size of the school, its basic functions are the same as those of a large-format university, and therefore BISLA employs a manager, building administrator, IT technician, economist, study officer, assistant to the Teaching and Learning Centre Coordinator.

<https://www.bisla.sk/vyrocne-spravy/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/accreditation/>

2.6. Internal system policies, structures and processes

Characterize and evaluate, as in IQAS:

The Rector of the Bratislava International School of Liberal Studies (BISLA) (hereinafter referred to as "BISLA in Bratislava") issues pursuant to § 15 par. 1 letter b) Act no. 131/2002 Coll. universities and on the amendment and supplementation of certain laws as amended (hereinafter referred to as "the Law") this internal regulation and at the same time establishes the BISLA Quality Council.

1. The internal system of securing studies at BISLA was developed and controlled by the Quality Council established by the decision of the Rector of BISLA on December 1, 2021. The Quality Council ensures that the pedagogical and creative activities of all teachers and employees of BISLA are in accordance with the long-term intention of the school and the profile of the graduate. The quality council determines the powers, scope and responsibility of school officials as well as individual teachers for the quality of teaching in individual courses as well as in the study program as a whole. The Quality Council regularly, after the end of each semester, submits proposals and reports to the academic senate about the study program, academic staff, the quality system and other relevant matters related to the quality and level of BISLA. These reports contain specific measures aimed at raising the level of the university and ensuring the fulfilment of BISLA's long-term goal.

2.6.1. University guarantees real involvement of stakeholders.

Despite the fact that bachelor's studies at BISLA are not professionally oriented, BISLA students must complete internships of at least 60 hours in state or municipal organizations, or in third sector organizations or in newspaper and magazine editorial offices. BISLA cooperates with several institutions, such as Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia, GLOBSEC, or Bratislava Policy Institute, etc., which place students regularly. We also cooperate with many others on an ad hoc basis, based on the needs of students. Internships are monitored by the Study

Coordinator, who takes care of their usefulness, development of practical skills, familiarization of students with the operation and management of the organization, etc.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in several-month internships through the Erasmus+ program. At BISLA, we support student participation in our Year abroad program, where students can, usually during the third year of study, combine one semester of study at a partner school and the second semester of an internship through the Erasmus+ program.

2.6.2. You ensure the linking of education and creative activities so that the level and focus of creative activity correspond to the level of higher education and the educational outcomes in the relevant fields of study.

The study program is designed to enable students to acquire the relevant curriculum of knowledge and competences and, upon completion, to decide on jobs requiring qualifications at the Bc. level or to continue with master's studies. We refer to the graphs that document the application of BISLA graduates in master's studies.

BISLA places great emphasis on the development of skills and abilities, as well as on the inculcation of democratic values. As mentioned above, BISLA students are very successful in placing themselves in higher education schools as well as in employment.

Democratic values are one of the key areas of BISLA's mission and educational outputs. The dialogical form of education, the emphasis on extracurricular activities and volunteering, the open form of school management contribute to a very active student community, which is strongly involved in solving pressing social problems already during their studies. During the pandemic, for example, BISLA student teams worked as volunteers in hospitals. During Russia's military aggression in Ukraine, students took turns in small groups at the border with Ukraine, where they helped manage the influx of refugees and provided tutoring, logistical and material assistance to Ukrainian youth during the summer and fall. BISLA has accepted three male and female students from Ukraine (out of a total of 47 students) and is helping them improve their academic and language skills so that they can properly engage in their studies.

These experiences not only help them to develop democratic feelings, tolerance, empathy, solidarity, but also to develop organizational skills, the ability of strategic planning, independent decision-making and management, etc., which are later invaluable experiences when entering the working environment.

Students also acquire professional skills through mandatory internships and the organization of large student events (e.g., the annual international conference The Liberal Herald, publishing the magazine Il Ponte, etc.)

In 2022, a group of students also participated in the Helsinki Youth Committee project, where students prepared and led interactive educational modules on human rights and democracy in secondary schools, participated in the preparation of educational materials and also in a representative survey on the level of awareness in secondary schools and gymnasiums on these topics.

2.6.3. Support the internationalisation of educational, creative and related activities, appropriately consistent with mission, strategic goals, the learning objectives, outcomes and the needs of university and interested parties.

All the data about these sections are on the website of BISLA.

<https://www.bisla.sk/alumni/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/student-experiences/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/alumni-interviews/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/student-society/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/faculty/>

For the self-assessment of individual standards, utilize the status and development of the related indicators listed in Annex 3 of the VHSVS. For example, when evaluating internationalisation, developments that can be monitored and evaluated:

- *the number of study programmes offered in languages other than Slovak,*
 - *the number of applicants for study in the relevant academic year with non-Slovak citizenship,*
 - *the proportion of international students out of the total number of students,*
 - *the number of students admitted on Erasmus from abroad in the relevant academic year,*
 - *the proportion of students with non-Slovak citizenship studying in a language other than Slovak out of the total number of students,*
 - *the proportion of teachers with more than 1 years' experience at a foreign university or research institution abroad,*
- ... etc.*

In the text of the self-assessment, a brief commentary on their development and the related goals is sufficient.

2.6.4. Guarantee protection against intolerance and discrimination against students, staff and applicants, in particular on the grounds of gender/sex, race, colour, language, age, sexual orientation, faith or religion, disability, political or other opinion, national or social origin, national or social origin, national or ethnic background, property and ancestry.

BISLA teachers strictly follow academic ethics. At the beginning of each semester, students are instructed on the rules of essay writing, and the problems they can cause themselves by plagiarizing. The overall atmosphere at BISLA encourages students to be motivated, and naturally competitive in learning the study material. At BISLA, students are provided with various forms of support services which help cope students with the study load, and maintain the numbers of the first year students (compared to the national average, where up to a third of BISLA students have a significantly higher retention rate of all students). This is also due to the peer mentoring program, in which older students help first years to transition to university level education and learn, among other things, strong academic ethics that is BISLA's flagship, the system of academic advisors, the writing centre, and the accessibility of psychological and career services. Students are taught from day one to be academically virtuous, self-aware, and self-reliant from the initial Orientation, through the Academic Writing course, the strict adherence to academic ethics in each course, to the final undergraduate thesis, of which most graduates are justifiably proud. BISLA strictly abides by the Disciplinary Regulations and any indication of plagiarism is referred to the Disciplinary Committee consisting of three members of the teaching staff and two male and two female students.

<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>

2.6.5. Guarantee to maintain scientific integrity, academic ethics and vigilance against plagiarism and further academic frauds. In the self-assessment, demonstrate the ability to detect academic frauds, draw consequences from it, and take systemic action to prevent it.

<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>

BISLA has a precise definition of plagiarism and strict rules to prevent plagiarism. Students are from the start encouraged to value themselves and their intellect and work, while also receiving focused training in academic writing skills, supported by several courses from the very first semester of study. The mentoring and advising system, the influence of older students, and the seriousness and rigor with which we approach cases of plagiarism discourage students from attempting to plagiarize. Academic writing skills at a high level in the English language are one of the main outcomes of studying at BISLA.

Any violations are automatically referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

BISLA consistently instils in its students that, despite widespread social acceptance, plagiarism is absolutely out of the question in terms of BISLA's values and in the interests of students' personal growth.

2.6.6. Inquiry complaints in which student seeks protection of their rights or legally protected interests that they believe have been violated, or in which student points to specific deficiencies in the activities or inaction of the College. Whereby the review of the complaints is transparent and conducted with the participation of student representatives, and feedback is provided to the complainants on the outcome of their review and the action taken. Evaluate the effectiveness of the mechanisms for reviewing complaints.

An important part of the BISLA education that BISLA imparts to its students is the value dimension. Studying at BISLA underlines the values of liberal democracy, leads to respect, protection and fulfilment of human dignity and human rights, promotes a caring attitude towards oneself, others and the world, encourages dialogue with difference and engagement in civil society, promotes tolerance, empathy and fosters diversity, leads to self-reflection on one's own strengths, weaknesses and needs, promotes tolerance, empathy and encourages diversity.

BISLA has established internal documents that ensure the protection of students' rights and address the review of students' rights (Code of Ethics and Disciplinary Regulations). The Commissions are composed in a manner that ensures transparent and efficient review of complaints. Each participant in the proceedings shall be informed of all the facts and shall have the right to lodge a complaint against the proceedings of the individual commissions.

2.6.7. Ensure the internal regulations are in line with the generally binding regulations and that they are respected in the University environment.

BISLA regularly evaluates and supplements individual regulations and internal documents in accordance with the Higher Education Act. The individual governing bodies (Quality Council, Academic Senate, Governing Board, Scientific Council, etc.) comment on the current formulations and propose changes and measures on a regular basis. All changes are reflected in the minutes of the Senate, Board of Trustees or Scientific Council, as well as regular control and evaluation by the BISLA Quality Council.

<https://www.bisla.sk/accreditation/>

2.6.8. Promote continuous quality improvement in all activities carried out by the college and develop a quality culture at all departments and levels of the college.

BISLA is committed to work continuously at all levels of the college so that the individual staff members of the various structures are capable of improving the quality of their activities and perform them efficiently and without extra workload.

2.6.9. Ensure the internal system is linked to the long-term goals of the college.

BISLA focuses on the implementation of individual aspects from the internal quality system in the development of its long-term plan. For example, Article 3 of the Internal Quality System describes BISLA's long-term goal, which is followed in the various steps implemented by the Quality Council.

2.6.10. Ensure efficient execution of administrative activities related to quality assurance and not overloading teachers, students and other creative staff of the college with unjustified bureaucracy.

BISLA distributes working time in accordance with the appropriate workload of individual employees, and individual duties and tasks are adjusted accordingly to the employees ability of performing their work efficiently and professionally. BISLA assigns work tasks in accordance with the classification and qualifications of individual employees to ensure the best possible results for each task and to reduce unreasonable workload on employees. The terms and conditions of employment as well as the conditions of recruitment of pedagogic staff are set out in the BISLA guidelines.

<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>

2.7. Consistency of habilitation and inauguration procedures

Characterize the policies, structures, and processes by which the HEI ensures HIC compliance with the HIC standards. Evaluate the results of the last internal HIC compliance assessment in each HIC department and related steps. Please provide a link to the related records of the internal HIC compliance assessment body. Evaluate the progress and results of the HIC for the last 5 years.

