



**INTERNATIONAL
BALKAN
UNIVERSITY**

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**RULEBOOK ON THE CONDITIONS, CRITERIA,
ENROLLMENT, AND STUDYING
IN THE THIRD CYCLE STUDIES**

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Based on Article 94 of the Law on Higher Education (“Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” No. 82/2018, 154/2019, 178/2021, and 58/24) and based on Article 32 of the Statute of the International Balkan University in Skopje, the University Senate at its session held on 00.06.2024 adopted the following Rulebook on the Conditions, Criteria, Enrollment and Studying in the Third Cycle Studies.

Introductory Provisions

Article 1. Aim and Scope

- a. This rulebook sets out the terms and requirements of studies at the International Balkan University (referred to as the University) in the third cycle of studies (PhD).
- b. The provisions of this Rulebook apply to all University units that perform higher education activities in the third cycle of studies.
- c. The third cycle of studies at the University is organized under the Law on Higher Education, the Statute of the University, and other acts of the University.

Article 2. Teaching Language

- a. The teaching language is English.
- b. Under the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of North Macedonia, teaching can also be held in a language used in the Republic of North Macedonia and other world languages.

Article 3. English Language Proficiency

- a. All students, including Transfer students, who are accepted into the study programs at IBU must pass the English Language Proficiency Exam facilitated by the Language School of the University.
- b. Students with valid TOEFL, IELTS, or other English Proficiency Language Tests and exchange students from a university whose teaching language is English may be exempted from the English Language Proficiency Exam by approval of the related committee at ELS.
- c. ELS may apply additional criteria in terms of English Language Proficiency upon prior approval of the Rectorate.
- d. Students whose native language is English or who can document that they studied English in high school or university are subjected to an oral exam. If they pass the speaking exam, they may be exempted from the English Language Proficiency Exam.

Registration

Article 4. Enrolment

- a. Enrolment in the third cycle of studies is based on the quotas and calls approved by the Rectorate.
- b. Students must complete the registration procedure that includes:

- (1) online application
 - (2) submission of documents according to the call
 - (3) fulfillment of all enrolment criteria
 - (4) payment of the required tuition fee approved by or on behalf of the University Founding Board of Management.
- c.** The rectorate determines the requirements and criteria for enrolment in the respective academic year and announces them on the university website.
- d.** If three or fewer candidates are accepted to a third-cycle program, the rectorate may decide not to open it that semester or academic year.

Article 5. Student Status

- a.** Student status and membership in the academic community are obtained after enrolling in one of the university's study programs.
- b.** A full-time student follows the teaching-learning process according to the respective study program. Small groups realize teaching-learning through a mentoring system.
- c.** Student status is proven with a Student ID Card.

Programs and Education

Article 6. Type of Programs

- a.** Study programs are created according to standards and methods and are compatible with the European Credit Transfer System.
- b.** Study programs are conducted within the framework of faculties and are accredited and licensed by the competent authorities of the Republic of North Macedonia.
- c.** Study programs contain compulsory and elective courses and clinical and practical teaching activities.
- d.** Based on accredited programs, University units (faculties, institutes, centers) can organize studies in the third cycle:
- e.** The level of qualification is determined based on the National Qualification Framework of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Article 7. Academic Study Programs

- a.** Postgraduate studies in the third cycle last three years, and upon completion, the student accumulates 180 ECTS credits, depending on the program registered at the beginning of studies.
- b.** The title to be gained is PhD in the relevant field.
- c.** The qualification level in all academic study programs is VIII.

Article 8. Realization of Programs

- a. Study programs are conducted in academic years and semesters. According to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), a study program's volume per study year is 60 credits.
- b. ECTS credits from individual courses are determined based on the number of hours in the class and individual studies.
- c. One ECTS credit refers to thirty (30) hours of work, including lectures and other forms of instruction such as exercises and seminars, as well as independent.
- d. Studies are conducted according to the accredited study program and syllabus.
- e. The academic unit (faculty, institute, and center) is responsible for organizing and implementing study programs, observing the academic and professional process, and the student's career development.

Article 9. Compulsory and Elective Courses

- a. The study program comprises compulsory and elective courses.
- b. Compulsory courses are at least 70% of the total credits of the study program.
- c. Students must take the compulsory courses of the study program for which they have registered.
- d. Elective courses constitute up to 30% of the total credits of the study program.
- e. Elective courses at the faculty level are the courses that the student independently selects from the list of elective courses a faculty offers. University elective courses are the courses that the student independently selects from the list of elective courses at the university level.
- f. The respective program coordinator decides which elective courses the faculty offers will become active in the following semester.

