

**INDEPENDENT KAZAKH AGENCY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN EDUCATION (IQAA)**



**STANDARDS FOR SPECIALIZED (PROGRAMME)
ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

GENERAL PROVISIONS

ASTANA 2015

PREFACE

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INTRODUCTION

The standards for accreditation of study programmes of higher education are designed in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education", revised Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), adopted at the Yerevan Conference of Ministers of Education of Bologna signatory states in May, 2015, as well as international practice of accreditation of study programmes of higher education.

The standards for accreditation of study programmes of higher education are based on universally accepted key concepts: responsibility of HEIs for the provision of quality education, consideration and protection of the interests of society, stakeholders and, most notably, students in receipt of high-quality educational services, compliance of programmes of higher education with social and professional competences, satisfying the educational needs of an individual and society in obtaining a profession.

There are two purposes in the focus of attention of the internal system of quality assurance of preparation of specialists in higher education institutions: transparency and enhancement.

In accordance with the revised ESG, the standards and criteria of the Agency have been focused at student-centred learning, new teaching methods that consider a student-centred approach, realization of a competence-based approach with the output in learning outcomes, which correspond to requirements of the National Qualifications Framework and professional standards. Attention has been reinforced at formation and development of a quality culture. A new standard on Public Information has been introduced, perhaps requiring bigger transparency of study programmes to a wider public and all stakeholders. A new in the standards is also introducing a continuous monitoring and periodic accreditation of programmes, where a focus is made on constant work of higher education institutions in quality assurance of their study programmes, and on presence of post-accreditation audit procedures. In the framework of a student-centred approach the activity of student support services is particularly emphasized in the standards.

In development of the standards for accreditation of study programmes of higher education, apart from the ESG, the followings have been taken into account: the policy and strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in higher education development, INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice, the experience of well-known foreign QA agencies (ABET, AQA, ASIIN, ACQUIN, AACSB, ATMAE, etc.) in terms of development and application of standards for accreditation of study programmes of higher education.

STANDARDS FOR SPECIALIZED (PROGRAMME) ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

General provisions

1. APPLICATION AREA

1.1 These standards are developed in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education" (Article 9-1, paragraph 3) and establish regulatory requirements for accreditation of study programmes of higher education and its procedure.

1.2 The standards define the basic principles and criteria for specialized accreditation.

1.3 These standards are used in the procedure of specialized (programme) accreditation of HEIs, regardless of their status, legal form of organization, form of ownership and subordination.

2. REGULATORY REFERENCES

These standards refer to the following normative regulations:

2.1 Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan "Kazakhstan's way - 2050: common aim, common interests, common future" - Astana, January 17, 2014.

2.2 Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan "Nurly Zhol - the path to the future" - Astana, November 11, 2014.

2.3 Strategic Plan of Development of Kazakhstan till 2020, approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 922 dated February 1, 2010.

2.4 State Programme of Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020, approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 1118 dated December 7, 2011.

2.5 Government Resolution No.130 dated February 11, 2011 "Action Plan for 2011-2015 on implementation of the State programme of education development in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020".

2.6 The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Education” dated July 27, 2007 No. 319-III (with amendments and additions as on 21.07.2015).

2.7 The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Technical Regulation” No. 603-II SAM dated November 9, 2004 (as amended on 16.02.2012).

2.8 Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated June 2, 2014 No.198 “On amendments and additions to the order of the Minister of Education and Science of RK dated April 20, 2011 No.152 «On approval of rules of the organization of the study process by credit technology of education”.

2.9 Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) (Revised) (Approved at the Yerevan Conference of Ministers of Education in May 14-15, 2015).

2.10 The ECTS Users’ Guide (the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) - Publications Office of the European Union, 2015, ISBN 978-92-79-43562-1 (Approved at the Yerevan Conference of Ministers of Education in May 14-15, 2015).

2.11 The State Obligatory Standard of Higher Education (Approved by the Resolution No.1080 of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, dated August 23, 2012).

2.12 The State Obligatory Standard of Postgraduate Education (Approved by the Resolution No.1080 of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, dated August 23, 2012).

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

In these standards the terms and definitions are used in accordance with the Laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education" and "On Technical Regulation", State Obligatory Standard of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Rules of the organization of the study process by credit technology of education.

In addition, the following definitions are used in these standards:

3.1 Accreditation of HEIs - procedure for recognition by the accreditation body the compliance of educational services with established accreditation standards (regulations), with the aim to provide objective information about their quality and confirm the existence of effective mechanisms for their promotion.

3.2 Specialized Accreditation (Programme Accreditation) - assessment of the quality of individual study programmes implemented by the educational institution.

3.3 Analysis - the process of identifying, gathering and preparing data for evaluation of educational objectives of the programme and achieved learning outcomes of students. An effective analysis uses appropriate direct, indirect, quantitative and qualitative parameters, suitable for measurable purposes or results.

3.4 The overarching framework of qualifications of the European Higher Education Area - the framework of qualifications, designed for higher education institutions in Europe and adopted at the Bergen Conference (2005), covering three consecutive cycles of higher education: the first cycle – Bachelor’s degree, the second cycle – Master’s degree and the third cycle - Doctoral studies (including a possibility of intermediate qualifications in the national contexts), generic Dublin descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges for the first and second cycles.