In Annex 2 of the VHSVS, please provide a list of habilitation and inauguration fields according to the status of the register <https://www.portalvs.sk/sk/haj> at the time of application, with links to related documents, e.g. the HIC description (according to Annex 2 of the Handbook).

2.8. Quality assurance on the part of contractors

Describe and evaluate how you ensure that the quality policies are applied in a binding manner by all contractors of the college or other third parties involved in or having an impact on the quality of education, creative activities and other related actions.

BISLA education emphasizes experience and the application of education in practice. Students must undertake an internship to demonstrate the quality of their education at BISLA through their studies. BISLA has various collaborations and internship arrangements with various government and non-profit partners. All relevant information regarding internships and co-operation with contractual partners can be found on the BISLA website (see attached links below).

<https://www.bisla.sk/internships/>
<https://www.bisla.sk/partnerships/>

2.9. Monitoring, evaluating and revising the internal system

Characterise the mechanisms for regular monitoring, evaluation and review of the internal system, involving all interested parties. The above processes consider whether the internal system leads to the achievement of the strategic objectives in the field of quality assurance

that the College has set in its strategic documents, in particular in the long-term plan. Insert a link to the other internal evaluation report of the college's internal system.
Evaluate the implementation of the measures from the last internal system evaluation.

BISLA is committed in the internal system to regularly monitor, review and update the internal quality system, curriculum, collaborations, internships and various other documents that affect the quality of study at the college. BISLA monitors all indicators related to the success of its graduates, internships, study placements, student activities or academic activities of its staff. All the indicators are regularly updated and published on the BISLA website.

The teaching staff is regularly trained in the latest approaches in liberal studies pedagogy at our Teaching and Learning Centre, and teachers also expand their knowledge and experience at monthly faculty meetings, where they share teaching experiences, best methods and practices. Teaching methods and practices also respond to the overall coverage of the learning outcomes set out in the Programme Description in the courses, as well as to feedback from students and, from 2022, to feedback on teaching methodologies in peer supervision by the teaching staff.

BISLA collects, analyses and uses relevant information on the implementation of the study programme and uses this data to evaluate its progress.

BISLA has a compulsory attendance policy, allowing a maximum of four absences. The Head of Studies regularly summarises absences across courses, as well as any teacher absences, and forwards them to the school management. The study department also keeps track of graduates' employment and dropping out or interrupting their studies. They also collect and evaluate feedback from students on individual courses. The study coordinator collects data on the majors that students declare.

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/alumni/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/accreditation/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/exchanges/>

In Annex 3 of the VHSVS, present the system of indicators that you use to monitor and evaluate the internal system and the curricula. Please indicate their status and development to the extent appropriate for the internal system, the fields of study and the programmes of study, or provide a reference to another document.

2.10. Public access to formalised policies, processes and internal system documentation

Characterize and evaluate the policies and processes by which the HEI provides easy public access to formalized policies, processes and other documentation. Specify how the HEI respects the specific needs of people with disabilities when providing access to information. Specify how you ensure that internal system documentation relevant to students is published in all programme languages.

BISLA publishes all information on the website www.bisla.sk in accordance with the law and aims to provide all information to the best of its ability for people with specific needs. All

information is easily accessible on the website available in the language of the study programme. BISLA regularly updates and adapts the materials to make it clear, accessible and understandable for all groups.

<https://www.bisla.sk/accreditation/>

3. Development, modification and approval of curricula

Describe and evaluate how the implementation of your own ISQA fulfils Article 3 of the Internal System Standards and the relevant articles (especially Articles 2 and 3) of the curriculum standards. Provide references and examples of adherence to the rules (e.g. how you avoid conflicts of interest in the assessment and approval of curricula; how you involve interested parties; how you ensure that all curricula have clearly specified and communicated objectives, learning outcomes and the qualification provided, its level and content).

The study programme is designed in accordance with the standards of the Department of Political Science. In designing its curriculum, BISLA takes into account current global trends, drawing primarily on the experience of teaching political science at Liberal Arts Colleges in Western Europe as well as in the U.S. and Canada. The members of the committee that develops the study programme are Assoc. Samuel Abrahám, prof. František Novosád and Dr. Dagmar Kusá. The Academic Senate of BISLA approves the Study Programme at its meetings and also provides recommendations for supplementing and modifying the Study Programme. The study programme is based on the mission and vision of BISLA, the stated learning outcomes and the mapping of their realisation in the individual courses in the registry. If the implementation reveals that some objectives, skills, type of activities, or values are not sufficiently covered in the courses offered, we add courses or modify existing courses in collaboration with educators to ensure that all of our stated objectives are covered.

<https://www.bisla.sk/study-program/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

3.1. Policies, structures and processes for curriculum development, modification and approval
Briefly characterize the policies and processes for creation, modification, and approval of curricula.

Characterize the structures for the creation, modification and approval of curricula. Describe their relationship, authority, scope and responsibility. In particular, describe the method of selection, delegation of responsibilities and powers to the person in charge of the implementation, development and quality of the study programme according to Article 6(4) of the standards for the study programme.

Curriculum development rules are determined by a decree of the Rector of BISLA. The dominant element of the BISLA educational process is the orientation towards dialogue-based teaching methods. Teaching in small groups makes it possible to blur the line between lecture and seminar. BISLA teachers are encouraged to actively involve students in the teaching process. The fundamental teaching method is a discussion based on relevant texts. In all courses BISLA emphasises written preparation of students for each lesson as well as written evaluation of the topics covered in the form of essays. All core courses are taught by internal teachers. BISLA offers between 20 and 25 courses each semester, giving the student freedom of choice. Elective

courses are generally taught by professionals in the field. The student community can regularly express specific requests for elective courses through questionnaires and discussions at periodic community meetings, and/or being communicated by the student part of the Academic Senate or the Student Council. BISLA's administration meets the demands in all possible ways and extends the circle of experts from different fields who cooperate repeatedly and/or regularly in holding the elective courses.

Passing criteria for each of the compulsory, optional and elective courses are set out in the information sheets.

The workload for required and elective courses demands approximately 12 hours per week and 10 hours for electives.

Required and elective courses are granted with 6 credits. Elective courses are granted with 5 credits. Each semester is 15 weeks long. In addition, students can enrol in shorter courses ("pop-up" courses or summer school courses), which are usually subsidised by two or three ECTS credits. Each ECTS credit corresponds to 25 to 30 hours of student work.

The BISLA administration aims to provide students with as many opportunities as possible to study for at least one semester at a foreign university, either under the ERAZMUS programme or under bilateral agreements with partner schools. BISLA currently has agreements with:
University College Maastricht, Netherlands,
Faculty of Humanities, Charles University, Czech Republic,
Tilburg University, Netherlands,
Lingnan University, Hong Kong
University in Navarre, Pamplona, Spain,
International University of Grand-Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire
Flame University, Pune, India
International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan

The BISLA study programme is designed to provide the student with a general overview of the possibilities for political analysis, while at the same time providing the opportunity to specialise either in the study of the institutional structures of modern societies or in international relations. The student must complete 30 courses, of which approximately one-third belong to the core curriculum and thus must be taken by every student. Completion of the compulsory courses provides the student with 66 credits. The core courses currently are:

Introduction to Political Science
Introduction to Sociology
Introduction to Philosophy
Introduction to the Methodology of the Social Sciences
History of Political Thought
Comparative Politics
Introduction to International Relations
Theories of Political Systems and Parties
International Conflict and Cooperation
European Union

Western Civilization
Modern Ideologies

Students must obtain at least 114 credits by completing the required elective courses and elective courses.

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

3.2. Policies, structures and processes for curriculum development, modification and approval are in line with the standards

Describe and evaluate how the policies, structures, and processes for creating, modifying, and approving curricula ensure:

See these sections with documents for the segments below:

<https://www.bisla.sk/accreditation/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/internships/>

3.2.1. Engagement of students, employers and other relevant interested parties in curriculum design, its modification and approval.

BISLA regularly monitors and reviews its study programmes in accordance with BISLA's Internal Quality Assurance System for the Educational Process and in accordance with the criteria of the Accreditation Agency.

Inputs for the review process are the suggestions, expectations and interests of all interested participants from the internal and external school environment (requirements of practice, labour market, employers, region, etc.).

The function of the evaluation is to also verify and evaluate the consistency of the name of the study programme with its content focus, the consistency of the content of the study plan (courses and their continuity) with the graduate profile, the adequacy of the scope of teaching of the courses, the consistency of the study programme with the requirements of practice, as well as the fulfilment of the other objectives of the study programme. In case of inconsistencies or outdatedness of the study programme content, the responsible teacher for the study programme shall propose their correction in the process of preparing the next accreditation of the given study programme.

3.2.2. Transparent, just, professionally based, objective and independent assessment and approval of curricula that avoids conflicts of interest and potential biases.

Describe separately the procedure and scope for the assessment and approval of new study programmes, modifications to existing study programmes, types and mechanisms of corrective measures and consequent actions, subsequent decision-making on the further pursuit of a study programme or on the cancellation of a study programme, how to identify the relevant decision of the approval body, how to supervise the study programmes being

pursued (or provide a reference to the relevant regulation). Provide reference to HEI curriculum approval structures and processes and their outcomes.

The study programme is designed in accordance with the standards of the Department of Political Science. In designing its curriculum, BISLA takes into account current global trends, drawing primarily on the experience of teaching political science at Liberal Arts Colleges in Western Europe as well as in the U.S. and Canada. The members of the committee that develops the study programme are Assoc. Samuel Abrahám, prof. František Novosád and Dr. Dagmar Kusá. The Academic Senate of BISLA approves the Study Programme at its meetings and also provides recommendations for supplementing and modifying the Study Programme.

The study programme is based on the mission and vision of BISLA, the stated learning outcomes and the mapping of their realisation in the individual courses in the registry. If the implementation reveals that some objectives, skills, type of activities, or values are not sufficiently covered in the courses offered, we add courses or modify existing courses in collaboration with educators to ensure that all of our stated objectives are covered.

