INDEPENDENT AGENCY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION (IQAA)

IQAA

STANDARDS FOR SPECIALIZED (PROGRAMME) ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

GENERAL PROVISIONS

ASTANA 2019

PREFACE

1. DEVELOPED AND INTRODUCED by the Independent Kazakh Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (IQAA), taking into account suggestions and comments of higher education institutions.

2. APPROVED AND PUT INTO EFFECT by the order of the Independent Kazakh Agency for Quality Assurance in Education No. 4 dated 01.08.2012. Partial amendments and additions made by orders of IQAA No. 7 dated 25.08.2014, No. 8 dated 24.08.2015 and No. 15 dated 30.06.17.

3. THE HOLDER OF THE SCRIPT: Independent Kazakh Agency for Quality Assurance in Education: 010000, Astana, Dostyk, 20, Office 801, "Saint Petersburg" BC, tel./fax: 8 (7172) 273820.

4. EXPERTISE held at the "Expert" on 21.08.2017
(expert conclusion No. 01/01-05).

STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION

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

1.1 General provisions

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

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

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

1.2 Evaluation criteria

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

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

1.1.6   The procedure for the adoption and approval of the HEI policy on quality assurance.

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

1.1.8   Avaibility Implementation of internal and external quality assurance (organization of student participation in all internal and external quality assurance processes, constant monitoring of student survey results, informing students about audit results and subsequent procedures). Implementation of internal and external quality assurance (organization of student participation in all internal and external quality assurance processes, constant monitoring of student survey results, informing students about audit results and subsequent procedures).

1.1.9   A systematic monitoring, performance evaluation, revision of the policy

in the field of quality assurance of educational programmes on the basis of information management, depending on changing conditions and environment (labor market, partners, and the world).

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

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

1.1.12 Measures for maintaining academic integrity and academic freedom, protection from any form of intolerance and discrimination against students, teaching staff or personnel (the system of checking all written works of students on the program " Anti-plagiarism", etc.).

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

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

2.1 General provisions

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

2.1.2 Educational programmes at each level of education should be developed in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework and reflect the requirements of the professional standard of the relevant industry or field of activity.

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

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

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

2.2 Evaluation criteria

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

2.1.7 The structure of educational programs and teaching periods by educational level.

2.1.8 Development of the content of educational programmes according to levels of education. Focus on expected learning outcomes, which reflect student-centered learning: competencies, competencies and practice-oriented educational programs corresponding to Dublin descriptors

2.1.9 The use of technology of modular learning in the development of educational programmes; development of modular educational programmes, which contain competencies that are necessary for the future specialist as learning outcomes.

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

2.1.11 Study and methodological support of educational programmes.

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

2.1.13 Consistency of educational programmes with the National Qualifications Framework and professional standards, as well as with SOES. Availability of external expertise and peer review during the approval of educational programmes.

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

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

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

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

2.1.16 Opportunities of a HEI to conduct educational programmes using distance learning technologies.

2.1.17 HEI conducts a regular assessment and revision of educational programmes involving students, staff and other stakeholders based on systematic collection, analysis, and information management, which results in adaptation of the programmes to ensure their relevance. The revised details of the educational programmes are published.

Thereby, HEIs should consider the following indicators:
- ✓ information on the student body;
- ✓ the level of academic performance, student achievement and dropout;
- ✓ students' satisfaction with the implementation of programmes;
- ✓ availability of educational resources and support services for students;
- ✓ employability of graduates;
- ✓ qualifications of graduates;
- ✓ key performance indicators of the HEI under the accredited educational program.

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

STANDARD 3. STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

3.1 General provisions

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

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

3.1.3 Realization of the process of an estimation of students' training results as the main result of educational process for a student from the point of view of knowledge, understanding and abilities.

3.1.4 During implementation of student-centred learning and teaching, HEIs should ensure:

a) respect and attention in relation to various groups of students and their needs;

b) the provision of flexible learning paths;

c) the use of various pedagogical methods and forms of training that provide an active student position in the independent acquisition of knowledge and necessary competencies, a departure from the position of the teacher transferring knowledge in a "finished form";

d) regular evaluation and correction of forms of learning and teaching methods;

e) encouraging student autonomy while providing the necessary guidance and support from the teacher, who becomes a tutor-consultant for educational interaction, and not just performs the functions of informing and monitoring;

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

3.2 Evaluation criteria for student-centered learning

3.1.5 Consideration of student characteristics in the study process, such as individuality, the desire for greater freedom, personal and professional growth, independence, self-esteem.