3.5 Double Diploma - the document on higher education, issued to the graduate of two (or more) partner institutions upon successful completion of the course of joint study programmes and awarding him/her a dual (joint) academic degree.

3.6 Descriptors of Levels / Qualifications - description of general for the specific level of education intended learning outcomes, that is, knowledge and understanding, ability to apply them in practice, ability to make judgments, and communication skills.

3.7 Dissertation, thesis / dissertation work - a written report on the results of independent research in a particular field of knowledge, submitted for public defense to the award of an academic Master’s or Doctoral degree.

3.8 Distance Learning Technologies (hereinafter - DLT) - learning technologies, implemented with the use of information and telecommunication tools in the mediated (distant) or not fully mediated interaction of students and teaching staff.

3.9 The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) - a pan-European body that disseminates information, promotes the implementation of best practices and innovative approaches in the field of quality assurance in higher education among European quality assurance agencies, public authorities and HEIs.

3.10 The European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) - the European association of higher education institutions that conducts a coherent and transparent policy in the field of higher education in the context of the Bologna reforms and defends the interests of HEIs.

3.11 The European University Association (EUA) - the association at the European university level with the purpose of conducting a constructive and coordinated policy in the field of higher education, ensuring active participation of universities in the Bologna process, providing support to HEIs in the protection of their autonomy, the right to self-governance, academic freedom in conducting educational activity and research.

3.12 The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) – a student-centred system based on workload of study programmes and a systematic way of describing a study programme by assigning credits to all of its components.

3.13 The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) – the educational area of the Bologna process member states that conduct a coherent and transparent policy in the field of higher education.

3.14 Quality in higher education - a multi-dimensional characteristic of higher education, covering the relevance of learning outcomes, training processes and institutional frameworks to the purposes and needs of the society, the state and the individual.

3.15 Competence - Based Approach - an approach to the design of learning outcomes based on competences.

3.16 Competence - a dynamic combination of characteristics (pertaining to knowledge and its application, skills, abilities, values and personal qualities), describing the learning outcomes of the study programme, i.e., what is needed to a graduate for an effective professional activity, social activity and personal development, what he/she is obliged to master and demonstrate.

3.17 Mobility of European students, teaching staff and researchers - a key principle of formation of the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area, providing multiple opportunities for free movement of European students, teaching staff and researchers in these areas in order to accumulate on a personal level academic and general cultural potential of development of national higher education systems and increase their impact on socio-economic development of their countries.

3.18 Module – a logically built, substantively and methodologically integral part of the educational process within a certain set of expected learning outcomes, expressed in terms of competences and characterized by difficulties in their achieving in credits.

3.19 Modularisation in education – a modular construction of the educational process, structuring the expected results of education and the content of study

programmes into separate *modules*, equipped with the characteristics of workload of acquiring them in credits, as well as technologies of learning, teaching, assessment, etc.

3.20 Lifelong learning - any form of education, vocational or general education at all levels, as well as continued after a break following the prior education.

3.21 Study Programme - the organizational and methodological document, structuring the content and scope of knowledge, forms of organization of the study process, the sequence and periods of mastering courses, modules, diagnostic tools of training success, certification, expected learning outcomes, including the formation of competences leading to attainment of an academic degree.

3.22 Educational Goals of the Programme - a set of expected results of the implementation of a study programme by a certain direction, level and profile of training of specialists with higher education.

3.23 Assessment / Evaluation - an interpretation of the data and evidence collected during the analysis. The assessment/evaluation determines the degree of achievement of the educational objectives of the programme, students' learning outcomes, and leads to decisions and actions regarding the improvement of the programme.

3.24 Policy in the Field of Quality Assurance - the main directions and objectives of the organization in terms of quality, approved by senior management on the basis of a thorough discussion among the staff.

A policy in quality assurance sets the direction of the organization development. In such a document, the organization's leadership publicly defines the basic priorities and values, which it will follow with regard to all its stakeholders (customers, employees, suppliers, society, etc.). This document additionally indicates what the leadership intends to do to implement the stated priorities and values.

3.25 Recognition of educational qualification - on the one hand, an official confirmation of the value of a foreign educational qualification by the competent authority, on the other hand, the positioning of a holder of a foreign qualification in the system of education or employment of the receiving side to access educational and/or professional activities.

3.26 Diploma Supplement (DS) - a pan-European standardized addition to the official document on higher education, which is used to describe the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies, successfully completed by the holder of the educational qualification.

3.27 Profile of Study - a set of basic common features, characteristics of the study programme, reflecting specific areas of higher education.

3.28 Site Visit of the External Expert Group - a component of the external evaluation, which is a common part of the accreditation process. The external reviewers-experts visit a HEI to check the materials of institution's self-evaluation, to interview faculty members, students, staff and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of services provided, as well as to propose recommendations for their improvement. The result of the site visit is the external review report.

3.29 The Process of Self-Evaluation - the process of internal evaluation conducted by a HEI on the basis of standards and criteria for specialized accreditation, which results in a self-evaluation report.

3.30 Learning Outcomes - a set of competences, expressing what a student will know, understand or be able to do upon completion of the learning process.

3.31 Joint degree - degree relating to the higher education qualification, assigned jointly by at least two higher education institutions, based on courses developed and/or provided jointly by those institutions, possibly in collaboration with other higher education institutions.

