



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

**GUIDELINES
ON ORGANIZATION AND CONDUCTING
AN EXTERNAL REVIEW
FOR PROCEDURES OF INSTITUTIONAL AND SPECIALIZED
(PROGRAMME) ACCREDITATION**

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Introduction

The Guidelines on organization and conducting an external review of an educational institution (hereinafter the Guidelines) have been developed in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Education”, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the Guidelines on external review of the American regional agencies.

An external review is conducted to evaluate the compliance of information presented in the self-evaluation report with the actual state of affairs in the educational organization.

On the basis of the visit to the educational organization the expert group develops recommendations on its accreditation for the Accreditation Council.

The Guidelines establish a procedure and content of an external review for experts in the framework of the IQAA accreditation procedure.

The Guidelines are intended not only for the expert group members, they can be applied by representatives of higher education institutions for a deeper understanding of the external review procedure.

1. The expert group

1.1 Composition of the expert group

The external review is conducted by the expert group, formed by IQAA for conducting an external review in the educational organization.

Selecting of experts is based on the database of the Agency's experts, recommended by higher education institutions, employers, associations and other organizations, certified by IQAA for conducting an external review. Selecting of the expert group members starts 2-3 months prior to the site visit. As a rule, the expert group consists of 4-6 experts, representing different stakeholder groups and possessing the necessary competences and knowledge for conducting an objective and qualitative assessment of quality of the service rendered by a higher education institution or a study programme.

The composition of the expert group for an external review includes experts from academic field, students, employers and international experts.

For institutional accreditation, the representatives of the academic field in the composition of the expert group include administrative and managerial staff from a higher education institution, and a head of the expert group is usually a Rector or a Vice-Rector of a higher education institution.

For specialized accreditation, the composition of the expert group includes heads of departments or teaching staff with scientific degrees in a given study programme, and a head of the expert group is usually a dean of faculty or a head of a structural unit.

The higher education institution should be informed about the composition of the expert group in advance. The institution has a right for a reasonable and motivated refusal of individual candidates.

The expert group is appointed with a head, who performs the functions of internal coordination of the expert group's work and is responsible for the external review report. The head of the expert group, as a rule, an expert with administrative and academic work in higher education institutions, develops a plan of work of the expert group, distributes work among the group members by standards, manages communication of the group, and is responsible for the final version of the external review report.

The work of the expert group during a site visit is coordinated by the IQAA coordinator, not included in the composition of the expert group, and a responsible person from the higher education institution.

1.2. The procedure of an external review

1.2.1 Responsibility of parties in conducting an external review

1. IQAA forms the composition of the expert group, informs the higher education institution, and negotiates with the experts.

2. The composition of the expert group with the appointment of its head is agreed with the head of the IQAA Audit Department and the relevant

Accreditation Committee. The composition of the expert group, a head of the expert group and a coordinator are approved by the order of the President of IQAA.

3. IQAA agrees the terms of the external review with the higher education institution in advance.

4. The IQAA coordinator and the head of the expert group draft a programme of the external review site visit and agree it with the higher education institution and the expert group members.

5. The expert group members implement their activities on the basis of the Code of Honor of Experts and the contract for services, concluded with the Agency.

6. The educational organization ensures the expert group with a separate room with computers connected to the Internet, in the number of the expert group members, a telephone with an intercity line, printers, a copier and a scanner for studying the documents, drafting the external review report, and private discussions.

7. The educational organization ensures the expert group with the access to all premises, equipment, information according to the site visit programme, and provides assistance.

1.2.2 Conducting an external review

8. 1-2 weeks prior to the site visit the IQAA coordinator conducts a video conference, where he/she discusses with the experts questions concerning conducting an external review, the template of the external review report, and interview questions.

9. The external review is considered fulfilled if 2/3 of the expert group members have participated in it.

10. Discussion of the final details of the external review takes place in the briefing meeting at the higher education institution.

11. Before the start of the external review, the expert group members sign the Code of Honor of an Accreditation Expert (Annex 3).

12. The programme of the external review includes:

- Interview meeting with the administration of the higher education institution, heads of structural units, teaching staff, students, employers and graduates of the educational organization.

- Visual review of the institution: visiting auditoriums, laboratories, libraries, student support services.

- Study of the supporting documents.

- Discussion of the preliminary results of the external review with the administration of the higher education institution.

- Final conversation. Agreement of the deadline for submission of the external review report and possible comments on the report by the higher education institution.

1.2.3 Drafting of the report and recommendations of the expert group

13. Based on the materials gathered, the head of the expert group drafts a preliminary report in two copies, which should be signed by all of the expert group members.

14. Within the established deadline, the higher education institution has a right to submit comments on the external review report for elimination of the possible inaccuracies (factual errors).

15. The expert group finalizes the external review report, taking into account comments of the higher education institution, for the Accreditation Council and sends it to the Agency.

16. In drafting the external review report of the higher education institution under re-accreditation, the expert group should consider outcomes of the previous external review.

2. Functions of the head of the expert group

The head of the expert group is appointed from the expert group members, approved by the IQAA for conducting an external review.

The head of the expert group carries out the functions of internal coordination of the group and is responsible for the distribution of responsibilities among the members of the expert group. The head should chair the meetings of the expert groups for discussion and exchange of opinions.

3. Functions of the IQAA Coordinator

At the stage of preparation to conducting an external review:

- organization and conducting training seminars on self-evaluation procedure for the administration of the higher education institution, heads of structural units, teaching staff and personnel;

- formation of the composition of the expert group in accordance with the type of accreditation (institutional or specialized) and specifics of the higher education institution (profile), as well as other significant characteristics of the upcoming accreditation procedure;

- informing the higher education institution on the composition of the expert group;

- drafting the programme of the external review site visit, its agreement with the higher education institution and the head of the expert group;

- together with the expert group, compiling a list of additional materials, necessary to the experts for preparation to the external review site visit;

- compiling lists for interviews. In preparation to the external review the higher education institution should send the IQAA coordinator lists of all interview participants with indication of their e-mails and telephone numbers.