Article 10. Title Earned in the Third Cycle of Studies

- a. After completing the third cycle of academic studies, the title of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded in the respective field.

Registration

Article 11. Academic Calendar

- a. The academic calendar is published on the university website before the start of the academic year by the Rectorate.
- b. The Rectorate approves eventual changes to the academic calendar.

Article 12. Semester Registration

- a. Each enrolled student at IBU must register via the University's electronic system every semester (Courses Registration) up to graduation.

- b.** The registration must be done within the registration period specified in the Academic Calendar.
- c.** Students select courses with the assistance of an advisor.
- d.** The adviser approves the registration after the student pays the education fee and the fee for failed courses.
- e.** Students who fail to register on time for various reasons can be registered with the decision of the Rectorate.
- f.** Students who didn't register for any semesters in the current academic year can renew the semester at the beginning of the following year with the approval of the program coordinator.
- g.** If the student re-registers each semester within the specified registration period, their semester will be recovered.

Article 13. Student Advisers

- a.** The program coordinator will assign student advisors for each study program at the beginning of the academic year.
- b.** An advisor must help students register for courses, discover their interests and talents, choose their study program, monitor their academic performance, and navigate the withdrawal procedures.

Article 14. Course Registration

- a.** Semester courses are registered through the university's electronic system.
- b.** The student registers for obligatory and elective courses according to the study program (30 ECTS per semester).
- c.** While compiling the schedule in the university's electronic system, the student has the following information: name and number of ECTS credits of the course, time, place, and language of lectures and exercises.
- d.** The program coordinator plans course offerings.
- e.** The scheduling procedure more closely regulates delayed schedule registration or changes for objective reasons.
- f.** Each student registers regularly 30 ECTS per semester (max 60 ECTS per academic year).
- g.** The failed and missing courses must be registered first.
- h.** For prerequisite courses, the student must pass the previous course to register for an adherent course.
- i.** During the registration of the courses via the university's electronic system, the student has the following information:
 - (1)** Name and number of course ECTS credits.
 - (2)** Time, place, and language of lectures and exercises.

- j.** During the whole educational period, the student has the right to replace a maximum of two failed elective courses with available courses at the faculty level.
- k.** The program coordinator must approve the replacement course through the adviser. In case of replacement, regular course criteria shall be applied to the new course.
- l.** The program coordinator can decide to replace an elective course with at least five registered students and replace another from the list of elective courses at the faculty level. However, any elective course with only two registered students shall not be activated and replaced with an available elective course.
- m.** The PhD Thesis shall also be registered as a regular course.

Article 15. Course Add / Drop Week

- a.** Students can change the courses they selected during the Add/Drop week, defined in the Academic Calendar.
- b.** Students can change a maximum of two elective courses if they fail. Course replacement can be done only once during third-cycle studies.
- c.** The student requiring the replacement of the course(s) shall submit a written request to the Student Office. The student advisor should approve and verify the replacement with the program coordinator.

Transfer and Mobility

Article 16. Transfer from Another Higher Education Institution

- a.** Students have the right to make a transfer from another higher educational institution and can be enrolled with the status of full-time.
- b.** The maximum number of ECTS credits can be transferred from other institutions is 90 ECTS credits. The ECTS credits for a PhD thesis cannot be transferred.
- c.** Accepting transfer students to IBU study programs shall be conducted following the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Macedonia and IBU student transfer procedures.
- d.** The request for a change of study program may be made only before the start of the academic year within a period determined by the academic calendar.
- e.** The Student Affairs Office submits the student's written request, transcript of records, and other related documents to the program coordinator.
- f.** The student's request for a transfer will be reviewed by a transfer committee of the related unit and then approved by the program coordinator.
- g.** The program coordinator decides which courses and how many ECTS will be transferred to the study program or faculty after a detailed evaluation of the transcript of the records, syllabus of courses, and other relevant documents.

Article 17. Internal Transfer

- a.** Transfer from one study program to another within IBU is permitted upon the student's request to the respective program.
- b.** The acceptance of transfer students to IBU study programs shall be conducted under the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Macedonia and IBU student transfer procedures.
- c.** Students must submit a written request to change their study program to the Student Affairs Office.
- d.** The request for a change of study program may be made only before the start of the academic year within a period determined by the academic calendar.
- e.** The Student Affairs Office submits the student's written request, transcript of records, and other related documents to the program coordinator.
- f.** The program coordinator of the related program will review the student's request for a transfer.
- g.** The program coordinator decides which courses and how many ECTS will be transferred to the study program or faculty after a detailed evaluation of the transcript of the records, syllabus of courses, and other relevant documents.

