



«АККРЕДИТТЕУ ЖӘНЕ РЕЙТИНГТІҢ
ТӘУЕЛСІЗ АГЕНТТІГІ» КЕМ

НУ «НЕЗАВИСИМОЕ АГЕНТСТВО
АККРЕДИТАЦИИ И РЕЙТИНГА»

INDEPENDENT AGENCY FOR
ACCREDITATION AND RATING

IAAR FOLLOW-UP REPORT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF IMPLEMENTING ENQA BOARD'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Astana 2018



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in the framework of implementing ENQA Board's recommendations

Astana, November 2018

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Introduction

At the meeting on November 30, 2016, the ENQA Board decided to award the IAAR full membership in ENQA for a period of five years, noting the substantial compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015).

At the same time, the ENQA experts' report, compiled on the basis of the ENQA external expert panel's visit on June 12-14, 2016, contains recommendations on further development of the Agency. A letter from the ENQA Board dated December 14, 2016 stated the requirement to submit a report by November 2018 on the follow-up measures and procedures.

IAAR carefully analyzed the ENQA Review Report and by order of the IAAR Director No. 3-17/1-OD as of January 13, 2017, has set up a working group on the implementation of the ENQA recommendations and elaborated an Action Plan to implement recommendations of ENQA experts under the follow-up procedures.

The follow-up report was considered and reviewed at a meeting of the IAAR Supervisory Council on October 15, 2018. The report presents an analysis on implementation of recommendations made by ENQA experts during the reporting period.

IAAR once again expresses its substantial gratitude to the ENQA expert panel for their invaluable work and very useful recommendations for further development of our Agency's activities.

Implementation of the ENQA experts' recommendations based on the results of the external audit by ENQA in 2016

Area for development 1 (ESG 3.1)

ENQA Board Recommendation:

ESG 3.1 ACTIVITIES, POLICY, AND PROCESSES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

In order to strengthen the contribution of students to as a stakeholder group to IAAR's governance and work, the IAAR Accreditation Council would benefit by increasing the student representation in its membership.

IAAR follow-up:

According to the Action Plan for the implementation of the ENQA experts' recommendations (approved by the Order No. 3-17/1-OD as of January 13, 2017), IAAR has conducted the following work in this regard:

1) On April 19, 2018, IAAR signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Republican student movement "Alliance of Kazakhstan Students". The parties have agreed therein to cooperate in bringing students from the Alliance of Kazakhstan Students to the board of the IAAR collegial bodies and expert panels.

2) At the meeting of the IAAR Accreditation Council as of May 11, 2018 (Minutes No. 37), it was decided to expand the membership of the IAAR Accreditation Council by bringing in the Council membership 2 more student representatives, which were recommended by the Alliance of Kazakhstan Students. The updated membership of the IAAR Accreditation Council is published at the following link <http://iaar.kz/en/about/accreditation-council>.

Thus, today the Accreditation Council of IAAR has received a wider students' stakeholder representation, who take a proactive part in making decisions on the accreditation of educational organizations.

Area for development 2 (ESG 3.4)

ENQA Board Recommendation:

ESG 3.4 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

It is recommended that, in the medium term, the agency should consider how it can use the information contained in its accreditation reports so as to inform general developments in higher education policy and practice. In this context, it would be appropriate to consult with HEI's to seek their views on areas of information or guidance that would be most relevant and valuable to them.

It is recommended that the agency further develops its current work to communicate to institutions and to the public more widely the significance of its quality assurance activities, and provides further guidance in understanding the significance of the outcomes of accreditation.

IAAR follow-up:

This recommendation of the ENQA Board is consistent with the Strategic Plan for the Development of IAAR for 2016-2020. Thus, Strategic Development Plan of IAAR for 2016-2020 determines two major strategic objectives: “4.3 Comprehensive analysis of the national quality assurance system for education” and “4.4 Public awareness of assessment outcomes of the quality of educational programs and activities of educational organizations” that comprehensively contribute to the implementation of the Standard ESG "3.4 Thematic Analysis".