3.2.3. Consistent consistency of curricula with the standards for the program of study.

The responsibility of the Quality Council is to regularly monitor and supervise implementation of the standards for the study programme. Decisions of the Quality Council are binding for all BISLA teachers and staff in Bratislava. The person responsible for the study programme is responsible for the content validity, maintenance and regular update of the study programme documentation. In order to ensure the accuracy of the documentation, the person responsible for the study programme may request cooperation of the individual course teachers. The depository of the study programme documentation is the BISLA information system in Bratislava in the area administered by the BISLA Study Department. The study programme documentation is available to all individuals and bodies involved in the internal system process. The person responsible for the study programme evaluates courses once per academic year and provides a written report to the Quality Council. Assessment of the study programme is conducted by the person with primary responsibility for the study programme at least once per academic year; the assessment is discussed by the relevant programme board. The study programme evaluation includes a record of the study programme evaluation in accordance with the internal guidelines on quality monitoring and evaluation at BISLA in Bratislava. The person responsible for the study programme is also responsible for evaluating information on graduate employability at the degree programme level. The study department provides appropriate information and assistance to the person with principal responsibility for the relevant study programme in the area of graduate employability assessment. The study coordinator and the person responsible for the study programme are responsible for the regular evaluation report on the implementation of the study programme (on meeting the quality requirements in accordance with the standards for the study programme).

The study programme is designed in accordance with the mission and strategic goals of BISLA in Bratislava, as defined in its long-term plan. The study programme consists of the prescribed sections listed in the description of the study programme according to the requirements of SAAVŠ.

Further requirements for teachers providing a study programme at BISLA in Bratislava include:

- a) demonstrate the results of creative activity in the relevant field of study in which the study programme is conducted
- b) demonstrate the results of creative activity in the relevant field of study in which the study programme is conducted at least at a nationally recognised level for teachers offering profile subjects of the study programme at the first level of study.

3.2.4. Clear definition and communication of the qualification acquired by successful completion of the study programme, with a level corresponding to the requirements of the relevant level of the qualification framework.

Depending on the level of education, every graduate of each study programme is expected to demonstrate the required knowledge, its understanding and its practical application. Students are expected to analyse and solve a specific problem and be able to defend the solution before a professional audience at the appropriate level according to the Dublin Descriptors (as defined in the EHEA¹ Qualifications Framework). For third-degree study programmes, the student is able to work scientifically, documenting their own scientific work and publishing original scientific papers in scientific journals and at conferences, or works of art.

3.2.5. Coherence of the content and level of qualifications with sector-specific expectations of employers and other external interested parties.

BISLA closely collaborates and intensively communicates with a variety of employers about their practical expectations of our graduates. BISLA has for years monitored the alignment between the skills of BISLA students, and then of graduates, and the needs of employers. Over the years, this has created a network of contacts with diverse primary employers such as non-profit organizations and public offices, which are most commonly chosen by students for internships. Every single student must undergo a compulsory internship in the second year. The internship lasts for a minimum of five weeks. Over this period, the internship supervisor regularly submits an online questionnaire assessing satisfaction with the level of skills and knowledge of BISLA students in various areas. This feedback serves as a guideline for BISLA Study Coordinator to determine whether the curriculum needs to be adjusted and revised in the future.

3.2.6. Building graduate's profile and identifying learning objectives and learning outcomes that are verifiable and relevant to the mission of the college, the relevant level of the qualification framework and the field of knowledge according to the relevant field of study or combination of fields of study in which their graduates complete their higher education qualification. Their communication method.

Person supervising the bachelor's study programme is responsible for the accomplishment of the graduate profile defined in the accreditation of the study programme in the scope of professional knowledge and skills corresponding with the objectives and focus of the study, for the definition of the content and scope of the state examination and its parts so that this examination corresponds with the focus of study and graduate profile, and for the thematic

¹ According to the Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area (http://ehea.info/media/ehea.info/file/WG_Frameworks_qualification/85/2/Framework_qualificationsforEHEA-May2005_587852.pdf). <https://saavs.sk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Deskriptory-Kvalifikacneho-ramca-EHEA-zjednodusene.pdf>).

focus of the final theses. Furthermore, the Quality Council serves as the body that assures the pedagogical and creative activities of all BISLA teachers and staff are in line with the long-term goal of the school and the graduate profile.

3.2.7. Linking education with creative activities, while the level and focus of the creative activity corresponds to the level of higher education and the learning outcomes of the relevant study programme.

The Quality Council ensures that the pedagogical and creative activities of all BISLA teachers and staff are in line with the long-term goal of the school and with the graduate profile. Guarantor of each course develops creative activity in the guaranteed course area. Academic staff actively strives for continual personal development and qualification growth in their educational and creative activities. Moreover, guarantors systematically contribute to the good reputation of BISLA in Bratislava, utilize opportunities to present their expertise to the public and seek to increase their profile visibility. Course guarantor initiates research projects, publications and other creative activities by course lecturers and students in order to capture the latest state of current understanding of the subject. The criteria for evaluating the quality of the educational and creative activity of an academic employee are:

- a) the extent and quality of the educational activity, including the method of knowledge testing and assessment of students,
- b) the extent and quality of the results of creative activity according to the criteria specified in the Rector's directives governing the specification of work duties in the creative field
- c) activity and success in grant schemes, especially outside BISLA in Bratislava, as well as the results of the evaluation of finalized grants.

3.2.8. That the programme of study will provide students with transferable competences that influence students' personal development and can be used in their future careers and lives as active citizens in democratic societies.

The study programme is designed to meet the professional knowledge, skills and competences, including transferable competences, which students acquire in a given study programme, must be consistent with the type and profile of the study programme; the qualification acquired corresponds to the relevant level of education according to the Qualifications Framework; the student must demonstrate the ability to use the acquired professional knowledge and skills and competences in English in the course of study in the fulfilment of his/her study obligations.

3.3 The European quality assurance approach for joint degree programmes

A HEI delivering joint programmes of study shall be characterised by compliance with the structures and processes for establishing, modifying and approving joint programmes of study, ensuring the application of the principles of the European Quality Assurance Approach for joint programmes of study, and compliance with Appendix 1 of the Standards for the Programme of Study.

BISLA does not have a joint study programme.

In Annex 1 of the IER, in the list of study programmes, please indicate for joint study programmes, inter alia, a reference to the cooperation agreement according to paragraph 3 of Article 2 of Appendix 1 of the standards for the study programme.

3.4 Compliance of the study programmes with the programme of study standards

Evaluate the process and results of the most recent assessment of the compliance and approval of the college's study programmes with the curriculum standards (according to Article 3 of the curriculum standards) in the different disciplines and levels of education. Including the status of corrective measures, if imposed.

BISLA has only one study programme.

In Annex 1 of the VHSVS, please list the study programmes according to Annex 1 of the handbook with links to the related documentation of the study programme. If the HEI runs fewer than 3 programmes of study, it may list them and the associated evidence directly in the text of the VHSVS.

4. Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment

Describe and evaluate how the implementation of your own ISQA fulfils Article 4 of the Internal System Standards and the relevant articles (especially Article 4) of the Curriculum Standards. Include references to policies and examples of evidence.

4.1. Active role, autonomy, creativity, and independence of students

How the active role, autonomy, creativity, and independence of students in their learning is encouraged in the delivery of the curriculum, while during the learning process this approach is reflected in the assessment of students.

The curriculum is designed to enable students to acquire an appropriate body of knowledge and competences and, on completion, to opt for jobs requiring a qualification at B.A. level or to pursue a Master's degree. Reference is made to the charts which illustrate the employment of BISLA graduates in the Master's programme.

BISLA places great emphasis on developing skills and competencies as well as inculcating democratic values. As mentioned above, BISLA students are very successful in being placed in schools of higher education as well as in employment.

Although undergraduate studies at BISLA are not career oriented, BISLA students are required to complete internships of a minimum of 60 hours in government or municipal organizations, or in third sector organizations or newspaper and magazine editorial offices. BISLA cooperates with a number of institutions such as Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia, GLOBSEC, and the Bratislava Policy Institute, among others, which hire students on a regular basis. We also

work with a number of others on an ad hoc basis, based on the needs of students. Internships are monitored by the Study Coordinator, who makes sure they are beneficial, develop practical skills, familiarize students with the running and management of the organization, etc. Students also have the opportunity to take part in several-month traineeships through the Erasmus+ programme.

BISLA emphasizes dialogical teaching methods. Students are drawn into discussions on the fundamental issues of the disciplines taught. At the same time, teachers lead students to make classical problems in social sciences and philosophy concrete through analyses of problems in contemporary societies.

Teachers encourage students to formulate their own positions on the topics discussed and to use the ideas of the classics of social and political thought as tools for interpreting contemporary problems.

Students have ample room for self-assessment in the teaching process. Several courses even leave the overall course evaluation to the students—so-called ungrading. The basis of this approach is frequent feedback on each assignment, consultations, structured monitoring of progress of individual skills through guideline questionnaires. The teacher has the opportunity to adjust the final grade after the consultation, but the emphasis is on tracking the shift in the students' own knowledge and skills, which also changes their approach to learning and the learning process. The second form of self-assessment that is practiced in one course is the so-called work contract, where students collectively set their own assessment criteria for the course, written in a collective contract, and assess themselves against these criteria.

<https://www.bisla.sk/study-program/>
<https://www.bisla.sk/skills-for-life/>
<https://www.bisla.sk/quality-of-education/>
<https://www.bisla.sk/course-schedule/>

4.2. Respect for the needs and diversity of students and flexibility of trajectories in learning **How the diversity of students and their needs is respected in the delivery of study programmes and flexibility of trajectories in study is allowed, including with regard to the possibility of reconciling work/family life with study at the university.**

The study programme requires students to complete 12 compulsory courses and 18 compulsory elective courses. This ratio between compulsory and elective courses allows students to choose their own trajectory of study, preparing for their future specialisation. The specialisation (minor) allows students to obtain a certificate of 30 ECTS credits, including the completion of an internship and the writing of a bachelor's thesis in political philosophy or international relations. Students can also design their own specialization in collaboration with their academic advisor or advisee. This allows them to pursue graduate studies in a wide range of disciplines. In order to achieve sufficient credits for such a specialisation, they take courses towards the specialisation - if BISLA does not offer a sufficient number of courses in this field, especially during the exchange stay, but they also have the possibility to find the necessary course at other

schools in Bratislava (UK, FSEV, University of Economics) and, by mutual agreement, BISLA will recognise the credits and the grade from the course. We also encourage students to participate in various summer and winter schools. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we also had an agreement with our partner Bennington College and students were able to take online courses at that partner school as well, and in turn, Bennington College students were able to participate in online classes at BISLA.

