

PRACTICES OF DL IN WB: THE ISSUE OF QUALITY

ALEKSANDRA RADULOVIĆ

University of Montenegro, Center of Information Technology, saska@ac.me

SUZANA LOSKOVSKA

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, suze@feit.ukim.edu.mk

VLADAN DEVEDŽIĆ

University of Belgrade, Faculty of Organizational Sciences, devedzic@gmail.com

BOŽO KRSTAJIĆ

University of Montenegro, Faculty of Electrical Engineering, bozok@ac.me

Abstract: *This paper gives overview of quality assurance (QA) in distance learning (DL) practices in Western Balkan (WB) high education (HE) institutions. For considered country, it describes the current situation relevant for QA in DL in general, illustrates this situation by showing examples related to a few specific HE institutions in that country. The paper shows that currently there are no adopted general standards and quality assurance procedures for DL in consider countries.*

Keywords: *E-Learning, Distance learning, Quality assurance*

1. INTRODUCTION

Idea of quality assurance is not new, neither our concern about it in education. All over the world there is an increasing interest in quality and standards, reflecting both the rapid growth of higher education and its cost to the public and the private purse. Accordingly, if Europe is to achieve its aspiration to be the most dynamic and knowledge-based economy in the world (Lisbon Strategy), then European higher education will need to demonstrate that it takes the quality of its programmes and awards seriously and is willing to put into place the means of assuring and demonstrating that quality. [1] Reaching this goal would imply a challenging programme for modernisation, not least education and training systems. The transformation of European education and vocational training systems involves both the development of e-learning as a means to increase quality of learning as well as a need to increase the quality of e-learning itself. [2]

The first experiences of e-learning were generally very disappointing for learners. In these first experiences the emphasis was put on technological aspects with unrealistic expectations that e-learning would reduce the costs of training and replace face-to-face learning. The consequence was a general failure in the uptake of e-learning throughout Europe. Today, e-learning is better understood and the pure technological approach has been replaced by the view that e-learning should be a learning process enhanced by technology: learners belong to a community where interaction between learners and tutors is encouraged. Original issues concerning connectivity and infrastructure are now much less important and focus is being placed on content, quality, pedagogy, standards, teacher training and organisational change. More and more e-learning experiences are occurring, but what is

important for the diverse actors involved whether they be educational decision makers, training organisations, teachers or the learner themselves is to find a way to measure the quality of the training course and in particular its effectiveness (how it has been received) and its efficiency (how it has been perceived).

Evaluating quality for an area such as learning is a difficult task as a training course is a service involving human intervention and not a linear industrial product that must be reproduced identically time and time again. It is first necessary to choose a quality approach and then parameters and/or indicators in order to carry out the assessment. Diverse approaches could be used, such as those based on customer satisfaction, systematic approaches, global approaches and total quality approaches. In the same way, diverse criteria could be used for evaluation, such as technical standards, criteria dedicated to e-learning, benchmarking exercises. [3]

Almost all high education institutions in Western Balkan use some kind of distance learning (DL) for particular courses, part of courses or whole programmes. Government institutions responsible for higher education in WB countries (such as Ministries of Education, National Councils for HE, Accreditation Committees, and the like) have also started to recognize the importance of DL and to provide administrative and legal support.

However, when it comes to quality assurance (QA) practices, one meets a variety across WB HE institutions. QA practices vary from one institution to another, and are usually not covered in detail in relevant policy documents and guidelines. Vague regulations cause different interpretations and usually result in partial coverage and reduction of the quality of DL services provided to students.

2. DL IN SERBIA

Activities related to DL in Serbia were initiated through personal interests and international connections of university researchers interested in various forms of Internet-based technologies applied to education. Over time, funding has been provided for moving from research-related issues to establishing DL practices at universities. Of course, in the beginning it was led by enthusiasts who wanted to promote DL in the courses they taught at their universities. They introduced the use of learning management systems (LMSs), such as Moodle, to their departments and started to gradually attract more and more attention.

Several universities in Serbia have started offering DL courses and, over time, some of them have accredited their DL programmes of study.