3.32 Social Dimension in Higher Education - a set of mechanisms for the implementation of the European Higher Education Area, which includes the process of access to higher education, counseling and informing students, providing students with material support and ensuring equal opportunities and social cohesion, which allows the majority of young people to achieve the highest level of education and maximally reveal their personal potential.

3.33 Strategy of Higher Education - defining the long-term development objectives of higher education and the circumstances for planning, taking action and allocation of resources necessary to achieve these goals.

3.34 Stakeholder - people, group of people or an institution interested in the results of decision-making in a certain field.

3.35 Student – a learner of a higher education institution in a Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral study programme.

3.36 Student-Centred Approach in Education - a fundamental principle of the Bologna reforms in higher education, involving a shift of emphasis in the educational process from teaching (as a main role of teaching staff in "translation" of knowledge) to learning (as an educational activity of students).

3.37 Work Load - a quantitative measure of learning activities of students in ECTS credits, necessary for the successful achievement of the expected learning outcomes.

3.38 Employability - a set of competences, knowledge, abilities/skills, understanding and personal characteristics, which provides graduates with career prospects in their chosen profession and contributes to the development of economy and society.

3.39 Formal, non-formal and informal education/learning:

Formal education - acquisition of an approved study programme on the basis of an educational institution.

Non-formal learning - learning, carried out during a planned activity that involves so-called “semi-structured” learning that occurs during daily working situations, containing a training component.

Informal learning – learning resulting from the course of everyday life: at work, in the family, etc.

The European Ministerial Conference in Bergen (2005) recommended to officially recognize the status of non-formal and informal learning.

4. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

The following abbreviations and acronyms are used in these standards:

HEI- higher education institution;

SOSE - State Obligatory Standard of Education;

DET - distance education technologies;

MES RK - Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan;

SRW – scientific research work;

IQAA - Independent Kazakh Agency for Quality Assurance in Education.

SP- study programme

5. GENERAL PROVISIONS

5.1 Accreditation of a study programme is the official expertise carried out by the accreditation agency to define compliance of training in a study programme according to adopted standards and requirements. Accreditation should recognize (or not recognize) that a study programme meets the standards.

5.2 Accreditation is aimed at quality assurance, integrity and reliability of an educational institution by an accredited specialty. It should build trust on the part of prospective students and their parents, the recognition of the validity of gained education by graduates on the part of employers.

5.3 The main objectives of the specialized (programme) accreditation are:

- a) to ensure that graduates of accredited study programmes gain qualifications required for practicing a profession;
- b) to promote further improvement and continuous progress of the quality of training of students;
- c) to support constant innovation in the implementation of study programmes;
- d) to pursue transparency of comparable study programmes.

5.4 The subject of specialized (programme) accreditation is both independent study programmes of HEIs and interconnected three and two cycled study programmes (Bachelor's-Master's, Bachelor's-Master's-Doctoral programme). Several study programmes from a common subject area can be accredited within one cluster, whereas a decision on accreditation is taken by each study programme separately. Likewise, a number of study programmes of the same level of education for training specialists of the same direction can be accredited in the framework of one external review, whereas a decision on accreditation is taken by each study programme separately.

5.5 The focus of specialized accreditation is directed at the content side of the study process: fundamental knowledge, professional knowledge, practical skills, and use of information technologies.

5.6 Accreditation of study programmes evaluates the following: a) availability of clearly defined study programme aims consistent with the mission of the educational institution and the requirements of stakeholders; b) availability of the system used for assessment of the achieved outcomes; c) availability of a system for continuous improvement of study programmes; d) availability of necessary resources to implement the programmes, learning outcomes.

5.7 Specialized (programme) accreditation is carried out using an arsenal of assessment tools, such as assessment of quantitative indicators of the study programme implementation; assessment of a self-control system; questionnaire; assessment of educational process management in the framework of the programme under accreditation; analysis of opportunities (SWOT analysis); assessment of resources (material and technical, human, financial); assessment of the reporting system.

5.8 The procedure of IQAA specialized accreditation is universal for accreditation of any study programme.

6. PRINCIPLES OF SPECIALIZED (PROGRAMME) ACCREDITATION

6.1 Specialized (programme) accreditation is based on the following principles:

- a) voluntariness of specialized accreditation procedure, which is held at the request of an educational institution;
- b) integrity and transparency of internal and external evaluation, ensuring access to information for the participants of the conducted process of accreditation;
- c) the objectivity and independence of the internal and external evaluation;
- d) the responsibility of educational institutions: they have a primary responsibility for the quality of higher education.

6.2 External evaluation of study programmes is conducted independently from any third parties (public authorities, HEIs and non-governmental organizations).

6.3 Public information in the country and abroad on the accredited programmes is carried out by providing information to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan and publication of the information on the website of the Agency.

7. OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF SPECIALIZED (PROGRAMME) ACCREDITATION

7.1 The objectives of specialized (programme) accreditation are:

- quality assurance of the study programme;
- providing support to prospective students in choosing a study programme;
- providing information about the study programme to a wider public;
- establishment of a system of collective self-regulation to maintain the balance between the rights of the study programme on academic freedom and responsibility to the state and society;
- assistance in securing international recognition of Kazakhstani diplomas issued by accredited specialties;
- receiving an independent evaluation of the quality of study programmes and training of specialists by the HEI, as well as obtaining recommendations for improvement of its study programmes.

