



Republika Kosova - Republic of Kosovo
Agjencia e Kosovës për Akreditim
Agencija Kosova za Akreditaciju
Kosovo Accreditation Agency



MANUAL FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF NEW STAFF





1. Introduction

The Manual for the Professional Development of New Staff at the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) presents a strategic and operational document that serves as the foundation for building an efficient, professional, and committed public administration dedicated to ensuring and advancing the quality of higher education in the Republic of Kosovo.

Drafted in accordance with the legal framework governing KAA's activities – including the Law on Higher Education, the Law on KAA, relevant sublegal acts, and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG) – this manual aims to institutionalize a structured, comprehensive, and progressive approach for the professional development of new staff.

Aligned with KAA's mandate to guarantee quality and in harmony with the principles of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the manual offers a clear framework for the orientation, training, mentoring, and active involvement of new employees in all institutional processes. It serves as a strategic tool not only for competence development but also for preserving, transferring, and advancing institutional knowledge.

The manual places special emphasis on:

- Integrating new staff into KAA's organizational structure;
- Effective use of existing digital systems and technology in daily work;
- Familiarization and involvement in accreditation, re-accreditation, validation, monitoring, and post-accreditation procedures;
- International cooperation and experience sharing with other agencies.

The professional development of new staff is not treated merely as an administrative need, but as a strategic and sustainable investment in fulfilling KAA's long-term vision for quality, trust, and innovation in higher education.



2. Purpose of the Document

The purpose of this manual is to establish a clear, systematic, and sustainable structure for the professional development of new staff at the Kosovo Accreditation Agency, aiming to ensure successful integration and sustainable contribution to institutional performance.

This manual functions as a practical and strategic guide, addressing the initial and medium-term needs of new employees, offering the necessary tools and support to:

- Acquire institutional knowledge;
- Understand KAA's mission, vision, and strategic objectives;
- Develop professional skills in accordance with international standards.

Specific objectives of the manual include:

- **Structured institutional integration:** Ensuring detailed initial orientation, including introduction to the organizational structure, functional tasks, and internal processes of KAA.
- **Professional capacity building:** Offering a progressive methodology for developing technical and soft skills, based on ESG standards and best international practices.
- **Long-term mentoring and support:** Establishing a genuine mentoring system to ensure experience transfer, learning support, and gradual advancement of autonomy for new staff.
- **Preservation of institutional knowledge:** Strengthening mechanisms for sustainable knowledge and experience transfer from existing staff to new employees, ensuring institutional continuity and quality of work.
- **Support for KAA's overall objectives:** Linking the professional development of new staff to the effective realization of KAA's mandate for quality assurance and continuous improvement of the higher education system.



3. Strategic Objectives

The objectives of this professional development program are closely linked to the mission and institutional function of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency. They serve as a guide for preparing a new professional cadre aligned with European quality standards in higher education.

3.1 Familiarizing staff with KAA's mission, vision, and legal framework

New staff must understand KAA's core objective of ensuring quality in higher education, including:

- The mission to promote quality and sustainable education;
- The vision to be a reliable agency for quality evaluation;
- Understanding the legal documentation governing the agency's operations (Law on Higher Education, Law on KAA, administrative instructions, regulations, etc.)

3.2 Understanding organizational structure and interdepartmental processes at KAA

A clear understanding of KAA's organizational chart, departmental functions, and modes of collaboration helps new staff orient quickly and work more effectively

3.3 Capability in managing processes related to accreditation, re-accreditation, validation, monitoring and post-accreditation

This core aspect of KAA's work requires new staff to learn:

- How to coordinate evaluation visits;
- How to manage documentation and reports;
- How to monitor higher education institutions post-accreditation.

3.4 Use of KAA's digital systems and databases

Efficient use of internal digital platforms is vital for administrative tasks and monitoring of HEI data. This objective includes practical training on:

- KAA's database;
- e-Accreditation application platforms;
- Internal collaboration and communication software.



3.5 Understanding and applying ESG standards and EHEA compliance

Staff must be aware of the ESG standards and Kosovo's commitments to the EHEA, which guide the work of KAA, as well as Kosovo's commitments to the EHEA. This includes:

- Applying quality principles in KAA processes;
- Integrating international criteria into evaluations and KAA decision-making.

3.6 Engagement in international cooperation and exchange

Professional development goes beyond national borders. KAA encourages participation in:

- International accreditation projects and networks;
- Study visits to peer agencies;
- Regional and European conferences, seminars, and trainings.