At the University of Kragujevac, Technical Faculty Cacak (TFC), a DL M.Sc. programme of studies in e-learning is established in 2008, with the objective to educate future experts in designing and implementing e-learning. This programme is established according to the principles of the Bologna declaration and under the framework of the Tempus project "M.Sc. curriculum in e-learning" and the classes are delivered online (<http://www.tfc.kg.ac.rs/>). The programme is unique in Serbia, being an "e-learning programme about e-learning" - its content/topics cover e-learning, and DL technology is used for delivery. Other departments of the University of Kragujevac have also embarked on DL track, but apparently only by putting up F2F course materials online using the Moodle platform (see, e.g., the Moodle portal of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering).

Although University of Belgrade is the largest university in Serbia, only one DL programme of study has been officially accredited. There are also a number of departments that offer course materials through Moodle and for some courses also course administration. At the Faculty of Organizational Sciences (FOS), a DL programme entitled Information Systems and Technologies (IST) was accredited in 2009 and is now a part of the faculty's standard offer to new generations of students. Note that it has evolved from the F2F programme with the same title, as the faculty's response to a high demand and interest of students for information systems and technologies. The programme accommodates 80 DL students each year. Many other departments of the University of Belgrade also offer online courses. Very often, these are run by DL enthusiasts, i.e. teachers who find DL a promising additional support for their courses. A good example here is the School of Medicine, where there are currently 4 online courses at the BSc level, 3 blended courses at the MSc level, and 2 blended courses at the PhD level. But, the School of Medicine has not adopted a DL development strategy. It is only through international projects and donations that the enthusiast teachers have developed their online and blended courses. A number of courses offered by the University of Novi Sad are available in DL mode. For example, the Department of Informatics, Faculty of Technical Science, has a comprehensive set of wiki pages related to their courses, and also uses Sakai LMS for course management, and their proprietary assessment system,

called Otisak. Although Otisak runs only multiple-choice problems/questions, it is being long used and a lot of experience is gained with it; thus all misuse/abuse of Otisak are eliminated. About a dozen of course instructors at the University of Novi Sad run their assessment tests using Otisak regularly. Unfortunately, just like the School of Medicine at the University of Belgrade, University of Novi Sad has not adopted a unified DL development strategy yet, and it is only the enthusiast teachers who have developed their online and blended courses. LMSs differ from one department to another (e.g., the Department of Mathematics uses a Moodle-based portal for their online courses), and the general level of adoption of DL varies across departments.

A good example of putting courses online at the University of Nis is the Faculty of Electronics. They use Moodle to offer their courses, and are currently in the process of unifying the previously individual offers into a coherent and unified one. All courses are described following the same pattern, and the pattern structure is highly informative for students. This is definitely a good QA approach, at least as far as an individual department goes. University-wide, such a unified approach is not adopted. At many other departments, it is difficult to find out by just browsing their Web sites what specific LMS is used (if any).

A suitable example of DL and QA in DL at privately run universities in Serbia is that of DL programmes of study accredited at the Singidunum University, Belgrade. They offer 3 accredited programmes of study - Business Economics, Tourism and Hotel Management, and Engineering Management. At the time of writing, the university's Web site shows another accredited programme, Marketing and Commerce, but the CAQA database of accredited programmes shows just the first three. DL material/content is based on Moodle, and each course is presented by learning units on the week-to-week basis. There is a DL tech support team in charge of the DL platform management and course maintenance, communication with staff and students, as well as for assessment preparation and administration. They have made important steps towards putting up assessment to the DL mode and to automation of assessment and administration. For example, proprietary tools are used to enable interoperability and export/import of items between the (also proprietary) assessment system, called Multitutor, the Moodle DL platform, and the student service administration. It is especially the assessment system that makes a distinction between DL at Singidunum University and DL at the other universities. It is in use since 2007, and has been installed at several university departments.

Metropolitan University, the Faculty of Information Technology (the founder of the Metropolitan University), was the first one in Serbia to obtain the work permit from the Ministry of Education to organize a programme of study at the BSc level DL and offer it as both F2F and DL programme. After that, in cooperation with lecturers from the New York Institute of Technologies, Metropolitan University has managed to develop and accredit another six study programmes, both F2F and DL, in the fields of management and design (Operations Management, Graphics Design, and Management and the BSc/BA level,

and Information Technologies and Systems, New Media Design, and Marketing Management at the MSc level). Currently, there are over 500 DL students at Metropolitan, from Serbia, Greece, Austria, Spain, Germany, The United States of America, Mexico, and The United Arab Emirates. Examples of multimedia lectures and tutorials are available from the Metropolitan University Web site. Along with digital literature and lecture materials for exam preparation, they enable successful studies to DL students who are unable to attend lectures regularly. The DL lecturers are available to students through video conferencing, so absence from traditional classes does not exclude real-time communication with lecturers.

