



THE CODE OF HONOR FOR AN ACCREDITATION EXPERT

1. General provisions

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

Participation in accreditation of educational organizations is an expression of special trust from the side of educational institutions and the Independent Kazakh Agency for Quality Assurance 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 educational organizations 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 educational organizations 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 educational organizations 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 educational organizations, 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 educational organizations 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 educational organizations 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