

**INDEPENDENT KAZAKH AGENCY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN  
EDUCATION**



**THEMATIC ANALYSIS**

**ANALYSIS OF THE REPORTS ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
INSTITUTION REVIEWS:**

**KEY REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**



**ASTANA 2017**

**Aliya Assylbekova**  
**Zamira Toiganbayeva**  
**Lyudmila Kovaleva**

**“Analysis of the reports on higher education institution reviews: key remarks and recommendations”.**

I. Introduction.....	3
II. Methodology.....	4
2.1 The research design.....	4
2.2 Sample.....	4
III. Systematization of trends on remarks and recommendations developed by external review teams.....	5
3.1 Findings and analysis.....	5
IV. Conclusion .....	15
Appendix 1 .....	17
Appendix 2 .....	19

## I. Introduction

According to the standard 2.6 “Report” of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), the external review report is the basis for the further improvement of the activities of higher education institutions (HEIs) and one of the tools for informing the public about the activities of the institution. In this case, reports on external visits, regardless of the results of accreditation, should be published on the website of quality assurance agencies.

The structure of external review reports should be clear and contain

- description of the context in which the HEIs operate
- description of the individual procedures of the external review, particularly the experts engaged.
- evidence, analysis and findings
- conclusions
- examples of good practices in place in HEIs
- recommendations for follow-up actions<sup>1</sup>.

All above provisions are reflected in practice and in the documentation of the Independent Kazakh Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (IQAA), in particular, in the procedures on drafting the external review report. It is a source of information on the results of the evaluation of HEIs and study programs, main trends and good practices in higher education, which is of value both for HEIs, students, their parents, and the community in general.

In this regard, we carried out a thematic analysis aimed at systematizing and analyzing the trends on remarks and recommendations reflected in the external review reports. Additionally the purpose of the paper is to inform the public on the results of the analysis, thereby contributing to the improvement of the quality of HEIs of Kazakhstan. Further this analysis can be used by the agency in training of the experts and improvement of the external evaluation procedures. The thematic analysis reviews the reports of external review of HEIs, conducted by experts team of the IQAA in 2015 and 2016, in line with the standards and criteria for institutional accreditation, developed by the agency in 2015 according to a new edition of the ESG.

---

<sup>1</sup> Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). (2015). Brussels, Belgium [http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG\\_2015.pdf](http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf) p.20.

## **II. Methodology**

### **2.1 The research design**

The purpose of the thematic analysis is to systematize, analyze the trends of remarks and recommendations derived from reports on external review and inform the public about the results of the analysis, thereby contributing to the improvement of the quality of Kazakhstani HEIs` activity.

To analyze reports on external review, a deductive qualitative research method, a thematic analysis was used, with the use of which an empirical study of individual elements of the text, codes, and categorization was carried out. Systematic segmentation of the text allowed to employ the frequency in the identification of codes.

The categories and subcategories have been systematized under the already existing themes of 9 standards of institutional accreditation.

To study the common trends, differences and cause-effect relationships, a codebook was developed by segmenting and coding the text. As the text was studied, new information was identified and analyzed, the corresponding changes were made to the codebook.

### **2.2 Sample**

The thematic analysis reviews the reports of external review of HEIs, conducted by experts team of the IQAA in 2015 and 2016, in line with the standards and criteria for institutional accreditation, developed by the agency in 2015 according to a new edition of the ESG:

1. Kazakh - Russian Medical University
2. Kazakhstan's Medical University «KSPH»
3. Ekibastuz Engineering and Technical Institute named after Academician K. Satpayev
4. Kazakh University of Technology and Business
5. K.I.Satpayev Kazakh National Research Technical University
6. Eurasian Academy of Law named after D.A. Kunayev
7. Central Kazakhstan Academy
8. Syrdariya University
9. Kazakh University of Railways
10. Zhezkazgan University named after O.A. Baikonurov
11. Eurasian Humanities Institute
12. Kazakhstan Engineering and Technology University  
Taraz Innovative and Humanitarian University

Additionally the reports of external review of the following reaccredited HEIs were considered:

1. Kazakh - British Technical University

2. Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan
3. Kostanay State Pedagogical Institute
4. Academician Zulkarnay Aldamjar Kostanay Social Technical University
5. University of International Business

**Table 1**

**The number of institutions accredited in line with the new standards of the IQAA for institutional accreditation in the period 2015 - 2016 (People).**

Year of the audit	%	The number of institutions
2015	11,1%	2
2016	88,9%	16
Total		18

### **III. Systematization of trends on remarks and recommendations developed by external review teams**

**3.1 Findings and analysis.** This chapter provides an analysis of frequently observed remarks and recommendations that were developed by expert that participated in audits of HEIs from the sample. In total, 62 recommendations and 132 remarks were analyzed, which were broken down into 304 and 17 categories respectively.