An important enrichment of the course offerings is mobility within the Erasmus programme as well as within ECOLAS and the Global Liberal Arts Alliance. Students have the opportunity to spend a semester at Erasmus schools in the Netherlands, Germany, the Czech Republic or Spain and, as part of bilateral agreements with partner schools, at Lingnan University in Hong Kong, International Christian University in Japan, Pune University in India, International University of Grand Bassam in the Ivory Coast, and Antioch College in the USA. Other bilateral agreements with schools in the USA, Israel, etc. are also in the pipeline.

BISLA takes into account the individual needs of students and their preferences in scheduling their time. BISLA tries to adjust the timetable so that private and academic life can be combined to the best possible extent.

4.3. Flexible use of concepts, forms and methods of learning and assessment

How the flexible use of a wide range of pedagogical methods, forms and concepts of education, methods of assessment of students are ensured. Indicate how they are regularly evaluated and improved.

BISLA prefers dialogic forms of teaching. Special emphasis is placed on the development of the undergraduate thesis. Topics for the Bachelor's thesis are determined at the end of the 3rd semester so that the student, in cooperation with his/her supervisor, can submit a good quality Bachelor's thesis.

Students are drawn into discussions on the fundamental problems of the disciplines taught. At the same time, instructors guide students to make classical problems in social sciences and philosophy concrete through analyses of problems in contemporary societies.

At BISLA, teaching is the alpha and omega. The teaching staff is regularly trained in the latest approaches in Liberal Studies pedagogy through our Teaching and Learning Centre, and teachers also expand their knowledge and experience at monthly faculty meetings where they share teaching experiences, best methods, and practices, etc. Teaching methods and practices are also responsive to the overall coverage of the learning outcomes set out in the Curriculum Description by the courses, as well as to student feedback and, from 2022, to feedback on teaching methodologies in the context of peer supervision within the teaching staff.

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

4.4. Student guidance and support

How appropriate guidance and support is provided to students by teachers and how mutual respect is fostered in the student-teacher relationship.

Teachers encourage students to formulate their own opinions on the topics discussed and to use the ideas of the classics of social and political thought as tools for interpreting contemporary issues.

Students are given ample scope for self-assessment in the teaching process. Several courses even leave the overall course evaluation to the students—so-called ungrading. The basis of this approach is frequent feedback on each assignment, consultations, structured monitoring of progress of individual skills through guideline questionnaires. The teacher has the opportunity to adjust the final grade after consultation, but the emphasis is on tracking the shift in the students' own knowledge and skills, which also changes their approach to the material and the learning process. The second form of self-assessment that is practiced in one course is the so-called work contract, where students collectively set their own assessment criteria for the course, written in a collective contract, and assess themselves against these criteria.

Students and teachers have a collegial approach throughout their studies, and collaborate on many activities, projects, policies of the school. This also models open governance, communication, and mutual respect, where students are treated as equal partners.

As part of peer mentoring, the school also provides workshops for all mentors and mentees (i.e., almost all students) on communication, non-violent communication, peer supervision, gender stereotyping, etc.

4.5. Methods of verification of learning outcomes

Describe and evaluate use of methods for verifying learning outcomes and how you ensure that:

4.5.1. Examiners are thoroughly familiar with existing methods of verifying the achievement of learning outcomes, methods of testing, examining, and assessing student performance, and are supported by the college to further develop their knowledge and skills in this area.

BISLA educators are familiar in advance with the college's criteria and standards. They meet regularly with the BISLA leadership in educator meetings. In these meetings, they discuss assessment methods and analyse student performance and activity. Each BISLA educator must have pre-developed assessment criteria, based on BISLA standards, which are known in advance to all students, especially when selecting elective courses.

4.5.2. The criteria, methods and dates of assessment and grading shall be known in advance and easily accessible to students.

At BISLA, it is a rule that each course must assess a minimum of seven different assignments and activities (written essays, presentations, projects, quizzes, tests), with an emphasis on their variety and even distribution throughout the semester. There is no exam period at BISLA; students are assessed throughout the semester.

Each course must present students with a course syllabus where the assessment criteria (tied to the criteria set by the school and adapted to the needs of that particular course) are predetermined. All infolists are published on the BISLA website and sent to all students at their email addresses well in advance.

<https://www.bisla.sk/course-schedule/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>

4.5.3. Assessment enables students to demonstrate the extent and level to which they have achieved the expected learning outcomes and provides feedback to students, which may be combined with recommendations and guidance on the learning process where necessary.

The student has the opportunity to request a board examination with the participation of at least two teacher examiners. Students are provided with a formal appeals procedure, are guaranteed the opportunity to participate in the review of suggestions and solutions and are guaranteed feedback on the outcome of their review and the action taken. The student also has the opportunity to appeal to the Ethics Committee in the event of a suspected violation of the University's Code of Ethics.

4.5.4. The assessment is consistent and fairly applied in relation to all students, carried out in accordance with pre-approved procedures and producing reliable conclusions that do not lead to unjustified differences in similar cases.

BISLA sets criteria in accordance with fair and equitable treatment of all students. BISLA criteria are designed to ensure that all students meet the same criteria and that there are no disparities. BISLA regularly reviews the assessment process and incorporates feedback from students and individual educators.

4.5.5. Appropriate consideration is given to the circumstances of students with Special Education Needs in the assessment process.

BISLA sets the criteria for all students equally, but also takes into account students with specific needs. Each case is assessed individually, and the criteria are set so that the student can manage his/her studies without unnecessary burden.

<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>

4.5.6. Where circumstances permit, assessment of students is carried out by more than one assessor.

Students also consult regularly with the assessing teachers about their results, and it is common for them to take up the matter directly with the teachers, their academic advisers, or the Study Co-ordinator if they are not in agreement with an assessment. BISLA regularly conducts walk-throughs as part of its TLC (Teaching and Learning Centre) and students can express their

attitudes about assessments at various levels of the college. A student is normally assessed by one teacher in each course, but in the event of a student's dissatisfaction with the assessment, the Principal may assign more than one teacher to assess the student.

4.6. Remedies for assessment results

Characterize and evaluate the means of redress against the assessment results available to students, ensuring fair treatment of those seeking redress.

In the event of dissatisfaction with their assessment, students may request remediation through their tutors or may contact the academic advisor directly.

Students also have the option of a 'make-up period'. If a student has failed to meet the requirements for a grade because of unsubmitted work (not, for example, because of overstayed permitted absences), he/she may still submit that work within one month of the end of the semester. The grade they would normally have received in the course with these assignments is then reduced by two grades. This simulates the institution of a make-up term at other schools, where the Fx grade is averaged with the make-up term grade. Since BISLA does not recognise the institution of an exam period and does not approve of marking students on the basis of a single exam, this alternative mechanism has been set up.

5. Admissions, course of study, recognition of education, and award of academic degrees

Explain how the implementation of your own ISQA fulfils Article 5 of the Internal System Standards and the relevant articles (in particular Article 5) of the Curriculum Standards.

See these sections with documents for the segments below:

<https://www.bisla.sk/admission/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/criteria-for-admission/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/regulations/>

5.1. Rules and course of study

Characterise and evaluate the policies, structures, and processes by which the HEI ensures that consistent rules are in place, implemented, published and easily accessible for all stages of the student learning cycle, in particular for admission, progression and assessment, recognition, graduation, degree award and the issuing of diplomas and other evidence of learning.

BISLA management ensures that all phases of the study cycle are conducted according to predetermined rules that respect the Higher Education Act and the requirements of the accrediting agency. The admissions policy sets out the conditions that must be met for admission to study, including those that must be met for recognition of a secondary school diploma. Also posted on the site are the requirements for recognition of a college degree from

other schools in the event of a transfer from another college to BISLA. The conditions set out the related courses that may be recognised as having been taken, as well as the exceptions to this recognition (low course content, grades lower than C) and the time limit (courses must not have been taken more than 5 years prior to the application for transfer to BISLA). Prerequisites and grades and their availability to students are described earlier in this form. The conditions for graduation as well as for the award of the degree of B.A. are set out in the Study Regulations and published on the BISLA website in the section on state examinations. The conditions for students with special needs are set out in the Guidelines for Students with Special Needs, as well as reflected in the other guidelines governing studies and the conditions for successful completion of studies at BISLA.

The study programme requires students to complete 12 compulsory courses and 18 compulsory elective courses. This ratio between compulsory and elective courses allows students to choose their own trajectory of study, preparing for their future specialisation. The specialisation (minor) allows students to obtain a certificate of 30 ECTS credits, including the completion of an internship and the writing of a bachelor's thesis in political philosophy or international relations. Students can also design their own specialization in collaboration with their academic advisor or advisee. This allows them to pursue a master's degree in a wide range of disciplines. In order to achieve sufficient credits for such a specialisation, they take courses towards the specialisation - if BISLA does not offer a sufficient number of courses in this field, especially during the exchange stay, but they also have the possibility to find the necessary course at other schools in Bratislava (UK, FSEV, University of Economics) and, by mutual agreement, BISLA will recognise the credits and the grade from the course. Students are also encouraged to participate in various summer and winter schools. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we also had an agreement with our partner Bennington College and students were able to take online courses at this partner school as well and, in turn, Bennington College students were able to participate in online classes at BISLA.

An important enrichment of the course offer is mobility within the Erasmus programme as well as within ECOLAS and the Global Liberal Arts Alliance. Students have the opportunity to spend a semester at Erasmus schools in the Netherlands, Germany, the Czech Republic or Spain and, within the framework of bilateral agreements with partner schools, at Lingnan University in Hong Kong, International Christian University in Japan, Pune University in India, International University of Grand Bassam in the Ivory Coast and Antioch College in the USA. Other bilateral agreements with schools in the USA, Israel, etc. are also in the pipeline.

