Russian Higher Education and European Standards of Quality Assurance

The article considers the relevance and implementation of European approaches to quality assurance in the context of the Russian educational system. It covers the issues of transformation of the Russian higher education system during the post-Soviet period, specific features of the Russian state accreditation system, the impact of the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) (www.enqa.eu/files/ESG_3edition%20(2).pdf)on Russian Quality Assurance system and trends in quality assurance of higher education.

Keywords: Quality assurance; State and institutional accreditation; Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG); Russia

Russian Higher Education and European Standards of Quality Assurance

Galina Motova & Ritta Pykkö

Introduction

The Russian Federation officially joined the European education reform process in 20003. By that time, fundamental reforms in education had already begun..Since the early 1990s, the education system (as well as many other spheres of society) had undergone considerable structural and content-related changes. The period 2003–2005 was marked by intense pressure from the state authorities and an active lawmaking process aimed at initiating the Bologna reforms in Russia. By 2007, a number of amendments to the *Federal Law* o*n Education* had been adopted and attempts had been made to adjust the reforms to the purposes of the Bologna Process. However, new challenges such as the demographic and economic problems and changes in the state education policy became a major hindrance to the reform of Russian education.

The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), approved by the European Ministers of Education at the Bologna Conference in Bergen (May 2005), had a fundamental effect on the formation of the Russian quality assurance system. However, for certain objective reasons, the ESG did not ensure full compliance of the Russian quality assurance system with the standards proposed in the document. Compliance could only be achieved by introducing corresponding changes in Russian legislation and accreditation methodology. Several are currently being introduced which are even more contradictory to European standards but meet present-day political requirements. In all likeliness, Russia will not be able to remain outside the processes of global and European integration. As from September 1 2011, there will be a massive transition to the two-tier system, as well as to a credit system that is analogous to the ECTS. Accreditation procedures are becoming more rigorously regulated by the state authorities, which turns the procedure into a form of state control of education. It will take time to develop a new round of fundamental reforms in the sphere of education, including the quality assurance system.

Quality Assurance before Bologna

The Russian education system is based on long-standing traditions and deep cultural and historical roots. It was formed as a centralised state system of professional personnel training to satisfy the requirements of the authorities, the economy and industry. The State acted simultaneously as an investor in and customer of higher education and also as a supervising body for educational institutions. In Russia (particularly in Soviet times), non-state provision of education was virtually non-existent, nor were there any democratic forms of public management or educational quality assessment. *Perestroika*[1] had an enormous influence on all spheres of Russian society, including education, although it can hardly be considered revolutionary: the national education system was stable enough to escape collapse, unlike the public spheres of production which plunged

2   *European Journal of Education*

into a deep crisis. As Russian HEIs had been granted considerable independence and autonomy by the State, the education system was developing along the principles of decentralisation and depoliticisation [2].

In 1992, the government enacted a Law *On Education* (http://mon.gov.ru/dok/fz/obr/3989/), which became the legal base for the reorganisation of the national education system in terms of both structure and content. It was the first Russian law to define the state policy in a particular sphere of social life. Recognising the nation's increasing needs for higher education, the Act provided more opportunities. The needs of HEIs for greater academic autonomy having been considered, the Act substantially broadened their rights, providing them with opportunities that they had never enjoyed (e.g. the right to increase the number of study places by accepting more students on a tuition-fee basis; the right to launch new specialist opportunities, including postgraduate education). It also provided new opportunities for structural reorganisation of the entire education system and establishing educational institutions of non-federal subordination. Thus, the setting up of municipal and private HEIs as non-state non-profit organisations became possible. State education institutions gained the right to change their status from institute (an HEI that trained students for a specific sphere of professional activity) to academy or university (an HEI offering a wide range of options and specialisations at the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels, and generally regarded as more prestigious). The principles recognised and proclaimed by the new legislation (democratisation, publicity, openness) were further developed in the methodology of HEIs' performance assessment. The state inspection procedures aiming at total control of HEIs' activities were replaced by regulation procedures, licensing, attestation, state and public accreditation that were completely new to the Russian education system.

