



Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care

**RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR STUDENT INVOLVEMENT
IN THE PROCESS OF ACCREDITATION
OF HIGHER AND POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION**



Almaty, 2023

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Education and Health Care**

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1. DEVELOPED BY Non-Profit Organization “Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care” (ECAQA)

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INTRODUCTION

Accreditation of Higher Education Institution is a procedure for recognition of educational services' conformity to the established accreditation standards (regulations) by the accreditation authority, in order to provide unbiased information on their quality and confirm availability of effective mechanisms of its improvement. Accreditation of Higher Education Institution is a tool for assuring quality of education. (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On education" dated 27.07.2007 no.319-III, last amended on 03.01.2023).

The ECAQA website has a "Students" section that provides information about the accreditation process <http://www.ecaqa.org/studenty/studentam-ob-akkreditatsii> and students' participation in accreditation <http://www.ecaqa.org/studenty/uchastie-studentov-v-akkreditatsii>

The main goals of accreditation assure the society that the accredited organizations of higher and postgraduate education (hereinafter referred to as HEIs) and educational programmes conform to the established national quality programmes and promote further quality improvement of higher and postgraduate education. Accreditation model, harmonized with the international practice of education quality assurance, provides the students with warranty of adequate quality of educational services.

Accreditation is performed by the accreditation authority (agency, centre) on the basis of the standards (regulations) for conduction of institutional and special-purpose (curriculum) accreditation, developed by it.

Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care (hereinafter referred to as **ECAQA**) is a non-governmental non-profit organization in the field of accreditation of higher, postgraduate and additional (continuing professional development) education, as well as specializes in accreditation of all levels of medical, pharmaceutical and nursing education

ECAQA is included in the Register of recognized accreditation authorities 1 of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (RoK MSHE).

ECAQA is recognized by the World Federation of Medical Education until October 31, 2032, which will fulfil the requirement of the Commission on Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) for graduates of medical educational institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan to enter the United States for postgraduate training programmes in clinical specialties from 2024.

ECAQA is the first specialized accreditation agency in the field of accreditation of healthcare education in the CIS countries, is included in the Directory of Organizations that Recognize/Accredit Medical Schools (DORA) of the Foundation for International Medical Education Research (FAIMER) of the United States, a partner of the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) in the Programme for the Recognition of Basic Medical Education Accreditation Authorities, as well as in the International Directory of the International Quality Group of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

In 2019, ECAQA gained international recognition by undergoing external assessment and being included in the Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR), which promotes harmonization and internationalization of Higher Professional Education and Research in the region, as well as entitles it to conduct international accreditation with the participation of representatives of the Asia-Pacific Quality Assurance Network for Higher Education (APQN).

ECAQA is a member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA) and a member of the International Quality Group of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA CIQG). ECAQA is currently undergoing the procedure of registration in the European Quality Assurance Register - EQAR.

ECAQA's standards of institutional and programmatic accreditation (Bachelor, Master, PhD, residency, Joint Degree Programmes, CPD, technical and vocational and post-secondary education) and Guidelines for self-evaluation and external evaluation considering type of accreditation, specificity of educational programmes are developed based on Standards and Guiding principles on quality assurance in European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015), Global Standards of the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) on quality improvement of basic, postgraduate education and CPD (2015, 2020), Standards of Organization on PhD programmes in biological medicine and clinical medicine in European System (ORPHEUS) and Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE) (2015), Standards of joint programmes quality assurance in European Higher Education Area.

The condition for accreditation process is a critical evaluation by HEI of its strengths and weaknesses, which are then assessed by the group of experts from the External Expert Committee (hereinafter referred to as EEC) on accreditation and during HEI visit.

Should HEI or educational programme successfully pass accreditation, they obtain a certificate for 5 or 3 years, which assures a wide range of parties concerned (students, teachers, employees, students' parents, physicians, patients), that this HEI ensures high quality of educational services.

This Guideline describes the participation of trainees of all categories (students, Master's students, PhD students, interns, residents, continuing professional development programme trainees) in the accreditation process.

1. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The Guideline applies terms and definitions in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On education" dated 27.07.2007 no.319-III (last amended on 03.01.2023):

Accreditation of Education Institutions is a procedure for recognition of educational services' conformity to the established accreditation standards

(regulations) by the accreditation authority, in order to provide unbiased information on their quality and confirm availability of effective mechanisms of its improvement;

Accreditation of educational programmes is a procedure for recognition of educational programmes' (specialty) conformity to the established accreditation standards (regulations) by the accreditation authority in order to provide unbiased information on their quality and confirm availability of effective mechanisms of its improvement;

Institutional accreditation is a process of evaluating quality of Educational Institution by the accreditation authority for compliance with the declared status and established standards of accreditation authority;

International accreditation is a process of evaluating quality of Education Institutions' activity (institutional accreditation) and individual educational programmes (programmatic accreditation) for compliance with the standards for assurance of quality of education, conducted by the national or foreign accreditation authority, included in the Register 1 of RoK MSHE;

National accreditation is a process of evaluating quality of Education Institutions' activity (institutional accreditation) and individual educational programmes (programmatic accreditation) for compliance with the standards for assurance of quality of education, conducted by the national accreditation authority, included in the Register 1 of RoK MSHE;

Programmatic accreditation is an evaluation of quality of individual educational programmes, delivered by the Education Institution;

Accreditation standards (regulations) – documents of accreditation authority that establish requirements to the accreditation procedure.