7.2 Functions of the programme accreditation are:

- a highly qualified expertise of quality and content parameters of education;
- disclosure of the educational potential of the programme that guarantees high standards to consumers and investors;
- evaluation of a study programme in terms of its status, determination of the degree of compliance with the programme requirements, established by the accreditation body and professional associations of employers;
- improvement of HEI's efficient application of financial and other resources, allocated by the state and society, due to their rational redistribution in favor of the accredited specialties and programmes.

7.3 Programme accreditation allows government bodies to make appropriate decisions to support the study programme and assists employers and organizations to invest in the study programme.

8. STAGES AND PROCEDURES OF SPECIALIZED (PROGRAMME) ACCREDITATION

8.1 Specialized accreditation procedure is developed in accordance with the European standards and guidelines for quality assurance (ESG), leading foreign practice (guides) and national standards.

8.2 The accreditation procedure includes the following stages:

Stage 1

- 1) HEI applies for Agency accreditation with a brief description of HEI and a study programme;
- 2) Agency and the HEI sign a contract on accreditation of the study programme. The contract specifies the rights and obligations of the parties, the cost of the procedure, and terms of conducting the accreditation procedure;
- 3) HEI conducts a self-evaluation process, writes a self-evaluation report in accordance with the IQAA standards and criteria;
- 4) HEI presents the first edition of the self- evaluation report with appendices for the expertise by the Agency at least 3 months prior to the external review in an electronic format with scanned signatures of the Rector and members of the working groups and the official stamp;
- 5) HEI makes amendments to the self-evaluation report on the basis of the received comments and remarks and presents the self-evaluation report in an electronic format in three languages: state, Russian and English;
- 6) HEI presents a final edition of the self-evaluation report not later than 1,5-1 month prior to the external review. The report should be both in an electronic format in three languages with signatures and stamp, and in a paper format with the Rector's signature and official stamp, signatures of the working groups' members on the preparation of the self-evaluation report, in one copy (in Kazakh and Russian languages), including appendices.

Stage 2

- 7) Regulation of the expert group's work is carried out according to the standards and guidelines for external evaluation, approved by the Agency;
- 8) The Agency forms a competent group of experts, which consists of representatives of the academic community of Kazakhstan, an employer, a student and an international expert;

- 9) The composition of the expert group is reported to the applicant HEI 1-2 months prior to an external review. If there arise any suspicions of bias of the reviewers, HEI has the right to refer to the Agency for replacement of the expert, enclosing a written reasoned explanation;
- 10) The expert group studies the self-evaluation materials, visits the HEI and conducts an external review, generates a report on the external evaluation and hands it to the Agency;
- 11) The external review of HEI is carried out within 2-3 days;
- 12) External experts form the report and recommendations within no longer than two weeks since the start of the external review, then the chairman or secretary of the expert group sends it to the Agency;
- 13) IQAA forwards the expert group's report to the HEI for elimination of small inaccuracies, if there are any;
- 14) The HEI, if necessary, has the right to make minor adjustments to the final report of the external review in case of any discrepancies, after communication of the changes with the chairman of the expert group within one week after receipt of the report.

Stage 3

- 15) After studying the self-evaluation materials and the external review report, the Agency prepares a conclusion for the Accreditation Council.
- 16) The Accreditation Council makes a decision.

9. DECISION MAKING OF THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

9.1 Decision making of the Accreditation Council is based on the self-evaluation report, the review report of the external experts, the conclusion of the Agency, and the Regulation on decision making on accreditation of study programmes.

9.2 A positive report of the expert group and the conclusion of the Agency are an obligatory prerequisite for a positive decision of the Accreditation Council.

9.3 The Accreditation Council makes one of the following decisions:

- Accreditation for the full term (5 years);
- Accreditation with a condition for a period up to 3 years (partial accreditation);
- Denial of accreditation.

9.4 In case of a positive decision of the Accreditation Council on accreditation, IQAA issues the educational institution a certificate of specialized (programme) accreditation for a period of five years.

9.5 In the event of accreditation with the condition, in 1-3 years the Agency representatives conduct a revision on the question of eliminating the remarks (site visit to the educational institution). After confirmation of eliminating the remarks the accreditation validity period is extended to 5 years (in conjunction with the term of accreditation with the condition). The costs of an additional revision shall be covered by the educational institution concerned.

9.6 In case of a positive decision, the decision on accreditation of HEI is forwarded to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan and is published on the website of the Agency www.iqaa.kz.

9.7 In the event of a negative decision, the HEI can re-apply for accreditation, but not earlier than one year after receiving a negative decision.

9.8 In case of a positive decision, HEIs should conduct a constant monitoring and periodic review of study programmes for their enhancement, in accordance with the Standard 8.

10. STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION

STANDARD 1. AIMS OF STUDY PROGRAMMES AND POLICY IN THE FIELD OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

1.1 General provisions

1.1.1 Study programmes should be implemented in accordance with the mission and strategy of development of the HEI, define the objectives of studies, competences and qualification of a future specialist, which students should acquire during the study period.

1.1.2 Policy in the field of quality assurance of study programmes, as part of a policy in quality assurance of the HEI, should have an official status and be available to all participants of the study process and stakeholders.