Article 18. Student Mobility

- a.** A student in mobility is a student from another university participating in exchange programs or a student from IBU enrolling in a study program for one or two semesters at another university in the country or abroad.
- b.** Students enrolled in other higher education institutions may apply for one of the student exchange programs offered by IBU (Erasmus+, Mevlana, Bilateral Agreements, etc.) with the status of Exchange Student.
- c.** Mobility is done under the Principles of Bologna and ECTS credits.
- d.** The mobility terms are defined in the joint document for the mobility *Learning Agreement Form*.
- e.** The International Relations Office coordinates the mobility process with the relevant faculty and services.
- f.** Interested students must apply at least one semester in advance following the mobility procedure.
- g.** The Rector's Board determines the exchange student quota.
- h.** Exchange students have equal rights and obligations with IBU students regarding the educational process at IBU.
- i.** At the end of the exchange period, a transcript will be issued.

Evaluation and Grading

Article 19. Syllabus

- a. The academic staff will inform students of their responsibilities at the beginning of the semester in the syllabus handed out on the first day of the semester and in the university's electronic system, which students should complete to pass the course successfully.
- a. The syllabus determines:
 - (1) A detailed description of the course, objectives, and learning outcomes;
 - (2) teacher and collaborator of the course, who will conduct teaching according to the syllabus;
 - (3) place, start, and end of classes (planning for 15 teaching weeks);
 - (4) the form of teaching (lectures, seminars, exercises, consultations, etc.);
 - (5) the methods of knowledge assessment (grading) and the manner of passing the exams;
 - (6) deadline for the final exam;
 - (7) description of literature for study;
 - (8) language in which the teaching will take place;
 - (9) other important aspects of the learning process.
- b. The syllabus is published electronically in the university's learning management system at the beginning of the semester.

Article 20. Grading and Exams

- a. Grading for each course shall be carried out according to the following ratio:
 - (1) In Term Activities and Works (40-60%),
 - (2) Final exam or project (40-60%).
- b. In-term activities in a course may consist of components such as class attendance, quizzes, homework, seminar works, presentations, and projects. The weight of these components is indicated in the syllabus distributed at the beginning of the semester. Class attendance can be up to 20% compelling in total grading.
- c. The final exam or project covers the whole semester.
- d. Any student who fails may enter the makeup exam or project.
- e. The makeup exam or project is equivalent to the final exam or project, and the results from the make-up exam or project will replace the results from the final exam or project.
- f. A student must fulfill the attendance criteria for the final or makeup exam or project.
- g. Students who didn't pass a compulsory course will repeat the course and must register again.
- h. Students who didn't pass an elective course will complete credit by taking an elective course from the list.
- i. Students may register for thesis study after completing 70 percent of the total credits.

- j. The terms of the exams are defined by the academic calendar announced on the university website.
- k. Exam papers are saved for two years after the completion of the exam. After this period ends, exam papers shall be destroyed.
- l. To pass the course, students must have:
 - i. Seventy points total from in-term activities and works and final exam or project.
 - ii. Fifty points from the final exam or project.
- m. The Equivalency Grades Table below shall be applied during examinations: A symbol NE (not entered) shall be used for students who didn't take the exam. The credit points that the student takes are zero (0), and the student failed the exam.

Numerical System from 5 to 10	10	9	8	7	6	5
100 Point System	90.00-100	80.00-89.99	70.00-79.99	60.00-69.9	50.00-59.9	0.00-49.99
ECTS System	A	B	C	D	E	F

Article 21. Announcement of Grades and Grade Reports

- a. The teaching staff will enter the grades into the university's electronic system for every exam.
- b. Teaching staff submit hard copies of every exam document to the Archive and keep their records.
- c. Upon the student's written request, the Student Affairs Office issues a transcript of records for course success signed by an authority of the Rectorate.

Article 22. Objection to Exam Results

- a. Students have the right to object to the course evaluation results.
- b. Students unsatisfied with the grading have the right to file an objection to the university's electronic system (Course Objection Module) within 48 hours of the announcement of the results. The lecturer/professor must show the paper to the student and explain the grading in a face-to-face meeting if the student attends. The lecturer/professor must write a response to the student over the University's electronic system Course Objection Module within three working days.
- c. If the student is still dissatisfied with the grading, they have a second objection right to the program coordinator with the proofs over the university's electronic system Course Objection Module within 48 hours after the professor's response. The program coordinator will look at the student's paper by comparing it with the other papers and must write a response to the student over the University's electronic system Course Objection Module in 5 working days.