- ensuring the expert group members with the package of materials for an external review: Guidelines on external review for institutional/specialized (programme) accreditation procedure; a self-evaluation report of the higher education institution/study programmes; the standards and criteria of institutional/specialized (programme) accreditation of organizations of higher and

postgraduate education; a template of the external review report; composition of the expert group; programme of the external review site visit; guidelines for students;

- organization and conducting preliminary training seminars for experts (in a video conference regime);
- developing a traffic route for expert group members, booking, agreement, and purchasing of tickets (rail road or avia) for experts;
- planning of accommodation for expert group members (a standard room for every expert in a hotel with not less than 3 stars);
- compiling a schedule of arrival and departure of the expert group members;
- control of other organizational moments, including the site visit of the experts to the higher education institution.

As a rule, the hotel expenses are paid by the Agency in a person of the IQAA coordinator. If agreed otherwise, the coordinator should inform the expert group.

IQAA books and purchases economy class flight tickets and rail road tickets for the expert group in accordance with the agreed by the expert information (preferred date and time of arrival and departure, etc.). All bills and boarding passes should be hand in to the IQAA coordinator. Reimbursement of expenses is made according to the originals of the submitted travel documents.

Payment for additional service in the hotel: intercity line connection, bar/snacks in the refrigerator, etc. should be made by the expert from his/her own funds.

At the stage of the external review site visit:

- conducting a briefing for the expert group members at the higher education institution;
- setting the contact and communication among the experts (at the initial stage);
- establishing a contact between the expert group and the administration of the higher education institution/study programme;
- coordination of the expert group's work according to the programme of the site visit;
- ensuring the group discussion of the preliminary results of the external review;
- designing documentation for the external review (a cover page of the report, tables of compliance, etc.);
- organization of the final meeting of the expert group with the administration of the higher education institution for summing up preliminary results of the external review.

After the Accreditation Council makes a decision on accreditation of the higher education institution/study programme:

- informing the higher education institution/study programme on the decision of the Accreditation Council within 3-5 days via e-mail;

- informing the expert group on the decision of the Accreditation Council within 3-5 days.

4. Informational visit of the IQAA Coordinator

IQAA coordinator can visit the higher education institution in advance, in agreement or at the request of the administration of the educational organization. Such a visit has an informational or consultative character and serves for deeper understanding of the context of the higher education institution, its level of development, strategy, etc. Information, received in the course of the informational visit should not influence the outcomes of the external review.

During the informational visit the IQAA coordinator can request documents supporting information of the self-evaluation report.

5. Preparation for the external review

Preparation of all parties for the external review is an integral part of the efficiency of the site visit.

5.1. Preliminary seminar for the reviewers/experts

The external review is conducted by the experts certified by IQAA. The training seminar for the experts is organized to familiarize them with the content of the accreditation procedure and methodology of the external review. To do this, all the experts, the first time participating in the external review, should undergo such training. Upon the successful completion, the experts receive corresponding certificates.

The content of the seminar includes analysis and assessment of the self-evaluation report of the higher education institution, explanation of the role and responsibility of the experts in the accreditation procedure. The training seminar highlights that the IQAA Accreditation Council is the sole decision-making body for accreditation, therefore, the expert group members are always warned not to say anything to the higher education institution about the possible outcome of the procedure.

Also, 1-2 weeks prior to the site visit the expert group members take part in the training seminar in a video conference regime, where they receive explanation on writing the external review report on institutional/specialized (programme) accreditation, programme of the site visit, clarification of the latest details of the upcoming visit.

6. Preparation of the experts and responsibility

Tasks of the experts

The task of the expert group members is not to compare the higher education institution/study programme under accreditation with their educational institution. During the external review, experts should explicitly limit their role not as a supervisory authority, but as a body that evaluates the degree of achievement of the institution's objectives and their compliance with the standards of accreditation.

Different higher education institutions have different culture and objectives. Therefore, experts should not impose any specific model. The function of the expert group is to formulate conclusions about what tools the institution is implementing to ensure quality and effectiveness of its study programmes. Accordingly, the primary questions of the external review are whether the institution complies with the standards of institutional/specialized accreditation; whether the study process, research work and other activities are functioning effectively in terms of the institution's mission statement, strategic goals and objectives?

The experts should fulfill their task as professionals, not as inspectors. They should understand that a good assessment is aimed not only at searching for weaknesses, but also on the identification of the strengths.

Responsibility

The experts should be prepared for the external review procedure in advance. They should carefully study materials, presented by the coordinator and the higher education institution, including the standards and criteria of institutional/specialized accreditation and the self-evaluation report of the higher education institution/study programmes. If the experts need additional documents before the site visit, they should agree the request for information with the IQAA coordinator and the head of the expert group. Every member of the expert group makes a list of questions for conducting interviews. A week prior to the site visit, an expert prepares an initial external review report and sends it to the coordinator and the head of the expert group via e-mail. Experts can record an existing opinion about the institution or the study programme on the basis of the self-evaluation report, and then have an opportunity to compare the statement during the interview and the visual review directly with the original version of the report, and to discuss selected aspects with other experts. Writing a brief preliminary report, undoubtedly, contributes to a better structuring of the external review.

It is necessary to distribute responsibility for a certain aspect of the external review among the expert group members. This does not exclude the need to understand all the issues of accreditation by every member of the expert group, but allows the experts in a particular field to take initiative in assessment of the aspects by profile and thus, to increase the quality of the external review. For example, an expert practitioner can make a list of questions on conducting student practice, while an expert with solid experience in administrative work can make a list of questions on organization and administration according to the Standard 2 of institutional accreditation "General management and information management".