Undergraduate students may apply to the Rector of BISLA for recognition of their completion of courses in the programme of study if they have completed a course with the same content at the same level of study at another university. Recognition of courses can only be applied for at the beginning of studies (immediately after enrolment, but no later than 2 weeks after the start of the course), using the prescribed forms published on the BISLA website. The application will normally be accompanied by documents issued and certified by the higher education institution at which the courses for which recognition is sought were successfully completed by the student:

- a) the original "Transcript of Studies",
- b) the syllabus of the course(s) taken or the information sheet(s) of the course(s),
- c) a list of the courses for which recognition is requested.

The student's application will then be assessed and processed, and the student will be placed in his/her year of study (once approved, the student may be placed in the next year of study). Each course taken is assessed individually on the basis of the content, scope, and requirements set out in the course for its completion. The assessment is processed by the Coordinator of Studies in cooperation with the Study Department. Recognition of courses is subject to the approval of the Rector of BISLA. Courses must not have been taken more than 5 years prior to applying to BISLA for recognition.

5.2. Study programmes offer

Characterise and evaluate the curriculum offer in the context of the HEI's mission and strategy. Indicate the intentions related to the adaptation of the portfolio of study programmes in relation to the mission of the College and to the graduate requirements. Indicate and evaluate the way in which objective and complete information on the curriculum offer, admission requirements and criteria, and other conditions of study are made publicly available.

BISLA offers a degree program in Liberal Studies with a major in Political Science. Graduates of the Liberal Studies programme in Political Science have up-to-date knowledge of the state of scientific knowledge (system of theories, facts, hypotheses, system of objects of knowledge) in the profile scientific disciplines of the theory of the study programme: political science, foundations of philosophy, sociology and anthropology, international relations. Possesses advanced knowledge of the methodology of research, development and evaluation of the subject knowledge of the study programme, scientifically correctly formulates problems in the field and conceives strategies for their solution in accordance with the rules of ethics of scientific work.

The BISLA graduate will gain knowledge of the concepts and methods by which we currently interpret social and political events at the municipal, state, and interstate levels. The student will be able to determine the place of political science in the social sciences. They can expertly analyse the functioning of political systems and is thoroughly familiar with the institutional structure of modern societies, with particular reference to the role of political parties and interest groups. The graduate can analyse the institutional structures of modern states as well as the economic, political and security dimensions of relations between states. The graduate is familiar with the structure and functions of international organisations such as the United Nations, the European Union and NATO. The graduate is familiar with the basic works of history in social and political philosophy as well as contemporary forms of social and political thought.

5.3. Admission of students

Characterize and evaluate the policies, structures, and processes that ensure that:

5.3.1. The admissions process is fair, transparent and reliable, and the selection of applicants is based on appropriate methods of assessing their suitability for study.

The admission rules respect the Higher Education Act and are specified in regulations issued by the Rector. The most important part of the admissions process is the interview with the applicants, in which we determine, in particular, the students' motivation, general outlook and language competences.

Admission interviews take place live before the committee on at least three dates (BISLA also allows ad hoc interviews) in April, June and September. Students from abroad or from further afield also have the option of being interviewed before the Board via ZOOM.

The admission interview is structured and the committee scores academic performance, personal development, extracurricular activities, and English language skills. Applicants are also encouraged to send a cover letter, which the admissions committee also works with.

The admission requirements are set and approved by the BISLA Academic Senate annually. Students who have passed the admissions interview thus give feedback on its transparency, fairness, and difficulty and regularly review these conditions.

The admission requirements, information on interview dates and methods, as well as information on tuition fees, scholarship opportunities, etc. are published on the BISLA website.

5.3.2. The admission procedure is inclusive and equal opportunities are guaranteed to every applicant who demonstrates the necessary qualifications to graduate.

The BISLA management ensures that all stages of the study cycle are conducted according to predetermined rules that respect the Higher Education Act and the requirements of the accreditation agency.

The admissions policy sets out the conditions that must be met for admission to study, including those that must be met for recognition of a secondary school diploma.

Also posted on the site are the requirements for recognition of a college degree from other schools in the event of a transfer from another college to BISLA.

The conditions set out the related courses that may be recognised as having been taken, as well as the exceptions to this recognition (low course content, grades lower than C) and the time limit (courses must not have been taken more than 5 years prior to the application for transfer to BISLA).

Prerequisites and grades and their availability to students are described earlier in this form.

The conditions for graduation as well as for the award of the degree of B.A. are set out in the Study Regulations and published on the BISLA website in the section on state examinations. The conditions for students with special needs are set out in the Guidelines for Students with Special Needs, as well as reflected in the other guidelines governing studies and the conditions for successful completion of studies at BISLA.

5.4. Study of students with special needs

Characterise and evaluate how support measures are provided and how an environment is created to equalise the opportunities for students with specific needs and students from disadvantaged backgrounds to study at the College.

BISLA provides individualised support for students with specific needs. A Coordinator for Students with Specific Needs (Dagmar Kusá) is appointed to implement these and follows the Guidelines for Meeting the Needs of Students with Special Needs.

The coordinator works with students to identify their needs, based on diagnosis and recommendations from treating physicians, and then forwards a proposal for special needs student status to the Dean of the School. The coordinator also communicates with instructors and monitors the fulfilment of such status in the instructional process.

Even without status, however, BISLA takes into account the various needs of students, whether arising from psychological or medical stresses. The small community that BISLA is means individual attention, good knowledge of students' needs, and direct access to teachers and mentors, so that we are able to support each student individually.

5.5. Quality of defended theses and rigorous theses

Characterise and evaluate the policies, structures and processes that ensure that the quality of defended theses and rigorous dissertations is commensurate with their grade, requires an appropriate level of creative activity, and that plagiarism and other academic fraud are effectively detected and sanctioned in a principled manner. In particular, please indicate whether the thesis assignments fulfil the requirement to analyse and solve the specific professional problem assigned and whether the students' defence fulfils this requirement at the appropriate level of the EHEA Qualifications Framework (Dublin Descriptors). Indicate whether the dissertations and their defences demonstrate that the candidate can work scientifically.

The bachelor thesis is the most important output of BISLA students' work. It is closely tied to the teaching philosophy at BISLA and reflects the focus on skills, independence, and multiperspectivity that are central to the overall approach to education at BISLA. The main stated objectives within the thesis process are:

Independent scholarly research:

Each student must plan and carry out independent scholarly research within their topic as part of the preparation of their thesis. Topics are selected and formulated to support original research. Most students are encouraged to conduct interviews, collect questionnaires, do archival research, participant observation, i.e., to develop field research skills and process the data collected.

Mastering the process of writing a longer format academic paper:

At BISLA, students have been writing shorter format academic essays since the beginning of their first semester of study. However, one of the goals of the final thesis is to master the process of longitudinal research, from planning to processing and presentation.

Style and format:

Part of the writing process includes learning academic writing style, proper and consistent formatting, and citations according to APA citation style.

Working with the literature:

During the research, the student will orient himself/herself to his/her professional topic, gather academic literature, with the goal of automating the habits of searching and evaluating academic sources, working with publicly available statistical databases, archival materials, etc.

Close collaboration with tutors:

Working with supervisors on a weekly basis provides a unique experience for the student to work closely with an expert in the field under study, to receive feedback from them and to learn first-hand the process of longitudinal research.

Publishable quality:

BISLA prides itself on the quality of the final thesis and encourages students to publish their outputs of theses in student academic journals, presenting at scientific and professional conferences.

Undergraduate theses are the most important output of the work and efforts of BISLA students and are given due time and attention. Students start preparing for their Bachelor's thesis from the third semester of their studies, choose a supervisor and a topic area at the beginning of the fourth semester and defend their Bachelor's thesis proposal before the Scientific Council.

They agree with their supervisors on the progress of the thesis and do the bulk of their research during the fourth semester. In the fourth and fifth semesters, all students take part in the Bachelor Seminar course, during which they write the different parts of the Bachelor's thesis in turn. Students present their work-in-progress undergraduate theses to the BISLA community of students and faculty, which gives the younger classes an idea of the topics, scope, and data processing. In January of their senior year, students complete the process of writing their bachelor's theses and submit the final version of the thesis to their advisors. After editing, formatting, and final touches, the thesis is due by February 15, in time for the start of the summer semester.

In this way, the submission of the final thesis does not disrupt the course of the summer semester and all students can concentrate on their classes undisturbed. The defence of the final theses takes place during the State Final Examination in the second week of June.

5.6. Recognition of higher education qualifications

Characterise and evaluate the recognition of higher education qualifications, periods and parts of studies, prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning, which is transparent, consistent and reliable and is in line with the general binding rules and principles of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications related to Higher Education in the European Region, so as to promote student mobility. Evaluate the frequency and causes of non-recognised qualifications, including the parts of the study undertaken as part of student mobility.

The site publishes the conditions for the recognition of higher education from other schools in the case of transfer from another university to BISLA. The conditions set out the related courses that can be recognised as having been taken, as well as the exceptions to this recognition (low course content, grades lower than C) and the time limit (courses must not have been taken more than 5 years prior to the application for transfer to BISLA).

The conditions and assessment of the study and their availability to students are described earlier in this form. BISLA makes a primary effort to recognize all courses taken and mobility for students in order to celebrate the diversity of students and their educational backgrounds.

<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>

5.7. Awarding of academic degrees, issuance of educational certificates

Explain and demonstrate that you award the relevant academic degree to graduates on successful completion of their studies and issue a diploma and other evidence of learning that specifies and characterises the qualification obtained, including the learning outcomes achieved, the context, level and content of the learning successfully completed.

Insert a link to a sample diploma, supplement or other documents awarded by the school.

Conditions for graduation and the award of a degree

The student shall complete their studies by completing the studies according to the relevant study plan. In order to complete the Bachelor's degree, the student must obtain a minimum of 180 credits by completing all required and selected elective courses (subjects). The date of the proper completion of studies is the date on which the last of the conditions prescribed for the proper completion of studies of a given study programme has been fulfilled. The condition for the proper completion of the study programme is the successful completion of the defence of the bachelor thesis. The defence of the Bachelor's thesis as well as the individual subjects of the state examination are classified with grades A to FX.