Thesis and Project

Article 23. PhD Thesis

- a.** The PhD Thesis is an integral part of third-cycle studies.
- b.** Every third-cycle program requires a written thesis to be finished and publicly defended.
- c.** Students are encouraged to begin their research and preparations for their PhD Thesis at the beginning of their Third Cycle Studies.
- d.** The program coordinator approved the student's request to have a mentor from the field by the beginning of the third semester.
- e.** The thesis topic is chosen by the student in consultation with the mentor.
- f.** The student continues writing the thesis under the mentor's guidance.
- g.** The coordinator forms a Commission for the Evaluation of the Thesis (Thesis Commission).
- h.** The Commission for the Evaluation of the Thesis consists of 5 (five) members, including the mentor and four other members, three of which are from the relevant scientific field of the institution that organizes the doctoral studies.
- i.** Members of the Commission for the Evaluation of the Thesis can be academic staff elected in the teaching and scientific positions of full professor or associate professor.
- j.** In the Commission from paragraph h of this article, a member cannot be a person who is related by blood to the candidate defending the doctoral thesis (dissertation) in a direct line to any degree and in a lateral line up to the fourth degree, the spouse, or a person with whom lives in an extramarital union or a relative by marriage to the second degree.
- k.** The commission members from paragraph h of this article shall not be related by blood in the direct line to any degree and in the lateral line up to the fourth degree or be spouses, persons living in an extramarital union, or relatives by marriage to the second degree. With support from the mentor, the student prepares the PhD Thesis Proposal form, which includes a thesis plan outlining activities and deadlines. The thesis proposal should be approved in the Thesis Commission's first meeting. The candidate can request to change the mentor. In these cases, the program coordinator decides on such requests within 30 days.

Article 24. The Form and Content of the PhD Thesis

- a.** The PhD Thesis should represent a substantial body of work and demonstrate the candidate's expertise.
- b.** The language of the PhD Thesis is the teaching language of the program.
- c.** The PhD Thesis style is defined in the Rectorate's thesis guide and standard thesis writing template.
- d.** The structure of the PhD Thesis should contain a front page and acknowledgments. (if there are

any), abstract, foreword, content by chapters, conclusions, and bibliography.

- e. The Thesis Commission decides the minimum length of the PhD Thesis.
- f. The PhD Thesis shall include a written and signed declaration stating: “I certify that I am the original author of this work” and “The copyright is transferred to the University for educational and research purposes.”
- g. Students should have their work proofread by a licensed and authorized professional before submitting the completed master's thesis.
- h. The mentor submits a review report about the quality and validity of the thesis work and the thesis to the Commission for Evaluation of the Thesis. At the same time, the thesis will be on public display in the university library for seven days.
- i. Based on the Commission's or other parties' remarks, the mentor liaises with the candidate to consider the comments and re-submit the mentor’s report and thesis to the Commission with agreed revisions within 15 days.
- j. The Commission has 15 days to submit a final report to the program coordinator for approval or rejection. This report must include a printout from plagijat.mon.gov.mk and a report from similarity check programs like Turnitin, iThenticate, Unicheck, etc.
- k. The program coordinator determines the date of the defense, which must take place within 15 days from the approval date.
- l. The candidate is notified officially about the date of the PhD Thesis defense.
- m. The candidate will only be allowed to defend their PhD thesis if they publish two papers in a scientific publication.
- n. If the program coordinator rejects the Commission’s report, then the procedure starts from the beginning.

Article 25. Thesis Defense

- a. The candidate publicly defends the PhD Thesis in front of the Commission for Evaluation of the Thesis.
- b. The program coordinator prepares the date and place of the public defense, along with the candidate’s name and PhD Thesis topic, and publishes it for all university staff at least seven days before the defense.
- c. PhD Thesis defense can be conducted in these forms:
 - (1) With a physical presence on the university premises.
 - (2) Online.
 - (3) Mixed form (with physical presence and online).

The program coordinator decides the form of defense.

