



NATIONAL CENTRE  
FOR PUBLIC ACCREDITATION

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## STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

OF PUBLIC ACCREDITATION FOR  
HIGHER EDUCATION, SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION,  
POSTGRADUATE AND DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES



PUBLIC ACCREDITATION

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## Contents

<b>STANDARDS AND CRITERIA OF PUBLIC ACCREDITATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, POSTGRADUATE AND DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Standard 1. Policy (goals, development strategy) and quality assurance procedures of study programmes .....	3
Standard 2. Educational programmes .....	4
Standard 3. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment.....	5
Standard 4. Student admission, support of academic achievements and graduation .....	6
Standard 5. Teaching staff .....	8
Standard 6. Learning resources .....	9
Standard 7. Collection, analysis and use of information for managing the study programmes and public information .....	10
Standard 8. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes.....	12
Standard 9. Quality assurance of education (online/distance learning) .....	13

## **STANDARDS AND CRITERIA OF PUBLIC ACCREDITATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, POSTGRADUATE AND DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES**

### **Standard 1. Policy (goals, development strategy) and quality assurance procedures of study programmes**

Educational institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public, is compatible with the strategy of the educational institution development and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders (administration, teaching staff, students) should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders (employers, employer associations, branch ministries and departments).

**Table 1 – Criteria with regard to Standard 1**

Nº	Subject of evaluation
<b>Basic criteria for higher education, secondary vocational education, postgraduate and doctoral programmes</b>	
1.1.	Availability of a documented internal quality assurance system providing continuous enhancement of quality in accordance with the developmental strategy of the educational institution
1.2.	Participation of all stakeholders (administration, teaching staff, students, employers, employer associations, research organisations, branch ministries and departments – key partners in employment of graduates) in developing and implementing a quality assurance policy through relevant structures and processes
1.3.	Participation of all structural units of the educational institution in quality assurance processes and procedures

### **Recommendations for the educational institution**

Policies and processes are the main pillars of a coherent institutional quality assurance system that forms a cycle for continuous improvement and contributes to the accountability of the institution. It supports the development of quality culture in which all internal stakeholders assume responsibility for quality and engage in quality assurance at all levels of the institution. In order to facilitate this, the policy has a formal status and is publicly available.

Quality assurance policies are most effective when they reflect the relationship between research, learning and teaching and take account of both the national context in which the institution operates, the institutional context and its strategic approach.

Such a policy supports

- establishment of the quality assurance system;
- departments, schools, faculties, university administration and other units; individual staff members and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance;
- academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud;
- guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students and staff;
- involvement of external stakeholders (key employers) in quality assurance.

The policy translates into practice through a variety of internal quality assurance processes that allow participation across the institution. The institution decides how the policy is implemented, monitored and revised.

The quality assurance policy also covers any elements of the institution's activities that are subcontracted to or carried out by other parties.

## Standard 2. Educational programmes

Educational institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the relevant level of the national qualifications framework.

**Table 2 – Criteria with regard to Standard 2**

Nº	Subject of evaluation
<b>Basic criteria for higher education, secondary vocational education, postgraduate and doctoral programmes</b>	
2.1.	Availability and accessibility of clearly defined, documented, approved and published goals and objectives of a study programme and expected learning outcomes and their correspondence to the mission and goals and objectives of the educational institution
2.2.	Availability of procedures for design, approval and revision of a study programme (including expected learning outcomes) with the account of the development of science and industry, and also with the consideration of stakeholder opinions (administration, teaching staff, students, employers)
2.3.	Consideration of the requirements of professional standards (if available) and the labour market
<b>Additional criterion for secondary vocational education</b>	
2.4.	Orientation of the content of work placement and pre-graduation practical training towards developing in students the practical skills required by employers
<b>Additional criterion for postgraduate/doctoral programmes</b>	
2.5.	Availability of a research/artistic component, integration with academic and field-specific science and knowledge in postgraduate/doctoral study programmes

### Recommendations for the educational institution

Study programmes are at the core of the higher education institutions' teaching mission. They provide students with both academic knowledge and skills including general cultural competencies, which may influence their personal development and may be applied in their future careers.

