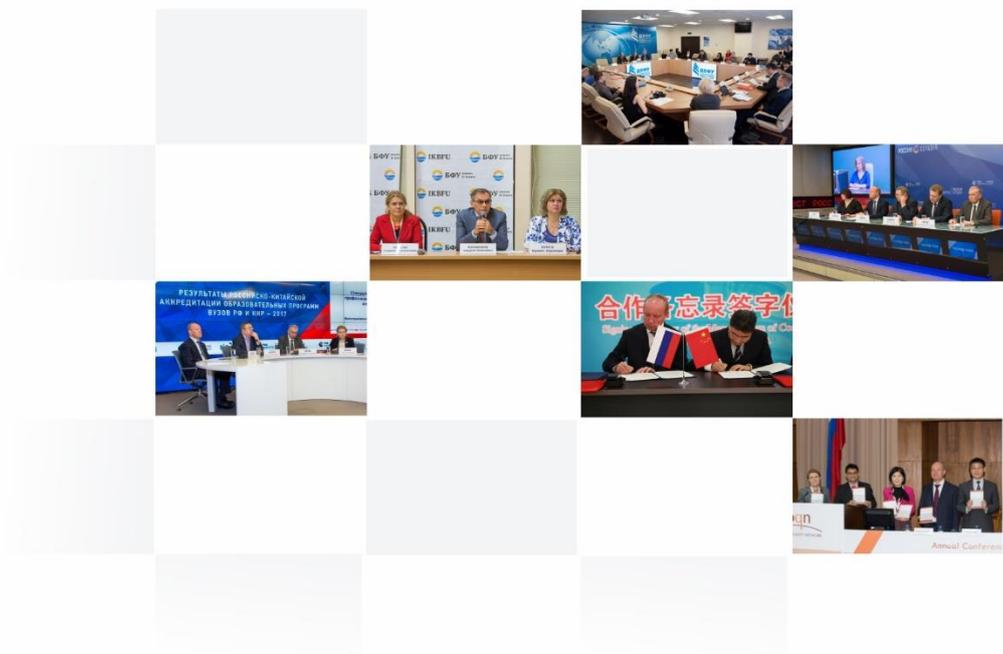




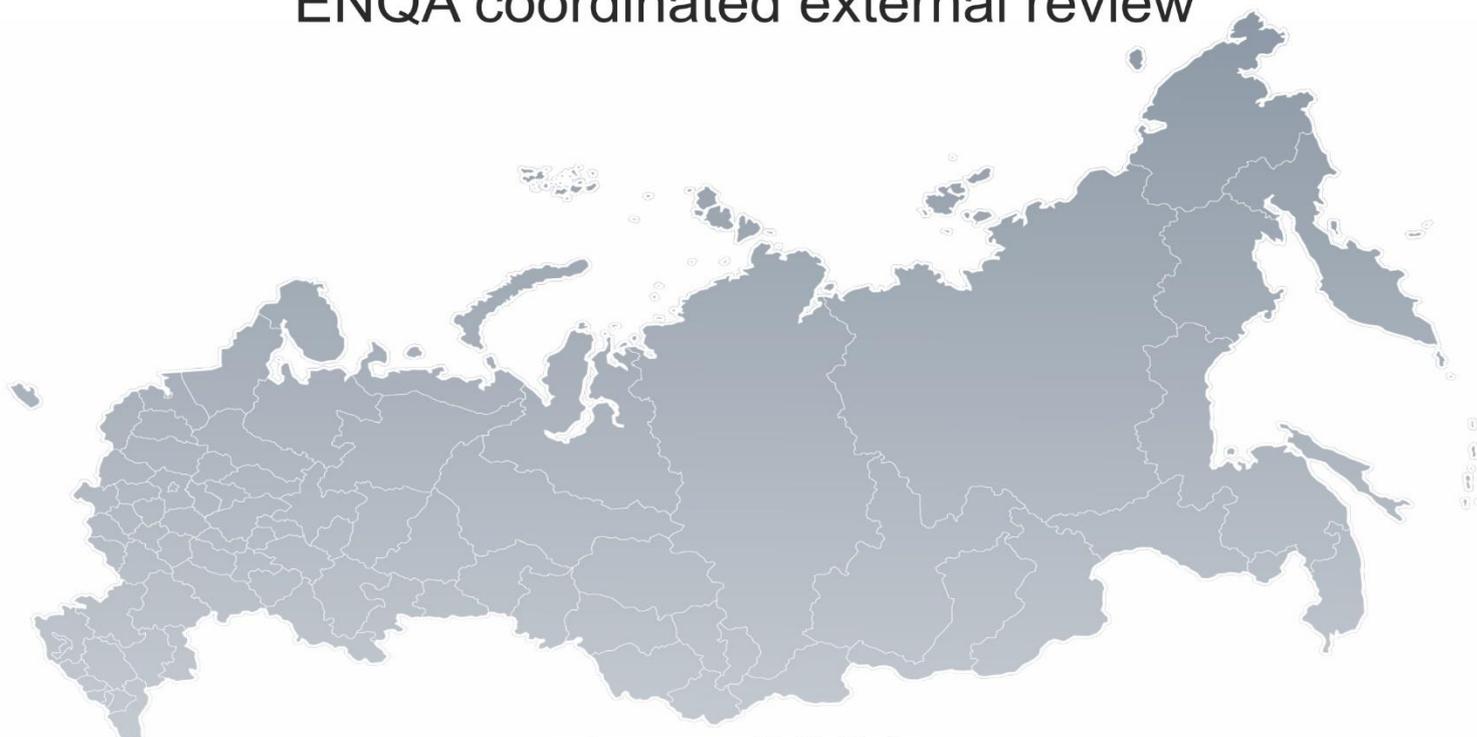
National Centre for
Public Accreditation



National Centre for Public Accreditation

FOLLOW UP REPORT

ENQA coordinated external review



June 2021
Yoshkar-Ola, Russia

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR PUBLIC ACCREDITATION

FOLLOW-UP REPORT

ENQA coordinated external review

Version 1.2*

*In this revised version of the follow-up report (v 1.2) new information was provided.

Introduction

In March 2019 the National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA) underwent external ENQA coordinated review and reconfirmed its membership of ENQA for a period of five years. The Board concluded that NCPA was in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) and thus fulfilled the membership criteria.

The review helped NCPA to analyze and improve its activities and procedures. NCPA would like to take this additional opportunity to express its sincere appreciation to the External Review Panel members for their thorough approach and many useful and helpful recommendations resulting from it that aim to improve the work of the Agency.

As a consequence of the External Review, NCPA developed a follow-up roadmap which addressed the findings of the External Review Panel and outlined NCPA's actions to be taken. Some recommendations were instantly fulfilled, others took certain time and resources to be implemented.

The follow up report below indicates per recommendation what actions NCPA has taken or is planning to take.

FOLLOW UP REPORT

Recommendations of the External Review Panel and actions taken

ESG 3.1 ACTIVITIES, POLICY, AND PROCESSES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

Panel conclusion: substantially compliant

Panel recommendations

NCPA should amend its Statute to explicitly assign the responsibility for overseeing the implementation of its strategy to the General Meeting of Founders;

Involve a mechanism of risk identification into NCPAs strategic planning;

Revise NCPAs mission statement that it clearly defines the full range of its activities. As reflected together with NCPA management the agency should take into account the mismatch of different versions of the mission statement provided in the Strategic plan and on the webpage as well as different wordings in English and Russian versions.

Panel suggestions for further improvement

If in the future NCPA would decide to widen its activities and step into advisory services, it should very clearly declare the boundaries of consultancy.

To strengthen positioning NCPA as a centre of innovation in the sphere of quality assurance by way of participating in programmes and projects on quality evaluation.