In recent years, a few full-fledged DL programmes of study have been developed and accredited at some universities in Serbia. However, QA procedures and practices in these cases are at various states of advancement.

2.1 QA IN DL- CURRENT PRACTICES

At the time of writing (Mid 2011) the situation with DL and its QA aspects in Serbia was hard to judge in general, because of a lot of controversial information. For example, a survey from 2010 [4] mentions that about two dozens of departments, from all state universities and some private universities and colleges in Serbia, offer DL courses. The survey even characterizes some of these cases as "the whole curricula is offered in a form of distance learning". On the other hand, the official information from the Committee for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in higher education in Serbia (CAQA) at the time of writing reads that there are 6 DL programmes officially accredited at the university level in Serbia (3 with state universities, and 3 at a private university), as well as 4 at the college level. Hence one can conclude that much of the DL offered at universities in Serbia is actually an additional support to conventional, classroom-based studies. In other words, a closer inspection of current practices reveals that most courses claimed to be DL courses are actually offered in blended mode, with much of the course material available through Moodle or another LMS, but with few other educational components and processes (such as assessment and administration) supported in the DL mode.

TFC's approach to QA of their programme is very systematic. At the end of each academic year, a poll is conducted with the students with the objective to evaluate the programme itself, the teachers, the service, and the like. The results are published and TFC uses them for continuous improvement of their offer and delivery.

Student's evaluations are always processed statistically. If after the statistics are analyzed an aspect/issue is found to have poor evaluations/scores, steps are taken to improve it. In addition to such periodic evaluations, TFC has recently conducted a SEVAQ+ evaluation of its DL study programme in e-learning as a part of their internal QA. The results of the evaluation are published in an extensive report. As SEVAQ+ survey includes questions about resources, processes and results, students have evaluated a set of statements about information provided on the courses, learning materials, services offered to the learner,

eLearning activities, knowledge assessment, and course efficiency (in general, as well as in terms of knowledge increase and motivation to learn effectively). The results have then been analyzed statistically, in order to get a better insight into how the students feel about the courses they took in the programme.

There is no published evidence of their internal QA procedures on other departments of the University of Kragujevac, hence it is difficult to judge how far did they go with it. Still, it is encouraging to see that for a number of courses materials are put online and are available through LMS.

Much of the IST programme's internal QA, on Faculty of Organizational Sciences is related to the quality of teaching material/content, virtual learning environment, and course design flexibility and adaptability. Proportion of the other QA aspects is much lower. This is due to the fact that only two generations of DL students have been enrolled to the IST programme so far, and more experience is needed in order for the programme to establish its internal QA to the full scale.

In terms of the quality of teaching material/content and course design flexibility and adaptability, it should be stressed that these are prepared according to the ADDIE model. Each course description includes a detailed course structure by topics and learning units, as well as teaching objectives and methods for each method. These methods include computer-based learning, experience-based learning, problem-based learning, social-constructivist learning, and so on, and these are often combined. In addition, the curriculum is based on the ACM guidelines published as an official recommendation on developing IST curricula [ACM/AIS/AITP, 2002]. However, no formal (summative) evaluation of the programme has been performed yet, other than the usual students' evaluation. In addition to the IST DL programme, FOS also offers teaching materials for many other courses taught at all three levels of study (BSc, MSc, and PhD; see for example, <http://myelab.net/moodle/>). Again, results of evaluations of these courses are not published.

As far of School of Medicine internal QA of DL courses is conducted without dedicated guidelines and procedures; QA procedures and documents for F2F are used instead.

On University of Novi Sad, QA related to the course contents is provided, as well as tech support for teachers and students.

Center for Quality Improvement is at the University of Nis, members of which come from all university departments. Unfortunately, they did not discuss the quality of e-Learning at the university yet. Departmental QA committees are, generally, responsible for QA aspects of DL as well, but in practice do not discuss that topic either. As a part of an earlier international project, a video conferencing equipment has been purchased and an e-Learning center has been formed, but with few activities so far.

A number of QA aspects of DL are taken care of at Singidunum University. But, as in many other cases, results of evaluations of DL courses and programmes at Singidunum University are not published.