For the practical use of institutions in Appendix 2, the trends on remarks and recommendations on standards for institutional accreditation are systematized.

The analysis of the remarks and recommendations derived from the external review reports, revealed the following issues (Appendix 1).

In general, the largest number of remarks were made by experts in the field of

1. application of student-centered learning (67%)
2. strategic planning, mission and policy in quality assurance (56%);
3. research (56%)
4. development and implementation of study programs (50%)
5. informing the public (50%).

Below we will discuss in detail the remarks and recommendations for each standard separately.

#### **Standard 1. Mission, strategic planning and quality policy.**

The definition and appropriate implementation of the mission, strategic planning and policy in the field of quality assurance is the cornerstone of the success of the institution. On the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the socio-economic and legal context, the institution needs to develop, with the involvement of stakeholders, a mission, objectives, strategic planning and quality assurance

policies, and systematically monitor the effectiveness of their implementation. Moreover, the monitoring results should facilitate the revision and improvement of the mission, objectives, strategic planning and quality policy.

The target indicators and figures of the strategic plan should be specific, achievable and consistent with the institution's goal, its human and technical resources and the potential as a whole.

The policy in the field of quality assurance should be transparent and promote the quality assurance in the the institution, including the quality of learning, research and extra-curricular activities of the uinstitution. The presence and effective implementation of this policy in the institution shows that the collegial responsibility of the institution and its stakeholders in ensuring quality is in place.

It should be remembered that all of the above stated issues should be understandable and accessible to both internal and external stakeholders. In addition, the stakeholders should be informed of the results of the assessment of the mission, the objectives, strategic planning and policy in the field of quality assurance and any changes introduced therein. Since informing and involving stakeholders in the activities of the institution and ensuring its quality are key concepts of the Bologna process.

The results of the analysis of the external review reports, reflecting the degree of conformity of the institutions to the above stated criteria, showed that the institutions have made significant progress in this area. For example, the reviewed institutions based on a comprehensive analysis developed an understandable, clear and up-to-date mission, goals and strategic plan that are accessible to all stakeholders. Moreover, the institutions believe that in the course of preparation for accreditation, they have improved the planning system for technical and human resources in accordance with the established mission and goals of the institution<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, an effective system of internal quality assurance has been created in the institutions, which contributes to the continuous improvement of the quality of their activities.

Nevertheless, the analysis revealed that the greatest need of institutions is to improve work in planning, evaluating the effectiveness of the planned and establishing relationships with stakeholders.

Thus, currently in some institutions there are no clear indicators and figures in the strategic plan and there are no plans for implementing a strategic planning.

In some institutions, the effectiveness of implementing the strategic planning is not sufficiently monitored. For example, in 4 out of 18 reports, experts recommended strengthening the work in this area.

Moreover, the experts recommended the HEIs to consider the professional development of the faculty in the strategic planning and establish the appropriate indicators and indifigures, which in their opinion would help to improve the quality of the faculty's activities and education in the institutions as a whole.

---

<sup>2</sup> Kalanova Sh., Assylbekova A.Z. Thematic analysis. What does the accreditation give to higher education institutions? [http://iqaa.kz/images/doc/What accreditation gives to higher ediucation institutions 1.pdf](http://iqaa.kz/images/doc/What_accreditation_gives_to_higher_ediucation_institutions_1.pdf)

Furthermore, the examination of the reports revealed the weakest aspect of the activity of the institutions in this standard, which, as it was already mentioned, plays a key role in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). It is related to stakeholders and partners in the quality assurance of higher education. Hence, the experts noted the lack of awareness of internal and external stakeholders about the mission, goals and strategies of institutions. In addition, the experts identified the passiveness of HEIs in establishing communication and collecting feedback during the development and implementation of the mission, goals and strategies of the institution.

## **Standard 2. General management and information management**

According to the standards and criteria for institutional accreditation of HEIs, developed by IQAA, the management of the institution's activities should be carried out in line with the mission, purpose, strategic planning, available technical and human resources of the institutions. At the same time, management should cover all activities and levels in the hierarchy of the institution. The delegation of authority in the management system should be carried out in accordance with the level of competence of employees. In addition, the administrative staff and other staff of the institution who head the structural units must update their knowledge and competence in management.