NCPA's actions

NCPA is going to consider this point when amending its Statutes.

NCPA will be including this mechanism into its Strategic plan for 2022-2027

The mission statement has been revised in order to include the full range of NCPA's activities

NCPA does not have any paid advisory services.

NCPA is a participant of the following projects:

- 1) SAGRIS – Enhancement of Postgraduate Studies on Sustainable Agriculture and Future Farming Systems. Project duration: 15.01.2020 – 14.01.2023
- 2) DEQAR CONNECT project “Enhancing the Coverage and Connectivity of QA in the EHEA through DEQAR”. Project duration: 01.02.2020 – 31.01.2022

ESG 3.3 INDEPENDENCE

Panel conclusion: substantially compliant

Panel recommendations

Limit membership to the NAB to people who are not involved at any other stage of the EQA procedure.

Define clearer, more explicit and transparent regulations regarding the members, stakeholder percentages, and

NCPA's actions

The Regulations on the National Accreditation Board have been revised. According to the revised document only persons who are not involved at any stage of the external quality assurance procedure can be elected to the Board For more information go to: [Regulations on the National Accreditation Board](#) (clause 2.7). The nomination procedure and the terms of service are described in clause 2.1-2.10, 2.17-2.18 of the same document.

terms of office of the NAB.

ESG 3.4 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Panel conclusion: substantially compliant

Panel recommendations

Focus on analysis of the material available in its accreditation reports and produce thematic analyses on this basis to support further development of quality assurance in higher education institutions by sharing good practice and bringing enhancements. This practice should also be included in the Internal Quality Assurance System.

Panel suggestions for further improvement

The plans of the follow-up activities presented by HEIs could serve as a valuable source of information for thematic analysis showing trends of the means used by HEIs to enhance their activities. This information would be valuable for all HEIs.

NCPA's actions

NCPA regularly carries out a multilevel thematic analysis at micro and macrolevels.

Microlevel

The microlevel involves the analysis of NCPA's internal procedures and processes. NCPA reflects on its own performance. After each accreditation procedure the NCPA staff members collect feedback from experts with the view of finding out their opinion about NCPA's practice of conducting QA procedures. NCPA also surveys HEI staff about the effectiveness of NCPA's procedures and their impact on enhancement of the institution's performance.

1. The collected feedback is discussed at NCPA's regular staff meetings in order to improve the agency's performance.
2. Weekly meetings of NCPA staff members, where all stages of accreditation procedures of HEIs are analyzed (self-evaluation, preparation of experts for the site-visit, site-visit, Final Reports on the external review, follow-up reports).
Presentation form – oral reports of coordinators.

3. Summary reports, apart from the findings of the External Review Panel, contain the analysis of the achievements of the educational programme and the overall evaluation of meeting NCPA's accreditation standards (distribution diagram of the external review outcomes)
Evidence: [Reports, Summary Reports and Decisions](#)

4. The semi-annual reports of the Accreditation Office to the NCPA Director on the outcomes of accreditation procedures and the analyses of the reports of external review panels are carried out in order to identify strengths and weaknesses of educational institutions and their improvement.
The presentation form – oral report by the Head of the Accreditation Office supported by MS Office PowerPoint presentations.
Evidence: [Thematic analysis of NCPA's accreditation procedures](#) (Analytical Reports, Analysis of Accreditation Procedures, Annual Review, Working materials, Public Presentations)

5. The semi-annual meetings of the National Accreditation Board, where the outcomes of accreditation procedures, plans and follow-up reports of educational institutions are discussed; the recommendations for NCPA are developed.
Evidence – [Materials for the Meeting of the National Accreditation Board](#)

6. Decisions made by the National Accreditation Board are analyzed twice a year at NCPA's meetings.
7. Annual reviews of NCPA's accreditation activities.
Evidence: [Annual Reviews](#)