It is difficult to draw conclusions about QA aspects of DL at the Metropolitan University, looking at the official information from the Web site only.

3. DL IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Government effort to introduce ICT in education system, increased Internet penetration in the society, strategy for opening HE units of dispersed studies in almost every town in the state are good base for development of distance learning programs at the Universities in R. Macedonia. But, at present, only several mostly blended study programs are accredited and offered to students.

E-learning and distance learning in Macedonia were introduced mainly by several successful projects. The result of the project "Establishment of an open and distance learning study center in Skopje" (CONV/98/PHA/0040, 1999/2000) was establishing a Centre for Open and Distance Learning at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies, the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje (www.odl.etf.ukim.edu.mk). The outcome of the project "Master studies in DSP based on blended learning approach" (<http://dsp.feit.ukim.edu.mk/DSPBLEND/>) was development of master study program at FEEIT, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje. This study program received accreditation and now is offered to students at the Faculty.

Although, this seems as a solid base for establishing DL programs, the legislation in Macedonia does not consider e-learning and DL different from the conventional classroom based learning. That means all accredited programs receive their accreditation only because they fulfil rules defined for traditional learning programs.

Even there are no fully accredited DL programs, there are many applications of different forms of e-learning and DL methods in the practice. Almost all Macedonian universities use some kind of learning management systems (LMS) as a support to traditional classroom learning process, and some of them offer videoconferencing as a form of distance learning. The following examples from different universities provide a good overview of current situation with DL in Macedonia.

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University – Skopje offers only one accredited study program "Master in DSP" (<http://dsp.feit.ukim.edu.mk/MSc/index.html>). This program based on blended approach obtained accreditation on the same way as other study programs at the University.

At the University, each faculty provides some information system for the students and LMS as repository of course materials. Moodle is the most widely used LMS.

The Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies developed its own LMS – FEITle (<http://e-tech.feit.ukim.edu.mk/FEITPortal/>). Although, the system started in 2006 as integrated but independent portal, it was recommended by the Faculty representatives in from November 2010. Since the beginning until today the portal was used by 3797 students and 120 faculty staff.

System offers to the students access to: documents or materials, announcements for the course activities, course forums, results from course activities, projects, a course activity calendar, Wiki pages, and the latest information and announcements from the Faculty. Employees have the opportunity to: publish electronic documents and announcements for course activities, initiate and moderate

course forums, manage the course members, sent e-mails to individuals or groups of students enrolled in the course, etc.

The Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, implemented and uses the system for Electronic Assessment. The functionalities of the system were developed, implemented and tested by company Innovation (<http://etest.ii.edu.mk/>).

The basic structure of the system consists of courses which material is divided in lectures. A tree like organization of lectures is implemented. Each lecture consists of smaller parts and each part consists of different sets and finally of learning objectives. The system for eTesting can have unlimited number of courses. The courses are independent from each other and have their own structure and question bank. A system is able dynamically to create tests by selection of questions from question bank. Each test generated by the system measures verbal, quantitative and analytical skills related to a specific field of course study. The system dynamically creates different test for every student with fixed number of questions. The strategy for test generation is defined from course administrator. The system evaluates the entered answers at the end of the test and displays the final results. To eliminate guessing, negative marking is implemented.

The University St. Kliment Ohridski in Bitola does not offer distance learning study programs. Within the University, several LMS are used mainly as repositories of study materials. For example, Faculty of Administration and Management of Information Systems, uses own LMS system (<http://famis.edu.mk/atutor/index.php>) based on A Tutor (<http://atutor.ca/>). The system provides easier access to study materials, and what is more important this system is convenient for part time students, because they are not obliged to travel to Bitola.

University "GoceDelcev" – Stip, has no accredited DL study program. Many forms of distance and e-learning are implemented and used in the practice. Although, at present they mainly use Moodle as a platform, the university is developing own solution with collaboration of Microsoft that is based on Sharepoint. The existing infrastructure at the university - interaction tablets Claus, with their client-server software which provides TCP/IP connections to the tablets is also used for chat and interaction. Videoconferencing is established, too. This system is mainly used by students of the medical faculty for following in-vivo operations in Nunberg Clinique, Germany and in the special hospital for surgical diseases "FilipVtori" in Skopje.