1.1.3 Policy in the field of quality assurance of study programmes is implemented at all levels of an educational institution (rectorate, dean's offices, schools, departments) to develop a culture of quality. All team members, including students, ensuring the implementation of study programmes, should take part in the development of programmes and take responsibility for their quality.

1.2 Assessment criteria

1.2.1 The availability of appropriateness of the study programme aims to the mission, strategic plan, aims and objectives of the HEI and satisfying students' needs in acquiring a relevant qualification and competences.

1.2.2 Forming the aims of study programmes in light of the development of the economy and labor market needs of the region and the country with an emphasis on student-centred learning, teaching and assessment.

1.2.3 The procedure for the adoption and approval of the HEI policy on quality assurance. Compliance of study programmes with regulatory requirements adopted at the national level and the SOSE requirements.

1.2.4 Participation of the administration, faculty and students in the creation and support of the policy of quality assurance of study programmes: responsibilities of Departments, academic units, Faculties (schools) and other structural units. Participation of external stakeholders in the implementation of the policy of quality assurance of study programmes.

1.2.5 A systematic monitoring, performance evaluation, revision of the policy in the field of quality assurance of study programmes on the basis of information management, depending on changing conditions and environment (labor market, partners, and the world).

1.2.6 The degree of interaction between teaching, research and learning in the policy of quality assurance of study programmes.

1.2.7 Efficiency and systematic application of evaluation results to improve and adjust the long-term directions of study programmes, setting new goals according to changes in external environment.

1.2.8 Measures for maintaining academic integrity and academic freedom, protection from any form of intolerance and discrimination against students, teaching staff or personnel.

1.2.9 Anti-corruption policy of HEI as an important element in the policy of quality assurance of study programmes. Anti-corruption measures; availability of the administration from HEI and Faculty for teaching staff and students; and the flexibility to respond to requests.

STANDARD 2. DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL OF STUDY PROGRAMMES AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

2.1 General provisions

2.1.1 HEI should have rules for development and approval of study programmes, including processes of administration, implementation and evaluation of their effectiveness.

2.1.2 Study programmes at each level of education should be developed in accordance with the national qualifications systems and reflect the requirements of the professional standard of the relevant industry or field of activity.

2.1.3 The structure of the study programmes, based on a modular principle, should include learning outcomes and competences: key and professional. In this case, credits, competences and learning outcomes, based on Dublin descriptors, should be interlinked, taking into account ECTS and qualifications frameworks of the EHEA.

2.1.4 The content of study programmes should be focused on credit technology of education and include innovative (distance, interactive, etc.) forms of education, as well as various categories of students, including inclusive education.

2.1.5 HEI should effectively manage information based on continuous monitoring, data collection, analysis and use of the information received.

2.2 Assessment criteria

2.2.1 Availability of internal rules of development and approval of study programmes at HEI, compliance with their regulations.

2.2.2 Approval of the structure of study programmes and their periods of study by levels of education.

2.2.3 Development of the content of study programmes according to levels of education. Focus on clearly expected learning outcomes: competences, competency and practice-orientation in study programmes, in line with Dublin descriptors.

2.2.4 The use of technology of modular learning in the development of study programmes; development of modular study programmes.

2.2.5 Compliance of the content of study programmes in its mandatory component with the requirements of the relevant level of SOSE and the model curriculum.

2.2.6 Compliance of the structure and content of working curricula with model curricula and the catalogue of elective disciplines.

2.2.7 Implementation of professional practice in the study programmes: types, scope (credits), the base, organization, results, and effectiveness.

2.2.8 Availability of components, which contribute to the personal development of Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral students and develop their professional competences and creativity, in the study programmes.

2.2.9 Study and methodological support of study programmes.

2.2.10 The need for study programmes on the part of students and the labor market. A list of disciplines included in the curriculum by proposals of employers. Involvement of students in the process of developing study programmes.

2.2.11 Consistency of study programmes with the National Qualifications Framework and professional standards. Availability of external expertise and peer review in the approval of study programmes.

2.2.12 The level and quality of implementation and operation of the credit system of education. The use of ECTS credits for:

a) ensuring the transfer of achieved credits on disciplines from one HEI to another (transfer function);

b) determining the position of the student in relation to his/her educational trajectory, first of all, to the possibility of continuing education and transition to the next level of education (cumulative function).

2.2.13 The extent of considering the students' workload of all kinds of activities provided in the curriculum, including classroom and self-study, internships, practice, etc. Evaluation of orientation of study programmes on promoting student performance and progress.

2.2.14 Opportunities of HEI to conduct study programmes using distance learning technologies.

2.2.15 Availability of an effective and continuous mechanism for internal assessment of quality and expertise of study programmes, providing control of the implementation of the curriculum and set objectives, as well as feedback for their improvement, which includes an assessment of:

- content of study programmes in the light of the latest research in the disciplines, thereby ensuring that the programmes are up to date;
- effectiveness of student assessment procedures;
- students' expectations and satisfaction with respect to the study programme.

2.2.16 HEI conducts a regular assessment and revision of study programmes involving students, staff and other stakeholders on the basis of systematic collection,

analysis, and information management, which results in adaptation of the programmes to ensure their relevance. The revised details of the study programmes are published.

Thereby, HEIs should consider the following indicators:

- information on the student body;
- the level of academic performance, student achievement and dropout;
- students' satisfaction with the implementation of programmes;
- availability of educational resources and support services for students;
- employability of graduates;
- key performance indicators of the HEI.