The collegial management should take place in the institution, chaired by a body whose activities are transparent and accountable to internal and external stakeholders. It involves participation, consideration of opinions and informing the latter about the results of the institution's activities and assessing its effectiveness. Thus, collegiality is ensured by equal participation of teaching staff, other staff, students in management and decision-making.

Last but not least, the management of the institution should be evaluated for its effectiveness on a systematic basis, the results of which are shared among all stakeholders. These results, first of all, are used to improve the management system of the institution.

During the preparation for the external audit and the drafting of the self-assessment report, the HEIs carry out a big deal of activities and improvements that are led by this standard.

For example, during the analysis of the reports, it was enclosed that in many HEIs there is a corporate form of management in place that encompasses all internal stakeholders and involves openness and collegiality in the decision-making. This is confirmed by the results of a survey conducted among institutions that have been accredited by the agency. The vast majority of institutions, accredited by the agency, believe that management in institutions became more collegial<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> Kalanova Sh., Assylbekova A.Z. Thematic analysis. What does the accreditation give to higher education institutions? [http://iqaa.kz/images/doc/What\\_accreditation\\_gives\\_to\\_higher\\_education\\_institutions\\_1.pdf](http://iqaa.kz/images/doc/What_accreditation_gives_to_higher_education_institutions_1.pdf)

However, the analysis of the reports shows that some institutions pay less attention to ensuring collegial management. For example, in 6 out of 18 reports experts suggest HEIs paying attention to the introduction of the corporate form of management by creating trustees' councils.

In addition, as in the previous standard, some institutions do not sufficiently ensure the participation of stakeholders in decision-making and management in general. In 6 out of 18 reports, experts noted that an insufficient share of the students and the teaching staff is involved in the decision-making process. As for the administrative staff, a number of audits have shown that institutions do not efficiently train their managerial staff, and therefore they were recommended to take professional development courses on the institutional management.

In some institutions, the results of management evaluation are undervalued. For example, in 4 out of 18 reports, the experts recommended to apply the findings of evaluations of management's effectiveness in decision making.

### **Standard 3. Students, student-centred learning, teaching and assessment of performance**

A student, being one of the main consumers of educational services, is able to perceive the circumstances from the point of view of the learner. In addition, the student is an investor of time and money in higher education. A student is considered to be the most significant representative of institutions' stakeholders.

In this regard, the activities of institutions should be built around the interests and needs of students by supporting a student-centered learning. The students should be actively involved in building its learning experience and in the decision-making process in institutions. The students should have an access to all information relating to the learning and research literature, equipments, if necessary.

The teaching staff should use innovative methods of teaching and ICT tools, promote the independence of students in learning and research.

The institutions on a systematic basis should work to assess the effectiveness of student-centered learning and use its results to further improvements.

Along with all above stated issues, the institutions should develop and effectively use procedure to assess the students achievements, which is analyzed for relevance and improved on the basis of this analysis. The evaluation methods should be clear and accessible to students.

Moreover, the the institutions should work on preventing the plagiarism by informing students and the faculty as well as revealing the cheating facts.

The institutions should work on supporting students, reviewing their complaints and appeals.

The analysis of external review reports demonstrates that the institutions in the sample achieved a significant progress in the implementation and application of student-centered learning. Students are actively engaged in student self-governance and their opinion is taken into account in decision - making. Additionally the

students independently choose elective disciplines from the catalogue of elective disciplines, consisting of thoughtful and relevant disciplines. The reviewed institutions perception on this matter is the same. The activity of students is increased, the students support service was improved, particularly, the the practice of informing the students about the educational process is in place<sup>4</sup>.

In the classroom, the teaching staff use the cutting-edge teaching tools contributing to the effective learning.

However, the experts concluded that in some institutions, the student-centered learning was not adopted sufficiently. Therefore, they encouraged the institutions to use an appropriate software as an assistance, for example, Platonus Learning Management System, students online registration system, etc.

In addition, the analysis of the recommendations showed that within the student-centered learning it is necessary to use the innovative methods of teaching, which, in their opinion, is not applied in an appropriate level. For instance, in 6 out of 18 reports experts noted that the teaching staff poorly utilizes the innovative teaching methods.

Moreover, the experts mentioned that the students in a number of institutions are not adequately provided with the resources in 4 out of 18 reports, thus, they were recommended to

- organize the rooms for preparation to classes in the accomodation, provide the Internet access in the in the library
- increase the number of seats in the library and in the computer rooms
- provide the access to the electronic library.

#### **Standard 4. Admission of students, learning outcomes, recognition and qualifications**

In the frame of this standard, the institutions are expected to use the single rules for admission, assessment, transfer from course to course, from institution to another institution, recognition and obtaining qualifications for the entire period of students' education.