#### Programmes

- are designed so that overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy;
- have explicit intended learning outcomes;
- are designed with the involvement of students;
- reflect the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for the labor market; preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies; personal development; and the development and maintenance of a broad, advanced knowledge basis);
- are designed so that they enable personal development and smooth student progression throughout the study programmes;
- define the expected student workload (e.g. in ECTS);
- include well-structured placement opportunities (where appropriate);
- are subject to a formal institutional approval process by external stakeholders;
- content of work placement and pre-graduation practical training is oriented towards development of students' practical skills required by employers;
- include a research/artistic component, integration in academic and field-specific science in postgraduate/doctoral study programmes.

### Standard 3. Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Educational institutions should implement processes of student-centred learning in their study programmes. The methods through which the programmes are delivered should encourage students to take an active part in the learning process.

**Table 3 – Criteria with regard to Standard 3**

Nº	Subject of evaluation
<b>Basic criteria for higher education, secondary vocational education, postgraduate and doctoral programmes</b>	
3.1.	Consideration of needs of diverse groups of students and a possibility to create individual learning paths
3.2.	Consideration of non-formal <sup>1</sup> and informal <sup>2</sup> education (if available) when assessing learning outcomes/students' competencies (online courses, further education programmes, microcredentials)
3.3.	<p>Use of clearly defined criteria and objective assessment procedures of learning outcomes/competences of students corresponding to the expected learning outcomes, goals of the study programmes and their purpose (diagnostic, formative or summative assessment)</p> <p><i>* define the forms of assessment for artistic programmes (concerts, performances, plays, etc.) and engineering programmes (technical testing, etc.)</i></p> <p><i>**define the assessment and monitoring measures for postgraduate/doctoral programmes in order to meet the planned deadlines of a thesis or research</i></p>
3.4.	Information about study programmes, criteria and procedures for assessment of learning outcomes/competencies, examinations, tests and other types of control.
3.5.	<p>Use of procedures of independent assessment of learning outcomes (certified examinations, Federal Internet-examination for graduates of Bachelor programmes Federal Internet-examination in the sphere of higher education", Federal Internet Examination in the Sphere of Professional Education, academic competitions, etc.)</p> <p><i>* for secondary vocational education programmes it is necessary to indicate the availability of the system of preparation for the professional exam (qualification assessment, demonstration exam) according to the WorldSkills standards</i></p>
3.6.	Availability and effectiveness of appeals procedure and procedures for dealing with students complaints
<b>Additional criterion for postgraduate/doctoral programmes</b>	
3.7.	Thesis defense in due time (within one year after the postgraduate/doctoral programme completion)

<sup>1</sup> Non-formal education refers to education that occurs outside the formal school system. (clubs, training sessions, short programmes, etc).

<sup>2</sup> Informal education – is the type of knowledge that one gains through several life experiences at the workplace, from parents or elders, etc. Informal education is gained under the influence of society and the community.

№	Subject of evaluation
3.8.	Publications and research activity of postgraduate/doctoral students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- publications in journals approved by the Higher Attestation Commission, indexed in the Russian Science Citation Index database and other national and international peer-reviewed scientific journals;</li> <li>- publications in journals indexed in Scopus, Web of Science databases;</li> <li>- presentation at conferences (international, national, regional);</li> <li>- winners of national and international competitions of postgraduate works (awards, diplomas, patents, etc.)</li> </ul>

### **Recommendations for the educational institution**

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. This means careful consideration of the design and delivery of study programmes and the assessment of learning outcomes.

#### Student-centred learning and teaching

- respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;
- considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate;
- flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods;
- regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and teaching and learning methods;
- encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher;
- promotes mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship;
- has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.

Considering the importance of assessment for students' progression and their future careers, quality assurance processes for assessment take into account the following:

- Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field;
- The criteria for and methods of assessment as well as criteria for assessing are published in advance;
- The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved;
- Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process;
- Where possible, assessment is carried out by more than one examiner;
- Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;
- A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.

### **Standard 4. Student admission, support of academic achievements and graduation**

Educational institutions should have and consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, support of academic achievements, recognition of graduates' qualifications and graduation.