2. ACCREDITATION PROCESS

2.1 Summary of accreditation stages

Accreditation process includes the following stages:

- Self-evaluation by HEI (institutional or programmeme) in accordance with the criteria of accreditation standards, which is completed by generation of self-evaluation report;
- Expert evaluation of self-evaluation reports by the accreditation authority (hereinafter – **ECAQA**);
- External evaluation procedure – visit of Higher Education Institution, PGD, CPD organization (for convenience, we'll combine it under one name – **HEI**) by the members of External Expert Comission (hereinafter – **EEC**) of **ECAQA**, which performs evaluation of HEI (institutional) and/or educational programmeme (programmatic);
- Generation of report and recommendations by **EEC** members for **ECAQA** Accreditation Council;
- Review of findings by **ECAQA**;
- Consideration of accreditation issue and making final decision by the Accreditation Council;

– Determining the accreditation status of HEI and/or educational programme (provide accreditation for 5 years; accreditation for 3 years (applicable for new educational organizations, primary accreditation of educational programmes); or provide accreditation for 1 year with follow-up visit of HEI; or reject accreditation; withdraw the accreditation certificate).

2.2 Self-evaluation of Education Institution

During accreditation, both institutional and programmatic, much attention is given to the self-evaluation of HEI and/or educational programme by accreditation standards, completed by report generation.

Purpose of self-evaluation: elevation of self-consciousness and social accountability of HEIs; determination of existing problems with regards to certain areas of activity of HEI or educational programme that require solution and determination of measures for improvement; improvement and development of academic standards, feedback for improvement of quality of education in HEI or specific educational programme.

Self-evaluation includes the following elements: determination of purpose of self-evaluation and end results, planning, evaluation design, gathering of data and relevant information, data and information analysis and investigation, distribution of responsibilities among the members of the internal evaluation commission (working group) on self-evaluation, making decisions regarding actions and measures, which should be taken to solve detected problems and/or further improvement.

HEI's preparation to external evaluation starts approximately 1 year (12 months) before the EEC's visit. For this purpose, ECAQA together with HEI fixes exact date of visit of this institution by EEC members. ECAQA, as an accreditation authority, provides HEI with the materials, required for self-evaluation (Standards for institutional or programme accreditation and Guidelines for self-evaluation).

Upon establishment of the date of HEI site-visit by EEC members, the HEI representative, appointed by the rector and responsible for performance of accreditation (hereinafter referred to as the "Representative") informs the employees and students about forthcoming EEC site-visit. The "Representative" develops plan (schedule) of self-evaluation (appendix 1) and arranges performance of self-evaluation in HEI (educational programme), maintains control over performance of self-evaluation in accordance with the developed plan.

Self-evaluation is performed in accordance with principal provisions and requirements of ECAQA Standards for accreditation.

For example, institutional accreditation of Higher and Postgraduate Education Organizations includes the following 10 Standards:

Standard 1 "Mission and policy of quality assurance of educational organization;

Standard 2 "Educational Programmes";

Standard 3 "Student-Centred Learning and Student Assessment";

Standard 4 "Students, Admission, Selection and Qualification Policies";
Standard 5 "Academic Staff/Faculty."
Standard 6 "Educational Resources and Student Support";
Standard 7, "Information and Activity Management."
Standard 8 "Public Information."
Standard 9 "Monitoring and Evaluation of Educational Programmes";
Standard 10 "Procedures for External Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement".

For instance, institutional accreditation of Medical University includes the following 9 Standards:

Standard 1 "Mission and end outcomes"
Standard 2 "Educational programmes (curriculum)"
Standard 3 "Assessment of students"
Standard 4 "Students"
Standard 5 "Academic staff"
Standard 6 "Educational resources"
Standard 7 "Evaluation of educational programmes"
Standard 8 "Governance and administration"
Standard 9 "Continuous Renewal"

Self-evaluation of HEI/educational programme is usually chaired by internal commission for institutional self-evaluation, within which sub-commission may be formed. The functions of the mentioned sub-commission consist in consideration and analysis of data in each of main categories of Standards for accreditation. The functions of these sub-commissions are to review and analyse data on each accreditation standard, to prepare quantitative and tabular data, to collect and prepare annexes to the Report, to solve organizational issues on the activities of the EEC visit program.