IAAR continues intensive work on thematic analysis aiming to use the information contained in the external expert panel's (hereinafter – EEP) reports on accreditation to inform educational organizations and the public about the development of the national quality assurance system and trends in higher education in general.

To date, the following work is being conducted on the implementation of the ESG Standard "3.4 Thematic Analysis":

1) Development of the IAAR annual report on the results of accreditation activities, which includes:

- analysis of quality improvement proposals made by expert panels for higher education institutions;
- a review of the best practices in accredited higher education institutions;
- proposals to improve the internal quality of IAAR, including the consideration of standards and criteria;
- the IAAR international activity and cooperation;
- information on quality assurance measures organized by IAAR.

The report is sent annually to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan and published on the IAAR website <http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-reports/annual-reports>

2) An analytical report on the survey results of the HEIs, accredited by IAAR, is compiled on an annual basis and is used in reviewing and improving the system of internal quality assurance of IAAR. The purpose of the survey of HEIs is to identify the degree of satisfaction of educational organizations with the IAAR procedures of institutional and specialized accreditation and to determine the degree of influence of accreditation on further development and improvement of the internal quality assurance system of educational organizations.

According to the recommendation of the ENQA Board, on March 12, 2018, at the meeting of the Expert Council on Higher Education (Minutes No. 12), the survey form of HEIs was reviewed to have a feedback on the priorities of current areas of the future thematic analysis of the agency.

The results of the HEIs survey for 2017 were summed up and the suggestions of the surveyed HEIs related to the current areas of thematic analysis were taken into account.

An analytical report on the HEIs' survey results is annually posted on the agency's website (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-reports/analytical-reports>).

3) The analytical report on the outcomes of the IAAR experts' survey is compiled annually for the quality of the accreditation procedures improvement purposes and to receive feedback from the IAAR experts.

An analytical report on the experts' survey results is published annually on the agency's website (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-reports/analytical-reports>).

4) Improvement and development of the scientific information journal of IAAR "Education. Quality Assurance". The journal is assigned the international standard serial number ISSN 2617-0493. The journal is included in the Kazakhstan citation database (JSC "National Center for State Scientific and Technical Evaluation").

The journal is also included in the Catalogue of Periodicals of the Republic of Kazakhstan, a subscription index has also been received. Since the second half of 2018, the work has been continuing on the subscription for this journal to broaden the information space.

Work is underway to include the journal in the list of recommended publications of the Committee for the Control of Education and Science under the Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Kazakhstan (CCES MES RK), which will increase the attractiveness of the journal and its dissemination in society and abroad.

In order to improve the quality of published papers, the editorial board of the journal has been revised and expanded; its membership includes foreign members of the editorial board.

The frequency of the journal has increased from 1 to 4 times a year. A separate website of the Journal "Education. Quality Assurance" <http://iaar-education.kz/> has been established.

5) As part of the social partnership, on March 3, 2017, IAAR signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the authoritative publishing house in Kazakhstan, the republican educational socio-political newspaper "Bilimdi Yel – Educated state".

The purpose of cooperation is to create public awareness with comprehensive, reliable and relevant information about the IAAR activities in the field of quality assurance in education, promoting the formation of public opinion in rising social importance of accreditation of educational services, highlighting and promoting the best practices of educational organizations, expanding the educational space.

Monthly on the pages of the newspaper, IAAR publishes information on various activities about the quality assurance of education. Along with the Journal "Education. Quality Assurance", the newspaper "Bilimdi Yel - Educated state" is actively involved in the processes of creating public awareness about the importance of the agency's performance in quality assurance, as well as the results of accreditation of HEIs and education programs (<http://iaar.kz/en/publications/newspaper>).

6) Annual analysis of the EEP reports. The purpose of the analysis is to identify development trends in the field of best practices of HEIs, as well as to identify ways to improve the quality of

education in the framework of the EEP recommendations. Monitoring is used to analyze and improve policies to ensure the quality of education at the national level.

Analysis of the external expert panels' reports is annually published on the agency's website (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-reports/analytical-reports>).