Licensing is conducted to ensure that an HEI has sufficient facilities (premises, equipment, information and library resources, and teaching staff) to carry out educational activities and to be granted the licence to launch educational activities along with certain privileges. Licensing provoked negative reactions from state HEIs, which considered the procedure pointless and unnecessary. Nevertheless, it was licensing that allowed the emergence of new non-state education institutions and special fields of higher education. The purpose of the *attestation* procedure was the external evaluation of an HEI's performance and assessment of the level, contents and quality of the students' knowledge with regard to the State Educational Standards (SES)[3]. The external reviewers' positive opinion of the HEI's performance and compliance with the accreditation criteria served as a basis for granting state *accreditation* to the HEI in question (www.utu.fi/en/university/quality/russia/handbook.pdf)

In Russia, state accreditation not only aims at recognition of the quality of higher education as corresponding to the SES, it also allows for a change in the status of educational institutions. As noted earlier, an institute may obtain the status of academy or the status of university may be granted to an HEI that meets all the legal requirements for conducting educational and research activities. Thus, the state accreditation procedure legally established a mechanism for motivating HEIs to further develop their activities and thus raise their status. State-accredited HEIs are entitled to award diplomas in the state format and to use the official seal bearing the national symbols; for male students of accredited specialisms conscription is postponed until the end of their studies. State accreditation status provides certain other rights and benefits that are of vital importance to the private sector,

allowing non-state institutions to operate on equal terms with state HEIs (*Zakon RF ob obrazovanii* 1992).

The new educational policy resulted in a tremendous expansion of higher education. At the time of *perestroika*, the Soviet higher education system included over 500 state HEIs; by 2009[4], this figure had increased to 689 because new HEIs had been set up, while some branches of HEIs had become independent entities. Over 15 years, the total number of HEIs more than doubled, the number of private HEIs being almost equal to that of state HEIs (675 institutions). The branching process had a particularly powerful impetus: in 1993, the number of branches in the state higher education sector did not exceed 200, while, in 2008, there were already 2,096 of them (Motova & Navodnov, 2009, pp. 7–11). The reform of the higher education system revealed that its structure was dominated by small HEIs: 40% providing education for fewer than 1,000 students.

There was also a rapid increase in the number of study places: in 1993, total student enrolment was just over 2.5 million; by 2008, it had increased to 7.8 million, mainly as a result of rapid growth in the number of fee-paying students enrolled in state HEIs. It should be mentioned that during this period the State did not limit the growth of the higher education sector, but rather promoted it by permitting the admittance of fee-paying students to state HEIs, the branching of institutions and the establishment of new ones. Rather liberal requirements to licensing of educational activities led to the situation of 2008, when half of Russian higher education students paid for their studies; the number of branches of HEIs increased ten times, while the number of non-state HEIs increased to 50% of the total number of HEIs. This was mostly typical of middle-sized and small cities (Agaptsov 2011). The supporting state policy ensured the availability of higher education opportunities in the difficult and unstable economic situation which limited the mobility of Russians and thus prevented them from gaining access to higher education in large cities.

However, the state approach also had negative impacts. The structural changes were formal and not supported by any changes in the quality of higher education provision. The expansion of the scope of educational programmes offered by HEIs and their branches was primarily due to the setting up of new specialisms in such fields as economics, law and the humanities, which did not require too much investment in material resources, but were considered highly prestigious by society. Between 2000 and 2008, the total number of programmes offered by Russian HEIs increased from 20,000 to 30,000 (Motova, 2007).

As a result of the education reform at the end of the 20th century, higher education, until then ?itist, became more widely available. At the same time, the reform process was not supported by an increase in educational resources, the most important being highly skilled teaching staff. The mass character and availability of higher education led to a deterioration of the quality of higher education provision. Thus, the Russian education system was faced with the challenging task of creating efficient mechanisms for quality assessment and motivating quality enhancement.

Introduction of Institutional Accreditation and Its Specific Features in the Russian Context

As state control was the only form of quality assessment that existed in Russia, the Ministry of Education established the state accreditation system practically from

scratch. Within the Ministry of Education, the Department of Licensing, Accreditation and Attestation was set up (in 2004 its responsibilities were delegated to the Federal Service of Inspection and Control in Education and Science (*Rosobrnadzor*). It supported all the initiatives of the Russian academic community, as well as international projects aimed at research and development in the field of internal and external quality assessment and assurance systems. As a result, specialised centres for research, technical and technological support of the state accreditation procedure were created: the Research and Information Centre of State Accreditation, the Main Expert Centre of the Ministry of Education (responsible for the organisation and financial support of expert panels*),* the Informational and Methodological Centre on Attestation (in charge of automatic evaluation of the compliance of curricular and educational programmes with the SES). The Department of Licensing, Accreditation and Attestation coordinated relations between HEIs and the specialised centres. The Accreditation Board of the Russian Ministry of Education was responsible for decision-making on state accreditation. It was composed of Heads of HEIs, representatives of associations of HEIs and sectoral ministries.(www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/links/National-reports-2007/National_Report_Russian_Federation2007.pdf). Thus, in setting up the state accreditation infrastructure, the State reserved for itself the main levers for consideration and sanctioning in all major procedural questions, such as approval of accreditation indicators, appointment of external experts, decision-making and reception and issuing of documentation. But the state accreditation methodology was based on the objective needs and resources of the Russian education system and the international experience in the field of quality assurance.