The rector (principal, director) and "Representative", in collaboration with the student council, include students (1-3) into the self-evaluation commission. The self-evaluation commission should complete their analysis and prepare the report on results of self-evaluation approximately 3 months before the EEC site-visit to HEI.

Report on self-evaluation of HEI or educational programme contains information on HEI's best practices, advantages, achievements, as well as areas to improve in HEI (educational programme). Conclusion, that contains issues, requiring consideration, and recommendations for solution of detected problems, finalizes the report on HEI self-evaluation. Upon completion of self-evaluation procedure, at least 2 months before the expected visit of EEC, HEI sends the report on self-evaluation to ECAQA. All the copies of report (in State, Russian and English) are signed by the HEI's chief executive officer.

Students should be aware of their role in the internal quality assurance of the educational institution. In order to inform students about the quality assurance

system and the role of students in this process, ECAQA has placed a section "students and quality assurance policy" on its website. <http://www.ecaqa.org/studenty/studenty-i-politika-obespecheniya-kachestva-obrazovaniya>

Student analysis is performed simultaneously with the self-evaluation of educational programme, performed by the HEI internal commission that includes one or more representatives of students (by all means with different levels of education).

The internal self-evaluation commission, while working with the students, pays attention to the methods of implementation of carrier guidance, the rules and conditions for admission to HEI, forms of entrance examinations, educational resources (library, computers, IT-systems, supervisors, consultants), services divisions (dormitories, canteens, health care centres, gym halls), students' leisure activities whilst out of class, financial support of students (scholarships, payment for educational services, allowances for orphan students), graduate employability, feedback with employers (representatives from manufacturing, business, and practical health care).

Participation of students in HEI self-evaluation process is detailed in Appendix 2.

2.3 Independent student analysis

Independent student analysis is conducted for an accredited educational programme and is a critical element of the specialized (programme) accreditation process.

Independent student analysis starts at the same time when HEI starts full process of self-evaluation (institutional or special-purpose) and ends approximately at the same time, when the internal self-evaluation commission finish its work.

The approaches, methods, and timing of the independent student analysis are agreed upon with the HEI's "Representative".

The student council (self-management) forms a group (hereinafter referred to as the "Group") from among the successful and active students and conducts an independent analysis of the educational programme (-programmes), prospective students' admission conditions and students' learning environment, educational resources, services divisions, among other things – accommodation conditions, financial support of students, learning environment, conformity of educational resources.

The "Group" that performs student analysis should investigate the opinion of the majority of students to generate comprehensive image of perception by the students of their HEI and the expected quality of the educational programme. Administration of HEI should enable performance of the student analysis.

The results of student analysis may be combined with the results of students' questionnaire survey, for more complete exposition of the students' perception of achievements and areas for improvement in HEI or in certain educational

programme. Students' opinion should be incorporated in full in the final report on self-evaluation of HEI (or educational programme).

The administration ensures corresponding material-and-technical support of the "Group" and students, engaged in performance of student analysis. The students should be provided with: the copy of the results of students' questionnaire survey, copy of the self-evaluation report (or, at least, important sections), and other information, which HEI and students defined as necessary in performance of the student analysis.

At the early stages the "Group" may contact the students of other HEIs, which are accredited or in the process of preparation to accreditation procedure.

Independent students' analysis is one of three main sources of information, obtained on the basis of investigation of students' opinion, which EEC should have at the moment of external evaluation of an educational programme. In this regard the independent students' analysis must be based on thorough investigation of comprehensive data, obtained from all the students. Other two sources are data from students' questionnaire survey and information, obtained from the students, which were interviewed by EEC members during site-visit.

The degree of students' involvement into self-evaluation determines authenticity of the information obtained. The "Group" should become familiar with the structure of HEI, its functions.

The following areas should be included in the independent student analysis:

- possibility of meeting with the rector (principal), teaching staff, dean and faculty employees;
- involvement of students in the work of structural subdivisions;
- curriculum, which includes work load, disciplines taught, practices, report on academic curriculum performance, conformity of the scheduled and actual load;
- assessment by the students of timeliness and effectiveness of the feedback;
- assessment of teaching methodology and problems in teaching;
- services and consultations on students' support (teachers, supervisor, financial support, educational resources - libraries, computers), including their availability and conformity;
- students' health protection, which includes conformity and confidentiality;
- learning environment;
- service facilities, including quality of educational process, availability of conditions for learning, rest, students' safety in HEI, at clinical sites and practice bases.

The analysis may include other problems, which are not given in the aforementioned list, but important for educational programme or students.

The "Group" should determine the areas, which will be covered for the self-evaluation. To gather quantitative data for each area of evaluation, various methods and techniques should be used. The leaders of the student analysis should:

- 1) hold a meeting with the students to discuss students' problems;

- 2) request the reports that reflect problems or areas, which claim attention, from each group of students;
- 3) perform the questionnaire survey of students.

The "Group" together with the members of the student council discuss the educational programme, availability, and quality of services, provided to the students (library, computers, gym halls, canteens, dormitories, medical services), availability and quality of education at clinical sites or practice bases. Each group provides the student council with the conclusion upon the results of discussion.