**Table 4 – Criteria with regard to Standard 4**

Nº	Subject of evaluation
<b>Basic criteria for higher education, secondary vocational education, postgraduate and doctoral programmes</b>	
4.1.	Systematic career guidance targeted at recruiting and selection of applicants should be in place.  <i>** For postgraduate and doctoral programmes indicate the availability of master's programmes (students' research work) which can be continued in postgraduate/doctoral programmes</i>
4.2.	Availability and effectiveness of rules and regulations for admission, transfer of students from other educational institutions, recognition of qualifications, periods of study and prior learning
4.3.	Balance of enrollment and graduation rates (retention, dropouts)
4.4.	Systematic work to support students' progression
4.5.	Availability of student information and support in project work, academic mobility programmes, students' participation in academic mobility.  <i>** For postgraduate and doctoral programmes indicate availability of training or doing research work in other national or international HEIs/research institutes and within joint research projects</i>
<b>Additional criterion for postgraduate/doctoral programmes</b>	
4.6.	Sufficiency and stability of funding of educational programmes (availability of financial support provided to postgraduate/doctoral students from grants, contracts, scientific/engineering programmes, etc. for academic mobility and research)

**Recommendations for the educational institution**

Providing conditions and rendering support necessary for students to make progress in their academic career is in the best interests of individual students, programmes, institutions and systems. It is vital to have relevant admission, recognition and completion procedures, particularly when students are mobile within and across higher education systems.

It is important that admission policies, processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner. Induction to the institution and the programme is provided.

Institutions need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression.

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 ensuring the students' academic progress, while promoting mobility. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on:

- institutional practice for recognition that is in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention;
- cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensure coherent recognition across the country.

Graduation represents the culmination of the students' period of study. Educational institutions should provide students with a document on education in compliance with the requirements of the national legislation and the Diploma Supplement/European Diploma Supplement that provides a supplementary description of the obtained qualification.

## Standard 5. Teaching staff

Institutions should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff which help ensure sufficient qualification and competency of their teachers.

**Table 5 – Criteria with regard to Standard 5**

№	Subject of evaluation
<b>Basic criteria for higher education, secondary vocational education, postgraduate and doctoral programmes</b>	
5.1.	Availability and compliance with clear, transparent and objective criteria of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– recruitment of the members of the teaching staff from Russia and/or abroad, appointment to a position, promotion, dismissal;</li> <li>– dismissal of the members of the teaching staff as a result of a failure to comply with professional competence requirements.</li> </ul>
5.2.	Compliance with professional competence requirements, relevance of specialisms, degrees and titles and /or practical experience to the profile of the study programmes
5.3.	Use of best national and international practices as well as current tendencies in teaching <p><i>** For postgraduate and doctoral programmes indicate availability of schools of thought in a HEI.</i></p>
5.4.	Availability of a mentoring /counseling / support system that takes into account the needs of different groups of students
5.5.	Research activity of the teaching staff, implementation of research results in the academic process <p><i>* For postgraduate and doctoral programmes indicate the organization of research supervision and consultancy of postgraduates/doctoral students</i></p>
5.6.	Employing visiting lecturers from other national and international educational/industrial/research institutions <p><i>* For secondary vocational education programmes indicate the involvement of part-time teachers in the delivery of specialized courses (modules, workshops, training sessions) and employed full time in top managerial positions in industrial enterprises</i></p> <p><i>** For postgraduate and doctoral programmes indicate the involvement of the leading specialists from research institutes, design bureaus and other research organizations in delivering lectures and practical classes, providing consultancy and supervision of students' research</i></p>
5.7.	Participation of teachers in joint international projects, internships abroad, academic mobility programmes <p><i>* For postgraduate and doctoral programmes indicate the research achievements of supervisors</i></p>
5.8.	A system of financial and non-financial incentives for teachers
5.9.	A system for career development and professional advancement for teachers <p><i>* For secondary vocational education programmes indicate availability of teachers and representatives from the industry who have been trained in further education professional programmes on personnel training in jobs demanded on the labour market</i></p>



Nº	Subject of evaluation
<b>Additional criterion for secondary vocational education</b>	
5.10.	Availability of certificate holders issued by the Young Professionals Union (WorldSkills Russia), National Championship "Abilimpix", etc.
<b>Additional criterion for postgraduate/doctoral programmes</b>	
5.11.	Publication activity of teachers involved in the delivery of postgraduate/doctoral programmes (Hirsch Index, number of publications in journals approved by the Higher Attestation Commission indexed in the RSCI database, Scopus, Web of Science and other peer-reviewed national and international journals)
5.12.	Involvement of research advisors in the work of Dissertation councils or acting as official opponents of dissertations and/or reviewing experts to select research papers to be published in the journals indexed in Scopus and/or Web of Science databases

### Recommendations for the educational institution

The teacher's role is essential in creating a high quality student experience and enabling the acquisition of knowledge, competences and skills. The diversifying student population and stronger focus on learning outcomes require student-centred learning and teaching approach and the role of the teacher is, therefore, also changing (cf. Standard 3).

Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their staff and for providing them with a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively. Educational institutions should:

- develop and implement clear, transparent and fair processes for staff recruitment, appointment for a position, dismissal;
- offer opportunities for career growth and promote the professional development of the teaching staff taking into consideration the results of peer and teacher assessment surveys;
- encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research;
- encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies;
- encourage academic mobility of teachers (internships, project work, visiting-lecturing).

### Standard 6. Learning resources

Educational institutions should ensure adequate, readily accessible and fit for purpose learning resources and student support services.

**Table 6 – Criteria with regard to Standard 6**

Nº	Subject of evaluation
<b>Basic criteria for higher education, secondary vocational education, postgraduate and doctoral programmes</b>	
6.1.	Provision of the study programme with material and technical resources (modern tools, equipment, computers, classrooms, laboratories, art studios, student theatres, etc.) <i>** For postgraduate and doctoral programmes indicate availability of research laboratories, e-databases, etc.</i>

№	Subject of evaluation
6.2.	Availability of internship opportunities, well-equipped facilities and qualified supervisors. <i>* For secondary vocational education programmes indicate availability of workshop rooms, training grounds, multifunctional centres of hands-on career-focused qualifications</i>
6.3.	Availability of up-to-date library and information resources including those for independent study and research work; availability of e-library and fully accessible e-learning environment
<b>Additional criterion for secondary vocational education</b>	
6.4.	Availability of material and technical resources necessary for conducting demonstration exams, national (regional) skill competitions based on WorldSkills standards, National championships of professional skills among people with disabilities and limited opportunities of health of "Abilimpix", regional, national and international competitions of professional skills
<b>Additional criterion for postgraduate/doctoral programmes</b>	
6.5.	Availability of research environment in an educational institution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Own dissertation councils and / or agreements with other HEIs on defense of theses at their dissertation councils</li> <li>– availability of peer-reviewed journals and / or agreements with other publishers on the publication of research results</li> </ul>

### **Recommendations for the educational institution**

For the purpose of creating good higher education experience, institutions provide a range of resources to assist student learning. These vary from physical resources such as libraries, study facilities and IT infrastructure to human support (tutors, counsellors and advisors). The role of support services is of particular importance in facilitating student mobility within and across higher education systems.

The needs of a diverse student population (such as mature, part-time, employed and international students as well as students with disabilities), and the shift towards student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing learning resources and student support. Support activities and facilities may be organised in a variety of ways depending on the institutional context.

In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.

### **Standard 7. Collection, analysis and use of information for managing the study programmes and public information**

Educational institutions should ensure that they collect, analyze and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities. Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.

**Table 7 – Criteria with regard to Standard 7**

Nº	Subject of evaluation
<b>Basic criteria for higher education, secondary vocational education, postgraduate and doctoral programmes</b>	
7.1.	The educational institution should have in place a unified effective IT system in order to collect and analyze information and ensure its effectiveness for the study programmes to be properly managed
7.2.	Involvement of students and members of the teaching staff in collecting and analyzing information for proper management of study programmes; providing access to information related to organizational issues of the educational process
7.3.	Effective use of the official website of the HEI, publication on the website and in mass media of complete and reliable information about educational programmes, achievements, including objective data on graduates' employment and labour market demand
7.4.	Content and adequacy of translation of the English version of the website/webpage of the structural unit
7.5.	Availability of a feedback mechanism for stakeholders (students, teachers, employers, line ministries and departments) on the university website and other sources
7.6.	Integration in the environment, interaction of the educational institution with major employers, different professional associations and other national and international organizations on industry-specific, regional, national and international levels
<b>Additional criterion for secondary vocational education</b>	
7.7.	Availability of documents with information from employers/representatives of large companies, on the quality of graduates

**Recommendations for the educational institution**

Reliable data is crucial for informed decision-making and for knowing what is working well and what needs attention. Effective processes to collect and analyze information about study programmes and other activities feed into the internal quality assurance system.

The information gathered depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the institution. The following are of interest:

- Profile of student population;
- Student progression, achievements, drop-out rate and graduation;
- Students' satisfaction with their programmes;
- Learning resources and student support;
- Graduates' employment;
- Key performance indicators of a HEI.

Various methods of collecting information may be used. It is important that students and the teaching staff are involved in providing and analyzing information and planning follow-up activities.

Information on institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students as well as for graduates, other stakeholders (mainly employers) and the public (parents of prospective students).