The rules for admission of students must be transparent, clear and accessible to applicants. However, in some institutions, experts found that the students were underrepresented. To 8 out of 18 institutions was recommended to increase the students enrollment.

In line with the standards and criteria for institutional accreditation the institutions are expected to have an appropriate procedure for recognizing the results of formal and informal education of students, including the results of mobility. The institutions should promote internal and external student mobility, which is not always the case. For example, 8 out of 18 reports revealed a lack of external and internal mobility among institutions` staff and students.

---

<sup>4</sup> Kalanova Sh., Assylbekova A.Z. Thematic analysis. What does the accreditation give to higher education institutions? [http://iqaa.kz/images/doc/What accreditation gives to higher ediucation institutions\\_1.pdf](http://iqaa.kz/images/doc/What_accreditation_gives_to_higher_ediucation_institutions_1.pdf)

The students should be provided with a Diploma Supplement along with the diploma, indicating the qualifications, the results achieved, as well as the context, content and status of the training. However, in some institutions this practice was not implemented or it is not fully applied. For instance, in 3 out of 18 reports, this problem was mentioned by the experts.

In addition, the institutions should systematically monitor procedures on admission of students, employment and career growth for further improvement of their activities, which is poorly developed in some cases. For instances, in 3 out of 18 reports, HEIs were recommended to pay attention to monitoring the employment of the graduates.

However, it should be noted that the institutions, accredited by the agency, succeeded in enrolling students and conducting career-oriented work to attract students. Moreover, in recent years, the number of students traveling by mobility was increased. The institutions started to issue Diploma Supplement according to the ECTS Guidelines 2015.

#### **Standard 5. Study programs: design, effectiveness, continuous monitoring and periodic review**

Within this standard, HEIs should implement an effective procedure for the development of educational programs, the content of which must comply with local legislation, the mission and goals of the institution, the needs of students and employers. Nevertheless, in some institution there is a lack of participation of employers in this process. For example, in 3 out of 18 reports on external audit the experts recommended the employers to be more involved in the development of educational programs.

In addition, a logical sequence of disciplines, a variety of the catalogue of elective disciplines should be provided to students. Moreover, the institutions should use the modular principle of designing the educational programs.

Educational programs design the institutions should take into account the load of the teaching staff and students, presented in credits.

The institutions should evaluate the effectiveness of their study programs and improve them based on the results of this assessment.

Analysis of the external review reports showed that the overwhelming majority of considered institutions in the development and implementation of study programs has made significant progress. For example, the employers and students are increasingly involved in the design of study programs.

In some institutions the elective disciplines are being developed from original courses. For example, in the UIB, a block of elective disciplines of study programs are developed from the number of author courses of the teaching staff and practitioners. For example, the practice faculty, the General Director of the Publishing House "Capital" Mira Khalina, the Director of the Department of the

Treasury of JSC "Qazaq Bank" Kamenev Dmitry and others read the their own original courses.

The institutions apply the modular principle of design of the study programs. On a systematic basis, they evaluate the effectiveness of study programs.

In a number of institutions, the joint-programs are delivered with foreign institutions.

Nevertheless, the improvement of the activities of institutions in the development and implementation of study programs, in the opinion of experts, should go on in the future in the following track:

- strengthening the work on concluding agreements with foreign partners on the implementation of double-diploma
- introduction of multilingual education.

### **Standard 6. Teaching staff and teaching effectiveness**

The teaching staff of HEIs despite the transition to student-centered learning, does not lose its importance in the teaching and learning. With the increasing competition in the labor market, which requires new knowledge, skills, flexibility and mobility from the staff, the requirements for the level of competencies and the quality of the work of university faculty increased.

In this regard, the institutions` human resource policy should be carried out taking into account the national legislation, the needs of students and employers.

The institutions should facilitate the teaching and research of the faculty and their professional development. Upon the study of the needs and weaknesses in the activities of the faculty, the institutions need to provide them with appropriate methodological support and professional development courses. Moreover, the institutions should have a transparent and clear system of awards and penalty available to all employees.

The institutions should promote the quality assurance policies, including academic integrity, among the teaching staff.

To improve the quality of teaching and learning as well as research of the students and the faculty, institutions should work on assessing the quality and effectiveness of the faculty, the results of which should be used in informed decision-making in this area.

Moreover, the institutions need to monitor the effectiveness of the human resource policy regularly and improve it. The activity of the faculty should be transparent. It should also be reflected in the annual reports published by the institutions on its website.