3.1.6 Preparation of the student's workload taking into account his individual abilities and opportunities. Completeness of reflection in individual curricula of the student of all components and elements of educational programs on levels of education.

3.1.7 The presence of a clear procedure for enrolling in academic disciplines, the practice of its implementation and compliance.

3.1.8 Mastering of educational programs by students in accordance with regulatory requirements. Student workload by educational level. Contact load, independent work of students, including under the guidance of a teacher by educational level.

3.1.9 Social support (providing social, psychological support to students, educational support for students showing a deeper interest in learning and, conversely, having educational difficulties, help in finding work in their spare time,

and a balance between study, work and the students' personal life).

3.1.10 Implementation of mobility, recognition of ECTS credits, compliance with the framework of qualifications (availability of simple and flexible measures for recognizing the previous education, assistance in organizing academic mobility, issuing Diploma Supplement indicating formal and informal learning outcomes).

3.1.11 Use of the possibilities of a unified system of information support for students (for example, on the basis of a Web site) for all educational programmes, availability of Wi-Fi points to support students in realizing their needs for personal development and self-improvement. Support of students in the access to modern electronic databases of the university, including foreign databases (Scopus, Thomson Reuters, etc.).

3.1.12 Participation of students in research, the availability and effectiveness of international academic mobility and internships.

3.3 Evaluation criteria for student-centered

3.1.13 The use of various forms of teaching (where possible) and the use of a variety of pedagogical methods.

3.1.14 Evidence for a change in the learning process at a HEI, introducing a new position of a teacher: from transferring ready-made information to a position of an organizer of active independent acquisition by students of the necessary competencies, a consultant to such a process, using innovative teaching technologies for this: information and communication, interactive, case studies, etc.

3.1.15 Continuous training of teachers for mastering students-centered learning technologies; informing teachers about the principles of student-centered learning, their new role and rights.

3.1.16 The presence of work on the academic support of students who do not cope with academic requirements (additional counseling or additional classes), the institute of tutors.

3.4 Evaluation criteria for learning outcomes

3.1.17 The presence of the internal monitoring of students' knowledge quality, which applies:
- ✓ criteria and methods of assessment; their transparency, objectivity, fairness, and uniform application for all students;
- ✓ analysis of achieved learning outcomes, their comparison with the expected learning outcomes; taking management decisions;
- ✓ participation in the examination procedures of more than one teaching staff;
- ✓ the use of mitigating circumstances in the rules of assessment, if there are any;
- ✓ compliance with the regulations adopted at the national level in the assessment procedures;

3.1.18 Analysis of the results from the current control and intermediate attestation of students. Procedures for boundary control of students' knowledge. Use of control methods that reveal the levels of mastering learning outcomes -

competences (execution and delivery of project works, mini-course projects, solution of situational tasks, etc.).

3.1.19 The presence of an electronic database on the academic achievements of each student, the systematic management of data collection, monitoring and management of information on the progress of students.

3.1.20 HEI demonstrates the availability of the official procedure for consideration of student's complaints/appeals.

3.1.21 Compliance with the academic rules of translation, restoration, the provision of academic leave.

3.1.22 Satisfaction of students with the quality of educational services, assessment of learning outcomes (systematic questioning).

STANDARD 4.
ADMISSION OF STUDENTS, ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION

4.1 General provisions

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

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

• institutional practice of recognition in accordance with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention;

• cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and national centers ENIC / NARIC to provide coherent recognition across the country.

4.2 Evaluation criteria

4.1.3 Availability of the system of professional guidance, aimed at training and selection of their "own" applicant, who deliberately choses the educational programme as a result of many years of work with him/her of the school and/or HEI.

4.1.4 Implementation of admission to HEI based on well-developed criteria that are available to students, transparent, and have a description of the conditions of learning opportunities and future employment opportunities of the programmes. Availability of conditions to ensure the stability of student enrollment in educational programmes.