Evidence: [Annual Reviews](#)

Macrolevel:

The macrolevel involves NCPA's analysis of changes in the Russian legislation in the sphere of higher education and QA; comparative analysis of the higher education systems in the country and abroad; research into the development of quality

	<p>assurance systems in Russia and other countries, and dissemination of the outcomes among stakeholders and the general public.</p> <p>1. The analysis of changes in the Russian legislation in the sphere of higher education and QA. NCPA operates in full compliance with the Russian legislation. The staff members examine the changes in the legal sphere of QA, especially related to licensing and accreditation, and their impact on independent processes of QA in education and adjust the activities of NCPA accordingly. NCPA disseminates the outcomes of its activity, changes and amendments in the legal framework related to QA through analytical annual reports, “Vestnik Akkreditatsii” news bulletin (2-3 times a month), Accreditation in Education journal (8 issues a year), etc. Evidence: Vestnik Akkreditatsii news bulletin (in Russian) Accreditation in education journal (in Russian) Analytical Reports (in Russian)</p> <p>2. Comparative analysis of the higher education systems in the country and abroad. NCPA carries out benchmarking for examining good practices and identifying new tendencies in the sphere of QA in Russia and abroad and for determining its place in the QA system. Evidence: NCPA’s publications</p> <p>3. Research into the development of quality assurance systems in Russia and other countries. NCPA staff members carry out the meta-analysis of the data collected on different levels (legislation, higher education system, NCPA’s and other QA agencies’ performance) and present the findings in research papers. Evidence: List of NCPA’s publications</p> <p>4. Over the past 2 years NCPA staff members published 19 research articles. Evidence: List of NCPA’s publications</p> <p>5. Dissemination of accreditation and research outcomes among stakeholders and the general public. The NCPA staff present at conferences, forums, round tables, research and practical conferences of experts, meetings of public bodies and organizations. (Public presentations)</p>
<p>ESG 3.5 RESOURCES</p>	
<p>Panel conclusion: fully compliant</p>	
<p>Panel suggestions for further improvement</p> <p>NCPA should discuss how they would make use of better long-term planning in order to foresee necessary steps on how to increase financial incomes for development of the Agency.</p>	<p>NCPA’s actions</p> <p>NCPA will be including long-term strategic planning into its Strategic plan for 2022-2027</p>
<p>ESG 3.6 INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT</p>	
<p>Panel conclusion: substantially compliant</p>	
<p>Panel recommendations</p> <p>Improve consistency of text in the</p>	<p>NCPA’s actions</p> <p>NCPA monitors the consistency of its documents to avoid</p>