The Russian state accreditation methodology is based on the US experience in the field of institutional accreditation of higher education institutions. Four procedures were adopted and implemented. These include: (1) setting clear uniquely-determined (in this case, qualitative) criteria for accreditation and determination of the status (type) of HEIs; (2) conducting self-evaluation and collecting information on HEIs' activities; (3) an external evaluation procedure and evaluation of the compliance of HEIs' performance with the accreditation criteria; (4) decision-making by a collegiate body and publishing information on the accreditation results. Objectivity, openness, transparency and availability of information were put forward as the main principles of state accreditation. The accreditation criteria were determined on the basis of statistical data on the performance of all Russian HEIs. The criteria are subject to revision every five years.

By 2005, the infrastructure and technology of state accreditation had been formed and regulations defining state accreditation had been adopted by the Government. By 2008, more than 90% of HEIs had been through at least one cycle of state accreditation. The creation of the Central Database of State Accreditation (the only complete information system in the field of education in Russia) provided an objective mechanism for decision-making regarding evaluation of an HEI's accreditation indicators and determination of its status. This system stopped the unsystematic formal process of re-naming state HEIs and offered the institutions a clear mechanism for development and for making qualitative changes (Navodnov *et al.*, 2008).

The democratic trends in management, combined with the US experience in accreditation of educational programmes, influenced the process of establishing (in 2002) the first Russian Agency conducting public[5] accreditation of educational

programmes in a particular professional field of study the Accreditation Centre of the Russian Association for Engineering Education, which used the ABET indicators and procedures for its accreditation activity (ww.ac-raee.ru). Other sporadic attempts of the Russian academic community to create accreditation bodies were not effective, as HEIs did not consider them relevant. In comparison with public accreditation, state accreditation granted substantially more rights, privileges and opportunities to create and maintain a positive image of the HEIs.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the State Accreditation System before Bologna

By the time the Ministers of Education of the countries participating in the Bologna Process had approved the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG.) in 2005, the Russian state accreditation system had been introduced into legislation and provided with the necessary instruments (indicators, technology and organizations supporting the technology). Thus, state accreditation as a system had been established in Russia before the Bologna Process (the first state accreditation decision was taken in April 1997) and the introduction of the ESG for quality assurance and accreditation procedures.

State accreditation served as a substitute for the state control procedures and was based on more democratic principles. The public perceived it as understandable and relevant, largely because state recognition and state-format diplomas traditionally enjoyed more confidence in Russian society. State accreditation was relevant for HEIs because, on the one hand, it was virtually obligatory and entitled HEIs to all rights and privileges and, on the other, it set clear reference points for their development on the basis of external benchmarking. The state accreditation system was relevant for the State because: (a) it provided a broad array of data on the entire education system and integrated democratic principles of educational management and quality assessment; (b) it allowed the State to retain all the major levers for managing the education system.

State accreditation was appropriate in the period of political and economic reforms in Russia, as it corresponded to national needs and resources. Within the decentralised and heterogeneous education system, particularly regarding legal and organisational forms of education institutions, state accreditation was created as an institutional form of assessment of the performance of HEIs on the basis of information technologies for decision-making support. It was comparatively inexpensive and relatively transparent and objective. In the same period, internal quality management systems were actively developed within the HEIs on the basis of ISO-9000 and TQM standards. These initiatives by the HEIs, which were mainly technical, received sufficient backing from *Rosobrnadzor* (www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/links/National-reports-2009/National_Report_Russia_2009.pdf).

Hence, in order to ensure accordance between internal and external quality assurance systems, as well asthe adequacy of the accreditation agencies' activities in relation to the European standards, it was necessary to introduce certain changes into the legislation and make certain adjustments in the evaluation methodology. At the same time, the first public accreditation agencies to emerge in Russia did not receive any support from the public or from the State. Students and employers were not involved in the educational management and quality assurance processes because such associations and public unions were at the stage of formation and did not have the legal right to conduct activities of this kind.