Nevertheless, every expert should realize individual and group responsibility for the external review outcomes.

The level of workload

The workload in the external review is often more than it seems at first glance. It includes numerous interviews, an analysis, a comparison of the results obtained with the results of the institution's self-evaluation and the standards of accreditation. A high level of concentration is necessary during the whole site visit.

Therefore, the expert group members should be ready for intensive work during 2-3 days of the site visit for the formation of the external review report.

The role of an expert is considered in Annex 2.

7. The site visit of the expert group and outcomes of the visit

Meeting of the expert group (briefing)

Meeting of the expert group (briefing) is conducted by the IQAA coordinator before the meeting of the expert group with the administration of the higher education institution//study programme. At this meeting the experts discuss final details concerning the external review procedure, share first impressions of the institution under accreditation, sign the Code of Honor, a contract for service, and clarify or amend the programme of the site visit.

During the meeting (briefing) of the expert group it is recommended:

- To revise details of the external review.
- To work out the main questions for interviews in advance, so that every group member is involved in every interview.
- To select interviewees from the list of the interview participants.
- To ensure that discussion questions are not beyond the stated mission of the institution/college or a specialty, its aims and objectives, assessment of the validity of the specialty and fulfillment of the mission of the educational institution.

- To strictly follow the confidentiality of information. A coordinator can be present in the work of the expert group with confidential information, if it is appropriate.

- To conduct qualitative and quantitative assessment of factors, which cannot be reflected in the written documentation.

- To analyze weaknesses and strengths of the higher education institution in the context of the IQAA standards, the mission of the institution and highlighted moments of the self-evaluation report with the aim of a fair assessment.

Significant achievements and/or particular potential should be underlined. Institutions expect and deserve fair and constructive criticism; but neglect of the positive aspects of the review may reduce the advantage of negative observations.

- To conduct a survey of students and teaching staff, process the survey forms and consider the survey results in discussion of intermediate outcomes of the external review;

- Coordinator asks the experts for initial impressions of the self-evaluation report, encouraging colleagues to express their point of view, to determine the "white spots", to discuss the questions and observations during/after the self-evaluation report, to formulate a preliminary thesis/hypothesis of the report for verification at the time of the external review.

- To pay attention to the nature of the outcomes of the external review. Institutions are increasingly required to demonstrate their external and internal customers (parties involved) achievement of their objectives in teaching, the study process and other activities. IQAA considers that the assessment can be carried out more effectively if the planning of study programmes is carefully studied; the

evidence is the extent to which the objectives of a discipline, a study programme, a higher education institution are achieved as a result of the implementation of teaching and learning plans, as well as the progress of the institution due to the use of the review outcomes.

Interviews of the expert group with representatives of the institution take place according to the agreed programme and rely on the prepared list of questions:

- with the administration of the higher education institution;
- with heads of structural units;
- with teaching staff;
- with students;
- with other stakeholders/participants of the study process (graduates, employers).

At large higher education institutions some interviews can be held in parallel. In such cases, the expert group is divided into two subgroups. The head of the group is responsible for keeping time and following the programme of the site visit. All interested administrative and managerial staff, teaching staff, and students can participate in the interview with the expert group.

The Agency has a clear goal of using the results of an interview. An interview is a rich source of information, which allows the expert group to establish the atmosphere of trust and to double check the perceived reality. It promotes discussion, thus eventually allows gathering more information to analyze and make appropriate recommendations.

The experts are recommended to make notes during an interview. Moreover, the interview can be recorded. In the beginning of every interview the head or the coordinator of the expert group should ask permission for audio recording. If there are any objections, the interview is not recorded.

After every interview the expert group has time for a private discussion.

Exchange of opinions of the expert group after the interview and dining of the expert group during the site visit takes place separately from the representatives of the higher education institution.

The visual review of the institution is carried out to get an overview not only of the material and technical base and its compliance with the standards, but also for the possibility of contact with students and staff. At the request of the experts and the proposal of the institution the main academic buildings, the administration building of the university, a library, a student health center (medical center), a sports complex, etc. can be inspected. Visiting auditoriums, laboratories, a library, student support services can be combined with conducting interviews and an audit of documentation.

After interviews and visual inspection of the institution the expert group discusses the outcomes of the external review. The main question becomes writing of the quality external review report and making a decision on which recommendations on accreditation of the institution/study programme should be given to the approval of the Accreditation Council.

The summarized preliminary results are presented to the administration of the institution/study programme and include:

- overall impression of the site visit,
- indication of the strengths and weaknesses of the institution/study programme,
- analysis of the identified positive and negative sides.

The expert opinion should be so convincing that those responsible for the study programme, the leadership of the institution, as well as members of the Accreditation Committee and the Accreditation Council can understand the recommendations of the expert group without any additional information.

8. The external review report

General report

A month prior to the visit, the IQAA gives an expert group a template for writing an external review report. The period for writing an external review report is 5-7 days. As a rule, in institutional accreditation every member of the expert group is responsible for a separate part of the report, whereas in programme accreditation an expert of the study programme is responsible for the external review report.

The report should have a clear structure and demonstrate compliance/non-compliance with the standards of institutional and/or specialized (programme) accreditation in the context of the mission, aims and objectives of the institution. The parallels to the self-evaluation report of the institution should be made and the necessary measures for improvement should be identified.

A separate part of the report should include a general description of the institution and conclusion on the quality of the self-evaluation report.

In case of non-compliance of the institution with the standards of institutional and/or specialized (programme) accreditation, the report should clearly point the fields for improvement and ways of optimization of the non-compliance.