SEE Univeristy - Tetovo offers a possibility for part-time study for several study programs. Study programs that can be studied on this way are Public Administration Studies and Communication Sciences at the Faculty of Public Administration and Political Sciences; Computer Science at the Faculty of Contemporary Sciences and Technologies, and English language and literature at the Faculty of Languages, Cultures and Communication. The regime of studies on these programs is as follows:

- in the beginning of the semester students have one introduction lecture with the professor of the respective course;

- the skill courses are organized in face to face teaching, once in two weeks, after the working hours, based on the level of knowledge of the students;
- by using electronic learning management system “Libri”, students are guided about self learning manner, with evaluation criteria, needed material and possibility for taking part in electronic forums;
- at the end of the semester, an intensive seminar with professors of the respective course is organized.

The University established the eLearning Center to assist the University community in exploiting the potential of technology to enhance teaching and learning. The e-Learning Center provides a number of services like: organization of workshops on different issues related to e-Learning, all necessary software, like LMSs to ensure successful delivery of eLearning activities, hands-on training programs are frequently conducted for SEEU faculties to enable them to develop effective online instruction, and support to develop online courses. To ensure quality in all eLearning activities at SEEU, the Center has started the development of guidelines and quality standards for eLearning processes like content development, course delivery, assessment and evaluation, copyright, online teaching etc.

The eLearning Center provides all necessary software including Learning Management System - Libri (<https://libri.seeu.edu.mk>). Libri is available to the university community to deliver and conduct their courses through web. The Libri system facilitate instructors in carrying out course related activities through web including course content delivery, communication and collaboration, and assessment.

The FON UNIVERSITY – Skopje does not offer DL programs, but extensively uses LMS platform to support learning process. They use e-learning platform Moodle Open source v.1.9. Approximately around 50 courses per Faculty are implemented in the system, and around 5000 students and 30% of the academic staff uses the system regularly.

3.1 QA IN DL - CURRENT PRACTICES

Higher education in Macedonia is offered by five public and about more than ten private accredited institutions. Their work is regulated by the Law for High Education approved in February 2011. The Law regulates several issues including the Quality Assurance process. One of the major changes in the current version of the Law is establishing unique Accreditation and Evaluation Board for Higher Education of the Republic of Macedonia instead of two different bodies (Board for Accreditation and the Agency for Evaluation of Higher Education) defined in previous version.

The evaluation (Quality Assessment) of the Higher Education Institutions is implemented through: external evaluation (external quality assessment); self-evaluation (internal quality assessment); system of evaluation of the quality of the academic staff. The external evaluation and the overall assessment of the academic staff with the new Law, this task will perform the Accreditation and Evaluation Board. Internal evaluation is regulated by the acts of the Universities.

Quality assurance procedure of study programs is well defined in the High Education legislation acts. According to the law, universities are obliged to obtain accreditation from Accreditation and Evaluation Body and periodically to perform external and internal evaluation. Implementation of internal quality assurance procedures varies among universities. There are no special rules for quality assurance of distance learning courses and programs.

It is difficult to discuss or to write about the QA of the courses offered in blended mode or about DL courses because the new law for Higher Education does not consider the DL as specific way of learning and there is no any adopted QA standards for eLearning programs or DL programs.

4. DL IN MONTENEGRO

In Montenegro there are 3 universities, one public - University of Montenegro and two private - Mediterranean University and University Donja Gorica.

University of Montenegro (UoM) first started with implementation of eLearning in Montenegro. UoM has one main eLearning center which is operate by Center of Information system (CIS). CIS is organization unit of UoM which plans, builds, develops and maintains Montenegro Research and Education Network (MREN) and services. One of the provided services is eLearning. CIS coordinate all activities on University of Montenegro regarding any kind of eLearning (videoconferences, distance learning, LMS Moodle, etc). Beside CIS, many UoM units-faculties have e-learning facilities (Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management, Faculty of Philosophy, Medical faculty and Faculty of marine studies).

Since 2007., on faculty of Electrical Engineering start one pilot blended learning course at the BSc level without adopted DL development strategy. This course is one form of distance learning which combines face-to-face and technology-mediated instruction provided by LMS. All material for course (lectures, exams, tests, etc.) is online on the LMS Moodle. Technical support for students and staff is reduced to support for using the environment of Moodle.