6   *European Journal of Education*

In the process of its long-term operation, some of the shortcomings of the system became evident. The primary orientation of state accreditation, which was to establish quantitative criteria for taking the final accreditation decision, was gradually leading to a standardisation of the HEIs' performance and providing training to obtain the necessary results. Student testing did not provide comparable objective results, as it was conducted at different times using different test materials. The appointment of *Rosobrnadzor* officials as the chairs of external panels to determine panel membership, combined with their right to decide the schedule of the panels, led to a certain degree of corruption. The internal quality assurance systems based on the ISO-9000 standards proved to be difficult to integrate into the practice of the HEIs[6]. Moreover, the internal QA systems were not taken into consideration when the HEIs underwent the state accreditation procedure. Furthermore, recognising the significance given to state accreditation HEIs sought to obtain as much information as possible to achieve maximum compliance with the state accreditation requirements. Thus, the system, which originally served as a powerful mechanism for the motivation and selection of the best HEIs, became a set of mandatory norms. This mandate determined the mass character of state accreditation. In addition, the delegation of responsibilities relating to state accreditation to the *Rosobrnadzor* furthered the process by which the function of state accreditation changed into one of state control.

Influence of the European Standards and Guidelines on the Methodology of State Accreditation

The European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) had a powerful impact on the enhancement of the Russian state accreditation system because, by 2005, the system needed an impetus for development, which was provided by the European initiatives for setting up quality assurance systems (Gevorkyan & Motova, 2004, pp. 159–165). However, the tasks set out in the Bologna Declaration had a dual influence on the transformation of the Russian higher education system. Certain tasks (e.g. implementation of the Lisbon Convention) did not require much effort, while others (such as the delivery of joint programmes resulting in diplomas) have not yet been understood and are not currently supported by any legal provisions. The initiatives of individual HEIs and researchers remain isolated projects, not a system.

The integration of a country into the European Higher Education Area presupposes not only great public awareness of the process, based on full information, but also active involvement at all levels and subsystems of the national education system, such as state authorities, governmental and public organizations supporting the education system (?uffer organisations and HEIs. The reforms are perceived and implemented differently at each of these levels. Moreover, the different levels and structures sometimes interact, and are sometimes directly opposed to each other in the solving of common problems.

The introduction of the ESG into the Russian education system was an evolutionary, but not a systemic and coherent process (*Russian Federation National Report,* 2009). By 2005, the document had been translated into Russian and its main ideas disseminated among the academic community at conferences, forums, seminars and the Accreditation Board sessions. The document was brought to the notice of all education institutions, published on the Internet and recommended for implementation.

Most active representatives of the Russian academic community and heads of HEIs are aware of the ESG and have integrated or are integrating them into their internal QA systems. However, this cannot be considered to have been completed, as the external evaluations of HEIs are conducted without taking into account the results of self-evaluations and are based on indicators that are different from the European ones (ESG, Standard 2.1.). This disparity allows HEIs to use different internal mechanisms for the management, monitoring, assessment and assurance of educational quality. Full compliance with the ESG for internal QA systems will only be possible if the external evaluation bodies take efficiency of internal QA systems into consideration.

Nevertheless, some isolated formal changes were carried out in the external system of quality assurance state accreditation. For instance, the State Accreditation Centre was renamed the *National Accreditation Agency* (NAA) in 2005 (*Russian Federation National Report*, 2007), and was officially recognised as the main body responsible for implementing the Bologna reforms with regard to the QA issues. Some specific functions were conferred to the NAA.

Certain changes were introduced into legislation: the *Attestation* notion was abolished and the external review became a stage of the state accreditation procedure. It was recommended that representatives of employers' associations and student organisations should be engaged in the work of the Accreditation Board (ESG, Standard 2.4). At the same time, the state accreditation procedure, which was voluntary so far, became obligatory, and *Rosobrnadzor* was again authorised to select and appoint external panel members, to approve Accreditation Board membership and to take the accreditation decision (*Zakon RF ob obrazovanii* 1992).

According to the ESG, all the stages of accreditation must be characterised by publicity and openness. In this context, the publication of self-evaluation reports on websites became a mandatory state accreditation requirement for HEIs. Information on the methodology and on state accreditation outcomes was thus disseminated among the heads of HEIs and the academic community. Intensive information provision was supported by seminars aimed at preparation for state accreditation, by issuing handbooks for HEIs and by consulting HEIs at the stage of their preparation for state accreditation. Such openness undoubtedly made the procedure more transparent, available and well-grounded.