documents available for internal and external use.	ambiguity. NCPA regularly improves its internal QA system and will be including Panel recommendations into our work.
ESG 2.1 CONSIDERATION OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE Panel conclusion: fully compliant	
Panel suggestions for further improvement <p>NCPA should finalise the explicit inclusion of ESG standard 1.10 related to cyclic external quality assurance in the methodology for public accreditation for study programmes delivered by further professional education institutions and for public accreditation of further professional HEIs.</p> <p>NCPA should further promote the involvement of students in the processes of internal quality assurance within HEIs.</p>	NCPA's actions <p>NCPA is considering including ESG standard 1.10 related to cyclic external quality assurance in the methodology for public accreditation for study programmes delivered by further professional education institutions. However, further education programmes are short-term programmes. They are quickly modified in order to reflect the latest advances and meet the requirements of the labour market. After five years these programmes are often replaced by others, thus no reaccreditation is needed.</p> <p>NCPA actively cooperates with All-Russian Student Union. NCPA takes part in workshops, conferences, round tables attended by student representatives. NCPA's role is to educate and encourage students to be actively involved in internal quality assurance of HEIs.</p>
ESG 2.2: Designing methodologies fit for purpose Panel conclusion: partially compliant	
Panel recommendations <p>Review its practice of accreditation of clusters of programmes to ensure its fitness for purpose. Either the practice has to be adjusted to the methodology of programme reviews or the activity has to become a separate activity with its own methodology. This review should include regulations for clusters (qualitative and quantitative) that have to correspond with experts (qualitative and quantitative) and also cover the impacts for site visit schedules and reports as well as final decisions.</p> <p>Separate accreditation procedures of basic programmes of vocational education.</p> Panel suggestions for further improvement <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NCPA should reflect on international experiences to ensure more flexible ways in activities carried out by NCPA to demonstrate the effectiveness of internal quality assurance of HEIs. 2. NCPA should develop a mechanism for regular review of its accreditation processes 	NCPA's actions <p>NCPA has introduced changes into the existing Regulations on public accreditation of study programmes (clusters of programmes) of higher, secondary and further professional education.</p> <p>Two types of accreditation procedures have been distinguished: accreditation of a study programme and accreditation of a cluster of study programmes.</p> <p>A cluster of programmes as separate from an educational programme has been defined. See clause 1.2 of the Regulations on public accreditation of clusters of basic educational programmes (clause 1.2).</p> <p>The revised Regulations determine that a cluster of basic educational programmes of higher education can comprise from 2 to 7 programmes of every level of education related to the same field of study. If an educational institution applies for accreditation of several clusters of educational programmes, a Review Panel is formed for each cluster. See clause 1.3; clause 4.2 of the Regulations on public accreditation of clusters of basic professional educational programmes.</p> <p>If marks on the standards of certain educational programmes in a cluster significantly differ from the marks of the other programmes, such programmes can be excluded from the cluster without any repercussions for the whole cluster.</p>

<p>and standards together with stakeholders to reassure its fitness for purpose.</p>	<p>Educational programmes excluded from the cluster are evaluated separately by the Review Panel and a separate Final Report is prepared on the outcomes of the review. The decision on accreditation or denial of accreditation and on the terms and conditions of accreditation of educational programmes excluded from the cluster are taken by the National Accreditation Board on each educational programme individually. See clause 3.9; clause 6.3 of the Regulations on public accreditation of clusters of basic professional educational programmes.</p> <p>The requirements to the experts of the External Review Panel evaluating a cluster of educational programmes have been specified. Experts are selected with the consideration of the type of accreditation: cluster or programme. In cluster accreditation preference is given to the nominees, representatives of the academic community, with leadership experience of Rector, Vice-Rector or Dean in order to be able to specifically evaluate the issues of internal quality assurance. In programme accreditation preference is given to the nominees, representatives of the academic community, who have the experience of working in the position of a Professor or the head of a department.</p> <p>An Expert Panel is composed in such a way so that the qualification of experts corresponds to the level of education, specialities and the field of study in order to make it possible for one expert panel to professionally evaluate every educational programme included in the cluster. In case an organization has applied for accreditation of several clusters of educational programmes, a separate Expert Panel is formed for each cluster of educational programmes. See clause 4.2; clause 4.6 of the Regulations on public accreditation of clusters of basic professional educational programmes.</p> <p>The revised methodology was piloted in the accreditation procedures in April and May 2021.</p>
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<p>ESG 2.3 IMPLEMENTING PROCESSES</p> <p>Panel conclusion: substantially compliant</p>	
<p>Panel recommendations</p> <p>Publish follow up reports on the website to ensure transparency and consistency of NCPA's operations.</p> <p>Panel suggestions for further improvement</p> <p>NCPA should consider involving experts in evaluation of reports of corrective actions in case of reduced terms of accreditation.</p>	<p>NCPA's actions</p> <p>In case of reduced terms of accreditation, the reports of corrective actions are published on NCPA's website. In case of full term accreditation, no follow-up report is required.</p> <p>NCPA involves Panel members to evaluate the reports of corrective actions (if necessary).</p>
<p>ESG 2.4: Peer-review experts</p> <p>Panel conclusion: substantially compliant</p>	