The style of writing a report should meet the goals of the external review, i.e. to give a clear summary of the activities of the institution and a reasoned explanation of the compliance of the institution/study programme with the standards. When referring to the mission, aims and objectives of the institution/study programme the experts should use terminology used by the institution itself. The report should not have a personal character and consist of separate parts, which are not related in content and form with each other; the report should show the result of work of a unified group of experts.

The common report is discussed by the expert group and submitted to the IQAA coordinator. In summing up the level of compliance of the institution/study programme with the standards and criteria of institutional/specialized (programme) accreditation the expert group needs to reach a consensus.

Failing to reach a unanimous opinion, the decision is made by a majority vote, the opinion (remarks and recommendations) of the expert, who disagrees with the general opinion, should be attached to the report. In making recommendations, the expert group relies on the context of the institution, its mission, aims and objectives, suggestions for improvements made during the

external review, with the aim of argumentation of these recommendations. No member of the expert group can leave before a decision on the recommendations is made.

Within ten working days, the Agency sends the external review report to the institution via e-mail for elimination of factological errors, if there are any.

If the institution does not present any comments on the report within three days, the Agency considers that the institution has no objections to the report.

If the institution presents any remarks to the submitted report, the head of the expert group in consultation with other members of the group makes amendments to the report, if necessary, or gives a reasoned refutation to these remarks.

The final version of the report is submitted by the head of the expert group to the IQAA coordinator via e-mail.

A recommended form of the external review report is available in Annex 6 (forms 6.1-6.4).

Based on the external review report, the IQAA coordinator prepares materials for decision-making of the Accreditation Council. The package of documents includes:

- an external review report;
- a presentation (slides) on the institution/study programmes;
- a conclusion of the Agency.

After the meeting of the Accreditation Council the full external review report is published on the website of the Agency.

After the visit

Within 3-7 working days the IQAA Department of Quality conducts a survey of representatives of the institution, experts participated in the external review and IQAA coordinators. The survey is made through the “Survey Monkey” online service. The outcomes of the survey are used for improving the quality of external reviews.

9. Glossary

9.1 Accreditation: the process by which an accreditation body evaluates the quality of a higher education institution/college as a whole or of the individual study programmes of the institution in order to recognize their compliance with certain standards and criteria.

9.2 Institutional accreditation: accreditation of the activities of the educational organization as a whole in accordance with the standards and criteria.

9.3 Specialized (programme) accreditation: accreditation of professional study programmes in accordance with the standards and criteria.

9.4 Self-evaluation: the process conducted by a higher education institution/college on the basis of the standards and criteria of institutional or specialized (programme) accreditation, the results of which are documented in the self-evaluation report.

9.5 External review: the process, conducted by a group of experts on the basis of the standards and criteria of institutional or specialized (programme) accreditation and results of the self-evaluation to confirm the findings of the self-evaluation for compliance with the standards and criteria, in which recommendations on accreditation or refusal of accreditation are made.

9.6 Accreditation Council: IQAA collegial body, the structure and responsibilities of which are regulated by the Regulations on the Accreditation Council.

9.7 Expert: a person with a solid experience in administrative work in higher education institution, or professional research and practical activity, certified by IQAA for conducting the external review procedure of an organization of higher and/or postgraduate education or a study programme.

9.8 Expert group: the experts, appointed by IQAA for conducting an external review procedure in the framework of institutional and/or specialized accreditation.

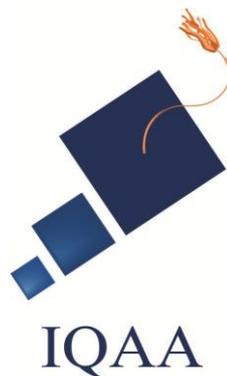
9.9 Coordinator of an expert group: IQAA employee, responsible for organization and conducting an external review procedure.

What does a higher education institution expect from an expert group and its head?

1. Respect the time and efforts invested in the self-evaluation report
2. Respect the institution as an organization of education
3. Collegiality in compliance with an appropriate professional distance
4. Objectivity and fairness
5. Knowledge of applicable standards and understanding of the context of the institution
6. Interest in the history of the institution
7. Compliance with expectations of the role and conduct during the visit

The role of an expert

- You are invited due to your competence, remember, however, you are only *one of the members of an expert group*.
- You are expected to be thoroughly prepared for the site visit:
 - ✓ Knowledge of standards and criteria of accreditation, requirements to the study process and scientific research work
 - ✓ Analysis of the self-evaluation report
 - ✓ Readiness for an appropriate participation in the review process
- Collaboration with the IQAA coordinator and other members of the group for an effective external review
- Thorough preparation for every interview and careful record-keeping
- Interview, not a monologue! (If you hear yourself for more than 3 minutes, please stop. Ask questions. Do not make a speech.)
- Refrain from conclusions based on comparisons between an institution under review and your own organization.
- Avoid pointing statements.
- Make every effort to understand the mission, aims and strategies of the institution.
- Make sure that the comments of the external review reflect the content of the guidelines/standards/manuals.
- Write your part of the external review report clearly, concisely and pragmatically, drawing a parallel with the standards/methodological manuals.
- Be understanding and constructive, avoid harsh judgments.



THE CODE OF HONOR OF AN ACCREDITATION EXPERT

1. General provisions

The Code of Honor of an expert in institutional and/or specialized (programme) accreditation of higher education institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan (hereinafter – the Code) sets general standards of conduct for an expert in accreditation of educational organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan according to generally accepted moral and ethical norms.

Participation in accreditation of higher education institutions is an expression of special trust from the side of educational institutions and the Independent Kazakhstan Quality Assurance Agency in Education (IQAA), and it places high requirements on morality and moral and ethical image of experts.

Trust and confidence in accreditation depend on the competence of those who conduct an assessment. This competence is based on the demonstration of:

- personal qualities;
- ability to perform their duties, applying knowledge and skills acquired during their study, work, training and experience in conducting assessment.