2.2.17 HEI demonstrates the existence of a possibility of continuing education on study programmes of postgraduate and additional professional education.

2.1.18 HEI provides evidence that the qualification obtained as a result of acquiring a study programme is clearly explained in detail to students and refers to the appropriate level of the National Qualifications Framework.

STANDARD 3.

STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

3.1 General provisions

3.1.1 A student is the main participant in the implementation of study programmes, therefore his/her interests are taken as the first priority while ensuring the quality of the study process, and training needs to be student-centred.

3.1.2 Teaching methods in HEI, through which the programmes are implemented, should encourage students to play an active role in the study process.

3.1.3 The process of assessment of learning outcomes should reflect the efficiency of the organization of student-centred learning.

3.2 Assessment criteria

3.2.2 In implementation of student-centred learning and teaching HEIs should ensure:

- a) respect and attention in relation to various groups of students and their needs;
- b) the provision of flexible learning paths;
- c) the use of various teaching methods and forms of learning, if necessary;
- d) regular evaluation and correction of forms of learning and teaching methods;
- e) promoting students' autonomy with the parallel provision of necessary guidance and support from the teaching staff;

f) manifestation of mutual respect in “student-teaching staff” relations.

3.2.3 Consideration of student’s characteristics in the study process, such as an individuality, striving for greater freedom, personal and professional growth, self-reliance, and self-esteem.

3.2.4 Formation of student workload based on his/her individual abilities and capabilities. Completeness of reflection of all components and elements of study programmes by level of education in a student’s individual curriculum.

3.2.5 Availability of a clear procedure for registration on academic disciplines, the practice of its implementation and compliance.

3.2.6 Assessment of educational achievements and the level of training of students. The applied system for assessment of knowledge, skills and competences; compliance of this system with the accepted practice at the national level. Policy and procedures of assessment, transparency and accessibility.

3.2.7 Awareness of students about the criteria used for their assessment, exams and other forms of control. The approved standardized tests or questions by disciplines of study programmes of HEI.

3.2.8 Acquiring of study programmes in accordance with regulatory requirements. The study load of students by level of education. Contact load, independent work of students, including teacher-led student work by education level.

3.2.9 Availability of an electronic database of academic achievements of every student, conducting systematic data collection, monitoring and management of information on the progress of students.

3.2.10 Availability of the internal monitoring of quality of students’ knowledge, which applies:

- a) criteria and methods of assessment; their transparency, objectivity and fairness;
- b) analysis of achieved learning outcomes, their comparison with the expected learning outcomes; taking management decisions;
- c) participation in the examination procedures of more than one teaching staff;
- d) the use of mitigating circumstances in the rules of assessment, if there are any;
- e) compliance with the regulations adopted at the national level in the assessment procedures.

3.2.11 HEI demonstrates the presence of the official procedure for consideration of student’s complaints / appeals.

3.2.12 Compliance with the Code of Honor by students and “zero tolerance” to any kind of dishonest attitude to learning, studies, and receiving marks.

3.2.13 The results of the current control and intermediate attestation of students. Procedures for boundary control of students’ knowledge.

3.2.14 Participation of students in research, availability and effectiveness of international exchanges and internships.

3.2.15 Conduct of periodic analysis of learning outcomes achieved in relation to the expected learning outcomes.

3.2.16 Compliance with the rules of academic transfer, recovery, and provision of an academic leave.

3.2.17 Satisfaction of students with the quality of educational services (a systematic survey).

STANDARD 4.

ADMISSION OF STUDENTS, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION

4.1 General provisions

4.1.1 HEIs should apply the approved and published rules that cover all periods of the student “life cycle”: conditions of admission, the orientation to enroll into the higher education institution, assessment criteria and conditions for transfer from one year of study to another, tools for collection, monitoring and management of information on the progress of students, obtaining documentation on the award of the degree and/or qualification.

4.1.2 Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for progress assurance, as well as student mobility. Procedures for the recognition should be based on:

- institutional practice of recognition in accordance with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention;
- cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and national centers ENIC / NARIC to provide coherent recognition across the country.

4.2 Assessment criteria

4.2.1 Availability of the system of professional guidance, aimed at training and selection of “own” applicant, who deliberately chooses the study programme as a result of many years of work with him/her of the school and/or HEI.

4.2.2 Admission to higher education on the basis of well-developed criteria that are available to students, transparent, and have a description of the conditions of learning opportunities and future employment opportunities of the programmes. Availability of conditions to ensure the stability of student enrollment in study programmes.

4.2.3 Availability of orientation procedures for the first-year students in HEI.

4.2.4 Availability of options for a quick adaptation of exchange students from other HEIs to the conditions of receiving HEI and its learning environment.

4.2.5 The presence of an electronic database of the student body by types of study programmes and levels of education. Policy and marketing of HEI to attract the required number of students, conditions of admission and special conditions of enrollment to study programmes (knowledge of a foreign language, professional experience, etc.).

4.2.6 Availability of monitoring of student progress and achievements in the evaluation of learning outcomes, performance and defense of diploma works and projects, Master’s and Doctoral theses in HEI.

4.2.7 Availability of statistical data on student performance, graduates, with different levels of GPA, the implementation and defense of diploma works (projects), Master’s and Doctoral theses, the results of graduates’ employment, including employment in specialty, after completion of the study programmes; satisfaction of employers with the quality of training of graduates, etc.