- d.** If, for objective reasons, only one member of the Commission for Evaluation of the Thesis cannot attend the defense, the public defense is legitimate (majority of voters). The presence of the mentor and the Commission President is obligatory. In case of a split or tied decision, another date for defense is determined with the presence of the full commission.
- e.** During public defense, the Commission members keep and sign official minutes.
- f.** The grading is done with the following two descriptions of grades:
 - (1) The candidate defended the PhD Thesis.
 - (2) The candidate did not defend the PhD Thesis.
- g.** Members of the Commission for Evaluation of the Thesis are prohibited from accepting gifts from candidates.
- h.** If the candidate does not successfully defend the thesis, the Commission reports this to the Program Coordinator and decides on a further procedure.
- i.** After the defense, the student makes the specified corrections and uploads the thesis to the University's electronic system for approval. After the supervisor and the program coordinator have approved the last uploaded copies, five bound copies of the approved thesis are delivered to the student affairs office. SAO will send three copies to the thesis committee, one to the archive, and one to the library. The approved version of the thesis was uploaded to the University's electronic system and digitally archived.

Article 26. Copyright

- a.** Before the approval of the thesis, the candidate signs a declaration in which s/he gives the copyright ownership to the University.
- b.** The University keeps the copyright ownership of the work mentioned above for academic and scientific purposes.

Article 27. Originality

- a.** The PhD Thesis should be the original work of the author. Any form of copying from published works of different authors, if not correctly cited, as described in relevant laws, is forbidden.
- b.** Suppose the PhD Thesis is proven to contain plagiarized material or is a plagiarism work. In that case, the student is subject to the Rulebook on Student Conduct and may be asked to leave the University immediately with no right of return.
- c.** If plagiarism is detected after the Commission approves the report, the mentor is called before a Disciplinary Commission to explain their failure to detect it.

Obligations

Article 28. Student Participation in Teaching and Learning

- a. The student must follow all forms of instruction set out in the syllabus.
- b. Participation in lectures and exercises is mandatory (except in small groups with a mentoring system) for at least 70% of the sessions.

Article 29. Attendance Obligation

- a. Students must attend at least 70 percent of lectures, exercises, and other activities.
- b. The attendance rule for failed courses is 50 percent of lectures, exercises, and other activities.
- c. The attendance rule for advanced courses is 50 percent of lectures, exercises, and other activities.
- d. Students are not obliged to attend a course if it is double repeated. This student is regarded as an Attendance-Free Student (AFS). However, they must register and pay for the related course.

Payment and Scholarship

Article 30. Education Fees

- a. The Uskup Foundation Board of Management shall determine the education fees for each academic year.
- b. Uskup Foundation Board of Management retains the responsibility to change the education fees.
- c. Students who fail to pay the education fee within defined periods are considered unregistered.
- d. Students who fail to pay the education fee within defined periods are not approved to enter Final and Makeup exams or thesis defense.
- e. The fee for the programs is charged for the standard three-year study period. If a student fails to complete the program in three years, they must pay an additional one-third of the program fee each year.

Other Aspects

Article 31. Rights and Responsibilities of the Students

- a. The rectorate published the “Document on Rights and Responsibilities of the Students,” which outlines students' rights and responsibilities.

Article 32. Losing a Diploma and Issuing a New One

- a. In the case of a loss of diploma, the student shall give an announcement in a Macedonian newspaper. In this case, the diploma reissued indicates being “re-issued due to loss.”

The student bears the administrative fees for newspaper publication and issuing the new diploma.

Article 33. Leaving University and Discontinuance of the Student Records

- a. Students may request a leave from the University at any time by submitting a written request to the Student Affairs Office.

- b.** The Terms and Conditions for Student Enrollment and Tuition Payment Obligations define the payment obligations of a student who wishes to withdraw from the University. Each student signs this document when they enroll at the University and fulfills their payment obligations.
- c.** Information regarding the leave date and the reasons is written on the back of the student's high school diploma, and a copy is retained. The original copy is returned to the student, while the retained copy is kept in the student's dossier.
- d.** If the student who has left IBU wishes to return and maintain his student status, they must comply with the criteria for applying again.

Article 34. Disciplinary Measures

- a.** Students' disciplinary measures are written in the "Student Disciplinary Rulebook".
- b.** The maximum timeframe for completing the second cycle of studies includes the expulsion period, during which the students were evicted from school for disciplinary reasons.
- c.** The student evicted from school for disciplinary reasons shall pay his/her semester fee, not considering the duration or starting date of the exclusion period.

Article 35. Final Provisions

- a.** This rulebook shall enter into force upon publication in the university bulletin and IBU website.
- b.** The changed rulebook on the conditions, criteria, and rules for enrolment and study in the second cycle will be implemented starting from the academic year 2024/2025.

Skopje, July 17, 2024

Senate of the International Balkan University
Prof. Dr. Kire Sharlamanov
President of Senate