To perform the questionnaire survey, the "Group" should inform their fellow students on the importance of participation and gravity, with which ECAQA, as an accreditation authority, evaluates the results of their survey. It is recommended to survey at least 30% of students from each course of the accredited educational programme.

The questionnaire survey should reflect specific features of the structure of educational programme, library, digital resources of learning, etc. The monitors gather obtained data, analyse, and submit the analytical report to the Group or Chair of the student council. The Group analyse, summarize the obtained data, and generate final report upon the results of students' questionnaire survey, which then will be included in the report on independent student analysis. The Group Leader will summarize the data and form a final conclusion to the student survey results, which will then be included in the Independent Student Analysis Report.

The officials of HEI should not exercise influence upon students' self-evaluation.

The report on independent student analysis should contain brief summary of each subject covered, e.g.: rules and conditions of admission, forms of entrance examinations, educational resources (library, computers, supervisors, consultants), services divisions (dormitories, canteens, medical centres, gym halls), students' leisure activities whilst out of class, graduate employability, feedback with the employers, financial support of the students (scholarships, payment for educational services, allowances for orphan students), with the description of strengths or weaknesses, and should be completed with the conclusion, detailing reserve, potential of HEI and areas for improvement of both HEI in general and certain educational programme.

The final revision of the report on independent student analysis is sent to the EEC members during HEI visit (see Appendix 3).

2.4 Students in the External Expert Commission

ECAQA forms the composition of the EEC in order to site-visit and validate the data of the Self Evaluation Report. The EEC consists of at least 5-6 experts and is formed in accordance with the Regulation on the ECAQA external expert commission (updated 2023).

The EEC includes accreditation experts nominated by HEIs, scientific centres and institutes, professional associations, public associations, and also includes an

expert from among the students (student, intern, resident, Master's Degree student or PhD student, listener of continuing professional development programmes).

The EEC is headed by a Chair, who is determined by the ECAQA Expert Board based on the results of the discussion of the composition of the external expert commission and the results of the nomination of experts. The EEC is accompanied by an observer - ECAQA representative.

With each member of the EEC, including the representative of students, signed a Contract of paid services, including the duties of the performer (expert) and the requirement to maintain confidentiality in relation to ECAQA and the accredited HEIs. The student - member of the EEC before the site-visit to the HEIs signs the Code of Ethics and a Declaration of Confidentiality on the avoidance of conflict of interest and confidentiality of the information obtained during the external peer review.

A student member of the EEC is an equal member and participates in all activities of the external evaluation program of the HEIs or educational programme.

Student-member of the EEC participates in making recommendations for the improvement of the HEIs or educational programme, discusses recommendations for the accreditation period, completes the Profile and Quality Criteria for compliance with the Standards for Accreditation, participates in the preparation of the final report of the EEC.

A student-member of the EEC participates in the external evaluation questionnaire administered by the ECAQA.

Thus, the student's opinion is taken into account in all aspects of the external evaluation and subsequent procedures.

ECAQA organizes training seminars for experts - members of the EEC and provides certification of external experts, including students, which confirms their competence in carrying out the procedure of institutional/specialized accreditation.

2.5 External Expert Commission visit to the Education Institution

The regulation of the EEC activity in HEIs is carried out according to the Guideline on External Evaluation of Educational Organizations and Educational Programmes (2023), developed and approved by the ECAQA Expert Board.

Two months before the site-visit members of EEC receive all the information, gathered during self-evaluation of HEI and/or educational programme, including all database of organization, final report on self-evaluation and report on independent student analysis (when conducting a self-evaluation of the educational programme). EEC reviews this information and makes preliminary evaluation of HEI and/or educational programme before visiting the HEI under accreditation.

Duration of EEC's visit is 2-4 days at an average. The site-visit starts from gathering of experts, the purpose of which is analysis of opinions and obtaining explanations of unclear points upon the results of self-evaluation report review, allocate areas of responsibility of each expert, including representatives of students. If the EEC is divided into subgroups, the Chair determines the leader of

the group from among the members of the EEC. Then EEC meets the first head of the HEIs (or his/her designee) to outline the objectives of the site-visit, talk about the mission, strategic goals, development program and financial processes for continuous improvement of all areas of the HEIs activities.

During the visit EEC meets the administration, teaching staff, employees of the subdivisions, students of different levels of education, employers, graduating students.

EEC schedules two official meetings with students – with students' active assets and group of students from various courses of studies (or Master's Degree students, PhD students, residents, depending on specialty of educational programme under accreditation). EEC members should become familiar with the learning environment in HEI, visit and examine main learning and practical training facilities (on-the-job) sites, accompanied by guiding students to ensure informal discussion of advantages and disadvantages of HEI. During the meetings with HEI representatives, EEC members gather additional information, analyse data, already obtained, and generate findings regarding conformity of HEI to the accreditation standards. At the close of the visit EEC chairman announces the collective conclusion and recommendations of EEC upon the results of HEI visit and/or evaluation of educational programme (complete accreditation, conditional accreditation, denial of accreditation) to the HEI management.