The registers of accredited Russian HEIs were published in Russian and in English on a specially designed website (abitur.nica.ru) and since then they have been maintained and regularly updated. In 2007, the reference-book *State Accredited HEIs in the Russian Federation* was published; it became annual and has been delivered free of charge to Russian secondary schools. In 2005, the NAA started publishing a new kind of report: an annual analytical report on the Russian educational system as a whole. The report included the state accreditation results, analysis of the education system's current state and development, and research and development for improvement of educational quality assessment (ESG, Standard 2.5.). Information on the state accreditation results and methodology became available to the general public with a new specialised journal *Accreditation in Education* (www.akvobr.ru) which has been published since 2005 and is devoted to all relevant issues relating to the educational system and quality assurance.

Adjustment of state accreditation to the ESG is only possible if the state accreditation bodies change their stance on the process of external reviews and on

the role of the review experts in that process. International experts have never been invited to participate in the Russian external review teams. The major problem, apart from language difficulties, is the difference in the principles and organisation of the review panel's work (ESG, Standard 2.4.).

To minimise these differences, a system of training and certification of experts was established in 2005 (ESG, Standard 2.4.). The six-month training includes a theoretical component, participation in the work of external panels, self-study and certification. For the purposes of further consultation and support of expert work, a specialised website was developed (www.expert-edu.ru). Thanks to this system, more than 500 representatives of the academic community from different regions of Russia have now been trained and certified. However, inadequate language skills are a major hindrance for Russian experts interested in participating in external reviews in Europe and vice versa.

In 2006 under the influence of the European initiatives, an expert community was formed in Russia on a voluntary basis the *National Guild of Experts in Higher Education*. It was composed of certified training programme graduates who were regularly engaged in the work of external panels (ESG, Standard 3.7). The organisation is a way of providing a professional consultation and communication platform to help experts in their work.

The ESG also influenced the activities of the National Accreditation Agency (NAA). Largely due to the NAA's initiatives, some aspects of the modernisation of educational quality assessment were implemented in compliance with the ESG, and information was widely disseminated to the academic community on the current state and tendencies of the development of the national educational system. Russia's active involvement in international quality assurance activities was possible through NAA membership in the international networks and associations of quality assurance agencies (ENQA, INQAAHE, APQN, CEEN)[7] (*Russian Federation National Report,* 2009).

The achievements in making evaluation procedures objective and public, the unique technologies for collecting and analysing information on HEIs' activities, student testing and outcome assessment, and new projects and positive development trends contributed to the principal achievement of the state accreditation system in the 15 years of its existence. In 2006, the NAA became a candidate member of ENQA. In 2008, the Agency conducted self-evaluation and underwent the external evaluation procedure, which resulted in NAA obtaining full ENQA membership in 2009 (ESG, Standard 3.8). This was evidence of the recognition by the European community of the Russian quality assurance system.

At the same time, the recommendations of the external review team (*External Evaluation,* 2008) and of the ENQA Board revealed the main problem that remained unsolved: state accreditation, in spite of all democratic reforms, still remained a state mechanism for management and for exerting pressure in higher education. The NAA as an institution subordinate to *Rosobrnadzor* had limited powers and was incapable of changing the state accreditation system without corresponding changes in the legislation (ESG, Standard 3.6).

The Involvement of Students and other Stakeholders in Quality Assurance

The engagement of students in the work of external panels was not frequent in the state accreditation procedures for a number of reasons. In Russia, there is no

long-term tradition or mechanism of involving students in the management and quality assessment of education. The average student age in Russia is also lower than in many other European countries. To take into consideration studentsopinions on the educational practices in their HEIs, and to do this rapidly, inexpensively and on a massive scale, the NAA developed and implemented the technology for conducting an anonymous Internet survey of students in HEIs subject to state accreditation. A specially developed questionnaire on the conditions of the educational process in HEIs allows rapid collection, processing and visual presentation of data. The results of such surveys are included in self-evaluation reports but only serve as a source of information and do not have any influence on the accreditation decision-making. Since 2006, it has been used as a mandatory procedure for all HEIs subject to state accreditation.