The analysis of the reports made it possible to conclude that the overwhelming majority of the institutions reviewed by the agency improved their human resource policy and increased the quality of the teaching and research of the teaching staff. In addition, the institutions monitore the educational needs of the faculty, on the basis of which courses are delivered to improve the skills in the

country and abroad. Moreover, appropriate awarding mechanisms are place in HEIs. For example, the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan establishes annual allowances for wages of all categories of teaching staff, taking into account the achievements of each faculty. The allowance is between 1.5 and 2.5.

However, the examination of the external review reports showed that the weakest aspect in the human resource policy of HEIs is in poor inattention to the educational needs of the teaching staff. Therefore, which they are recommended to

- increase the effectiveness of professional development courses
- support the study of the faculty at PhD programs.
- facilitate the participation of teaching staff in professional development courses on innovative teaching methods
- provide English language courses to the teaching staff.

### **Standard 7. Scientific research work (creative activity)**

According to this standard, the research of HEIs should be in line with the national policy and legislation, mission, goals and strategic planning of the institutions. They should promote the integration of science, education and innovation. In an economy of knowledge, HEIs should strengthen the research development skills and research potential of the students and the faculty.

Currently, the borders are being blurred and research approaches around the world are reaching uniform standards. The research institutes and HEIs conduct joint research at international level. In this regard, Kazakhstani HEIs should have an adequate human and technical potential to learn the graduates capable of carrying out research both at the national and international levels.

This approach implies the involvement of highly qualified teaching staff, actively engaged in research and publishing the articles in journals approved by appropriate state body in quality and in peer-review journals, included in international databases.

In addition, the institutions should stimulate the research activity of the students and the teaching staff. Moreover, the institutions on a systematic basis should monitor the effectiveness of research to use it informed decision-making.

Today, the institutions, accredited by the agency, supports the integration of education, research and innovation, actively stimulate the involvement of the faculty and the students in the research through the appropriate awarding system. High qualification of the teaching staff allows to deliver Masters` and PhD programs.

The key aspect in the activity of HEIs is the establishment of cooperation with foreign research institutes and HEIs to conduct joint research, internships and supervision of doctoral students. For example, in 2014, Kazakh-British technical University received a grant for the development of research relations and research

in the amount of 35 thousand UK pounds together with the University of Northampton.

Despite all the beforementioned requirements for research and development, the agency's experts noted the low research activity in some of the reviewed institutions. For example, in 5 out of 18 external review reports, the experts highlighted a low publishing activity of the faculty.

Moreover, according to the experts, some institutions need to focus on the commercialization and implementation of research results. In 5 out of 18 institutions this problem was identified. However, in the majority of institutions this work is already under way. For example, Kazakh-British technical University established the Department of Commercialization, which consists of three sectors. One example of commercialization is the sale of a powdered surfacing material based on iron. The generation of pure silicon, using nanotechnology, for solar batteries are on the stage of commercialization

### **Standard 8. Resources and student support service**

In line of this standard, the resources of HEIs should meet the qualification requirements for equipping them, their missions, goals and strategic planning. They should support the learning, teaching and research of the students and the faculty. At the same time, internal and external stakeholders should be informed about the resources available in the institution.

The structure of institutions should ensure the management and effective application of resources, which presupposes the maintenance of financial reporting and control over the effective expenditure of funds.

The students and the faculty should have access to high-speed Internet, educational and research literature and equipment. In addition, the HEIs should conduct a survey of students and faculty about the degree of their satisfaction with accessibility and quality of resources. The results of the feedback should be used to strengthen the material and technical base or increase the effectiveness of its use.

Along with all of the above stated aspects, the institutions should have a student support service that monitors and satisfies the students' daily educational needs. The management of the institutions should support the work of the bodies of student government, which has not a nominal status, but a practical value in improving the learning experience of the students.

The institutions should monitor the effectiveness of student support services, for example, by interviewing students and comprehensive analysis of their performance, with a purpose of further improvement. At the same time, students should be informed about the activities and results of evaluating the effectiveness of such services.

It should be noted that the analysis of the external review reports showed that the strongest part of the institutions' activity is in their physical and technical support. According to experts opinion as it can be seen from Appendix 3, that the

least amount of remarks was obtained by institutions in this field. The institutions in the sample have strengthened their resources over the past 3 years, thereby improved the students' learning experience. For example, in institutions, in particular at K.I.Satpayev Kazakh National Research Technical University, up-to-date information and telecommunication infrastructures were created, a high level of its accessibility has been ensured, and a single information space has been formed.