7) In the area of the thematic analysis, according to the Strategic Plan for 2016-2020, the work is underway to conduct a study of the mobility and internationalization programs, as well as on the commercialization of research projects in accredited HEIs of the Republic of Kazakhstan. A report on academic mobility is planned to be published on the IAAR website before the end of 2018, compilation of the report on the commercialization of research projects is scheduled for 2019.

8) Continuous work is conducted to widely attract public attention to the results and significance of the agency's activities on quality assurance in education through the organization and participation in webinars, seminars, workshops, conferences and forums.

In 2017-2018 the following major events were held by IAAR:

- World Congress of Engineers and Scientists WSEC-2017 (June 19-20, 2017, Astana city)
- International Training Seminar "Accreditation of technical and vocational education organizations as a factor of quality assurance in training qualified personnel: international experience" (November 10, 2017, Astana city)
- I Central Asian Forum on Quality Assurance (December 8, 2017, Almaty city)
- International seminar on professional development of the IAAR experts, organized jointly with EQAR (March 12, 2018, Astana city)
- Seminar "Preparation of organizations of technical and vocational education to the accreditation procedure" (March 13, 2018, Kokshetau city)
- Workshop "Accreditation of technical and vocational education organizations - imperatives of time" (April 3, 2018, Almaty city)
- International Forum "Accreditation - a new vector for quality assurance of educational institutions in the Kyrgyz Republic" (May 18, 2018, Bishkek city, Kyrgyz Republic)
- II Central Asian Forum on Quality Assurance (October 16, 2018, Astana city) and others.

9) In the framework of expanding information interaction, IAAR actively works with the media and gives an important consideration to information cooperation. In order to raise public interest and awareness of on the IAAR activities the following has also been arranged:

- Interview to local television channel of the Kokshetau city (March 13, 2018).
- Participation in the "It is important to know" program of the Khabar TV channel (May 24, 2018).
- Media coverage of the IAAR Accreditation Council's meeting by the Khabar channel (June 1, 2018).

- Interview of the Agency Director A. Zhumagulova to the leading republican TV channel Khabar (June 19, 2018).
- Interview to the Tajik TV channel No. 1 on the quality assurance system in Kazakhstan and prospects for the development of accreditation in the Central Asian region (June 19, 2018, Khujand city, Tajikistan) during the participation of the IAAR representative in the International Conference “International cooperation of HEIs as an important factor in improving the quality of education.

10) The methods and important means of thematic analysis and public awareness are further development of cooperation with regional, republican and foreign media through the publication of materials prepared by the IAAR staff and experts. The papers of the IAAR employees were published in the Journal of the International Academy of Education, the Kazakhstanskaya Pravda Republican newspaper, the Kutbilim social-educational and popular science newspaper of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Higher Education Discovery (HED) journal and others.

IAAR actively participates in several Erasmus + projects aiming to improve the quality assurance system in education, and in the project funded by the World Bank, “Conducting a review of best practices to develop a systematic approach to aligning the National Qualifications Framework with vocational and higher education programs”.

Area for development 3 (ESG 3.6)

ENQA Board Recommendation:

ESG 3.6 INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

It is recommended that IAAR, as it implements fully its internal quality assurance procedures, maintains regular internal reviews and reports concerning the level of performance against the measures that it has defined for internal quality assurance.

It is recommended that the agency’s periodic surveys of experts and institutions be reviewed with the aim of increasing their usefulness, and that the agency should consider ways in which the resulting information could be shared more widely. In addition, evaluative feedback and comment on individual accreditation events should be introduced.

It is recommended that in the interest of public information, IAAR makes a more concise and accessible statement regarding its internal quality assurance available on its website, possibly in the form of an executive summary of the IQAS Manual.

IAAR follow-up:

Having studied the report of the ENQA experts, IAAR revised and supplemented the “Guidelines for the internal quality assurance system” to more fully implement the internal quality assurance procedures. To this end, by order of the IAAR Director (order No. 3-17/1-OD as of January 13, 2018), a working group was established to implement the recommendations of the ENQA Board. One of the goals of the working group was to formalize internal reporting and

create a mechanism for the wider use of periodic feedback surveys for the performance and effectiveness of internal quality assurance system (IQAS) procedures.