The need to improve the student testing procedure during the state accreditation process stimulated the development of a new technology: the Federal Internet Examination in Higher Education. It allowed for the use of unified methods for external assessment of student learning outcomes. An HEI's regular participation in the Internet Examination was taken into consideration when the HEI was going through the state accreditation procedure, thus reducing excessive tension and motivating it to develop internal QA. Introduced by the NAA in 2005, the Internet Examination became relevant for HEIs very soon, with 58 HEIs participating in 2005 (15,700 student outcome samples were gathered), and 1,300 HEIs taking part in the procedure in 2009 (1,200 million student outcome samples were collected) (www.i-exam.ru).

By 2008, the new State Educational Standards had been developed in Russia on the basis of the competency-based approach, and new goals had been put forward, emphasising the need to assess not only the compliance of educational quality with the SES, but also to propose objective technologies for selecting the most talented students for master-level studies. In this context, new technologies for interdisciplinary Internet testing were developed the Master? level examination and the Internet Olympiad. The second initiative gained broader recognition, not only in Russia. It has grown into a large-scale international project called the Open International Internet Olympiads (the OIIO project) in which more than 20,000 students from 18 countries participate annually (www.i-olymp.com). Internet Olympiads are not related to state accreditation, but they are an efficient mechanism for external assessment of educational quality.

In an attempt to offer a new approach to quality assessment of higher education, a new large-scale project was proposed — *The Best Educational Programmes in Russia* (www.best-edu.ru). The project is not related to accreditation or ratings; its mission is to identify higher education programmes that are distinguished by the exemplary level of their educational quality on the basis of expert opinions. The two main goals of the project are: (1) to identify the HE programmes recognised as the best by the academic and professional communities; and (2) to engage as many stakeholders as possible in the process. One of the project outcomes is the publication (in Russian and in English) of the reference manual *The Best Educational Programmes in Russia*.

Trends in Quality Assurance of Higher Education in Russia

The period 2009–2010 was the next stage in the fundamental transformation of the Russian education system (Motova & Navodnov, 2010, pp.178–182). The state

educational policy of the last few years has been oriented towards the implementation of new mechanisms for motivating HEI development: the establishment of federal and national research universities (as opposed to differentiating HEIs on the basis of their accreditation status). The status of a federal university is granted not on the basis of state accreditation, but on grounds of a decision by the Federal Government; the status of a national research university (NRU) can be granted to any HEI that passes the competitive selection for the NRU category. The purpose of the structural changes in the Russian higher education system is the consolidation of the HEIs and elimination of branches, both to be based on recommendations of the state executive bodies (http://rian.ru/edu_higher/20101111/294834970.html).

Since 2008, a trend to strengthen control and inspection in Russian education has become evident. This process has a number of objective reasons. State accreditation as a motivation mechanism has exhausted its potential: almost all Russian HEIs are now state accredited and granting an HEI a higher status is beyond the scope of state accreditation.

State policy aims at strengthening control over educational quality. This is because there have been recurrent cases of selling higher education diplomas, falsification of the educational process and corruption. At the same time, taking into consideration control and inspection in education as the main goal of *Rosobrnadzor*, the function of state accreditation is being transformed in terms of content and procedure into a function of state control.

The development and broad discussion of the new integrated federal law ?n Educationare currently in full swing in Russia. The law strengthens control and inspection in education and, among other provisions, specifies certain new forms of public-professional and public accreditation. The emphasis on the need for public accreditation was determined by the directives of the President and of the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation who highlighted the need to develop the procedures of public-professional accreditation (e.g. with regard to legal specialisms), involve employersassociations in the process and implement the international practice of accreditation (www.rg.ru/2009/05/29/uristy-dok.html; www.premier.gov.ru/events/news/9274). The fact that such close attention was given to the problems of enhancing the quality of education stressed the need to draw a line between control in education and motivation for development. This served as a stimulus both for the development of public accreditation and for the emergence of several actors in the field of quality assurance. The Accreditation Centre of the Russian Association for Engineering Education cooperates with domestic, foreign and international organisations working in engineering education towards integration into the European system of quality assurance in engineering education (Navodnov, *et al.*, 2008). AKKORK (Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance and Career Development) carries out the accreditation of both institutions and programmes in order to ensure their compliance with the state accreditation requirements. The agency is a full member of APQN, INQAAHE, and CEEN and holds Associate status in ENQA (www.akork.ru).