4.1.5 Availability of orientation procedures for first-year students in a HEI.

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

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

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

4.1.9 Educational outcomes and competencies should be described not only at the qualification level, but also at the level of individual modules and each academic discipline.

4.1.10 The issuance of the diploma supplement reflecting the qualifications obtained, learning outcomes, as well as the context, content and status of the training, including the issuance of European diploma supplement - Diploma Supplement.

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

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

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

STANDARD 5.TEACHING STAFF

5.1 General provisions

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

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

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

5.2 Evaluation criteria

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

5.1.5 Indicators for the qualitative composition of teaching staff, the categories of teaching staff (full-time, part-time) in the last 5 years (assessment is conducted for teachers conducting basic and core disciplines).

5.1.6 Characteristics of the teaching staff in accordance with the qualification requirements for the licensing of educational activities. Implementation of national regulatory requirements for teaching staff under the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education".

5.1.7 Characteristics of the teaching staff appropriate by the profile of educational programmes: appropriate basic education, code of scientific degree and academic title, professional development courses of no less than 6 months or practice experience in the modern (advanced) enterprises on the profile of the taught disciplines, approved by an appropriate certificate, or serious scientific and scientific-methodological works on the profile of the educational programme.

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

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

The level of individual work plans and reports of the teaching staff, including educational, methodical, research and educational work.

5.1.9 The activities of teaching staff: assessment of the balance between the academic, research, methodical, organizational and educational activities of teaching staff.

Availability of information on the teaching load of the teaching staff in the framework of the educational programmes, on the consolidation of academic disciplines in the departments. Evaluation of the optimal distribution of the teaching load.

5.1.10 The contribution of the teaching staff in improving educational programmes, their modularization, determining educational goals and outcomes, increasing the efficiency of learning.

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

5.1.11 The results of the systematic assessment of competence of teaching staff by the HEI's administration, assessment of teaching quality efficiency (open classes, reciprocal visiting of classes, questionnaires of students and colleagues, etc.). Participation of the teaching staff in seminars, training on the improvement of qualifications in education quality assurance.

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

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

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

5.1.15 Lecturing and conducting classes by invited highly qualified specialists from leading organizations and industries.

STANDARD 6.
LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

6.1 General provisions

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

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

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

6.2. Evaluation criteria

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

6.1.5 Availability of structural units and student support services that will assist students in acquisition of educational programmes, where qualified advisors, personal tutors, and consultants provide the necessary assistance.

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

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

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

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

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

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

6.1.12 Modern computer classes: the possibility to use them by students and

teaching staff with access to information resources (local area network, the Internet), constant updating, improving and expanding the information base, availability of licensed educational programmes.

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

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

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

6.1.16 Constant updating and expansion of the material and technical base with modern equipment for educational programmes.

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

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

STANDARD 7. PUBLIC INFORMATION

7.1 General provisions

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

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

7.2 Evaluation criteria

7.1.3 Publication of information on educational programs indicating the proposed training paths and qualifications awarded on the website, university portal, information stands, booklets, on the number of students studying under the programs; teachers who provide training.

7.1.4 Publication of information on the expected learning outcomes (competencies) for educational programs on the university website.

7.1.5 Information on the employment of graduates on educational programs and their career growth.

7.1.6 The availability of information on the conditions for admission of applicants, the rules and conditions for training students, the rules for conducting various types of exams, tests, assessments, methods and criteria for grading.

7.1.7 Information about the calendar of the educational process, including exams and holidays.

7.1.8 Information about student support services, including dormitories and other units that are aimed at creating good conditions for learning.

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

8.1 General provisions

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

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

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

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

8.2 Evaluation criteria

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

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

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

8.2.4 The effectiveness of assessment procedures for students.

8.2.5 Student expectations, needs and satisfaction with educational programmes.

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

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

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

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

8.2.10 HEIs should undergo an annual post-accreditation monitoring to assess the changes in their internal systems of quality assurance. To analyze changes and improvements in the educational programme after two years of accreditation under the Agreement, one or two experts and a coordinator organize a visit to the university. HEIs annually report on changes in the internal quality assurance system.

8.2.11 In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education", IQAA standards and the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), HEIs on a regular basis, every five years, should undergo the process of external assessment - accreditation of educational programmes.