The overall result of successfully completed studies is assessed by two grades:

- a) passed cum laude
- b) passed.

If the student has achieved a weighted grade point average for the entire course of study as stipulated (GPA) up to and including 1.3 (without state examination) and is classified on the state examination with a grade of "passed cum laude" shall graduate with a grade of "passed cum laude". In other cases, the student shall graduate with an overall grade of "pass" after successfully passing the state examination.

Proof of completion of studies and of obtaining the relevant academic degree is the university diploma, the diploma supplement and the state examination certificate. Graduates of the Bachelor's degree are awarded the academic degree of 'Bachelor' (abbreviated as Bc.) The university diploma, the diploma supplement and the state examination certificate are issued by the university. According to the Higher Education Act, the college provides for the issue of the diploma in a combination of the state language and the English language.

The diploma is usually presented to the student at the graduation ceremony. The diplomas are issued to the graduates to their own hands. An official power of attorney is required for acceptance by another person.

<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>
<https://www.bisla.sk/regulations/>

6. Teachers

Describe and list how the implementation of your own ISQA fulfils Article 6 of the Standards for the Internal System and the relevant articles of the Standards for the Curriculum (especially Articles 6 and 7). In particular, please indicate how the HEI systematically ensures that it has teachers whose qualifications, level of educational activities, practical and pedagogical skills, and workload enable it to achieve the learning outcomes, and how the HEI implements the assignment of teachers to deliver the curricula and learning activities.

See these sections with documents for the segments below: <https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>
<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>
<https://www.bisla.sk/accreditation/>

6.1 Selection of teachers

Characterize and evaluate how the Institute of Higher Education ensures that:

6.1.1. The selection of university teachers is transparent, objective and professionally informed and is based on known requirements and criteria that are consistent with the mission and long-term goal of the university and with the generally binding regulations.

Evaluate and provide a link to the records of the conduct and results of tenders since 1 September 2020.

The selection of teachers is primarily the responsibility of the Rector and the Academic Council and is subject to approval by the Academic Senate. Teachers, both internal and external, meet regularly to discuss the conduct, content and methodology of individual courses. BISLA currently employs 6 full-time teachers; the number of external teachers varies from semester to semester. In addition to regular meetings, short and longer-term workshops are provided by the Teaching and Learning Centre where teachers learn the latest knowledge and practice in pedagogy, collaboratively plan their syllabi and activities for the next semester, share experiences, etc.

BISLA places great emphasis on the knowledge and expertise of its educators. It is a priority for BISLA that educators are also practitioners. In-house teachers providing profile subjects and are required to be experts in the subject matter taught. Educators must have an active scientific (publication, conference, grant) activity and be actively educated in their field. BISLA periodically (usually once a year) evaluates the scientific and research activities of its staff and assesses them according to internal criteria with regard to their level of education and job classification.

6.1.2. The selection of university teachers is open and allows for inter-institutional, inter-sectoral and international mobility.

BISLA's recruitment process allows anyone who is interested in the post and meets the pre-determined criteria, which are always published on the school's website, to apply. BISLA allows its teachers to collaborate with various national and international institutions. BISLA also requires its educators to participate in mobilities to develop their pedagogical, academic and professional skills. All information about BISLA educators can be found on the website.

6.2 Structure, number and qualifications of teachers

Explain how the IHE systematically ensures that it has teachers whose qualifications, workload distribution, level of creative outcomes, practical experience, pedagogical skills and transferable competences enable it to deliver the learning outcomes and whose numbers and staff capacity are appropriate to the number of students to deliver the programmes of study. BISLA systematically analyses and evaluates the creative, scientific and publishing activities of all its staff once a year. During this process, BISLA focuses on achievements in all areas (conferences, invited lectures, publications, citations, mobility, etc.). BISLA requires from its in-house teachers to publish at least one scientific output per year (monograph, chapter in a monograph, conference paper, paper in a scientific journal or other output of an adequate level). The workload and working hours shall be distributed in such a way that the staff member can function efficiently without unnecessary workload beyond the established working hours.

6.3 Linking education to teachers' educational activities

6.3.1. Describe how the HEI strengthens the link between education and teachers' educational activities, with the focus of the educational activities matching the learning outcomes and the level of the outcomes of the educational activities matching the level of the qualification framework of the education being delivered.

BISLA aims to support the educational activities of its teachers and seeks to enable them to pursue educational activities in a wide range of ways. It encourages business trips, international participation in conferences, collaboration with other universities (at home and abroad), cooperation with non-profit organizations or private entities. BISLA aims to continuously improve the qualifications of its in-house teachers and therefore does not refuse any form of training, cooperation or other professional development.

6.3.2. Describe the procedures (methodology) by which the IHE evaluates the level of activities in the study programmes in accordance with Article 7 of the standards for the study programme. Briefly summarize the results of the evaluation of the level of educational activities from the last assessment and approval of the study programmes. If you are running programmes of study in more than one location, evaluate the level of educational activities for each location separately.

BISLA regularly evaluates the educational activities of its teachers. It discusses the current results and creates reports on the quality of published outputs, conference presentations, invited lectures, international collaborations or participation in grants. Internal lecturers who supervise the study programme must regularly inform the university about their academic and teaching activities. The Scientific Council and the Quality Council subsequently evaluate and process this information.

6.4. Developing language, pedagogical, digital skills and transferable competences

Describe and evaluate how teachers develop their professional, language, pedagogical, digital skills and transferable competencies.

BISLA requires its educators to develop their pedagogical, digital and other skills. BISLA regularly runs various workshops, training or other learning activities as part of its Teaching and Learning Centre. All teachers always have the opportunity to participate in various seminars, workshops or other activities organized by another organization or institution. All information about BISLA teacher training, current workshops or other activities can be found on the BISLA website under <https://www.bisla.sk/tlc/>.

6.5 Assignment of teachers to deliver curricula

Describe and evaluate:

6.5.1. How teachers are assigned to curricula and educational activities, the teaching of individual courses of study, and the supervision of final and rigorous theses. How it is ensured that these procedures are transparent, that the level of qualifications, competences, practical experience, focus and results of educational activities is guaranteed to be appropriate to the level and learning outcomes and the thematic focus of the theses.

The Scientific Council of BISLA and the Quality Council meet regularly and set the study program in accordance with the highest quality standards. Individual study subjects and final theses are assigned according to the qualifications of teachers, their scientific focus, publications, or practical experience in the given field. BISLA discusses all requirements in such a way as to ensure maximum transparency in the selection of teachers, setting the rules of the study program or other requirements. BISLA publishes all decisions on its website.

6.5.2. Method of selection and delegation of responsibilities to teachers providing profile subjects².

The teachers who provide profile subjects normally possess titles of a professor or docent, in rare cases they may also have a lower qualification if the person achieves excellent results in scientific and academic activities and has considerable practical experience in the field.

6.5.3. Method of selection and delegation of responsibilities to a person who has the competences, scope and level of competences - entitlements of persons having the main responsibility for the implementation, development and quality assurance of the study programme or otherwise defined comprehensive part of the study programme³ and provides the profile subject⁴.

The person responsible for the implementation and quality of the study program is selected according to strict quality criteria. These are set and approved by the Scientific Council and the Quality Council. The person selected by the Scientific Council and supported by the Quality Council regularly provides both bodies with documents to demonstrate the fulfilment of the criteria and standards based on which they were selected as the person responsible for the quality and implementation of the study program. All documents and details that BISLA is obliged to publish are on the website: <https://www.bisla.sk/accreditation/>.

² According to the Methodology for the Evaluation of Standards, Article 27: "The teacher in charge of a subject is the teacher who is responsible for the subject, conducts lectures and other core learning activities of the subject and is responsible for the quality assurance activities in the subject and the development of the subject so that the required learning outcomes of the study programme are achieved."
According to Article 6(3) of the standards for the study programme, "Profile subjects are normally provided by university teachers in the capacity of professor or associate professor who work at the university on a fixed weekly working time."

³ A coherent part of the study programme according to Article 6(7) to (11) of the standards for the degree programme.

⁴ According to Article 6(4) of the standards for the degree programme, "This person shall act as a professor in the relevant field of study at the established weekly working time; in the case of a bachelor's degree programme, he/she shall act as a professor or as an associate professor in the relevant field of study at the established weekly working time. At the same time, this person does not bear the main responsibility for the implementation, development and quality assurance of the study programme at another higher education institution in the Slovak Republic. One and the same person may have principal responsibility for the implementation, development and quality assurance of up to three study programmes. This number shall not include cases of concurrence pursuant to Article 7(3)(b) to (h) of these Standards."

6.5.4. Evaluate the method of selecting thesis supervisors, especially dissertation supervisors⁵.

Bachelor theses are the most important output of the work and efforts of the BISLA students, and a lot of time and attention is devoted to them. Students start preparing for bachelor's theses from the third semester of their studies, at the beginning of the fourth semester they choose a supervisor and thematic area and defend the proposal of the bachelor thesis before the Scientific Council. BISLA emphasises the selection criteria and takes into account the focus of individual teachers, their scientific, publication, and academic activities together with professional experience from the given area of the final thesis.

6.5.5. Evaluate the fulfilment of the requirement that the professional qualification of teachers delivering the programme of study is higher than the qualification achieved by completing the programme of study. Please give reasons for waiving this requirement (e.g. foreign language teachers, trainee teachers, practitioners and doctoral students).

The teachers/pedagogues providing the study program must always have a higher qualification than the one achieved at the end of the study program. BISLA checks that these requirements are always met and these criteria can be checked via BISLA website, where all information about the qualifications and training of its internal educators/teachers are published.

6.6. Workload distribution of university teachers

Describe and evaluate the procedures for scheduling the workload of university teachers that enable them to ensure and develop the quality of study programmes, provide teaching and other related educational activities, ensure student assessment, conduct and evaluate final theses, participate in educational activities and other activities related to their professional development and the fulfilment of the mission of the university to the extent and in proportions that correspond to the pool of working time in relation to the size of their full-time job and the nature of the position they hold.

BISLA teachers/educators have their workload distributed evenly to the duties and activities they are engaged in. BISLA sets individual conditions for each teacher according to his/her workload, activities, specialization and other activities that enhance the qualification and quality of the teaching staff. BISLA takes a positive attitude towards all activities that an educator undertakes in order to improve his/her qualifications, skills or pedagogical abilities. BISLA adjusts the workload according to the individual needs of educators in order to create a quality and pleasant working environment.