The working group has developed proposals for improving IQAS and presented it to the Expert Council on Higher Education for discussion (Minutes No. 12 as of March 12, 2018). After the discussion and review by members of the Expert Council these proposals were sent to the IAAR Supervisory Board for consideration. In its turn, the Supervisory Board made specific recommendations to the IAAR Director on amendments to the “Guidelines for the internal quality assurance system”.

By the Order of the IAAR Director (Order No. 68-18/1-OD as of May 25, 2018) the “Guidelines for the internal quality assurance system” were amended in the paragraph 8.2.2. in terms of formalizing internal reporting to determine the performance and efficiency of procedures. According to these amendments, a working group on internal audit is created at least once a year. The results of the correspondent internal audit are reported and submitted for review to the Director of the Agency. The director, on the basis of this report, takes corrective and preventive actions to improve IQAS.

Also, amendments were made to the paragraph 5.6 of the IQAS Guidelines, which spelled out a mechanism for the wider use of the accredited HEIs and agency experts’ surveys to improve accreditation procedures overall aiming to introduce feedback practices.

Today, the agency practices two types of surveys of accredited HEIs and experts: 1) after each visit; 2) once a year.

When developing a survey form of an accredited HEI for feedback after each accreditation procedure, the ENQA Feedback Form for Agencies was used as a model of the questionnaire.

The results of this survey, at least once a year, are summarized and analyzed under the Information and Analytical Project, and submitted for the Expert Councils review and presented in the form of recommendations to the IAAR Director for subsequent decision-making. This process is also regulated by the IQAS Guidelines (paragraph 5.6.1).

The results of the internal audit and survey of stakeholders are widely used in the preparation of annual Action Plans and Strategy Implementation Plans of the IAAR.

At the same time, following the recommendation of the ENQA experts, a brief write-up summary of the IQAS Guidelines is published on the IAAR website, which in a more accurate and accessible form makes it possible to inform the public about the main provisions of the IAAR quality assurance policy (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/internal-quality-system>).

Area for development 4 (ESG 2.1)

ENQA Board Recommendation:

ESG 2.1 CONSIDERATION OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

The agency may wish to review its checklists of criteria with a view to making them more manageable within the duration and scope of an accreditation event.

To improve further the reporting on HEI's internal quality assurance it would be desirable for IAAR now to review its 2011 Guidelines for organizing and conducting the external expertise in the educational expertise of the education organizations. The review should aim to give the agency's experts more detailed guidance on how to use the IAAR 2015 standards and how to ensure that these were adequately covered in the main body of accreditation reports as well as in the concluding checklists.

IAAR follow-up:

In 2017, IAAR in connection with the recommendation of the ENQA experts revised the standards of higher education on institutional and specialized accreditation. Such revision is initiated to ensure greater harmonization of standards with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015). Also in the course of the survey of experts and HEIs the need to optimize and reduce the standards criteria was revealed.

Standards were reviewed in accordance with the "Instructions for the Development and Improvement of the IAAR Standards," taking into account the recommendations of HEIs, academic experts, employers, students representatives and professional organizations. The draft of the new standards was developed by the working group, and discussed at the meeting of the IAAR Expert Council on Higher Education and was sent to the IAAR experts for examination. Standards were also reviewed at the IAAR seminars aiming to take into account stakeholder views. The final edition of the standards is sent for approval to the Accreditation Council (approved by the order of the IAAR Director No. 10-17-OD dated 02.24.2017).

In the course of systematic work to optimize the criteria for standards of institutional and specialized accreditation, the following results were achieved:

- Specified criteria for standards of institutional and specialized accreditation by eliminating duplicate and detailed quality assessment parameters. For instance, standards of institutional accreditation "Strategic development and quality assurance" (18 criteria in the former edition, 7 in the new edition); "Development and approval of educational programs" (24 criteria in the former edition, 12 in the new edition); "Students" (19 criteria in the former edition, 12 in the new edition); "Teaching staff" (16 criteria in the former edition, 12 in the new edition); "Research activities" (16 criteria in the former edition, 10 in the new edition).
- Changing the structure of standards for institutional and specialized accreditation by including the additional standard "Continuous monitoring and periodic evaluation of educational programs" to ensure the quality assessment procedure by a system for determining the correspondence of educational programs to current needs and the satisfaction of stakeholders with the content.