Almost all institutions have access to wireless Internet. In addition, there are computer rooms in the academic buildings and dormitories. Moreover, the scientific library along with performing its traditional functions, providing information to the students and the faculty in all existing types of media (paper, digital), access to such databases as Scopus, Web of science, Jstore, etc. The library fund ensures the effectiveness of the educational process and the research activities of the students and the faculty.

The institutions have a system of monitoring the satisfaction of internal stakeholders with the quality and availability of resources, the results of which are applied in further improvements.

Furthermore, the institutions, experts noted that the stable interaction of educational, research and industrial structures in the period of educational and industrial practices of the students.

Nevertheless, according to this standard, the most often proposed recommendations, developed by external review team, is connected with the insufficient level of provision of the students with teaching support. Thus, the institutions are expected to

- develop electronic textbooks and electronic catalogues
- expand the library fund
- provide students with access to international databases.

The institutions experience a lack of additional funding that the experts propose to solve at the expense of

- research, commercialization of the results the research in production, expansion of the list of paid services, etc.
- the Alumni Association.

Moreover, the analysis of external review reports revealed that in a significant number of (6 out of 18) HEIs the poor attention is paid to students. According to experts, some institutions need to provide students with dormitories and equip the dormitories.

## **Standard 9. Public information**

According to this standard, HEIs need to inform stakeholders about all their activities. Information on learning and research, study programs, mission, goals and strategic planning, rules for admission of students, the structure of the institutions, contact details of the staff should be published on the websites of the institutions.

At the same time, the information published on the website should be relevant and accessible to all stakeholders.

HEIs, as in previously reviewed standards, on a regular basis need to evaluate the effectiveness of their activities in this direction.

The institutions in the sample succeeded in “Public information”. In particular, almost all of them posted information about their activities, missions, strategic planning, study programs, teaching staff, staff, management, etc. in three languages on their websites. Thus, the activities of institutions became more transparent and open to internal and external stakeholders.

However, it should be noted that the public information, as well as student-centered learning, study programs, mission, strategic planning and quality policy, requires institutions` attention. Thus, in this standard, experts identified the following problems, over which institutions need to work.

Thus, according to experts, information on educational services and other activities of institutions is not adequately represented on their official websites. Therefore, they are encouraged to inform students and other stakeholders about the

- vacancies
- results of monitoring the quality of the institutions` activities
- the mission
- all types of activities of the institutions in three languages;
- study programs.

Moreover, the institutions are urged to increase the effectiveness of sharing information, the experts suggest establishing contacts with stakeholders through creation and effective administration of the rector's blog.

## **IV. Conclusion**

The analysis of the external review reports, written by the experts of the agency as the result of the audits in the framework of the institutional accreditation, revealed that in general during the self-study HEIs made a big deal of achievement. However, the audits enclosed that there are certain areas of improvement that should be considered by the reviewed institutions. Thus, the experts developed remarks and recommendations in the different areas of the HEIs` activities. The largest amount of remarks concern:

- application of a student-centered learning (67%)

- strategic planning, mission and policy in quality assurance (56%);
- research (56%)
- development and implementation of study programs (50%)
- informing the public (50%).