Experts maintain and improve their competence through continuing professional development and regular participation in expertise (assessments).

2. Personal qualities

An expert should have such personal qualities that allow him/her to act according to principles of conducting expertise (assessment).

An expert should be:

- independent, i.e. to express personal opinion on accreditation of the higher education institution;
- decent, i.e. truthful, sincere, honest, discreet and prudent;
- open, i.e. perceiving alternative ideas or points of view;
- observant, i.e. actively acquaint with other people and their activities;
- versatile, i.e. be ready to adapt to different situations;
- persistent, focused on achieving objectives;
- resolute, i.e. make timely decisions based on logical reasoning and analysis;

- confident, i.e. to be able to act independently, at the same time effectively collaborate with others;
- diplomatic, i.e. knowing how to tactfully interact with people.

3. Obligations of an expert

An expert should be ready for the following:

- adherence to the agreed aim and deadlines of the Agency;
- careful study of the self-evaluation report and other materials submitted for institutional and/or specialized (programme) accreditation;
- application of the principles, procedures and methods of an external evaluation of a higher education institution;
- effective planning and organization of work;
- conducting an external evaluation of a higher education institution within scheduled time;
- setting priorities and orientation in essential moments;
- data collection through an effective survey, interviewing, questionnaires, observation and analysis of documents, records and data;
- understanding of the relevant methods and results of selective research for conducting an expertise;
- verification of the accuracy of the data collected;
- assessment of the factors that affect the accuracy of the findings and conclusions of an external evaluation of a higher education institution;
- use of working documents for recording activity during an external evaluation of an educational organization;
- productive exchange of information through personal knowledge of the language or through an interpreter;
- keeping confidentiality.

The experts, conducting accreditation procedure of higher education institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in their activities should:

1. be guided by the principle of rule of law, strictly abiding by the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan, acts of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and other regulatory legal acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
2. ensure respect for and protection of the rights and interests of higher education institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan, not allow actions involving violation of rights;
3. strictly adhere to labor discipline; faithfully, impartially and efficiently perform their duties; effectively use their working hours;
4. strive to high standards of performance; use optimal and cost-effective ways to achieve objectives;
5. confront manifestations of corruption;
6. prevent interference in their activities and lobbying of interests of individual subjects;
7. prevent the use of confidential information for financial gain or other personal purposes;

8. contribute to a stable and positive moral and psychological climate in a team by personal attitude to the subject and personal behavior;
9. confront actions preventing proper performance of their duties;
10. not allow and prevent facts of violations of professional ethics on the part of other experts.

4. Rights of an expert

Experts have rights to:

- 1) submit in established order to the IQAA proposals to improve the evaluation system of higher education institutions and accreditation procedures;
- 2) request and receive from the administration of a higher education institution under accreditation documents, materials and information needed to fulfill their tasks; ask for oral and written explanations from the relevant officials working at the higher education institution;
- 3) conduct conversations, questionnaires, interviews with administration, faculty members, staff, students of the higher education institution and employers;
- 4) provide a report or a statement on the results of their work, or on a separate stage of work in the IQAA.

5. A conflict of interest

The IQAA does not appoint an applicant to be a member of the expert group, if there is even a slightest suspicion on a possible conflict of interest. According to this policy, an expert cannot be a person, who:

- works in the organization, which is part of the same system with the higher education institution under accreditation;
- during the last year was a candidate for the vacant position in this institution;
- during the last five years was an employee of this higher education institution, or otherwise related to it;
- has joint business, advisory or other interests and relations with this higher education institution;
- is a relative of any staff member of this higher education institution;
- expresses a personal opinion regarding the accreditation of this higher education institution;
- is a graduate of this higher education institution;
- refers to the administration of this higher education institution (the directorial board);
- presents any other personal arguments on a possible conflict of interest.

To ensure a complete understanding of the policy of the IQAA on a conflict of interest, the head and members of the expert group sign the Code of Honor of an Expert.

A higher education institution is committed to respect the expert group members and not offer them work as a consultant or employee within the next year.

6. Head of the expert group

Head of the expert group, conducting an external evaluation of a higher education institution, should:

- 1) precisely define tasks and scope of credentials of the expert group members in accordance with their positions, and should not require them to execute orders that go beyond the mandate of an expert;
- 2) not allow groundless accusations, facts of rudeness, tactlessness, etc. in relation to members of the expert group;
- 3) not compel members of the expert group to commit unlawful acts or acts that are inconsistent with generally accepted moral and ethical norms.

7. Public speaking on the activities of an expert group

Public speaking on the activities of an expert group is delivered by its head or a duly authorized person.

8. Experts should conduct their discussions in a correct form

Experts should conduct their discussions in a correct form, without undermining the credibility of their expert group.

9. Experts should not publicly express

Experts should not publicly express their opinion on the accreditation of higher education institutions, if it:

1. discloses the information, which is not permitted to be public;
2. contains unethical remarks against anyone.

10. In case of groundless public accusations of an expert

In case of groundless public accusations of an expert in lobbying somebody's interests or corruption, he/she should take measures to refute these accusations.

11. In relation to staff of higher education institutions under accreditation experts should:

1. express modesty, not emphasize and not use their official position;
2. not give rise to justified criticism from a higher education institution by their actions and decisions; use constructive criticism to eliminate any shortcomings and improve their professional activities;
3. comply with generally accepted moral and ethical norms, be polite and tactful.

12. Compliance with this Code by experts

Compliance with this Code by experts constitutes their official duty.

13. In case of violation of the requirements

In case of violation of the requirements set by this Code, receipt of reasoned statements in a written form from higher education institutions concerning incompetence of experts, the IQAA reserves the right to include these experts to

the "blacklist of experts" of the Agency and not allow their participation in the procedure of an external evaluation henceforth.