Standards of specialized accreditation of educational programs of HEIs (2017) and Standards of institutional accreditation of HEIs implementing higher and postgraduate education programs (2017) are published on the IAAR website at the following link <http://iaar.kz/en/accreditation/standards/kazakhstan#higher-educational-institutions>.

In order to implement this recommendation, in 2017, the Working Group on the implementation of the recommendations of the ENQA Board revised the "Guidelines for the

organization and conduct of an external assessment procedure in the process of accreditation of an educational organization and/or educational program” (hereinafter referred to as the Guidelines). These Guidelines were also thoroughly discussed at the meetings of the IAAR Expert Councils (EC for Higher Education Minutes No.11 as of January 11, 2017; EC for Medical Education Minutes No.7 as of January 27, 2017; EC for Technical and Vocational Education Minutes No.6 as of January 19, 2017).

The 2017 Guidelines describes in more detail the roles and responsibilities for organizing the external assessment procedure of experts, the IAAR observer, the coordinator of the educational organization. Also, the Guidelines integrated the external expert panel’s report template with a detailed description of the structure of the final report and assessment, in accordance with the current standards of the IAAR.

“The Guidelines to organizing and conducting an external assessment procedure in the process of accrediting an educational organization and/or educational program” is published on the IAAR website at the following link <http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-documents/regulations>.

Area for development 5 (ESG 2.2)

ENQA Board Recommendation:

ESG 2.2 DESIGNING METHODOLOGIES FIT FOR PURPOSE

It is recommended that the contribution of student views to the design and review of the agency’s quality assurance methodologies should be strengthened.

IAAR follow-up:

To implement this recommendation, as noted above, IAAR signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Republican student movement "Alliance of Kazakhstan Students". The parties have agreed therein to cooperate in bringing students from the Alliance of Kazakhstan Students to the board of the IAAR collegial bodies and expert panels.

The Alliance of Kazakhstan Students recommended 2 students to the Accreditation Council (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/accreditation-council>), 1 student to the Expert Council on Higher Education (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/expert-councils/expert-council-for-higher-education>), 1 student - to the Expert Council on Technical and Vocational Education (<http://iaar.kz/en/about/expert-councils/expert-council-for-technical-and-vocational-education>).

The National Medical Association of the Republic of Kazakhstan recommended one student to the Expert Council (<http://wwar.kz/en/about/expert-councils/expert-council-for-medical-education>).

The aforementioned collegial bodies of IAAR actively participate in the development and revision of all the documentation and methodology of IAAR on assuring the internal quality of the agency.

Thus, the expansion of the collegial bodies of IAAR by students' representatives provides more opportunities to take into consideration students' views on the development of the IAAR methodological documents.

In the framework of the Memorandum of Cooperation, IAAR will continue to send accreditation standards to the Alliance of Kazakhstan Students for consideration, expecting suggestions for their improvement.

Area for development 6 (ESG 2.3)

ENQA Board Recommendation:

ESG 2.3 IMPLEMENTING PROCESSES

It is recommended that the agency ensures that its planning ensures that there is sufficient time for the proper preparation and confirmation of accreditation reports before their consideration by the Accreditation Council.

It is recommended that IAAR review its use of 'cluster' accreditation events. The review should define the maximum practical size of a cluster, taking into consideration the effect of such arrangements on the participation of single stakeholder experts, and the adequacy of the information on subject programmes contained in the resulting reports. In particular, the agency should ensure that in designing 'cluster' accreditations, a student panel member is able to participate and contribute fully to the procedures with regard to individual subject programmes.