Therefore, institutions provide information about their activities, including, the intended learning outcomes, qualifications awarded, teaching, learning and assessment methods used, pass rates and learning opportunities available to students as well as data on graduate employment.

### **Standard 8. On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes**

Educational institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes, employ feedback mechanisms (surveying, interviewing, questioning students, key employers) in order to assure the achievement of their goals and meeting the needs of students and society. The results of these processes should lead to a continuous enhancement of study programmes. The information about the measures undertaken and planned should be available to all stakeholders. The study programmes should undergo external quality assurance procedures.

**Table 8 – Criteria with regard to Standard 8**

Nº	Subject of evaluation
<b>Basic criteria for higher education, secondary vocational education, postgraduate and doctoral programmes</b>	
8.1.	Documented procedures of monitoring and periodic review of study programmes should be in place
8.2.	Study programmes should undergo regular external review procedures
8.3.	Availability of follow-up as a result of external review of study programmes and consideration of the results of previous external reviews when conducting subsequent evaluation procedures
8.4.	Availability of results of independent assessment of study programmes (best-edu.ru, programme rankings, academic achievements of students and members of the teaching staff, achievement of study programmes)
<b>Additional criterion for secondary vocational education</b>	
8.5.	Availability of documents (certificates) confirming that the quality of educational programmes meets the requirements of the national industrial enterprises

### **Recommendations for the educational institution**

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to ensure that the provision remains appropriate and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

These include the evaluation of:

- the content of the programmes in the light of the latest research thus ensuring that the programmes are up to date;
- changing needs of society;
- students’ workload, progression and assessment of the quality of student and graduate training;
- effectiveness of procedures for student assessment;
- student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;
- learning environment and support services and their fitness for purpose.

Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly with the involvement of students and other stakeholders (employers, employer associations, line ministries and departments – key stakeholders in employment). The information collected is analyzed and the

programmes are adapted to ensure that they are up-to-date. Revised programmes are published.

External quality assurance procedures allow stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of internal quality assurance processes. They accelerate the development and create environment for the new opportunities. They also provide objective information to the public about the quality of the HEI's activities.

Educational institutions should regularly participate in external quality assurance procedures that take into account the requirements of the national legislation. Depending on the context external quality assurance can take different forms and be implemented at different levels (programme, faculty or educational institution).

Quality assurance is a continuous process that does not end with receiving external feedback, writing a report, or follow-up procedures taking place in an educational institution. HEIs should strive to ensure that the progress achieved in the previous external quality assurance procedure is taken into account when preparing for the next quality assurance procedure.

### **Standard 9. Quality assurance of education (online/distance learning)**

Educational institutions should have relevant quality assurance for distance/online learning format.

**Table 9 – Criteria with regard to Standard 9**

Nº	Subject of evaluation
<b>Basic criteria for higher education, secondary vocational education, postgraduate and doctoral programmes</b>	
9.1.	Availability of facilities (equipment) in an educational institution necessary to deliver study programmes via e-learning/distance learning technologies
9.2.	Availability of technical infrastructure for e-learning (access to e-learning environment, sufficient e-library resources, digital security)
9.3.	Use of electronic/ distance or blended learning technologies in accordance with the objectives of the study programmes, goals of evaluating students' achievements and due consideration of students' capabilities and needs
9.4.	Systematic work meant to support (record) the educational process and students' academic performance when using e-learning and / or blended learning approach
9.5.	Academic and technological support for teachers and students to obtain the necessary digital competencies when delivering or mastering programmes in a distance format

### **Recommendations for the educational institution**

The educational institutions should create the necessary conditions for study programme delivery in an online/distance format. E-learning environment includes e-learning information resources, e-learning educational resources, information and telecommunication technologies, appropriate technological facilities enabling students to complete study programmes to the full regardless of their location.

The educational institution is accountable to its students for the quality of education, regardless of whether the online course of another educational organization is used in the educational programme delivery or not. In order to ensure the quality of the educational service the HEI provides organizational, educational, methodological and other relevant support to the student all through the online course. The HEI also monitors the knowledge mastered and carries out interim assessment. If a student is not satisfied with the quality of online course, the HEI is obliged to make up for the shortcomings (as part of student support).

In case the HEI shifts to distance format of study programmes delivery, teachers are required to comply with the curriculum (student workload, number of contact hours and students' independent work). The tools used for communication between a teacher and students in distance learning should meet the needs and capabilities of both: message exchange via email and messengers, use of online conference systems in workshops and the electronic educational environment of the university (Learning Management System).