4.2.8 Learning outcomes and competences should be described not only on the qualification level, but also at the level of the individual modules and each academic discipline.

4.2.9 Implementation of analysis and assessment of the main indicators of learning outcomes in HEI:

- a) the level of requirements for the competitive selection of applicants;
- b) the degree of preparedness of graduates to meet the requirements of SOSE;
- c) the degree of demand for graduates in the labor market;
- d) reviews of employers.

4.2.10 Provision of students with documents of the qualification awarded, including the achieved learning outcomes.

4.2.11 Provision of graduates with a Diploma Supplement in accordance with European standards, in the context, level, content and status of training, acquired and successfully completed, taking into account the individual trajectory and the mobility of students.

4.2.12 Availability of the standardized methods for ongoing monitoring and ensuring the results, in particular, the method of questioning for each discipline by using standardized questionnaires, in which students are encouraged to give their independent assessment.

4.2.13 Availability of the work to assess the extent of borrowing by students in performing course works, diploma works and projects, Master's and Doctoral theses (the system of checking on the programme "Anti-plagiarism" and others) in HEI.

4.2.14 The development of "post diploma guidance" (verification stage), the search for effective ways to interact with graduates and employers in improving the quality of training.

4.2.15 Availability of the practice of recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, which is based on:

- ensuring action in accordance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention;
- cooperation with other HEIs and quality assurance agencies, national centers ENIC /NARIC to ensure consistent recognition.

STANDARD 5. TEACHING STAFF

5.1 General provisions

5.1.1 The role of teaching staff is critical in high-quality education. Therefore, HEIs should be objective and transparent in hiring process, professional growth and development of the teaching staff.

5.1.2 Teaching staff should have complete knowledge and understanding of the subject taught, the necessary skills and experience to effectively transfer knowledge to students as part of the study process.

5.1.3 HEIs have the primary responsibility for the quality of their staff and provision of enabling environment for their activities.

5.2 Assessment criteria

5.2.1 Personnel policy of HEI, which reflects the institutional arrangements in relation to the faculty and staff (recruitment, promotion, motivation, reduction, layoff, rights and responsibilities, job descriptions), its availability for teaching staff and personnel.

5.2.2 Indicators for the qualitative composition of teaching staff, the categories of teaching staff (full-time, part-time) in the last 5 years;

5.2.3 Availability of the teaching staff in accordance with the qualification requirements for the licensing of educational activities. Implementation of national regulatory requirements for teaching staff under the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Education”.

5.2.4 Availability of appropriate teaching staff by the profile of study programmes: appropriate basic education, code of scientific degree and academic title, professional development courses of no less than 6 months or practice experience in the modern (advanced) enterprises.

The institution shall ensure qualification level of the teaching staff in accordance with their positions, a high level of research training in a particular field of knowledge.

5.2.5 The planning of the teaching staff’s activity of HEI should be based on the individual teaching staff’s working plan drawn up for each academic year.

Availability of information on workload of the teaching staff in the frame of study programmes, allocation of disciplines to departments.

5.2.6 Availability of an individual working plan for teaching staff and its structure. The level of preparation of individual working plans and reports of teaching staff, including academic, methodical, research, and educational work.

5.2.7 The activities of teaching staff: assessment of the balance between the academic, research, methodical, organizational and educational activities of teaching staff. Optimal allocation of teaching load.

5.2.8 The contribution of teaching staff in improving study programmes, determining educational goals and outcomes, increasing the efficiency of learning.

5.2.9 The degree of involvement of teaching staff in the internal system of quality assurance.

5.2.10 The results of the systematic evaluation of competence of teaching staff by the HEI’s administration, evaluation of teaching quality efficiency (open classes, reciprocal visiting of classes, questionnaires of students and colleagues, etc.)

5.2.11 Availability of training, professional development and promotion of teaching staff for their high pedagogical skills, achievements in research and dedication to work.

5.2.12 Publications of teaching staff in foreign and national academic journals, implementation of research results in the study process. Publications with impact factor, citation of publications.

5.2.13 The use of advanced pedagogical methods of learning and innovation by teaching staff, introduction of research results in the study process, where possible.

5.2.14 Consideration of academic integrity of teaching staff and personnel, following the Code of Honor of HEI's teaching staff.

5.2.15 Availability of invited highly skilled professionals from leading organizations and industry enterprises, besides full-time teaching staff of the study programmes.

STANDARD 6. LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

6.1 General provisions

6.1.1 HEIs should ensure that the resources used for the organization of the study process are adequate and meet the requirements of the realized study programmes. The necessary resources should be easily accessible to all students and teaching staff, who need to be informed of their location.

6.1.2 Educational environment: material and technical resources, financing, training and laboratory facilities, library fund, informational provision should be focused on the successful implementation of study programmes.

6.1.3 The financial policy of HEI should be aimed at maintaining the quality of study programmes. The budget of HEI should be sufficient and fully ensure the needs of its study programmes.

6.2 Assessment criteria

6.2.1 Availability of student support services in the implementation of their educational, personal and career needs: Office of the Registrar, counseling service, library, information and research centers, student residencies, dining rooms and canteens, medical centers, gyms, and clubs.