Full name

Signature

**Template of the site visit programme of the expert group for
institutional accreditation**

	Activities	Venue	Time	Participants	Note
<i>The day before</i>					
1	Arrival	Hotel	During the day	Head of the expert group, the expert group, the coordinator (H, EG, C)	
<i>Day 1</i>					
1	Transfer from the hotel to the institution		8.30 - 9.00	H, EG, C, Responsible person from the institution (RP)	
2	Briefing, discussion	Room for the experts	9.00 - 10.00	H, EG, C	
3	Meeting with Rector	Rector's Office	10.00 - 10.30	H, EG, C, Rector	
4	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	10.30 - 10.45	H, EG, C	
5	Interview with Vice-Rectors and review of materials by profile of activity	Rector's Office	10.45 - 11.30	H, EG, C, Vice-Rectors	
6	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	11.30 - 11.45.	H, EG, C	
7	Visual review of the institution	Faculties, Office of the Registrar, laboratories, auditoriums	11.45 - 13.00	H, EG, C, RP	
8	Lunch	Canteen	13.00 - 14.00	H, EG, C	
9	Interview with head of structural units	Room No._____	14.00 - 14.45	H, EG, C, heads of structural units	
10	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	14.45 - 15.00	H, EG, C	

11	Interview with deans and heads of departments	Room No.____	15.00 - 15.45	H, EG, C, deans, heads of departments	
12	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	15.45 - 16.00	H, EG, C	
13	Interview with Bachelor and Master students	Room No.____	17.00 - 17.45	H, EG, C, Bachelor and Master students	
14	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	16.45 - 17.00	H, EG, C,	
15	Interview with teaching staff	Room No.____	18.00 - 18.45	H, EG, C, teaching staff	
16	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	17.45 - 18.00	H, EG, C,	
17	Interview with graduates	Room No.____, Room for the experts, telephone	10.15 - 11.00	H, EG, C, graduates	
18	Discussion of the expert group on the outcomes of the first day, study of materials to the self-evaluation report, brief writing of the report (planning of work for the next day)	Room for the experts	18.45 - 19.30	H, EG, C	
19	Dinner	Hotel	19.30 - 20.30	H, EG, C	
20	Session of the expert group	Hotel	20.30 - 21.30	H, EG, C	
Day 2					
1	Transfer from the hotel to the institution		8.30 - 9.00	H, EG, C, RP	
2	Visiting classes of teaching staff of the institution	Faculties	9.00 - 11.00	H, EG, C	
3	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	11.00 - 11.15	H, EG, C	
4	Interview with employers	Room No.____, Room for the experts, telephone	11.15 - 12.00	H, EG, C, employers	

5	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	12.00 - 12.15	H, EG, C	
6	Visiting the Informational and Analytical Center, the library	Informational and Analytical Center, Library	12.15 – 13.00	H, EG, C	
6	Lunch	Canteen	13.00 - 14.00	H, EG, C	
7	Visiting research and industry complexes, branches of departments in industry, practice bases	research and industry complexes, branches of departments in industry, practice bases	14.00 - 16.00	H, EG, C, RP	
8	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	16.00 - 16.15	H, EG, C	
9	Meeting with the Chief Accountant	Office of the Chief Accountant	16.15 - 16.35	H, EG, C, RP	
10	Selective visiting to departments and structural units	Faculties, structural units	16.35 - 17.35	H, EG, C, RP	
11	Visiting student support services and students' residencies		17.35 – 18.00	H, EG, C, RP	
12	Discussion of the results, brief writing of the report	Room for the experts	18.00 - 19.00	H, EG, C	
13	Dinner	Canteen	19.00 - 20.00	H, EG, C	
14	Transfer to the hotel		20.00 - 20.30	H, EG, C	

<i>Day 3</i>					
1	Transfer from the hotel to the institution		8.30 - 9.00		
2	Work with documents, selective invitation of Vice-Rectors, deans, heads of structural units for clarification of the documents	Room for the experts	9.00 - 11.30	H, EG, C	
3	Work of the expert group: preparation of the report, formation of the recommendations	Room for the experts	11.30 - 13.00	H, EG, C	
4	Lunch	Canteen	13.00 - 14.00	H, EG, C	
5	Work of the expert group: preparation of the report, formation of the recommendations	Room for the experts	14.00 - 16.00	H, EG, C	
6	Meeting with the administration, oral report on the outcomes of the external review behind the closed doors	Rectorate, deans	16.00 - 17.00	H, EG, C, Rectorate	
7	Departure of the expert group (according to the transport timetable)		17.00 - 20.00 or next morning according to the transport timetable	H, EG, C	

Note: H – head of the expert group, EG - the expert group, C- the coordinator, RP – the responsible person from the institution.

**Template of the site visit programme of the expert group for specialized
(programme) accreditation**

	Activities	Venue	Time	Participants	Note
<i>The day before</i>					
1	Arrival	Hotel	During the day	H, EG, C	
<i>Day 1</i>					
1.	Transfer from the hotel to the institution		8.30 - 8.50	H, EG, C, RP	
2.	Briefing, discussion	Room for the experts	8.50 - 09.50	H, EG, C	
3.	Meeting with the Rector	Rector's Office	09.50 - 10.20	H, EG, C	
4.	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	10.20 - 10.35	H, EG, C	
5.	Interview with Vice-Rectors and review of materials by profile of activity	Rector's Office	10.35 - 11.20	H, EG, C	
6.	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	11.20 - 11.35	H, EG, C	
7.	Visual review of the faculty and departments in the direction of the study programmes under accreditation	Faculties, departments	11.35 - 13.00	H, EG, C, RP	
8.	Lunch	Canteen	13.00 - 14.00	H, EG, C	
9.	Visiting practice bases in the direction of the study programmes under accreditation	Practice bases	14.00 – 15.30	H, EG, C, head of department	
10.	Interview with the dean and heads of departments	Room No. ____	15.30 - 16.10	H, EG, C, dean, heads of departments	
11.	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	16.10 - 16.20	H, EG, C	
12.	Interview with Bachelor and Master students	Room No. ____	16.20 - 17.05	H, EG, C, students	
13.	Exchange of opinions of	Room for the experts	17.05 - 17.20	H, EG, C	