⁵ According to Article 6(5) of the standards for the degree programme: 'The persons supervising the theses shall carry out active creative activity or practical activity at a level appropriate to the degree of the degree programme in the field of the professional and thematic focus of the theses supervised. Thesis supervisors are persons holding the position of professor or associate professor or other similar position in a research institution cooperating contractually with the university in the provision of a third-level study programme. In the case of staff of research institutions, these are senior researchers with qualification level I and independent researchers with qualification level II.'

7. Resources for study provision and student support

Describe and list how your implementation of your own ISQA meets Article 7 of the Standards for internal systems. In particular, how do you ensure sufficient resources to meet the core business, how do you allocate them so that the needs of students and teachers on all programmes of study provided are adequately met.

See these sections with documents for the segments below:

<https://www.bisla.sk/library/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/vyrocne-spravy/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/smernice-rektora/>

Explain and evaluate how the HEI provides:

7.1. Adequate financial resources allocated to the comprehensive provision of curricula and related creative, support and other activities consistent with its mission. Evaluate the economic performance of the college or provide a link to another document.

The college has secured an operating subsidy from a foreign sponsor; after accounting for the previous year, the college will receive the subsidy for the next calendar year. The College has a balanced accounts every year.

7.2. Spatial, material, technical, infrastructural and institutional provision of educational, creative and other related activities appropriate to the learning outcomes, the number of students and their specific needs.

The college owns two historic buildings at its headquarters address, connected by a shared courtyard and garden. The size of the school allows students and teachers to realize themselves in a stimulating environment. Lectures with fewer students are held in the Rorty Library and Arendt Room. In addition, students have a librarian available twice a week if they wish to borrow books. External teachers may use the external teachers' office, which is fully equipped with computer technology and a printer, to prepare lectures. There is a laundry room in the basement of the front building that students can use fully. It is mainly used by out-of-town students and international students. On each floor there is a small kitchenette, ideal for heating food, meals and preparing drinks. Students also use the main kitchen connected to the dining room, which is spacious and available from eight in the morning until nine in the evening, so they can cook breakfast, lunch and dinner there. The TLC (Teaching and Learning Centre) is a podcast recording studio where students invite interesting guests according to the thematic focus of each podcast, most recently the former Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda was a host of the podcast. The *learning lab* is a classroom and also a room where students go to write

assignments and do research. The room is also the venue for regular student senate meetings. On the initiative of the students, we will shortly be converting the lower floor into a student space, which they will use for studying as well as for spending their free time. They already have a ping-pong table, a fitness room and a study corner there. SPITZER ROOM is BISLA's non-academic, leisure library and also a space for students to write homework assignments and spend their free time. Students use it for communal dinners and also for film clubs as there is a projector, as well as for social games such as chess tournaments. The outdoor areas of the school, which also serve the students. The garden, the upper gazebo, the conservatory-the outdoor gazebo. Seating tables are placed throughout the garden. Any of the students who want to, can relax in gardening activities with our master gardener. If students are interested, the garden is available each year for them to create what is called a "student herb garden". The garden is also used in the summer for barbecue sessions and various social events organized by students at the college. Students regularly organize their own BBQ events. The garden is often the venue for various cultural events and summer concerts. There are also relaxation and yoga activities, breathing exercise classes. The Helsinki Committee, a non-profit human rights organization, is based in the second building of the college and many of our students participate in it. In the second building, students also have leisure facilities, showers and a printing corner. Students regularly have the opportunity to take advantage of various financially discounted promotions, such as the opportunity to purchase Kindle readers at a discounted price subsidized by the college up to 50 percent. In case a student has a requirement to procure various electronics required for his/her study or research purposes, the college tries to find a solution and support him/her.

7.3. Functional contractual partnerships with specialized teaching establishments and other institutions necessary to achieve learning outcomes related in particular to practical training for the professions concerned, if such training is provided.

BISLA College actively collaborates with several non-profit organizations for the purpose of internships for our students. We have a proven track record of working with these organizations for many years. During their studies, students complete a mandatory extensive internship in an area corresponding to their field of study and future career choice, where they gain experience in management, strategic planning, organizational development, project implementation, research, report writing, etc.

Skills related to the field of political science and liberal studies include:

- the ability to identify topics for social science and humanities research
- the use of interdisciplinary approaches in the analysis of political phenomena, events, ideas, institutions and behaviour,
- Application of quantitative and qualitative social science research methods,
- mastery of non-discriminatory approaches in the social sciences and humanities
- the ability to recognise issues that are ethically and morally relevant to society

- advanced use of the English language in academic and professional settings

7.4. Access to information resources, library collections and services for the student and teacher of each study programme appropriate to the learning outcomes, the focus of educational activities and the number of students.

BISLA students and teachers have access to a library and study room. The library contains 3,641 volumes and 92 audio-visual documents. The study room contains a further 3,342 volumes and 12 periodicals. Publications are available for study in the reading room, which has its own server for connection to the internal information system, some of which are part of the teachers' reference libraries and are available for same-day request. BISLA students and teachers can also borrow all titles. BISLA also provides membership to the nearby Library of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. In addition, students and teachers have access to databases made available by friendly universities.

The library at the Bratislava International School of Liberal Studies has been an academic library since 2007. The activities of the academic library are governed by Act No. 183/2000 Coll. on Libraries and the Statute of the Library of the Bratislava International School of Liberal Studies (BISLA).

7.5. Easy access for students to counselling and other support services and administrative resources that meet their diverse needs and are a prerequisite for their progress in their studies and their personal and career development.

Students with questions regarding their studies, choice of courses, or choice of direction after studying at BISLA, or with questions regarding the choice of summer school or exchange programme can contact the Study Coordinator Dagmar Kusá. The frequency of meetings varies according to need, but on average, approximately five students per week seek out the coordinator, which is approximately 2.5 consultation hours.

7.6. Qualified support staff providing tutoring, counselling, administrative and other support services and related activities for students, with the capacity to meet the number of students and their diverse needs.

From the first year, each student is assigned to a tutor - one of BISLA's in-house lecturers, who is their main advisor for the duration of their studies. The tutor can be contacted by the student with any questions regarding studies and home preparation, personal orientation in the selection of courses. The number of meetings with the tutor is arbitrary, but at least twice per semester. Each tutor is assigned 10-12 students. Tutor meetings during a semester represent approximately 100 hours of consultation between tutors and students.

7.7. Adequate social security, sports, cultural, spiritual and social activities for students during their studies.

BISLA students themselves run a number of student clubs. Currently these include the Philosophy Society, Studies for Humanity, Public Speaking Society, Renovation and Design, Rock Climbing, 21 Century Skills, Il Ponte student magazine, Music Production Society.

BISLA students regularly publish the student magazine Il Ponte every month. The magazine is published in English and covers current topics in philosophy, sociology, international relations and other social sciences.

The film club is run by one of the teachers. Weekly meetings of students and teachers, thematic meetings on jointly selected films and subsequent discussions.

BISLA also includes the Bratislava Institute of Humanism (BIH) through which BISLA organised public discussions and lectures in the field of social sciences and humanities and issues of domestic and foreign public and political life in 2021. For these regular lectures and discussions on social, political and cultural issues of society, the Institute invites distinguished experts from various social sciences and humanities fields, as well as practitioners. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, these lectures were temporarily suspended and then successfully resumed.

7.8. Listed resources for all off-site components of the college in which degree programs or educational activities are conducted.

BISLA College makes full use of its two historic buildings, its courtyard and its garden. In all these premises, educational activities take place in their entirety and there is no need for additional components outside the college premises.

7.9. Accessibility of resources for students and awareness of their accessibility.

The college provides its students with access to academic article databases such as J-STORE and many other databases. The college has dedicated computers with paid access to these databases.

7.10. Efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

The College uses the funds raised for administration and for student activities related to both curricular and co-curricular activities in an efficient and effective manner. The College's accounting records are subject to audit as required by law. An accounting of the overall management of the college is submitted annually to the college's board of trustees for approval and subsequently to the sponsors. The BISLA Board of Trustees meets twice a year, to which the college submits interim management results and, after the end of the calendar year, submits an annual statement of accounts. Financial resources are extremely important for the overall operation of the college and especially for the improvement of the quality of education.

8. Collecting and processing information

Describe and evaluate how you fulfil the Article 8 of the standards of internal system, by implementing your own internal system of quality assurance. In particular, describe how you ensure:

8.1. Systematic collecting, processing, analysing, and evaluation of information, that is used in effective strategic, tactical, and operational management of implementation and development of study programs, related creative activities, and other activities of the university.

BISLA regularly works with data, that are processed in the form of various documents and reports for the implementation, supervision, and planning of the study program. BISLA submits all the processed data to the Quality Council and the Scientific Council, which evaluate and consequently communicate with each other regarding the improvement and increase of the quality of the program.

<https://www.bisla.sk/study-program/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/accreditation/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

8.2. A set of indicators used in the management of study programs⁶.

BISLA regularly evaluates all of data regarding the study program. We primarily work we questionnaires from students, teachers, employers/organizations providing internships or jobs for our students. There are tables, statistics, and overviews created on subjects, information lists, teaching methods, and student evaluation methods. The Scientific Council and the Quality Council evaluates these materials. They modify it and submit proposals for changes of the content of the study program, in order to ensure the highest quality and level of provided education.

<https://www.bisla.sk/study-program/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

8.3. Involvement of all interested parties in the collection and processing information.

BISLA regularly communicates with employers, non-profit organizations, and other educational institutions regarding setting of the study program, in order to ensure high quality of achieved education. The bachelor program offered by BISLA is specific for the students' obligation to take in at least one mandatory internship during their studies. BISLA regularly evaluates data from interested parties and consults with them any possibilities of improving the program. BISLA archives all the information and works with them regularly through different governing bodies

⁶ The indicators should enable in particular the evaluation of the profile of the applicants and student body, the success rate, and other characteristics within the admission process, the success rate and reasons for failure in the study programs, the rate of proper completion of studies in the study programs, the degree of student satisfaction with the implementation of the study programs and availability of resources necessary for study, degree of applicability of the graduates of the study programs, degree of satisfaction of employers and other external interested parties with the quality of graduates of the study programs, characteristics of the profile of teachers and other employers, results of creative activities and degree of their connection with education, degree of internalizations of university activities.

of the university. All information about data processing and monitoring is available on the BISLA webpage. For example in the section:

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/alumni/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/internships/>

In Annex no. 3 also present the system of the indicators you use for monitoring and period evaluation of the study programs according to point 8.2.