In accordance with the Order of the President of the Russian Federation, the Centre for Public Accreditation of Law Education was established together with the non-profit Association of Law Education. The mission of the Centre is to assess the quality of law programmes in HEIs. Each of the 17 members of the Association

of Law Education underwent the public accreditation procedure in 2010 (www.auro08.org).

At the end of 2009, on the initiative of the National Guild of Experts in Higher Education, the National Centre of Public Accreditation (NCPA) was established to promote quality culture in higher education, identifying and evaluating best practices in accordance with the ESG, and providing information about the quality of educational programmes. NCPA is a full member of the CEE Network and APQN, an Associate member of INQAAHE, and has Associate status in ENQA (www.ncpa.ru). Hence, new players are appearing in the Russian quality assurance system which are non-governmental bodies. One can presume that the process of establishing new accreditation agencies will continue. In this case, it will be necessary to separate the agenciesresponsibilities and spheres of activity and establish partner relationships between the agencies, HEIs, and the state executive bodies. This illustrates the emergence of new trends in the QA system in Russia.

It would be reasonable to eliminate the overlapping of state functions, so that state control would remain the remit of the state organs of control and inspection, and the responsibility for state accreditation would be delegated to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation or to public organizations. This approach is based on international practice in which state and public accreditation are not separate. Accreditation is conducted, and all interested parties are involved; accreditation status serves as evidence of recognition of educational quality by the public and by the State.

Conclusion

Two scenarios are possible for the further development of the system of quality assurance in education in Russia. It is likely that state educational policy will concentrate the functions of management, financing and control within the structure of the state authorities, while not allowing for the development of alternative forms. This option would be historically grounded: the long history and traditions of the Russian educational system demonstrate that the State has always played the main role in education.

There is also the possibility of a second scenario, according to which the results of the *perestroika* period and the integration of Russian society into the system of European education will allow differentiation and effective interaction between state and public forms of management and financing, as well as between state and public forms of educational quality assessment. Time will tell which will become a reality. However, the transformation mechanisms following ESG implementation are irreversible, though they are currently facing considerable opposition for a number of both objective and subjective reasons.

Russia had achieved certain progress in the directions that had been implemented before the Bologna Process: implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and access to the next cycle of education. In the Stocktaking Report prepared for the Ministerial Conference in 2009, Russia received red cards for stage of implementation of the first and second cycle and implementation of a national qualifications framework Even the yellow categories representing the Quality Assurance action line (stage of implementation of ESG cannot be

12   *European Journal of Education*

considered to constitute evidence of stability and development in this direction. At this point, much depends on state policy and the motivation of all the stakeholders.

NOTES

1. *Perestroika* (?estructuring was the name for the official state policy launched in the USSR in the mid-1980s to reform the political and economic system of the country.
2. Organisational structures of political parties, sociopolitical or religious movements (associations) are not allowed to carry out their activities in state or municipal educational institutions (*Zakon RF ob obrazovanii* 1992).
3. According to Russian legislation, the uniform State Educational Standards are established for educational programmes regarding their composition, content, and outcomes. (www.standard.edu.ru)
4. In 2008, the highest increases were recorded in the higher education sector of Russia. Since 2009, the scope of Russian higher education has shown a declining trend.
5. The Russian legislation provides for two forms of accreditation: state accreditation which is conducted by the State Executive bodies, and public accreditation (professional-public), conducted by national and international public, academic, and professional organisations.
6. It was the reason for the initiative of Saint Petersburg Electro-technical University (LETI) to develop a standard quality system model for educational institutions which was based on the ISO 9001:2000 standards and the ENQA Standards. The Federal Agency for Education recommended the model for implementation in HEIs and it was widely used across the Russian Federation (www.ed.gov.ru/prof-edu/vish/rub/quality/4565).

Galina Motova, National Center of Public Accreditation, 206-A, Volkova str., Yoshkar-Ola, Russia, 424000, galina_motova@mail.ru www.ncpa.ru

Ritta Pykkö, University of Turku, FI-20014 Turku, Finland, riitta.pyykko@utu.fi

REFERENCES

Agaptsov, S. A. (2011) Analytical note on the outcomes of the expert review. *Bulletin of the Accounts Chamber of the Russian federation*, 2 (158). www.budgetrf.ru/Publications/Schpalata/2011/ACH201103031811/ACH201103031811_p_007.htm [02.03.2011]

External Evaluation of the Russian National Accreditation Agency (2008)