These strategic objectives ensure that new staff not only adapt but actively contribute to KAA's long-term mission.

4. Structure of the 6-Month Program

The six-month Professional Development Program at KAA is designed as a progressive journey for effectively integrating new staff by gradually building knowledge, skills, and institutional experience. It is divided into three phases, each with clear objectives, concrete activities, and expected outcomes.

4.1 Month 1–2: Initial Orientation and Institutional Foundations

Objective: To ensure new staff are well acquainted with KAA's mission, vision, structure, and work culture.

Key Activities

- Assigning a mentor to each new employee and holding the first orientation meeting.
- Orientation training on the strategic plan and legal documents of KAA.
- Familiarization with the organizational structure, departmental roles, and workflow.
- Study of internal regulations and the Code of Ethics.
- Baseline assessment of knowledge and expectations for the next 6 months.

Expected Outcomes:



- Each new employee is assigned a mentor and the orientation meeting is held within the first week of employment.
- The new employee demonstrates understanding of the institution's strategic plan and legal documents.
- The new employee possesses sufficient knowledge of the structure and responsibilities of KAA's organizational units.
- The new employee understands the content of the internal regulations and Code of Ethics and commits to complying with them.

4.2 Month 3–4: Technical Development and Process Participation

Objective: To practically train staff to actively participate in accreditation and monitoring processes.

Key Activities:

- Intensive training on the full cycle of accreditation, reaccreditation, validation, monitoring, and post-accreditation procedures.
- Participation in preparing agendas for evaluation visits.
- Involvement in analyzing self-evaluation reports and other supporting documents.
- Involvement in the analysis of expert reports and their use in the monitoring process and post-accreditation procedures.
- Interdepartmental workshops to stimulate cooperation and experience sharing.
- Training on the use of KAA's digital tools for reporting and evaluation.

Expected Outcomes:

- The new employee possesses comprehensive knowledge of the accreditation cycle and can contribute to each of its phases.
- The new employee contributes to drafting agendas for evaluation visits while respecting procedural requirements and deadlines.
- The new employee develops analytical skills to identify and understand key elements of self-evaluation and expert review reports.
- The new employee possesses the technical skills to effectively use KAA's digital platforms for reporting and data management.

4.3 Month 5–6: Autonomy and Advanced Engagement

Objective: To prepare staff to work independently and engage in higher-level activities, including international ones.

Key Activities:



- Independently performing tasks during evaluation visits for accreditation, reaccreditation, validation, monitoring, and post-accreditation procedures, with limited support from the mentor.
- Participation in conferences and meetings with peer agencies (if possible).
- Drafting of a final report by the employee and mentor on performance and further recommendations.
- Final institutional assessment for the long-term inclusion of the staff in KAA.

Expected Outcomes:

- The new employee demonstrates sufficient ability to perform important tasks independently throughout the accreditation cycle, requiring mentor support only in special cases.
- The new employee and mentor submit a comprehensive report documenting progress, Mentors are the main pillar in the process of integrating and developing new staff at KAA. They serve as a point of reference, professional guide, and source of institutional knowledge. The mentor's role is not limited to supervision; it also includes building a relationship based on trust, collaboration, and mutual development.



5. Key Responsibilities of Mentors:

Mentors are the main pillars in the process of integrating and developing new staff at the KAA. They serve as a point of reference, professional guide, and source of institutional knowledge. The role of the mentor is not limited to supervision but also includes building a relationship based on trust, collaboration, and mutual development.

5.1 Main Responsibilities of Mentors

Monitoring the progress of new staff: Mentors must systematically track the progress of the new employee in task implementation, knowledge acquisition, and involvement in institutional processes.

Providing practical and ethical guidance: Through personal example and practical advice, mentors help new staff understand the institutional culture, ethical norms, and methods of professional collaboration at KAA.

Regular and structured feedback: Mentors provide clear and constructive evaluations on a weekly/monthly basis to identify strengths and areas needing improvement. This feedback must be documented in a format defined by KAA.

Involvement in planning professional development activities: Mentors contribute to drafting an individual training plan and involve new staff in workshops, seminars, and official visits relevant to their field of work.

Emotional and social support: In addition to professional aspects, mentors are encouraged to help new employees adapt more easily to the work environment and colleagues, fostering a sense of belonging and motivation.

Final assessment: At the end of the six-month period, the mentor prepares a final report summarizing the progress, challenges, and recommendations for further development.