Further procedure includes preparation of final report on the results of HEI (educational programme) external evaluation and its submission to ECAQA within 2 weeks from the completion of the last visit.

2.6 External Expert Commission Report generation

The draft report of EEC members is sent to the Head of HEI for review and rectification of any actual errors and to obtain explanations on any misunderstandings.

For this purpose, 7 (seven) calendar days are given. After that the Report is sent to the ECAQA and to the members of the EEC for preparation of the final version of the Report within 7 (seven) calendar days.

The ECAQA accreditation and monitoring staff member reviews the submitted Report and assesses the degree of its completion and the corrections made.

The EEC final report is sent to the Accreditation Council two weeks before the Accreditation Council meeting.

The final version of the EEC final Report with supporting documents, along with the self-evaluation Report of the HEIs or educational programme, serves as a basis for decision-making on the accreditation of the ECAQA Accreditation Council.

The final Report and recommendations of the EEC are also the basis for the development of a corrective action plan based on the recommendations of the EEC during the post-accreditation monitoring period.

2.7 Decision making by the Accreditation Council

The Accreditation Council is a consultative body of ECAQA, the task of which is assessment of quality of educational services of Higher Education Institutions and health care organizations, delivering educational programmes, on the basis of valid standards of institutional and programmatic accreditation by ECAQA.

Decision-making process by the Accreditation Council is performed based on the Report on self-evaluation of HEI (educational programme), final Report of EEC, recommendations of EEC on accreditation.

The Accreditation Council makes the following decisions on accreditation:

- 1) complete accreditation - give accreditation for 5 years;
- 2) accreditation for a period of 3 years (for new educational organizations and educational programmes);
- 3) conditional accreditation - give accreditation conditionally for 1 year with repeated visit of Higher Education Institution;
- 4) denial of accreditation or withdrawal of accreditation\$
- 5) revocation of the Certificate of Accreditation

The decision on institutional accreditation of HEIs for a period of 5 years is made when 100% of basic accreditation standards are met, and in case of programme accreditation at least 80% of basic standards. There should be no non-compliant standards.

The decision for the period of 3 (three) years is adopted for new educational organizations and educational programmes. In this case, all requirements for the fulfillment of standards are the same as in the previous case.

The decision on conditional accreditation for a period of 1 (one) year, subject to a repeated external evaluation by the same accreditation agency is taken if more than 21% of the basic accreditation Standards and more than 41% of the improvement standards are partially fulfilled or there are inconsistencies of accreditation Standards, and the severity of the problems is reflected in the final report of the EEC and in the justification of the decision on conditional accreditation.

In this case, during the next year the HEIs conducts corrective actions on the recommendations (comments) of the EEC, prepares a self-evaluation Report of the HEI or educational programme under a new Contract and submits the self-evaluation Report to the accreditation agency that decided on conditional accreditation.

The decision to withdraw accreditation is taken if most of the Standards are not complied, which means the seriousness of deficiencies and problems that require several years for elimination. The HEIs may start the accreditation procedure not earlier than one year after the negative decision on accreditation of the HEI (or educational programme).

The decision on revocation of the accreditation certificate of the HEIs (or educational programme) during its validity period is taken in a few cases listed in p.9.5 of the ECAQA Standards for Accreditation.

After making positive decision on accreditation of HEI or educational programme, ECAQA issues the accreditation certificate for the period of 5 years.

Decision on accreditation of HEI or educational programme is sent to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MSHE RK) and to the National Centre for Higher Education Development of the MSHE RK or inclusion in the Register of accredited institutions and educational programmes, as well as placed on the ECAQA website.

In case of conditional accreditation HEI is entitled to contest the decision of the Accreditation Council in accordance with the appeal procedure, established by the accreditation authority (Regulation on ECAQA Appeal Committee).

2.8 Post-accreditation monitoring

ECAQA performs post-accreditation monitoring throughout the validity period of the accreditation certificate. Post-accreditation monitoring is performed by submission of annual report on realization of improvement plan on the basis of EEC's recommendations. HEI should inform ECAQA on any significant changes in the field of its activity or on changes in the educational programme.

3. STUDENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN ACCREDITATION PROCESS

3.1 Provision of students with information on accreditation process

Chief executive officer of HEI, after establishing the date of EEC site-visit, notifies the students in advance on forthcoming visit of the organization by the external experts. The role of students in information gathering, their participation in the accreditation process and particularly in the self-evaluation is discussed at the meeting between students and rector (principal) and "Representative" on self-evaluation (institutional or programmatic). The role and behaviour of students during EEC visit is talked over.