Gevorkyan, E. N. & Motova, G. N. (2004) Bolonskii process i sotrudnichestvo v oblasti obespecheniya kachestva obrazovaniya: opyt Rossiiskoi Federacii, *Voprosy obrazovaniya*, 4, pp. 159–165 http://vo.hse.ru/arhiv.aspx?catid=252&z=994&t_no=995&ob_no=1010 [••]

Motova, G. (2007) *The Russian Quality Assurance System* www.utu.fi/en/university/quality/russia/motova.ppt

Motova, G. N. & Navodnov, V. G. (2009) K sozdaniyu sistemy monitoringa kachestva vysshego professionalnogo obrazovaniya, *Ekologiya cheloveka*, 9, pp. 7–11 www.nsmu.ru/human_ecology/chitat/arhiv.php

Motova, G. N. & Navodnov, V. G. (2010) Akkreditaciya: ?nut ili pryanikv sisteme upravleniya kachestvom obrazovaniya, in: G. N. Motova (Ed) *Akkreditaciya v*

sfere vysshego professionalnogo obrazovaniya Rossii: sostoyanie I perspektivy (Moskva, Gildiya ekspertov v sfere professionalnogo obrazovaniya), pp.178–182   http://expert-nica.ru/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=198 [02.03.2011]

Navodnov, V. G., Gevorkyan, E. N., Motova, G. N. & Petropavlovskii, M. V. (2008) *Akkreditaciya vysshikh uchebnykh zavedenii v Rossii: uchebnoye posobiye* (Yoshkar-Ola, Mariiskii gosudarstvennyi tekhnicheskii universitet).

Zakon RF ?b obrazovanii 1992

⑦

AUTHOR QUERY FORM

Dear Author,

During the preparation of your manuscript for publication, the questions listed below have arisen. Please attend to these matters and return this form with your proof.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Query References	Query	Remark
1	AUTHOR: May 2005 has not been included in the Reference List, please supply full publication details.	
2	AUTHOR: Russian Federation National Report, 2009 has not been included in the Reference List, please supply full publication details.	
3	AUTHOR: Russian Federation National Report, 2007 has not been included in the Reference List, please supply full publication details.	
4	AUTHOR: Please provide a corresponding note for ennote 7, or remove the citation of the ennote 7 from the text.	
5	AUTHOR: The missing year of publication '2008' has been added in *External Evaluation of the Russian National Accreditation Agency*; please confirm this is correct.	
6	AUTHOR: Please supply the date.	
7	AUTHOR: '*Zakon RF ?b obrazovanii*' The corrupted '?' has been changed to 'o' in *Zakon RF ?b obrazovanii* 1992; please check if they are correct.	

MARKED PROOF

Please correct and return this set

Please use the proof correction marks shown below for all alterations and corrections. If you wish to return your proof by fax you should ensure that all amendments are written clearly in dark ink and are made well within the page margins.

Instruction to printer	Textual mark	Marginal mark
Leave unchanged	• • • under matter to remain	⟨✓⟩
Insert in text the matter indicated in the margin	⋏	New matter followed by ⋏ or ⋏⊗
Delete	/ through single character, rule or underline or ⊢——⊣ through all characters to be deleted	⟋ or ⟋⊗
Substitute character or substitute part of one or more word(s)	/ through letter or ⊢——⊣ through characters	new character / or new characters /
Change to italics	— under matter to be changed	⌣
Change to capitals	≡ under matter to be changed	≡
Change to small capitals	= under matter to be changed	=
Change to bold type	∿ under matter to be changed	∿
Change to bold italic	∾ under matter to be changed	∾
Change to lower case	Encircle matter to be changed	≢
Change italic to upright type	(As above)	⫫
Change bold to non-bold type	(As above)	⫪
Insert 'superior' character	/ through character or ⋏ where required	Ɣ or ⋋ under character e.g. Ɣ² or ⋋²
Insert 'inferior' character	(As above)	⋏ over character e.g. ⋏₂
Insert full stop	(As above)	⊙
Insert comma	(As above)	,
Insert single quotation marks	(As above)	Ɣ or ⋋ and/or Ɣ or ⋋
Insert double quotation marks	(As above)	Ɣ or ⋋ and/or Ɣ or ⋋
Insert hyphen	(As above)	⊢⊣
Start new paragraph	⌐	⌐
No new paragraph	↩	↩
Transpose	⊔⊓	⊔⊓
Close up	linking ‿ characters	⌒
Insert or substitute space between characters or words	/ through character or ⋏ where required	Y
Reduce space between characters or words	| between characters or words affected	↑