5.2 Criteria for Selecting Mentors:

- Must have work experience at KAA
- Deep knowledge of accreditation processes and institutional regulations
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Willingness to contribute to the development of others

5.3 Mentor–New Employee Collaboration

- The relationship between the mentor and the new employee should be characterized by:
- Active and mutual collaboration
- Regular meetings to share experiences and progress
- Documentation of each phase of progress in the new staff member's personal file



6. Supporting Activities

Supporting activities represent an important pillar of the professional development program at KAA, as they directly contribute to deepening knowledge, building new capacities, and preparing staff to face the dynamic challenges of quality assurance in higher education.

6.1 Internal Thematic Trainings/Workshops

KAA organizes periodic trainings that cover various areas important for the daily functioning of the agency. Some of the most common topics include:

- Training on accreditation and post-accreditation procedures.
- Management of documentation and digital databases.
- Professional ethics and institutional communication.
- Updates on legal and administrative changes.

6.2 Interdepartmental and Divisional Collaboration Workshops

To foster cooperation and institutional cohesion, internal workshops are organized in order to:

Strengthen teamwork and experience sharing between divisions.

Identify common challenges and practical solutions. Promote a culture of open discussion and professional reflection.

6.3 Seminars and Trainings on ESG and Digital Technologies

Considering the importance of the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), KAA offers:

- Seminars on understanding and implementing ESG in evaluation practices.
- Trainings on the use of new technologies in accreditation processes, such as data management systems, electronic reporting, and digital collaboration platforms.

6.4 Participation in International Conferences

New staff are encouraged to participate in:

- Regional and European conferences on quality assurance.
- Meetings of accreditation agency networks and strategic partners.
- Presentations by KAA at academic or regulatory events.

These engagements increase the international exposure of staff and enable the exchange of best practices with colleagues from other countries.

6.5 Study Visits Abroad

With the support of international partners and according to KAA's planning:

- New staff may be involved in study visits to peer agencies abroad.



- The visits aim to compare local practices with international ones and bring new ideas for institutional improvement.

The value of supporting activities lies in the fact that they go beyond individual technical development – they build a modern mindset that is open and committed to quality and international cooperation.

7. Performance Evaluation of the New Officer

Evaluation is conducted on a monthly basis through mentor reports and reflective questionnaires (annexes 1, 2, 3) completed by the employee. At the end of the period, a final report is drafted to determine the level of competence acquisition by the mentor, but the evaluation is carried out by their supervisor, as defined by the applicable law.

8. Conclusion

The professional development of new staff constitutes a key component in building institutional capacities and fulfilling the mission of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). In an environment characterized by rapid changes in higher education and growing expectations for quality and transparency, it is essential that new staff are equipped with knowledge, skills, and a consistent orientation.

This manual provides a clear and practical framework for the orientation and support of new staff during their first six months. It is not only a plan for integration but a concrete tool for personal and professional development that helps new employees to:

- Understand the essence of their role within KAA.
- Adopt best practices in quality assurance.
- Actively engage in the institution's mission for a stronger higher education system in Kosovo.

Through this manual, KAA demonstrates its commitment to cultivating a professional and responsible culture that values human development as an inseparable priority of organizational success. The manual also ensures institutional continuity by formalizing the mentoring process and the transfer of knowledge from the experienced generation to the new generation of professionals.



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At the end of this six-month process, the goal is for every new staff member to be not only prepared to contribute independently and responsibly but also motivated to be an active part of ongoing reform and improvement at KAA



9. ANNEX 1

MONTHLY SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is intended to help the new employee reflect on their professional progress during the month, in accordance with the phases of the six-month development program at KAA. It must be completed at the end of each month and submitted to the mentor for review.

1. What competencies have you acquired this month?

2. In which processes have you been involved, and what were the main challenges you encountered?

3. What additional training or support would help your continued development?

4. How do you evaluate your involvement in the team and interdepartmental communication?

5. What are your objectives for the following month?



10. ANNEX 2

MENTORING REPORT FORM

To be completed by the mentor at the end of each month or a significant stage of the new staff member's professional development.

Name of the new employee: _____

Reporting period: _____

Progress made during the period:

Skills developed and competencies acquired:

Challenges encountered and how they were addressed:

Communication and involvement in the team:

Recommendations for the following month:



11. ANNEX 3

INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IPDP)

To be completed jointly by the mentor and the new employee at the end of the 6-month program.

Name of the new employee:

Date of completion:

Key areas of progress during the program:

Areas that require further development:

Objectives for the next 6 months:

Participation in planned international activities (if any):

Suggestions for further improvement of the professional development program:



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