Faculty of Economics started in 2006 with distance learning on their new study program established in another city in north of Montenegro, Bijelo Polje. Since that day, almost lectures are held on a daily basis, using videoconferences through academic network. They plan to do all lectures and practices online, from the next semester, except exams. Moreover they established separate distance learning group on the BSc study program in Podgorica, three years ago. Faculty will enrol 120 students in this group this year. Students in this group have the same rights as students on classroom-based studies, plus they have LMS accounts, where they have all lectures, literature and materials. This group of students also has possibility to take recorded classroom-based lectures from streaming server. At the time of writing (Mid 2011) they have 35 courses on LMS Moodle, at the BSc and MSc level without adopted DL development strategy. 25 courses of this is 90% distance learning (online lectures, homework, exercises, seminars,

lectures, etc.), only test and final exam are done on faculty with presence of professor. Other courses are used as repository for literature and materials for 4 year at academic study program. This distance learning group evolved from face to face program, as response to a high demand and interest of students. As far as PhD studies, for now they only use videoconference for lectures, because they often have professors from abroad.

As far as other faculties, Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management and Medical faculty, use videoconference systems for lectures, from time to time, when the need arises. Faculty of Philosophy and Faculty of marine studies are preparing for the introduction of LMS and eLearning. LMS Moodle will be used as support to lectures on some courses.

The first private university, the University Mediterranean (UM), started to operate in Montenegro in 2006. UM like others universities in Montenegro, provides Distance Learning System (DLS) in their curricula on Faculty of Information Technology, Faculty of Tourism Bar-MTS- "Montenegro Tourism School" and Faculty of Business Studies "Montenegro Business School". UM allows students to study at a distance by using Internet platform for learning with DLS. During the semester, there are periodic monitoring of lectures and exercises at the faculties according to the plans of teachers and assistants. Students perform presentation of seminar and other works; pass tests and final exams on classic way at faculties. UM in Podgorica took into account recommendations and experience of leading world institutions and organizations providing specific standards and systems to ensure quality in distance teaching. Preparations for introduction of DLS to other faculties are in process.

In 2010, the private University Donja Gorica (UDG) has been awarded a licence. UDG use distance learning as part of regular classes, when professors from abroad have lectures via a video link for students at the university. In each semester there are cases where only part of the teaching done in this way, and it happens every week. Moreover, UDG use LMS for almost all courses. They developed their own LMS, and designed it in accordance with their needs. Each student enrolled in college, get username and password for LMS access. On account, each student has the opportunity to register exams which follow in a particular semester (the only way to register exams is online through the application), then has the option of viewing score (each student can only see their grades), possibility to check the status of financial obligations to the faculty (this year will be also available in electronic payment fees), and finally, there is the possibility of access to sites, objects, from which takes learning materials, and track information from teachers.

4.1 QA IN DL - CURRENT PRACTICES

The Ministry of education and sport (MES) is the highest authority responsible for overall education policy in the country. Apart from the Ministry, there is the Council of higher education which is responsible for high education programme accreditation and external evaluations. The Council is especially responsible for realising quality of higher education in Montenegro.

University of Montenegro has recognized the importance of quality assurance in high education and established the Centre of Studies and Quality Assurance. The Center is in charge for ensuring and improving quality through continuous process of evaluation (assessment, monitoring, guarantees, maintenance and improvement) of the quality system of study programs on University of Montenegro. Unfortunately, there is no any adopted procedure for quality for any kind of programmes with elements of eLearning. On all faculties QA for programmes with some kind of eLearning is internal and done as face to face lectures.

On private universities accreditation and QA of DL programs are similar as on University of Montenegro. The programs are not accredited as a separate study program. QA is internal and is done on traditional way, as well as other face to face lectures.

Officially, Council of higher education have not accredited any program for DL or some other form of eLearning in Montenegro yet. Furthermore, there is no any adopted QA standards for eLearning programs or programs with elements of eLearning. Consequence of this is that currently quality assurance for distance learning is same as for traditional face-to-face lectures.

5. CONCLUSION

Generally known that QA is important in high education, both for traditional as well as for DL education. There are many defined standard and procedures on European level for QA in DL, but there is no unique accepted.

In this paper we show that all higher education institutions in the WB have some elements of distance learning in their education systems. Also we have find that these distance learning programs don't have a special QA, but QA procedure is done as on the traditional, face to face programs. We can conclude that, there is significant progress and intentions for further improvement of DL and adoption of QA in DL on WB HE institutions, especially through institutional framework and projects.

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