9. Information disclosure

Describe and evaluate how you fulfil the Article 9 of the standards of internal system, by implementing your own internal system of quality assurance. In particular, describe how you disclose:

- 9.1. Clear, accurate, adequate, and up-to-date quantitative and qualitative data about study programs and their graduates, as well as other related activities in accordance with the university's mission relevant for potential applicants, students, employees, employers, and other external interested parties and wide public.**

BISLA in cooperation with participating students developed a matrix of learning outcomes of the study program (BISLA Learning Grid), as well as a table showing how individual subjects meet BISLA strategic goals, learning outcomes and qualifications. Documents such as Long-term Development Plan, BISLA Learning Grid, and BISLA Course Matrix aim at providing information about the study program and other related activities in line with the university's mission, relevant to prospective students, students, and other interested parties. The person responsible for developing and ensuring the quality of the study program is doc. Samuel Abrahám, PhD. In cooperation teachers regularly evaluate the process and the results of the teaching process, paying special attention to the compatibility between the core and elective courses. The study program and the preparation of the schedule are discussed at the Academic Senate which formulates recommendations for supplementing elective subjects. The student members of the Academic Senate survey the student body regularly to find out their interests in different subjects.

The BISLA graduates particularly excel in general skills and the ability to apply acquired knowledge to different context or practice which was confirmed by OECD AHELO (Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes) survey, in which BISLA ranked first in Slovakia and in the top 17% internationally. BISLA graduates are proficient in argumentation, critical thinking, independent research, they have above the average presentation skills and academic writing skills and that is everything in English. Majority of the graduates pursue their master's studies, mostly abroad. Students are successful in being admitted to the schools of their first chose and in completing these programs. The placement of the graduates in the master's study programs is therefore the main criterion for evaluating their success as graduates.

Employers especially value the above-mentioned qualities of BISLA students and alumni. We have several partner organizations that gladly accept our students for internships and often they stay there working after graduation (e. g. GLOBSEC, Bratislava Policy Institute, Milan Šimečka Foundation).

Despite the fact that the bachelor program at BISLA is not professionally oriented, the students are obliged to complete an internship of at least 60 hours in state or municipal organizations, third sector organizations, or in editorial offices of newspaper and magazines. BISLA cooperates with multiple institutions, such as for example Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia, GLOBSEC, Bratislava Policy Institute, etc., which regularly hire our students for internships and then jobs. We also cooperate with many other organizations on ad hoc basis, based on the students' needs. Internships are monitored by the Study Coordinator who oversees the usefulness of the internships, familiarization of students with the operation and managements of the organizations, etc.

Students have also an option of participating in internships through Erasmus+ programs which are abroad and typically last for a couple of months. BISLA supports its students in taking part in a Year Abroad program, in which student, usually during their third year at BISLA, can combine one semester of study at a partner university and a second semester of internship through Erasmus+ program. After this year abroad, they come back and finish their studies at BISLA.

9.2. Current information on the implementation and functioning of the internal system, achieved results and measures taken.

BISLA has developed an internal quality assurance system. The system serves as a criterion for assessing the study program as a whole but also individual courses. Regularly, after the end of a semester, the Quality Council evaluates the teaching process and the achieved results in particular courses.

BISLA carries out routine monitoring and evaluations of its study program in accordance with the Internal System of Quality Assurance of the educational process at BISLA and in accordance with the Accreditation Agency's criteria.

For the process of quality control, there are different inputs taken into consideration, such as subjects, expectations and interests of all interested parties from the school's internal and external environment (practice requirements, labour market, employers, regions, etc.).

Another function of the evaluation is to verify and assess the compliance of the name of the study program with its content, the compliance of the content of the study program (subjects and their connections) with the profile of a graduate, the adequacy of the scope of teaching, the compliance of the study program with the practice requirements, as well as fulfilment of other objectives of the study program. If a discrepancy occurs, or out-of-date content in the study program, the person responsible for the study program proposes their removal in the process of preparing the next accreditation of the study program.

The evaluation of the study program is carried out at least once a year during an academical year. The following is taken into consideration:

- a) applicants' interest in studying the study program,
- b) whether the study program takes into account the international dimension of education,
- c) whether there is occurrence of duplication of the subject content in the teaching process.

To ensure that the possibility of a student will not acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities during their studies is kept at minimal, regular meetings between the representatives of the teachers and students take place at the end of each semester. The purpose of the meetings is to evaluate the teaching practice from the point of view of all parties involved and to present proposals for improvements.

Students' feedback on particular courses is also continuously received through the mentoring relationship between each student and their respective academic advisor. First-year students also have peer mentors from among students from higher years, therefore the feedback comes also from the peer mentors, or is communicated by the Student Council. There are also a regular communities-monthly student meetings, to which members of the university staff and leadership are invited as well.

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

9.3. Information about study programs in the languages of instruction.

At BISLA, there are two languages of instruction – Slovak and English. All information, materials, and documents are available in both languages. In the case of unavailability, BISLA provides translations into the languages of instruction. All information is available on the BISLA webpage.

9.4. Information from the perspective of accessibility for people with disabilities.

The university has introduced the status of a student with special needs and students have the opportunity to apply for this status. After submitting the necessary paper-work, this status is approved by the dean of the university in cooperation with the Undergraduate Studies Coordinator. The university tries to meet needs of students with various forms of health disadvantage through individualized approach. The BISLA guideline for the students with special needs is available on the website: <https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>. This guideline specify all the requirements and helps to create a functional and open environment for students with special needs at BISLA.

10. Periodic monitoring, evaluation, and approval of study programs

Describe and evaluate how you fulfil the Article 10 of the standards of internal system, by implementing your own internal system of quality assurance.

- 10.1. In particular, describe how study programs are continuously monitored, periodically evaluated and approved, while employers, students, and other interested parties are involved in the internal system.**

BISLA publishes the description of the study program on its website, in the section: <https://www.bisla.sk/dokumenty-a-vnutorne-predpisy/>. The description of the study program incorporates details regarding the course of study, the setting of particular core and elective

courses, ideal study plan, statistics and overview of the student activities. In the description, there are procedures explain pertaining communication with employers, or organizations where our students do their internships and work after graduation.

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

10.2. How you ensure that when monitoring and evaluating study programs, the student assessment and learning outcomes are in line with current knowledge, technological possibilities, society's needs, students' needs, and employers' expectations and other external stakeholders and that the university creates a supportive and effective learning environment for the students.

Teaching and Learning Centre is part of the functioning of BISLA. This centre is continuously involved in taking care of education, modification and adaptation of study methods and other activities related to the quality of teaching process. Within the university, we are focused on regular collection and evaluation of data from the employers, who provide internships to our students. We also collect data from the teachers and students regarding teaching and learning which we consequently evaluate. During the teachers' meetings which take part several times per a semester (at least 4 times), we discuss the current stat of the study program and courses offered. The university strives to create an environment which implements different forms of collecting feedback and processes maximum amount of data in order to increase the quality of educational process at BISLA.

10.3. How you ensure that when monitoring and evaluating study programs, there are sufficient spatial, personnel, material, technical, infrastructural, information, and financial resources provided for the implementation of study programs and other related activities.

BISLA regularly monitors and evaluates technical, material, personnel, information, financial, and other resources to ensure sufficient operation of the study program and its monitoring. BISLA create an annual report yearly which is focused on evaluation of these factors. This reports can be found on our webpage in the following section: <https://www.bisla.sk/vyrocnne-spravy/>.

10.4. In what way students can communicate at least once a year their opinions on the quality of the study program, the quality of the teachers, the quality of support system, and the quality of the university. At the same time, how is feedback provided to the students on the study results and the measures taken.

Students regularly (once a semester) fill out a questionnaire regarding the quality of the study program, and the courses offered by the university. They have various student bodies, such as Student Council or student representatives in the Academic Senate, through which they can communicate their feedback on the quality of education offered by BISLA. The university leadership communicates with the students on a regular basis and involve the students to the process of evaluating the quality of education.

<https://www.bisla.sk/evaluation-monitoring/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/student-council/>

<https://www.bisla.sk/academic-senate/>

10.5. How are any adjustment which are results of monitoring and periodic evaluation proposed with the participation of students, employers, and other interested parties.

BISLA involves in the monitoring all parties (teachers, students, employers, non-profit organizations, and others) which provide feedback on the quality of education and its improvement. All the information are provided in the description of the study program which is regularly updated on our webpage.

10.6. How study programs are periodically approved in a period corresponding with their standard length of study.

BISLA continuously evaluates its study program according to the standards set in the description of the study program. BISLA regularly publishes all change on its webpage in the section News and at the same time updates all relevant documents.

[Link to the results of the other periodical approval of the study program by the authority for such approval should be disclosed in a description of each study program.](#)

11. Regular external quality assurance.

Explain what forms of regular external quality assurance assessment the university undergoes in order to make sure that the internal system of the university is being developed and implemented in accordance with the standards for the internal system and that this system is improving.

BISLA conducts external evaluation through experts from different sectors (academia, non-profit organizations, state administration, private sector, etc.) on a regular basis. These experts are always listed on the BISLA website and the conclusions from their evaluations are published in the current report on the quality of university <https://www.bisla.sk/accreditation/>. BISLA continuously works on external evaluation and strives to create new methods of assessment and improving the quality of the university. Teaching and Learning Centre is highly participating in these endeavours.

12. List of attachments of IER

The university attaches to this IER the following:

1. The list of study programs (the university attaches an overview of study programs according to Appendix no. 1 of the handbook).
2. System of indicators of the internal system of quality assurance of the university (the university attaches an overview and status of indicators that it uses in monitoring and improving the internal system of quality assurance).
3. Additional attachments (the university attaches any additional documents at its own discretion in zip format).