<p>Panel recommendations</p> <p>Include students' representatives in the public accreditation of study programmes delivered by further professional education institutions, as well in the accreditation procedure of the further education institutions.</p>	<p>NCPA's actions</p> <p>The revised Regulations on public accreditation of a further education programme and the Regulations on public accreditation of clusters of further education programmes contain the revised requirements to the composition of an External Review Panel.</p> <p>An External Review Panel includes representatives of student community (listeners¹) who have completed a similar further education programme in the past three years. A listener shall be nominated by an educational or professional organization/centre for qualification development and professional training</p> <p><i>Evidence: Regulations on public accreditation of a further education programme (clause 4.2; 4.5);</i></p> <p><i>Regulations on public accreditation of clusters of further education programmes (clause 4.2; 4.5)</i></p>
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ESG 2.5 CRITERIA FOR OUTCOMES

Panel conclusion: substantially compliant

<p>Panel recommendations</p> <p>Improve the evidence base in the expert reports in order to allow consistency in the decision-making process.</p> <p>Implement procedures and criteria allowing different decisions in accreditation procedures of a cluster of programmes.</p>	<p>NCPA's actions</p> <p>During the briefing of experts NCPA draws special attention to the improvement of the evidence base of the reports. When the reports are ready NCPA's coordinator checks them for accuracy with the focus on the evidence base.</p> <p>NCPA is currently developing an online training course for experts in Russian and English with due regard of the revised technology.</p>
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ESG 2.6: Reporting

Panel conclusion: partially compliant

<p>Panel recommendations</p> <p>Adjust its publication practice and publish accreditation decisions together with the full reports.</p> <p>Assure transparency regarding the publication of reports on the English website.</p>	<p>NCPA's actions</p> <p>The reports and decisions are published together and can be accessed from NCPA's official website:</p> <p><i>Evidence: Reports</i></p> <p>The revised methodology used in the most recent accreditation procedures resulted in Final Reports that contain evidence on the individual programmes that are</p>
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¹ The term «listener» refers to students mastering a further education programme. In the Russian language there are different terms denoting participants of the educational process who are being educated and/or trained at different levels:

- 1) Pre-school education — vospitannik (no exact equivalent in English)
- 2) School — uchaschiysya — pupil
- 3) University — student
- 4) Post-graduate education — aspirant (no exact equivalent)
- 5) Further education — slushatel' — listener

All these terms are used in the law «On Education in the Russian Federation». Thus, they are not «solely' listeners'» but full members of review panels.

<p>Assure that reports contain an adequate evidence basis and analysis in order to explain recommendations in a comprehensible way.</p>	<p>part of a cluster: <i>Evidence: Report on external review of the cluster of educational programmes delivered by National Research Ogarev Mordovia State University (pp. 11, 13, 17, 19, 22, 24, 25)</i> <i>Report on external review of the cluster of educational programmes delivered by Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University (in Russian) (pp.18, 19, 20)</i></p>
<p>ESG 2.7: Complaints and appeals</p> <p>Panel conclusion: substantially compliant</p>	
<p>Panel recommendations</p> <p>Continue to refine the appeals procedure to allow appeals to all formal decisions and establish a complaints procedure.</p>	<p>NCPA's actions</p> <p>The new documents the Regulations on the Complaints Committee and the Complaints Procedure and the Regulations on the Appeals Committee and the Appeals Procedure has been developed.</p> <p>The educational institution, experts and persons involved in the accreditation procedure have the right to lodge an appeal and/or complaint, against any decisions and/or action (inaction) of experts, members of the National Accreditation Board, NCPA's staff at any stage of the accreditation procedure. For more information see: Regulations on the Complaints Committee and the Complaints Procedure; Regulations on the Appeals Committee and the Appeals Procedure</p> <p>NCPA is working on embedding the Complaint and Appeal feedback mechanism on its website. The work is currently in progress.</p>