6.2.2. Availability of structural units and student support services that will assist students in acquisition of study programmes, where the necessary assistance is provided by qualified advisors, personal tutors, and consultants.

6.2.3 Availability of services to help students to perform academic mobility (internal and external) for the acquisition of additional experience and competence in the form of credits in HEIs of the country and abroad. Availability of developed admission procedures of students from other HEIs, recognition and transfer of credits, acquired in the course of the academic mobility.

6.2.4 The availability of modern tools, equipment, classrooms, and laboratories, their accessibility and serviceability; maintaining and updating the material and laboratory facilities.

6.2.5 Information support should meet the requirements of the study programme; the library should contain all the necessary teaching materials: academic, technical, reference and general literature, various periodicals.

6.2.6 Uniform system of library and information services, purchase of study and methodological literature at the request of Departments and Faculties, the amount of funds allocated for the purchase of literature.

6.2.7 Availability of an electronic library catalogue to search for the required literature and providing access to electronic versions of certain textbooks and study and methodological materials.

6.2.8 Availability of academic, methodological and scientific literature fund on general, fundamental and core disciplines of study programmes on paper and electronic media; renewability of literature funds in accordance with the norms established by the qualification requirements for licensing.

6.2.9 Modern computer classes: the possibility to use them by students and teaching staff with access to information resources (local area network, the Internet), constant updating, improving and expanding the information base.

6.2.10 Availability of single information management system for students and teaching staff (for example, website-based) in all study programmes, availability of Wi-Fi points to support student access to the Internet in places convenient for students, teaching staff and personnel. Student support access to modern electronic databases of HEI, including to foreign databases (Scopus, Thomson Reuters, etc.).

6.2.11 Qualification of support service staff matches the interests and needs of students.

6.2.12 Support for students, who have difficulties in studies, underachievement in acquiring the study programme due to various reasons, as well as students with a desire to learn the study programme more in-depth, achievement of additional credits during a summer semester and academic mobility period.

6.2.13 Consideration of the needs of different groups of students (working adults, external students, foreign students and students with disabilities).

6.2.14 Constant updating and expansion of the material and technical base with modern equipment for study programmes.

6.2.15 Adequate funding of study programmes, at the expense of both budget financing and revenues from the provision of paid educational services, performing research or other activities that do not contradict the legislation.

6.2.16 Dynamics of funds allocated for the purchase of laboratory equipment, textbooks, periodicals, information resources and computers.

STANDARD 7. PUBLIC INFORMATION

7.1 General provisions

7.1.1 HEIs are required to publish detailed information on study programmes, which should be clear, accurate, objective, relevant and accessible.

7.1.2 Information on the study programmes should be useful for applicants, students, graduates, and all other stakeholders.

7.2 Assessment criteria

7.2.1 Availability of information on study programmes and expected learning outcomes of the programme.

7.2.2 Publication of information about the study programmes, the number of students enrolled, and the teaching staff on the HEI's website, portal, information boards, and leaflets.

7.2.3 Information on the awarded academic degree and qualification, teaching procedures used, assessment criteria, the percentage of achievement, as well as information about graduates and their employment opportunities.

STANDARD 8.
CONTINUOUS MONITORING AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF STUDY PROGRAMMES, PERIODIC ACCREDITATION

8.1 General provisions

8.1.1 HEIs should carry out continuous monitoring and periodic review of their study programmes for their improvement.

8.1.2 Regular monitoring, analysis and revision of study programmes are aimed at ensuring the provision of services at the required level and the creation of a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

8.1.3 The results of continuous monitoring and periodic review of study programmes should be communicated to all stakeholders.

8.1.4 HEIs should regularly undergo the process of external quality assurance (accreditation) of study programmes in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines.

8.2 Assessment criteria

8.2.1 Availability of the latest achievements on specific disciplines in the study programmes, updating disciplines and their content.

8.2.2 Compliance of study programmes and disciplines with the changing needs of the labor market, society and employers.

8.2.3 Assessment of student workload, promotion and completion of study programmes.

8.2.4 The effectiveness of assessment procedures for students.

8.2.5 Student expectations, needs and satisfaction with study programmes.

8.2.6 Educational environment and support services, their compliance with the aims of the study programmes.

8.2.7 Involvement of students and other stakeholders to evaluation and revision of study programmes on a regular basis.

8.2.8 Analysis of information on study programmes and any adjustments to ensure their relevance.

8.2.9 Publication of the revised requirements to study programmes in open access.

8.2.10 HEIs should undergo an annual post-accreditation monitoring to assess the changes in their internal systems of quality assurance.

8.2.11 In accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines and the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Education”, HEIs on a regular basis, every five years, should undergo the process of external evaluation - accreditation of study programmes.

11. PROCEDURE ON DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL AND VALIDITY PERIOD OF STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

11.1 Amendments and additions to the present standards for accreditation of study programmes of higher and postgraduate education are made by IQAA with a view to further improve and align them with the educational policies pursued by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the activities of higher education institutions and the European Standards and Guidelines.

11.2 In case of initiating amendments and additions to the standards and criteria for accreditation, the proposals and observations should be sent to IQAA.

11.3 After expertise of the proposals and observations, conducted by IQAA experts, and approval by the Accreditation Council of the Agency, IQAA makes amendments and additions.

11.4 The revised standards and criteria should be published and shared at the Agency’s website.