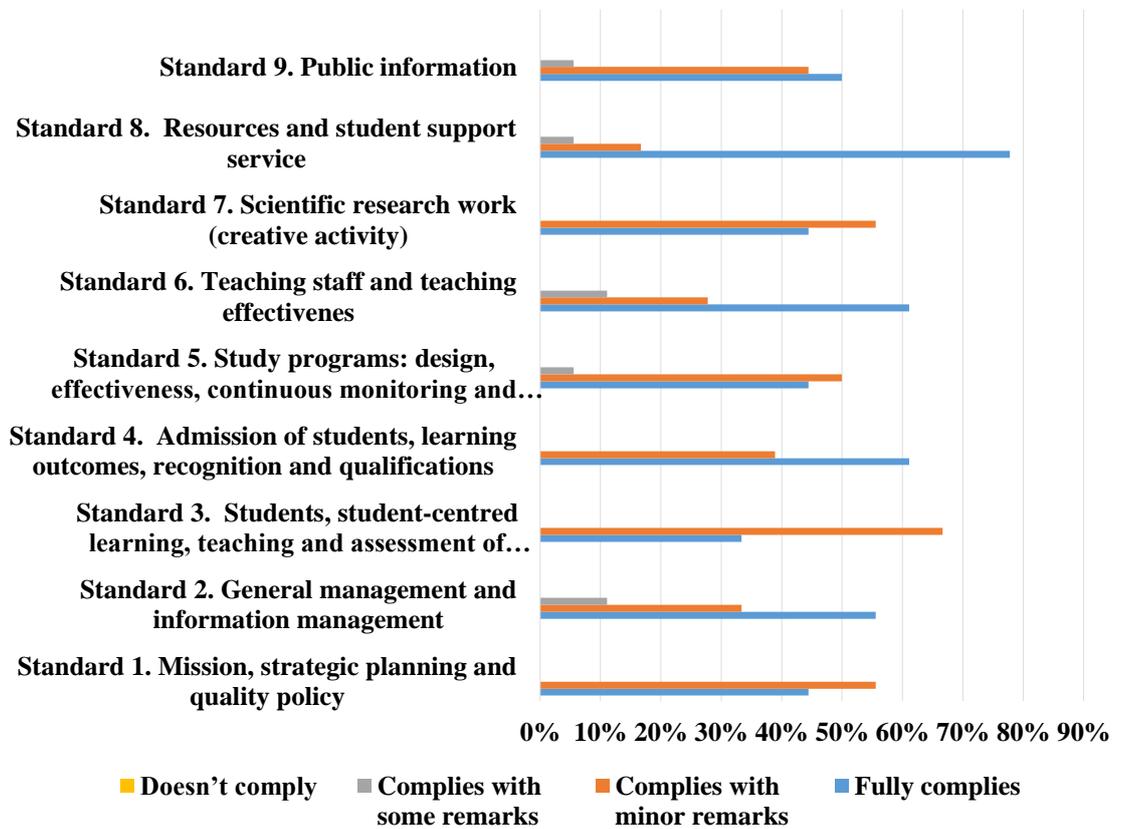
Therefore, the reviewed institutions were urged to strengthen their work in implementation of the student-centred learning, particularly by increasing the awareness of the faculty in innovative teaching methods and practice of academic mobility. Moreover, the experts suggested engaging the stakeholders in design and implementation of the institutions' planning and study programmes more actively. Then, the institutions were recommended to stimulate the research of the faculty and the students. Last but not least, the institutions are expected to inform the community about the learning, research and other types of activities, mission and planning via the websites as well as to gather the feedback from the stakeholders for an informed decision-making.

**Appendix 1**

**The level of compliance of the report on self-assessment with the actual state at the institutions, accredited by IQAA**

	<b>Fully complies</b>	<b>Complies with minor remarks</b>	<b>Complies with some remarks</b>	<b>Doesn't comply</b>	<b>Total</b>
Standard 1. Mission, strategic planning and quality policy	8	10	0	0	18
	44%	56%	0%	0%	
Standard 2. General management and information management	10	6	2	0	18
	56%	33%	11%	0%	
Standard 3. Students, student-centred learning, teaching and assessment of performance	6	12	0	0	18
	33%	67%	0%	0%	
Standard 4. Admission of students, learning outcomes, recognition and qualifications	11	7	0	0	18
	61%	39%	0%	0%	
Standard 5. Study programs: design, effectiveness, continuous monitoring and periodic review	8	9	1	0	18
	44%	50%	6%	0%	
Standard 6. Teaching staff and teaching effectiveness	11	5	2	0	18
	61%	28%	11%	0%	
Standard 7. Scientific research work (creative activity)	8	10	0	0	18
	44%	56%	0%	0%	
Standard 8. Resources and student support service	14	3	1	0	18
	78%	17%	6%	0%	
Standard 9. Public	9	8	1	0	18

**The level of compliance of the report on self-assessment with the actual state at the institutions, accredited by IQAA**



## Systematized remarks and recommendations

### Standard 1. Mission, strategic planning and quality policy

#### Remarks

1. The students, the faculty, the administrative staff of HEIs and the employers are not sufficiently informed about the mission, purpose and strategic planning of the institutions.
1. Professional development of the faculty, academic mobility are not included in the strategic plan.

HEIs were recommended to

1. to ensure monitoring of the level of implementation of the indicators of the strategic development plan;
2. to discuss the mission, goals and objectives with the stakeholders;
3. to specify the targets and indicators in the strategic plans;
4. to develop an operational plan, to set specific measures for the implementation of the strategy;
6. to specify the mission taking into account the place of HEIs at the regional level and in the market of educational services;
5. to involve stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the strategic plan;
6. to receive feedback from stakeholders.

### Standard 2. General management and information management

#### Remarks

1. Insufficient involvement of the students in and the faculty in Academic Council.
2. The management of the institutions does not sufficiently monitor the implementation of the decisions taken.
3. Insufficient level of training of administrative staff of HEIs.