3.2 Inclusion of students in the commission for self-evaluation (institutional or programmatic)

The students should be included in the commission (or sub commissions) for self-evaluation and any commissions, as a part of which they could perform the required work. The committees for self-evaluation should incorporate corresponding number of members to perform their own certain task. The students should participate in self-evaluation in accordance with the criteria and requirements of accreditation standards, carry out an analysis of learning environment, accommodation, financial support, and educational resources (internship bases, library, computers, supervisors, etc.).

3.3 Arranging communication with students from other Education Institutions

Prior to proceed with the independent student analysis it is necessary that the students were familiarized with the experience in implementation of student self-evaluation in other HEIs. To contact the students from other HEIs it is necessary to know, which of them passed accreditation or intend to start.

ECAQA website contains the required information on accreditation procedure (<http://ecaqa.org/studenty/studentam-ob-akkreditatsii>). Information on ECAQA website is regularly updated, including data on accredited education institutions and educational programmes. HEI may contact higher education facilities, equal in status, to share experience. Contacts may be carried out via representatives of students of other education institutions or at local, municipal, or republican meetings of students.

3.4 Students' participation in External Expert Commission site-visit

Upon completion of self-evaluation (institutional or special-purpose) and independent student analysis, the EEC experts remotely review all the materials, submitted by the higher education institution to the accreditation agency.

A staff of the ECAQA Accreditation and Monitoring Department, together with a member of the ECAQA Expert Board, draws up the program of the site-visit to the HEIs. The program of the site-visit is discussed with the EEC Chair and members. Further the program is agreed upon by the management of the HEIs.

The program of EEC site-visit is prepared according to the sample (posted on ECAQA website, <http://ecaqa.org/vneshnyaya-ekspertnaya-komissiya>), but to ensure special needs, wishes of HEI, the program may be amended or extended.

In accordance with the visit program, EEC members meet the representatives of junior and senior years, graduates individually and at separate times.

The meetings of EEC members with the students are unofficial, therefore they are carried out in amiable and trustworthy environment in the absence of the management, teachers, and representatives of the higher education institution's administration.

The purpose of these meetings is to detect compliance or noncompliance with the data of students' report on self-evaluation, questionnaire survey and comments that arouse during meeting with the students. EEC members determine authenticity of discrepancies unravelled. Also, external experts investigate in greater detail the problems, contained in the students' report on self-evaluation and data of questionnaire survey, identify new problems, which could not be mentioned in the specified sources. It is of crucial importance to inform all the students at such meetings about the data, contained in the students' report on self-evaluation, data of questionnaire survey.

Selection of students for conduction of meetings with EEC is implemented by the HEIs and student council well in advance. One or more well-informed students, hat participated in the conduction and organization of independent student analysis, should be involved in the meetings with EEC. EEC may meet one or several students, which had outstanding programme requirements and familiar with the additional requirements on their elimination.

At the meetings with EEC members the students should feel themselves comfortable and provide unbiased information on strengths and weaknesses of the higher education institution. It should be considered that EEC does not make its decision based on students' opinion only. However, they consider any potential

problems of unconformity, which arise during discussion with the students, whether their confirmation sought or not.

In addition to the meetings with the students several students should accompany EEC members during their visit to the lecture halls, subdivisions, laboratories, libraries, computer rooms, recreation rooms, dormitories, gym halls and other training opportunities of HEI.

EEC members interpret information, which they obtained on the basis of reports on self-evaluation (institutional or programmatic) within the context of another information, which they obtained before and during the site-visit, but makes no conclusions.

3.5 Complaints and opposition.

EEC's visit should not be considered as a possibility of consideration of complains of individual students (faculty members, deans, or anyone else) in HEI. EEC members focus on fulfilment by the higher education institution of the requirements of ECAQA accreditation standards.

The student, which is of opinion that HEI does not follow the accreditation standards, may draw external experts' attention in two ways:

- 1) suggest his/her complaint about HEI or management of educational programme for consideration. This may be done at any time by meeting EEC members during their visit to HEI.
- 2) "Third party's comments", that point to incompliance with the accreditation standards, during EEC's work in HEI.

4. OTHER POSSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS' INVOLVEMENT INTO ACCREDITATION PROCESS

4.1. Member- students of the ECAQA Expert Board

The HEI students may become members of ECAQA Expert Board in order to solve the problems of the students during preparation and accreditation of HEI or educational programmes. This category of students participates in the development of Standards and Guidelines on accreditation, requirements to generation of report on independent student analysis, in the development of questionnaires for the students. The expert-student offers his/her proposals on improvement of these documents.

In this respect, student of any level of education (student, intern, Master's degree student, resident, PhD student) for the period of 3 years, recommended (nominated) by HEI management and students' active assets, professional associations, management of organizations, may become an expert.