	the expert group				
14.	Interview with teaching staff	Room No.____	17.20 - 18.05	H, EG, C, teaching staff	
15.	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	18.05 - 18.20	H, EG, C	
16.	Interview with employers	Room No.____	18.20 - 19.00	H, EG, C, employers	
17.	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	19.00 - 19.10	H, EG, C	
18.	Interview with graduates	Room No.____	19.10 - 19.55	H, EG, C, graduates	
19.	Discussion of the expert group on the results of the first day, study of materials on the self-evaluation report, planning of work for the next day	Room for the experts	19.55 - 20.10	H, EG, C	
20.	Dinner	Hotel	20.10 - 21.10	H, EG, C	
21.	Session of the expert group	Hotel	21.10 - 22.00	H, EG, C	
Day 2					
1	Transfer from the hotel to practice bases		8.30 - 9.00	H, EG, C, RP	
2	Visiting classes	Auditoriums according to the timetable	9.00 – 11.00	H, EG, C, RP	
3	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	11.00 - 11.15	H, EG, C	
4	Visiting the library and student support services	Library and student support services	11.15 - 11.45	H, EG, C	
4	Study of the documentation of departments realizing the study programmes under accreditation	Department	11.45 - 12.45	H, EG, C	
5	Exchange of opinions of the expert group	Room for the experts	12.45 - 13.00	H, EG, C	
6	Lunch	Canteen	13.00 - 14.00	H, EG, C	
7	Work of the expert group on the recommendations, selective visit to objects, selective invitation of Vice-Rectors, deans, heads of departments, teaching staff, and students	Department	14.00 - 15.00	H, EG, C, RP	

8	Work of the expert group: preparation of the report, formation of the recommendations	Room for the experts	15.00 - 18.00	H, EG, C	
9	Meeting with the administration, presentation of the preliminary results and recommendations	Rector's Office	18.00 - 19.00	H, EG, C, administration of the institution	
10	Dinner	Canteen	19.00 - 20.00	H, EG, C	
11	Transfer to the hotel		20.00 - 20.30	H, EG, C	
12	Departure of the expert group	According to the timetable		C, RP	Airport, rail road station

Note: H – head of the expert group, EG - the expert group, C- the coordinator, RP – the responsible person from the institution.

Acquaintance with the self-evaluation report of the institution

After reading the self-evaluation report the experts should be aware of:

1. What is the mission, aims and objectives of the university/college, which units perform them?
2. Whether they are adequate at present for the region ...?
3. Are all activities of the university/college corresponding to the stated mission, aims and objectives?
4. Are study programmes and other activities organized so as to help to achieve these aims?
5. Whether it is obvious that these objectives have been achieved / are being achieved by the university/college?
6. Are there human, material and financial resources necessary to achieve organizational goals? Whether their presence in the future is guaranteed?

Interview questions should be formulated in advance. When studying a self-evaluation report, the expert should answer the following questions:

1. Were all staff members involved into the process of self-evaluation? Assistance of external consultants is possible.
 2. What else should I know about the institution and where can I get this information?
 3. If the infrastructure of the institution and its processes (administrative and academic buildings, additional housing, distance learning, study programmes) are working effectively?
 4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the institution?
 5. Do incoming indicators, including assessment of students at the beginning of their studies contribute to the effectiveness of achieving the aims?
 6. Are the rules for hiring correspond to the strategic planning and budget planning?
 7. How do the documents complement each other?
 8. What items should be added to supplement a self-evaluation report or extend the information? For example, is the information about extracurricular activities, significant certificates, linear study programmes and distance learning included?
 9. Are there any inaccuracies/discrepancies that require clarification?
 10. Who should be interviewed? What information should they provide?
- What additional documents should be studied?

Form of the external review report of the expert group

1. Context and aims of the site visit

- Brief description of the institution;
- Passport of the institution, including: the list of assigned academic degrees and qualifications (with issuance of a diploma);
- description of the self-evaluation process and report (the methodology of self-evaluation, the level of staff's participation).

2. External review

To give in a narrative form an overview of the external review and analysis, including fields of significant improvement, as well as other aspects of the organization, deserving positive comments.

3. Compliance with the standards of institutional and specialized accreditation.

This part of the report is generally based on the structure of the self-evaluation report of the institution (e.g., related standards are usually described in one group and are rarely considered as separate standards). In any case, there should be a clear overview of how all the standards of institutional and specialized accreditation are performed. The experts fill in the table (Forms 6.1-6.3). In case of compliance of the self-evaluation report with remarks or non-compliance the forms 6.4-6.5 should be filled in addition.

4. Conclusion on the external review results and recommendations for further sustainable improvement of quality.

Recommendations on further improvement of quality of a relevant individual standard of accreditation should be grouped and submitted to the IQAA/institution.

This conclusion should provide the basis for making a decision on accreditation by the Accreditation Council.