IAAR follow-up:

Having studied the report of the ENQA experts, IAAR revised and supplemented the "Regulations on the Accreditation Council" allowing sufficient time for members of the Accreditation Council to study the EEP reports. Following suggestion of the Working Group on the implementation of the recommendations of the ENQA Board, in September 2018 the Regulations on the Accreditation Council were amended in relation to the provision of EEP materials and reports to members of the Accreditation Council at least 21 calendar days before the meeting. The current version of the Regulations on the Accreditation Council was reviewed at the meeting of the IAAR Accreditation Council on September 28, 2018 (Minutes No. 40) and recommended for approval by the IAAR Director.

Regulations on the AC is published on the IAAR website <http://iaar.kz/en/about/accreditation-council>.

The working group on the implementation of the ENQA Board recommendations revised the "cluster" approach with respect to specialized accreditation of educational programs based on the analysis of the national system of higher and postgraduate education. Correspondent amendments have been made to the "Regulations on the procedure for the specialized accreditation of educational organizations", "Regulations on the procedure for the institutional accreditation of educational organizations", "Guidelines for the organization and conduct of an external assessment procedure in the process of accreditation of an educational organization and/or educational program" and the maximum practical size of the cluster and the number of

educational programs are clearly stated. During one site-visit, the expert panel evaluates no more than 30 educational programs. One cluster includes no more than 6 homogeneous study programs. In order to contribute fully to the accreditation procedure representatives of the students are included to each cluster being accredited. In the event of joint institutional and specialized accreditation, and accreditation of more than 3 clusters, the EEP includes at least 2 foreign experts and minimum 2 employers.

When conducting joint international accreditation, the procedure for shaping an expert panel and clusters is governed by separate Guidelines, developed jointly with a partner agency (amendments are made to the relevant Agency Regulations).

The amendments on the cluster approach were widely discussed at the Expert Councils (EC for Higher Education Minutes No.12 as of March 12, 2018; EC for Medical Education Minutes No.9 as of March 14, 2018; EC for Technical and Vocational Education Minutes No.7 as of March 16, 2018) and Accreditation Council of IAAR (Minutes No.37 as of May 11, 2018).

Area for development 7 (ESG 2.6)

ENQA Board Recommendation:

ESG 2.6 REPORTING

It is recommended that IAAR review its guidelines with a view to providing a more developed specification of the format of the report, perhaps including a standard template for different types of accreditation. In this context, it is further recommended that reports on 'clusters' of programmes be redesigned so as to provide a detailed statement on each individual programme.

IAAR follow-up:

In order to implement this recommendation in 2017, the Working Group on the implementation of the recommendations of the ENQA Board revised the "*Guidelines for the organization and conduct of an external assessment procedure in the process of accreditation of an educational organization and/or educational program*" (hereinafter referred to as the Guidelines), which was thoroughly discussed at meetings of the Expert Councils (EC for Higher Education Minutes No.11 as of January 11, 2017; EC for Medical Education Minutes No.7 as of January 27, 2018; EC for Technical and Vocational Education Minutes No.6 as of January 19, 2017).

The 2017 Guidelines describe in more detail the roles and responsibilities for organizing the external assessment procedure of experts, the IAAR observer, the coordinator of the educational organization. The Guidelines integrated the external expert panel's report template with the detailed description of the structure of the final report and assessment, in accordance with the current standards of IAAR for both institutional and specialized accreditation. The report template on specialized accreditation contains sections and recommendations on the description of each accredited educational program for the experts' benefit.

The template allows the expert panel to compile a meaningful report with a detailed description of the evidence and analytical part, from which recommendations for quality improvement follow logically. The new template enables to highlight the specifics of the educational program and give separate recommendations for each program.

The *“Guidelines for the organization and conduct of an external assessment procedure in the process of accreditation of an educational organization and/or educational program”* may be found on the IAAR website at the following link <http://iaar.kz/en/about/iaar-documents/regulations>.

Area for development 8 (ESG 2.7)

ENQA Board Recommendation:

ESG 2.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

IAAR is recommended to review the constitution and membership of its Commission for the Consideration of Appeals and Complaints. IAAR is advised that its membership should not include members of the Accreditation Council, and that the membership should be broadened to include appropriately experienced members of the academic community.