**HEIs are recommended to**

1. introduce corporate management approach;
2. involve stakeholders in the decision-making process;
3. questionnaire the students on the level of satisfaction with the quality of educational services, organization of research and use of the results of the questionnaire in informed decision-making;

4. conduct professional development courses in management for administrative of the institutions;
5. in the structure of the institutions to appoint the department responsible for research;
6. improve the electronic document management.

### **Standard 3. Students, student-centred learning, teaching and assessment of performance**

#### **Remarks**

1. The results of external evaluation of educational achievements in higher education were decreased .

#### **Recommendations**

HEIs are recommended to

1. improve the practice of applying a student-centered learning
  - automate the educational process;
  - introduce an inclusive education;
  - to increase the transferable GPA;
2. improve a physical resources:
  - organize rooms to prepare for classes in the accomodations, conduct Internet in the libraries;
  - increase the number of seats in the libraries;
  - increase the number of seats in the computer rooms;
  - provide access to the electronic library;
3. improve the process of applying credit system:
  - automate the information system for the implementation of credit sustem;
  - review the elective disciplines catalogue;
  - enter online registration for elective disciplines;
4. apply the Platonus learning process management system;
5. use innovative methods of teaching.

### **Standard 4. Admission of students, learning outcomes, recognition and qualifications**

#### **Remarks**

The academic mobility of students is not sufficiently developed.

#### **Recommendations**

1. to develop external and internal mobility;

2. to increase the students' enrollment rate;
3. to introduce the practice of issuing the “Diploma Supplement”.
4. to involve the employers in financing the students` learning;
5. to monitor the employment rate of the graduates;

### **Standard 5. Study programs: design, effectiveness, continuous monitoring and periodic review**

#### **Remarks**

1. Inadequate implementation of modular study programs.
2. Study programs
  - are not approved by the management of the institutions;
  - are developed without the involvement of employers;
3. The mechanism of the development of the study program was not been fully disclosed.
4. There is a formal approach in forming the profile of the graduate's competencies in study programs.

#### **Recommendations**

1. to attract graduates and employers in development of study programs;
2. to strengthen the work on concluding agreements with foreign partners on the implementation of joint-diploma;
3. to introduce a multilingual education.

### **Standard 6. Teaching staff and teaching effectiveness**

#### **Remarks**

1. The insufficient amount of professional development courses are provided teaching staff.
2. The weak language preparation of the faculty.

#### **Recommendations**

1. to develop the external academic mobility of the teaching staff;
2. to organize the foreign language courses for the teaching staff;
3. to strengthen the work in terms increasing a professional competence of the faculty:
  - to improve the effectiveness of refresher courses;
  - to improve the qualification of the faculty through the allocation of grants to a targeted doctoral program.
4. to support for the participation of teaching staff in advanced training courses in innovative teaching methods.
5. to improve the system of incentives for the faculty.

## **Standard 7. Scientific research work (creative activity)**

### **Remarks**

1. Low publication activity of the faculty.
2. The documenting the process of introducing research results into the educational process and production is insufficiently regulated.
3. There are no commercialization offices in institutions.

### **Recommendations**

1. to increase the number of publications of the faculty in journals with the impact factor through the creation of an incentive system;
2. to ensure the participation of the teaching staff and the students in funded research projects;
3. to increase the activity of students in research;
4. to intensify the work in terms of commercialization;
5. to promote participation of the faculty in joint international projects;
6. to expand the research infrastructure of the institution through the creation of research centers, laboratories, the department of commercialization, etc.
7. to expand the practice of implementing the results of the research.

## **Standard 8. Resources and student support service**

### **Remarks**

The insufficient level of provision of students with accomodation.

### **Recommendations**

1. to increase the access of to the textbooks, teaching aids, research literature through:
  - creation of electronic textbooks and catalogues;
  - extension the library resources;
2. to provide and increase expenses for:
  - professional development courses for the faculty;
  - academic mobility of teaching staff and students;
3. to attract additional finance via:
  - conducting a research, commercialization of the results obtained in production, expansion of the list of paid services, etc.;
  - interaction with the Alumni Association.
4. Provide students with a dormitory and improve living conditions in dormitories;
5. Provide medical services to students and staff of institutions.
6. Improve sports complexes of the institutions.

## **Standard 9. Public information**

### **Remarks**

On the official website of the institutions, the information on educational services is not adequately represented.

### **Recommendations**

1. To inform students and other stakeholders about
  - vacancies
  - results of monitoring the quality of the learning, research and social activities;
  - the mission;
  - all types of activities of the institutions in three languages;
  - on study programs;
2. To gather a feedback from stakeholders through the creation and effective administration of the rector's blog.