5. The forms 6.1 - 6.3 should be enclosed to the report.

**The table of compliance of the self-evaluation report with the actual
state of affairs in the institution
(institutional accreditation)**

Standards	Mark the level of compliance of the self-evaluation report with the actual state of affairs by each standard			
	Full compliance	Substantial compliance	Partial compliance	Non compliance
<i>Standard 1</i> Mission, strategic planning and policy in the field of quality				
<i>Standard 2</i> General management and Information management				
<i>Standard 3</i> Students, student-centred learning, teaching and assessment of performance				
<i>Standard 4</i> Admission of students, learning outcomes, recognition and qualifications				
<i>Standard 5</i> Study programmes: design, effectiveness, continuous monitoring and periodic review				
<i>Standard 6</i> Teaching staff and teaching effectiveness				
<i>Standard 7</i> Scientific research work (creative activity)				
<i>Standard 8</i> Resources and student support services				
<i>Standard 9</i> Public information				
<i>Standard 10</i> Periodic external quality assurance and follow-up procedures				

**The table of compliance of the self-evaluation report with the actual
state of affairs in the institution
(specialized (programme) accreditation)**

Standards	Mark the level of compliance of the self-evaluation report with the actual state of affairs by each standard			
	Complies fully	Complies with minor remarks	Complies with significant remarks	Does not comply
<i>Standard 1</i> Aims of study programmes and policy in the field of quality assurance				
<i>Standard 2</i> Development, approval of study programmes and information management				
<i>Standard 3</i> Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment				
<i>Standard 4</i> Admission of students, progression, recognition and certification				
<i>Standard 5</i> Teaching staff				
<i>Standard 6</i> Learning resources and student support				
<i>Standard 7</i> Public information				
<i>Standard 8</i> Continuous monitoring and periodic review of study programmes				

The scheme of the questionnaire in case of compliance of the standards of accreditation in the self-evaluation report with remarks

Name of the educational organization:			
The chosen topic of the self-evaluation report:			
Standard	Submitted documents	Brief annotation	Section of the self-evaluation report
No. and name of the standard	Name of the documents, the relevant section and/or page no.	Description on what each document demonstrates in relation to the standards and its fundamental elements	Point the section of the self-evaluation report and page no.

Example

Name of the educational organization: X			
The chosen topic of the self-evaluation report: Assessment criteria of student support services			
Standard	Submitted documents	Brief annotation	Section of the self-evaluation report
Standard 4 of Admission students, progression, recognition and certification	Reference guides, booklets, regulations	Available only in printed version, there is no electronic version on the website of the institution	Section 4

Form 6.5

The scheme of the questionnaire in case of non-compliance of the standards of accreditation in the self-evaluation report

Name of the educational organization:		
The chosen topic of the self-evaluation report:		
Standard	Submitted documents	Brief annotation
No. and name of the standard	Name of the documents	Description on what each document demonstrates in relation to the standards and its fundamental elements

Example

Name of the educational organization: YX			
The chosen topic of the self-evaluation report: planning of the university budget			
Standard		Submitted documents	Brief annotation
Standard resources support	6 and	Learning student	Plan of the budget planning
			Only the annual budget plan is presented

Template of the cover page of the external review report



IQAA external review report



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

**REPORT ON THE EXTERNAL REVIEW
OF _____,**

name of the higher education institution

**written by the IQAA expert group
after the study of the self-evaluation report and the external review visit
to the educational organization in the framework of specialized accreditation
of the study programme**

name of the study programme

Date of the external review:

**City
Year**

THE EXPERT GROUP

Head: Full name, position, scientific degree, title, post address, e-mail, signature

Members:

1) Full name, position, scientific degree, title, post address, e-mail, signature

2) Full name, position, scientific degree, title, post address, e-mail, signature

3) Full name, position, scientific degree, title, post address, e-mail, signature

4) Full name, position, scientific degree, title, post address, e-mail, signature

5) Full name, position, scientific degree, title, post address, e-mail, signature

THE IQAA COORDINATOR

6) Full name, position, scientific degree, title, post address, e-mail, signature

RESPONSIBLE PERSON FOR THE EXTERNAL REVIEW FROM THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

7) Full name, position, scientific degree, title, post address, e-mail, signature

A short list of actions that the expert group (team) can take or recommend to the Commission

<i>Does the educational institution comply with the standards?</i>				
<i>If the expert group answers confidentially:</i> ↓	<i>The following information is submitted to the educational institution</i>		<i>The team presents the following confidential information to the Commission in a form of a letter from the head of the expert group</i>	
	<i>The team should take the following actions:</i>	<i>The team at its discretion can:</i>	<i>The team should recommend the Commission the following actions:</i>	<i>The team can additionally recommend the Commission the following actions:</i>
Yes ➡	-	1.To discuss significant achievements; 2. To give suggestions for institutional improvement	To accredit	To highlight the achievements of the institution, the quality and outcomes of the self-evaluation process
Yes , but with minor remarks, which should be eliminated within a year ➡	Give the exact wording of the remarks To make recommendations	1.To discuss significant achievements; 2. To give suggestions for institutional improvement	To recommend accreditation with a further report on the course of elimination remarks within a year	To highlight the achievements of the institution, the quality and outcomes of the self-evaluation process
Yes , but with significant remarks, which should be eliminated within a year ➡	Give the exact wording of the remarks To make recommendations	1.To discuss significant achievements; 2. To give suggestions for institutional improvement	To recommend accreditation with a further report on the course of elimination remarks within a year	1. To submit a report on the elimination of remarks to the Agency after a year. 2. In case of failure to report by the deadline, to raise the question on deprivation of the accreditation certificate
No , the educational institution does not comply with the standards and criteria of institutional/programme accreditation ➡	Give the exact wording of the remarks To make recommendations	1. To discuss significant achievements/progress or examples of innovations; 2. To give suggestions for institutional improvement	To warn the institution about a possible refusal of accreditation	To send the Agency staff to the institution immediately for a further discussion in the Commission
The expert group does not have enough information to make a conclusion ➡	To identify what kind of information is needed	1.To discuss significant achievements; 2. To give suggestions for institutional improvement	To postpone the decision on accreditation and request the missing information to a determined date.	The site visit can be organized after the presentation of the requested information*

*Note: The visit is conducted at the discretion of the Agency, if the data confirmation requires presence on site.