IAAR follow-up:

To implement this recommendation of the ENQA Board, the IAAR administration has created a working group (by order No. 3-17/1-ОД dated January 13, 2017) on introducing changes and amendments to the *“Regulations on the Commission for Review of Appeals and Complaints”* (hereinafter - the Commission).

The working group, having studied the documentation and practice of other agencies, suggested amending and supplementing the *“Regulations on the Commission for Review of Appeals and Complaints”*. These proposals were considered at the meetings of the Expert Councils (EC for Higher Education Minutes No.12 as of March 12, 2018; EC for Medical Education Minutes No.9 as of March 14, 2018; EC for Technical and Vocational Education Minutes No.7 as of March 16, 2018), the Accreditation Council (Minutes No.37 as of May 11, 2018) and the Supervisory Council (Minutes No.1 as of May 24, 2018).

Following the recommendation of the Supervisory Board, it was decided to amend the *“Regulations on the Commission for the Review of Appeals and Complaints.”*

The Commission consists of 5 (five) independent members, including 2 permanent members (chairman and vice-chairman) and 3 non-permanent members (including a master’s or doctoral student). The permanent members of the Commission are recommended by professional associations of employers and cannot be members of the IAAR Accreditation Council.

Non-permanent members of the Commission are recommended by the Chairman of the Commission from among employers, representatives of educational organizations as qualified specialists in the educational organizations’ area of specialization for a comprehensive and

objective consideration of appeals and complaints who are not members of the Accreditation Council, experts of the IAAR and employees of the educational institution being under review.

The decision of the Commission shall be deemed as final.

According to the “*Regulations on the Commission for the Review of Appeals and Complaints*”, IAAR has documented procedures for complaints and appeals.

“*The Regulations on the Commission for the Review of Appeals and Complaints*” and information on the permanent composition of the Commission are published on the agency's website <http://iaar.kz/en/about/appeals-and-complaints-commission>.

Suggestions for further development

Some more general suggestions are being made, extending beyond strictly interpreted ESG which IAAR may wish to consider when reflecting on its further development.

Regarding its governance and management structures, IAAR may wish in the medium term to review its Statutes. Such a review should seek to make completely transparent the separate responsibility and authority of the Accreditation Council for all academic-related matters in the accreditation activity of the agency. There should be a clear differentiation between the role of the Accreditation Council and the role, responsibilities and authority of the Founder Director of the agency.

The agency might also wish to consider the value of appointing a new overarching governance body, which can advise IAAR on the broader policies, management, and strategic direction of the agency, thus freeing the Accreditation Council to concern itself primarily with accreditation matters.

IAAR follow-up:

Having analyzed the report of the ENQA experts, IAAR revised its management structure, the Statutes and created a new administration body - the IAAR Supervisory Board. Correspondent amendments were discussed at meetings of the IAAR collegial bodies. The Statutes now fully defines the transparent exclusive responsibility and authority of the Accreditation Council on all academic matters related to the accreditation activity of the agency and provides a clear distinction between the role of the Accreditation Council and its responsibilities, as well as the powers of the Founder and Director of IAAR.

The main objective of the Supervisory Board is to create a dominant body to discuss the broad issues of policy, management and strategic development of the agency, assisting the Director of IAAR in shaping the policy for further development of the agency. According to the Regulations on the Supervisory Board, the Director of the Agency once a year reports to the Supervisory Board on the results of the activities of IAAR.

The composition of the Supervisory Board is published on the IAAR website <http://iaar.kz/en/about/supervisory-board>.

Conclusion

According to the recommendations of the ENQA Board the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR) has done a lot to improve the methodology and further advance the internal and external quality assurance procedures.

We express our gratitude for the high professionalism of the ENQA expert group, for the caring attitude to the issues of quality assurance in higher education and the desire to improve quality assurance procedures.

We would also like to note the competence and elevated culture of the ENQA expert group members. We are confident that the voluntary visit of the ENQA experts in the framework of the follow-up procedures will serve as an impetus for our further development and an example of good practice in the field of independent accreditation.

We thank all the staff of Secretariat and members of the ENQA Board.