The nominated student should get good or high grades, be proactive, sociable, and disciplined, have broad-based knowledge in the professional area (in accordance with the level of education and selected specialty), have student achievements in science, practice, social sphere. It is desirable that the nominated student had at least Intermediate level of English, had perfect skills in Excel, Power Point. Working as a member of the Expert Board the student gains

knowledge and skills in expert evaluation of higher education or PGE or CPD, develops skills of critical analysis, communication and teamwork, consolidation of a large amount of customized information and making major decisions. ECAQA plans and carries out the education of expert-students on issues of accreditation in education. The expert-students may be included in EEC when performing accreditation of HEI and/or educational programmes.

4.2 Member-students of ECAQA Accreditation Council

The students of higher education institutions may become members of ECAQA's Accreditation Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council). The students are nominated by HEI management, representatives of professional associations, management of organizations.

The member-student of the Council should be upper-year student that completed studying of the majority or all required disciplines, practices and familiar with the students' problems. Requirements to the students are similar to those in item 4.1. The period of student's participation in the Council's work as a member of full standing is 3 years and may be extended taking into account the student's transition to the next level of education (from pre-diploma to postgraduate). Newly appointed students are invited to the final meeting of the Council in the current year as observers. The member-students of the Council take part in all scheduled and unscheduled meetings of the Council and should be active in discussion and voting on issues of accreditation of HEI or its educational programmes (unless they have a conflict of interests with this institution).

The students, interested in the membership in the ECAQA Council, may obtain full information on the membership process from ECAQA representatives or at its website (<http://ecaqa.org/>).

4.3 Students' feedback on accreditation standards

Students' contribution to the process and procedures of accreditation is important for ECAQA. The student is useful for ECAQA because he/she ensured suggestions on improvement and effective feedback. There are several ways that ensure feedback.

ECAQA carries out scheduled and unscheduled reviews of existing accreditation standards as well as considers development of new or revised standards. The scheduled reviews are carried out within a period of five years. Questionnaire surveys are sent to the representatives of parties concerned, ensuring feedback on each standard to improve the quality of education. With that in mind ECAQA developed questionnaire and questioning may be conducted both directly in HEI and remotely by distribution to students' e-mails.

The suggestions for new standards or amendments to the existing standards may originate from any source, in the majority of cases from HEI. ECAQA also gives an opportunity for general comments on standards and suggestions on new standards. The students may send their comments on improvement of accreditation

standards, suggestions on accreditation process and on content of the questionnaires to ECAQA e-mail info@ecaqa.org.

Depending on the standard and problem ECAQA may seek assistance of the student council to identify and solve the problem.

Sample schedule of Education Institution accreditation

	(Students' participation is highlighted in bold type)	Months before/ after visit
1.	ECAQA establishes and coordinates dates of EEC's visit with HEI management	-12
2.	ECAQA sends letter with instructions to HEI representative, responsible for the planning and organization of EEC's visit, together with accreditation standards and guidelines on performance of self-evaluation Informing students on expected EEC's visit. Meeting of students with rector and HEI representative, responsible for performance of self-evaluation of HEI (or educational programme) to discuss students' role and their involvement in the accreditation process.	-11
3.	HEI representative distributes the accreditation standards between the heads of key subdivisions, engaged in self-evaluation, students , etc.	-11
4.	Chief executive officer of HEI appoints the chairman and members of the commission for self-evaluation, including students' representatives , by the order.	-11
5.	The commission for self-evaluation establishes its tasks, schedules, and forms subcommittees. The students participate in corresponding committees and performed independent student analysis	-11-10
6.	HEI representative gathers filled in forms of databases and distributes copies between the sub-commissions for self-evaluation.	-10-6
7.	The committees review data and prepare a report. The report is sent to the chairman of the commission for self-evaluation.	-10-6
8.	The committee for self-evaluation reviews the reports of subcommittees, prepares detailed lists of strengths and weaknesses, areas of nonconformity, and recommendations for improvement.	-6-4
9.	HEI representative sends the copy of the report on self-evaluation and HEI database for review and signature to HEI management and then to ECAQA. Independent student analysis is incorporated in the report on self-evaluation of HEI (or educational programme).	-4-2
10.	EEC members visit HEI, carry out interviews and examinations, prepare report for ECAQA. External experts meet administration, deans, and student groups. The students should be well-informed on strengths and weaknesses of the students.	visit
11.	Preliminary report of EEC is submitted to the chief executive officer of HEI and HEI representative for review and analysis of EEC's recommendations.	visit
12.	Final report of EEC is handed over to ECAQA	1
13.	ECAQA reviews the EEC's report. ECAQA hands the report over to the Accreditation Council, which makes decision on accreditation of HEI or educational programme.	2-3
14.	The chief executive officer of HEI receives notification regarding the decision of ECAQA's Accreditation Council.	3-4

Students' participation in self-evaluation of an educational programme, consists of the following stages:

No.	Stage	Execution period from the start of HEI accreditation procedure (- month)	Events
1	Informing and involvement of students in accreditation process	-12	<p>Head of the HEIs and representative on self-evaluation of an educational programme meet the student council.</p> <p>At the meeting with the student council the role and participation of students in the self-evaluation process should be determined and discussed, main rules of familiarization of higher education institution's students with self-evaluation process should be established.</p> <p>A group of students, responsible for implementation of independent student analysis, should be formed, time frames of independent student analysis, participation, and role of students during site-visit by the External Expert Commission (EEC) should be determined.</p>
2	Ensuring conditions for implementation of student analysis	-11	<p>HEI administration should ensure implementation of student analysis.</p> <p>The student analysis is performed concurrently with the self-evaluation of an educational programme, conducted by HEI internal commission, which includes one or more students' representatives (by all means with different levels of education)</p> <p>HEI administration provides the students, involved in student analysis, with corresponding material-and-technical conditions.</p> <p>The students should be provided with: organizational structure of the institution, copies of the results of student' questioning, copy of the report on self-evaluation of educational programme (or relevant sections of the report, possibly, in soft copy), and other information, which the internal commission for self-evaluation and the students defined as necessary in performance of student analysis.</p> <p>The officials of the higher education institution should not exert influence on the students' self-evaluation.</p>
3	Content of independent	-10-6	The Group of students, responsible for the conduction of independent analysis, performs

	student analysis		<p>self-evaluation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the rules and conditions of admission to HEI, – educational programme, – methods of teaching and learning, – learning environment and resources for education (library, information, and communication technologies, etc.), – involvement of students in the work of HEI structural subdivisions, – students’ assessment of timeliness and effectiveness of feedback, – student support services (social service, supervisors, advisors, etc.), – services divisions (dormitories, canteens, medical centres, gym halls, etc.), – systems of students’ material and social support, – effectiveness of students’ consulting, including its availability and conformity, – students’ health support programmes, – availability of leisure facilities, – organization of students’ safety during learning, – other problems.
4	Responsibility of the student Group, performing self-evaluation	-6	<p>The responsible group of students should determine areas, which will be included for self-evaluation. To gather quantitative data in each area various methods and techniques should be applied.</p> <p>The leaders of the groups, together with the responsible group of students, discuss the educational programme, availability, and quality of services, provided to the students (library, computers, gym halls, canteens, dormitories, medical services), availability and quality of clinical education at clinical sites.</p> <p>To carry out the questionnaire survey, the leaders of groups should notify their fellow students on the importance of participation and gravity, with which the accreditation authority evaluates the results of their questioning. The questionnaire survey should reflect specific features of the educational programme, e.g., structure of educational programmes, library, digital resources, etc.</p> <p>The group leaders gather obtained data, analyse, and submit the report to the responsible group of students. The responsible group of students analyses and summarizes the obtained data and submits the report on investigation of students’ opinion.</p>

THE STUDENTS PERFORMS SELF-EVALUATION AND SUBMIT SUMMARY REPORT ON INDEPENDENT STUDENT ANALYSIS

The report should contain the following information:

- 1) Front page of the report on individual student analysis:
 - name of education institution;
 - full name of rector (dean) of r education institution;
 - document title and date of document submission;
 - location of education institution.
- 2) Full name of student, responsible for conduction of independent student analysis:
 - contact details: postal address, telephone and fax number, e-mail address;
- 3) List of students, responsible for report generation:
 - year of study
 - representative of student council (specify)
 - member of HEI advisory boards (specify)
- 4) Terms and definitions (if any)
- 5) Designations and abbreviations
- 6) Table of contents of the report on individual student analysis with findings and conclusion on each section of report, which includes brief description of strengths and weaknesses and perspective improvements:
 - rules and conditions of admission,
 - forms of entrance examinations,
 - resources for education (libraries, computers, supervisors, consultants),
 - services divisions (dormitories, canteens, medical centres, gym halls),
 - students' leisure activities whilst out of class,
 - graduate employability,
 - feedback with employers,
 - material and social support of students (scholarships, payment for educational services, allowances for orphan students).
- 7) Conclusion with indication of potentialities of educational programme and areas for improvement
- 8) Appendices
 - Supporting documents are enclosed to the report.
 - Appendices, supporting documents must be accompanied with the list.

REFERENCE LIST

1. Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On education” dated July 27, 2007 no.319-III PK. (last amended on 03.01.2023).
2. The Role of Students in the Accreditation of Medical Education Programmes in the U.S. and Canada / Liaison Committee on Medical Education.-, June, 2006 - 25 p
3. Basic Medical Education. WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement. World Federation of Medical Education (WFME); New edition 2012, revised 2015(<http://wfme.org/standards/bme/78-new-version-2012-quality-improvement-in-basic-medical-education-english/file>, accessed 19.12.2016).
4. Basic Medical Education WFME Global Standards for Quality assurance. The 2020 Revision.
5. Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), 2015, Brussels, Belgium (35 p).
6. Liason Committee on Medical Education. Overview 2010: Accreditation and the LCME from <http://www.lcme.org/overview.htm>.